

III  
AGES DU BRONZE ET DU FER  
EN EUROPE



## RELIGION PREHISPANIQUE AUX CANARIES: L'APPORT DES GRAVURES RUPESTRES

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Aux Iles Canaries, la préhistoire se termine vers le 13<sup>e</sup> ou le 14<sup>e</sup> siècle, à l'arrivée des premiers navigateurs et colons européens. Au 15<sup>e</sup> siècle, quand Portugais et Espagnols firent la conquête de l'archipel, ils y trouvèrent une société néolithique de chasseurs, bergers et paysans. Malheureusement, les chroniques laissées par les conquérants ne permettent pas de se faire une idée de la religion des indigènes de l'époque, ni a fortiori de celle des populations préhistoriques antérieures.

Nous disposons cependant, outre les monuments archéologiques traditionnels, d'un grand nombre de gravures rupestres qui peuvent compléter partiellement à ce manque d'information. Sans doute, la signification de celles-ci était-elle déjà oubliée au moment de la conquête, comme en témoigne l'absence de croix ou d'autres signes de christianisation, si fréquents en Galice par exemple. De tels signes n'eussent point manqué si, à l'arrivée des missionnaires espagnols, des rites religieux avaient été pratiqués au voisinage des roches gravées. De plus, il n'existe ni traditions locales, ni espagnoles ou portugaises concernant d'éventuelles cérémonies en rapport avec l'art rupestre. On en conclura que, dès avant la conquête, les gravures n'étaient plus des objets culturels et que leur signification originelle était tombée dans l'oubli, bien que d'autre part au Barranco de Balos (Gran Canaria) par exemple, la tradition d'art rupestre se soit poursuivie jusqu'à nos jours.

L'art rupestre des îles de Lanzarote, Gran Canaria, la Palma et El Hierro (on en n'a pas trouvé jusqu'à présent à Fuerteventura, Tenerife et La Gomera) pose des problèmes génétiques et chronologiques pour lesquels on ne peut, dans l'état actuel de la science, que suggérer des solutions partielles. La recherche doit s'appuyer sur les principes suivants:

1. La technique d'exécution des pétroglyphes ainsi que les thèmes représentés ne peuvent être séparés des autres éléments culturels.

2. Le problème de l'origine et de la date des gravures est partiellement lié aux conditions de peuplement des îles.

Beltran-Cuscoy, ouvr. ss. presse), la figure isolée de la Cueva del Moro à Agaete, et l'ensemble peint en rouge, très stylisé de la Majada d'Alta. (Beltran, *Ensayo...*).

b) Figures animales: chevaux montés du Barranco de Balos.

c) Figures géométriques complexes: spirales, labyrinthes, cercles ou demi-cercles concentriques, méandres, serpentiformes, rosettes, etc., à Lanzarote (Zonzamas), La Palma (Belmaco, Tigalate Hondo, Roque de Teneguía, plus de nombreux sites du Nord, entre Barlovento, Santo Domingo de Garafia et Las Tricias), et El Hierro (rares exemplaires d'El Júlán).

d) Figures géométriques simples et isolées: cercles ou ovales pourvus de rayons, de diamètre, etc., empreintes de pieds (?), à El Hierro (El Júlán), Gran Canaria (Balos), Lanzarote et La Palma.

e) Peintures géométriques de couleurs diverses (rouge, jaune, gris, noir, orange), sur les parois de grottes artificielles: carrés, triangles et cercles, à la Cueva Pintada de Galdar (Gran Canaria).

f) Inscriptions alphabétiques gravées, à El Hierro (El Julan, La Caleta, Tejeleita, La Candia), La Palma (Tajodeque), Gran Canaria (Balos). Celles de Cuatro Puertas et du Barranco de Silva sont douteuses.

On notera que les signes très simples et élémentaires sont communs à toutes les îles, tandis que les signes spécialisés ou compliqués sont particuliers et caractéristiques de chacune d'elles. Bref, il est impossible

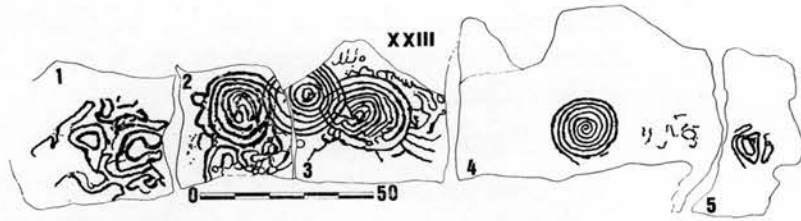


Fig. 116  
Hospital de Santo Domingo (La Palma).

de supposer une diffusion de chaque motif dans tout l'archipel. Jusq'à nos travaux récents, encore partiellement inédits, seuls les gisements de Balos, Tigalate Hondo, une petite partie de la Fuente de la Zarza à Santo Domingo (La Palma), avaient été étudiés, encore qu'incomplètement. Ces recherches avaient abouti à des conclusions chronologiques partielles:



Fig. 117  
 Roque de Teneguia (La  
 Palma).



Neolithique: El Júlán et les signes analogues de Balos.

Age du Bronze: Stations de La Palma, stèles de Zonzamas à Lanzarote (1800 - 1500 av. J. C.).

300 à + 200 apr. J. C.: Inscriptions alphabétiques en caractères tiffinagh (Cuscoy, 1963, p. 45; Tarradell, 1969, p. 385; Almagro, 1969, p. 123; Jimenez Sanchez, 1945; Perez de Barradas, 1939).

Une telle classification chronologique ne tenait pas compte des divergences entre les arts rupestres des différentes îles et n'était appuyée par aucune stratigraphie archéologique; aussi les auteurs les plus prudents, tout en reconnaissant des analogies avec les art rupestres de Galice, de Bretagne, d'Ecosse, d'Irlande, du Nord et du Nord-Ouest de l'Afrique, exprimaient-ils leurs incertitudes quant à l'origine et à la datation des gravures des Canaries.

D'une manière générale, les relations avec les autres arts rupestres sont évidentes, et ne peuvent être antérieures au Néolithique. Elles semblent plutôt correspondre à l'Age du Bronze, même si l'on tient compte de l'existence d'ensembles de figurines en terre cuite d'aspect

Fig. 118  
 Caboco de Belmaco (La  
 Palma).



néolithique, de la disposition de la Cueva Pintada de Galdar et d'autres éléments analogues qui proviennent sans doute de la Méditerranée orientale néolithique. En ce qui concerne l'origine des pétroglyphes canariens: Serra Rafols, Santa-Olalla et Pericot, bien qu'ils ne connussent qu'une faible part de l'impressionnant ensemble de l'île de La Palma, avaient déjà mis l'accent sur l'élément atlantique. Ils s'appuyaient sur

les ressemblances formelles des gravures de Belmaco et de la Fuente de la Zarza avec celles de Galice, de Bretagne, d'Irlande et d'Ecosse et croyaient à un fond culturel commun à toutes (Mata-Serra Rafols, 1940-1941, p. 352; Hernandez Perez, 1970, p. 90 Saez Martin, 1948; Pericot, 1955, pp. 579 sgg), sans pour cela oublier les influences méditerranéennes ou africaines. De fait, les similitudes entre la Fuente de la Zarza et Gavr'inis, New Grange, Dowth ou Lough Crew sont frappantes, mais dès que l'on quitte l'île de La Palma, la question se pose de façon très différente. Wölfel pensait à une origine crétoise des gravures des Canaries mais ne tenait compte que a El Júlán et du Barranco de Balos (Wölfel, 1940; Biedermann, 1970, p. 109; Jimenez Sanchez, 1966, p. 156, 1970, p. 75). Mac White pensait que la spirale d'Europe occidentale ne venait pas de l'Egée via Malte, mais d'Egypte et aurait atteint la province atlantique européenne à travers l'Afrique du Nord et les Canaries (Mac White, 1951, p. 24; Vaufrey, 1939; Santa-Olalla, 1947). Toutefois la prudence est indispensable quand on

Fig. 119  
La Zarcita (La Palma).



traite de la diffusion d'éléments graphiques tels que la spirale, le méandre ou le cercle, qui sont universels dans le temps comme dans l'espace. En outre, la théorie de Mac White ne tient pas compte des régions européennes de Galice, du Valcamonica, de Carschenna et du Nord de l'Allemagne (Kerenyi, 1941; Menghin, 1957, p. 121; 1969, p. 1; Asmus, sous press.).

Les parallélismes formels de l'art rupestre canarien et du reste du monde atlantique sont innombrables. Ainsi par exemple, les cercles concentriques à ligne rayonnante de Mevagh (Donegal) ou de Youghal (Cork), le labyrinthe fermé de Hollywood (Wicklow), les cercles et demi-cercles unis de Seskilgreen ou de New Grange, les cercles concentriques pourvus d'un rayon qui croise toutes les lignes de New Grange, Auchnabreach (Ecosse), Skaly, Backa (Suède) ont leurs correspondants dans les gravures de La Palma (Mac White, 1946; Crawford, 1967; O'Riordain, 1964, p. 56; O'Riordain-Daniel, 1964; O'Kelly, 1971; Childe, 1935). Il en va de même pour la Galice: le labyrinthe fermé de Mogor, les cercles concentriques de Villar de Matos, Figueirido ou Salcedo, le labyrinthe à rayon et le groupement de cercles concentriques de Lombo de Costa repètent des types identiques de l'Irlande ou de La Palma. Sobrino Lorenzo Ruza prend position pour l'indépendance des pétroglyphes « galico - atlantiques » et les considère comme le noyau originel de ceux d'Irlande, d'Ecosse, d'Angleterre septentrionale et de Scandinavie, ainsi que des gravures mégalithiques de Boyne (Irlande) et du Morbihan (Bretagne). Ces pétroglyphes galico-atlantiques auraient leur origine en Méditerranée. Ceux des Iles Canaries, du Grand Atlas, du Sahara Occidental et de l'Algérie, qui ont de grandes affinités avec l'art de la Galice constitueraient une branche méridionale du même mouvement, qui s'étend encore vers le sud, comme le montre la gravure découverte à Tchitundo-Hulo (Angola) (Sobrino Buhigas, 1935; Sobrino Lorenzo Ruza, 1956, 1963; Anati, 1968 b).

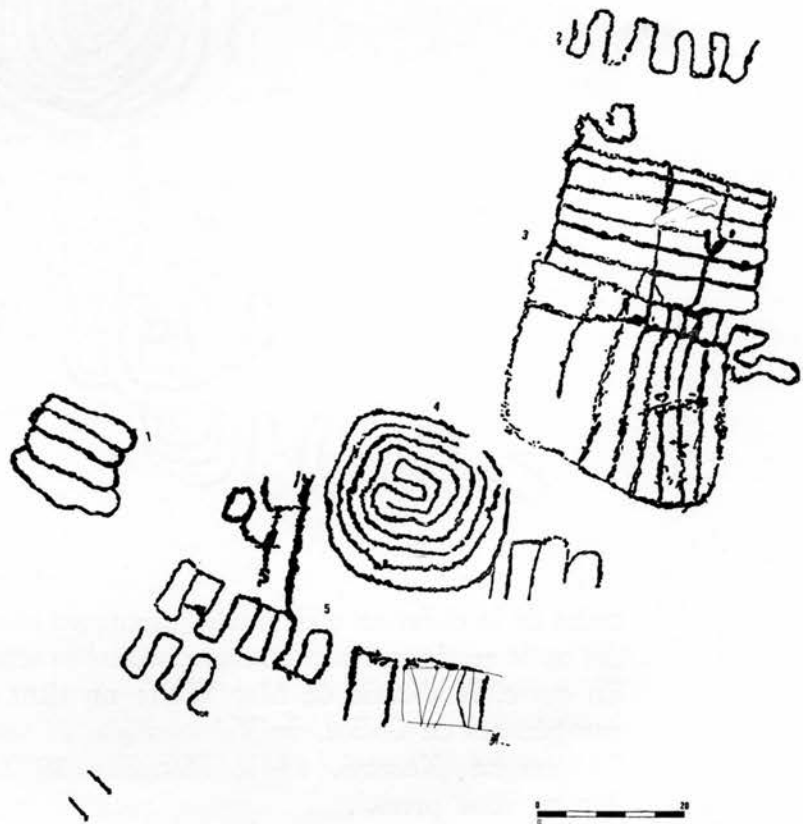


Fig. 120  
Don Pedro (La Palma).

Fig. 121  
*Zonzamas (Lanzarote).*



Localisées dans un cadre géographique plus étroit, les stèles de Valltellina peuvent également être rapprochées des pétroglyphes de La Palma. Les cercles pourvus de prolongements, les doubles spirales et d'autres éléments des monuments de Caven, Valgella, Ossimo, Borno et Sonico, qu'Anati situe entre 2200 et 1000 av. J. C. rappellent Belmaco et Fuente de la Zarza aussi bien que Carschenna en Suisse. A cette liste de parallèles, on peut encore ajouter le labyrinthe de l'oënochoé de Tragliatella (7 s. av. J. C.), et le groupe de spirales de l'île de Malte, qui ont indiscutablement leur origine en Méditerranée orientale (Anati, 1968 a; Zindel, 1968).

Cependant, malgré des ressemblances qui vont presque jusqu'à l'identité, l'art des Canaries présente toujours un aspect plus lourd et irrégulier, qui doit être attribué à sa longue évolution en milieu clos.

Si l'on veut tenter de dégager la signification des gravures des Canaries, il faut tenir compte des différences qui se manifestent entre une île et l'autre; puis sur une même île, de leurs diverses localisations possibles.

A Gran Canaria, le Barranco de Balos paraît avoir été un lieu de culte pendant une période très longue.

A Lanzarote, les gravures sont proches de marmites artificielles appelées populairement « queseras », qui sont en relation avec l'eau et la pluie. Cela leur assure également une signification rituelle. A El Hierro (El Júlán), les figures ont été exécutées sur un véritable fleuve de lave de plusieurs centaines de mètres de longueur. Ce dernier est dominé par un « tagoror », lieu de culte ou de réunion qui doit certainement être mis en relation avec un rituel.

A La Palma, les gravures sont distribuées de façon très inégale; elles se trouvent presque toutes au nord de l'île, à l'exception des gisements



del Belmaco, Tigalate, Teneguía, Caldera de Taburiente et Las Breñas. On les trouve:

a) En tête des « barrancos », près de sources d'eau anciennes ou actuelles (« cabocos ») auxquelles sont associées des grottes d'habitation. Gravées sur des parois rocheuses verticales, elles comprennent des spirales et des cercles concentriques associés à des méandres.

b) Dans des espaces découverts, au bord de la mer, près des falaises. Dans ce cas, on voit prédominer les signes circulaires ou semi-circulaires. Parfois les formes se compliquent, et le dessin finit par ressembler aux labyrinthes intestinaux babyloniens.



Fig. 122

El Julian (Hierro).

En outre, dans presque toutes les stations on trouve des signes exceptionnels qui rompent la régularité, on dirait presque la monotonie de ces ensembles.

Les difficultés à se procurer de l'eau qu'éprouvèrent les Canariens de toutes les époques justifieraient fort bien l'existence de rites pour demander la pluie ou l'eau, représentée graphiquement par les méandres qu'on retrouve à côté des sources, tandis que les signes ronds suggèrent plutôt une interprétation solaire, les uns et les autres étant perpétuellement en mutuelle relation. Signes paracirculaires, semi-circulaires et méandres se retrouvent à Gavr'inis (Bretagne), Pola de Allende (Museo de Oviedo, Asturies) ou encore sur les stèles de N'Kheila (Musée de Rabat). De même, dans la région de l'Oukaimeden (Marrakech) et à Talat n'Isk (Grand Atlas) on trouve des figures circulaires englobant des signes plus ou moins semi-circulaires de lignes parallèles, et à Aoug-dal n'Ouagouns des labyrinthes intestinaux très élaborés: dans les deux cas, du cercle extérieur partent des lignes droites qui pourraient représenter les rayons solaires (Vaufrey, 1939, p. 624; Malhomme, 1959-1961; Pyto-Musso, 1969; Souville, 1971, p. 77).

La grande accumulation de ces signes en certains endroits confirme la définition de ces derniers comme lieux de culte qui doivent être mis en parallèle avec les sites d'art mégalithique (Duhourceau, 1972, p. 72;

## SUMMARY

The rock art of the islands of Lanzarote, Gran Canaria, La Palma and El Hierro raises problems of chronology and access routes which can be solved, at least in part. Given the almost total absence of contact between these islands during the prehistoric period, rock art developed independently and has its own characteristics in each case. Thus even the contacts with Africa (as shown by ceramics, for example) were closer in La Palma than in Tenerife or Lanzarote. Contacts with the Atlantic world (Ireland, Scotland and Galicia) and megalithic art, with North West Africa and the Mediterranean cannot be earlier than the Neolithic, and are closer to the Bronze Age. Interpretation of the engravings must take account of their position, which is very significant in La Palma. They are found:

- a) In shelters near a source of water (« caboco »), on vertical slabs or rock faces. They involve spirals or concentric circles associated with meanders.
- b) By the sea, near the cliffs, where circular or semicircular signs are predominant.

The great difficulty which the Canary Islanders always had in finding water would be a sufficient justification for the existence of water conservation or rain rites. The meanders may be the graphic expression of these rites, while the circular signs may be solar discs. Both signs may be related to megalithic religion in that the source of water may also have been understood as the source of life, and the tomb as the passage to a new life. The spirals and labyrinths with their unfinished lines would reflect the unbroken passage from life to death. The large number of engravings in each site suggests that these places were cult centres related to water, sun, life and death.

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Shee, 1972, pp. 199-224). Dans une telle perspective, on pourrait imaginer que la source d'eau soit également la source de la vie qui atteint son plein épanouissement sous l'effet du soleil. Une telle vision serait parfaitement en accord avec la mentalité de bergers et de paysans néolithiques pour qui les signes symboliques en question exprimeraient la relation eau-soleil - vie-mort.

*Aperçu  
chronologique:*

a) Les figures humaines ne sauraient être antérieures à la fin de l'Age du Bronze européen. Les personnages au corps carré sont certainement de l'Age du Fer, tandis que d'autres sont modernes, comme ceux qui accompagnent les représentations de chevaux, qui sont nécessairement postérieures à l'arrivée des Européens dans l'archipel.

b) Les spirales, méandres, etc., reflètent une ambiance de l'Age du Bronze et du monde mégalithique.

c) Les figures géométriques simples d'El Hierro sont malaisément datables, mais pourraient être mises en rapport avec celles de la rubrique précédente.

d) Les peintures de la Cueva Pintada de Galdar reflètent un aspect de l'Europe méditerranéenne vers l'an 2000.

e) Les inscriptions tiffinagh (d'origine saharienne) ne sauraient être antérieures au 3<sup>e</sup> siècle avant J. C. tandis que les plus récentes pourraient appartenir au 8<sup>e</sup> siècle de notre ère.

RIASSUNTO

L'arte rupestre delle isole di Lanzarote, Gran Canaria, La Palma e El Hierro pone problemi di cronologia, di vie di accesso, ed altri che possono essere almeno parzialmente risolti. Poichè i rapporti tra le sopraccitate isole sono quasi inesistenti in epoca preistorica, l'evoluzione dell'arte rupestre avviene indipendentemente in ogni isola e ciascuna ha le sue caratteristiche differenti e una sua interna motivazione, stimolata da forze che a malapena conosciamo. I rapporti con l'Africa (p. es. per la ceramica) sono più forti a La Palma che a Tenerife o Lanzarote. Certamente i rapporti con il mondo atlantico (Irlanda, Scozia, Galizia) e l'arte megalitica, con l'Africa nord-occidentale e il Mediterraneo, sono evidenti e non possono essere anteriori al Neolitico, mentre corrispondono piuttosto all'età del Bronzo. Dal punto di vista del significato, bisogna tener conto della situazione delle incisioni, che nell'isola di La Palma è molto eloquente.

Esse si trovano: a) in ripari, presso una fonte d'acqua (« caboco »), su lastre verticali e sopra pareti rocciose, con segni spiraliformi o cerchi concentrici o simili, associati con meandri; b) in riva al mare, presso le scogliere, in punti aperti, con predominanza dei segni circolari o semicircolari.

La grande difficoltà degli abitanti delle Canarie, in tutte le epoche, per rifornirsi di acqua, spiega molto bene i riti per invocare la pioggia o per conservare l'acqua, di cui i meandri a lato delle fonti sarebbero l'espressione grafica, mentre i segni rotondi sarebbero solari. Gli uni e gli altri possono essere visti in rapporto con la religione megalitica, nel senso che la sorgente d'acqua è anche la fonte della vita e la tomba significa il passaggio a una nuova vita; le spirali e i labirinti, le cui linee non finiscono mai, riflettono la corsa continua della vita verso la morte e la speranza nel futuro. La grande accumulazione di incisioni in ogni giacimento fa pensare che questi punti fossero luoghi di culto e di riti in rapporto all'acqua, al sole, alla vita e alla morte.

## SUMMARY

The rock art of the islands of Lanzarote, Gran Canaria, La Palma and El Hierro raises problems of chronology and access routes which can be solved, at least in part. Given the almost total absence of contact between these islands during the prehistoric period, rock art developed independently and has its own characteristics in each case. Thus even the contacts with Africa (as shown by ceramics, for example) were closer in La Palma than in Tenerife or Lanzarote. Contacts with the Atlantic world (Ireland, Scotland and Galicia) and megalithic art, with North West Africa and the Mediterranean cannot be earlier than the Neolithic, and are closer to the Bronze Age. Interpretation of the engravings must take account of their position, which is very significant in La Palma. They are found:

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## PERSPECTIVES ON THE RELIGION OF PREHISTORIC CRETE

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Unlike the earlier papers read in this Symposium, presenting new information or the results of investigations, this paper deals with future research.

It attempts to provide a method by which we can answer or clarify, at least, a rather simple question - this question is, how are we to distinguish between the Minoan and the Mycenaean religions and, indeed, between their respective cultures?

The study of the religion of Prehistoric Crete is a comparatively recent field of inquiry. The strategic geographical location of the island in the Aegean Sea at crossroads between Africa, the Near East, and the European continent as well as its transitional position in the cultural sequence between the earlier prehistoric and neolithic cultures and later more complex societies of historic times have not only affected the course of Crete's own history but influenced to some extent the direction taken in Minoan studies. These two factors have also affected the approach to its religion.

The traditional view of the subject taken by pioneers like Evans (1901, 1925) Persson (1942), and Nilsson (1950, 1952), has been to regard the religion of prehistoric Crete as one of the forerunners of the historical Greek religion. Their emphasis on verification of historical or legendary sources and mythological allusions and their demonstration by these means of the continuity of some religious elements from the Bronze Age in the religion of Greece have been their major contributions.

To a certain extent, this emphasis on continuity of tradition has obscured the differences between the Minoan and the Mycenaean cultures; for while scholars like Nilsson (1950, 1952), and Picard (1948) have warned us against too close a resemblance between the Mycenaean and Greek religions, the distinction between the prehistoric religions of Mycenaean Greece and Crete needs to be demonstrated.

The complex interrelations of these two cultures have proven too strong to be separated easily into individual studies; though researchers like Karo (1930-1933), Matz (1962), Furumark (1965) and Banti

(1954) among others have pointed out the contrasting styles in art, architecture and in their language, the subject continues to be viewed as the indivisible Minoan-Mycenaean religion. For how are we to distinguish between the two?

The acceptance by most scholars of Michael Ventris's decipherment of Linear B as an early dialect of Greek has shown one major point of difference between the Mycenaean world and the Cretan. The replacement of the native Linear A script by Linear B at Knossos in Late Minoan II suggests, if not political domination of Knossos, at least a strong influence by Mainland elements upon Cretan culture from this period onwards.

Curiously enough it is from these Late Minoan periods that the bulk of ritual objects used for the interpretation of Minoan religion comes. Thus involving the danger of speaking of Minoan religion as it was experienced in its later stages.

In the collections of Linear B tablets from Mainland centers and from Knossos, we possess texts to accompany our picture-book of Mycenaean society and religion. Apart from information regarding socio-economic aspects of society, the transcription of Linear B into Greek has revealed dedications to important personages with names or epithets akin to those of the Olympian pantheon of classical times: Poseidon, Athena, Artemis, Zeus, and Dionysus. The texts from Knossos, on the other hand, allude to less known deities with the titles of « Potnia », « Our Lady of the Labyrinth » and « Mistress of the Winds » (Chadwick, 1958, pp. 124-125). Deities not only with apparent different epithets but with possible different functions.

The indebtedness that historic Greek religion owed to the Bronze Age Mycenaeans has been amply demonstrated. We may describe the situation in archaeological terms by stating that the stratigraphical sequence or the relationship in time and space of these two cultures has been established. But this is only a small part of the enquiry. We still need to investigate the individual contributions that the Bronze Age cultures of Mainland Greece and Crete made to each other. The over-emphasis by Evans on the exertion of the Minoan culture upon the Mainland obscured for a while any thought regarding the possible contributions that the latter might have made to Crete. In any attempt to investigate the nature of the Minoans' religious beliefs and practices it is necessary to disentangle the present web of confusion surrounding the Minoan-Mycenaean religion. In order to achieve this we must attempt the following:

- a) first, we must trace in chronological order the development of Minoan religion as it is expressed in the burial customs, ritual objects and places of cult, for example.
- b) secondly, we must limit our enquiry on Minoan religion to those objects and monuments that have been found in Crete - on the grounds that any object, regardless of its being Minoan workmanship, has been « Mycenaeanised » once it is found on the Mainland.
- c) thirdly, we must attempt to view the Minoan religion in its proper context. This entails not only a knowledge of their own mentality and outlook upon the world but, far more important, we must envisage the



religious experiences against the background of that context — its achievements and socio-economic developments.

Before we outline the context of Minoan religion, let us try to catch the spirit of its civilization. The idyllic serenity of mountains, valleys, forests and sea may have engendered that desire for communion with all forms of Nature which permeated their thought and was reflected in most aspects of their material culture. Their protective, insular situation contrasted with the aggressive character of the Mycenaeans. In architecture, the carefree spirit of the Cretans is reflected in the planning of their palaces, villas, and towns by the asymmetrical layout of rooms around a central courtyard, the opening of lightwells to the sky and the non-monumentality of their buildings; characteristics strikingly different from the citadels of the Mainland with their symmetrical layout around the megaron and their enclosure by massive Cyclopean masonry.

In the minor arts, the dynamism of the Cretans is reflected in their use of the principle of torsion in glyptic and ceramic decoration, in their representation of naturalistic landscapes in the frescoes of the Early Palaces, and in their emphasis upon surface decoration with animal and plant motifs.

In the realm of religious beliefs and practices, the choice of cult places on mountain peaks or in the depths of sacred caves agrees with the freedom of being they experienced in proximity to Nature. Their burial practices indicate a belief in the afterlife but not an established cult of the dead. Likewise the absence of temples or of one form of divine representation except for the figurines of Snake-Goddesses and the bell-shaped idols of MM I period, is in accord with the Minoans' religious orientation towards the fleeting joys of present-day existence rather than the problems of cosmic order or eternity.

The development of the Minoans' cult places and burial structures may now be considered in relation to the socio-economic changes evidenced in the archaeological remains.

From the Early Minoan I period onwards, a cult associated with stone concretions or stalagmites existed in sacred caves at various localities. The variety of objects found in different caves suggests belief not only in one deity but in several. In burial structures, the Neolithic burials in rock-shelters were replaced in the south by vaulted tombs used by the community for generations. Elsewhere, different grave types made their appearance — cist graves, ossuaries and clay coffins — indicating a move towards individualization probably as the result of increased wealth derived from foreign trade.

By Middle Minoan I times and synchronous with an increase in overseas contacts with the Near East a number of phenomena occurred: the rise of the palatial centers at Knossos, Mallia, and Phaestos, the appearance of a rudimentary hieroglyphic script, an increase in population, class distinctions, and craft specialization. In burial structures, pithoi burials and clay coffins continued while at the same time three distinct cult places appeared (Faure, 1969):

1. domestic shrines or chapels in houses.
2. peak sanctuaries.
3. cave shrines.

The finding of cylindrical-shaped objects with loops running

down either side and resembling the Late Minoan « snake-tubes » associated with the cult of the Snake Goddess suggests a move toward consolidation of belief. The next MM II period was to see a greater degree of achievement in technology and a further step towards the consolidation and centralization of the « Snake-Goddess » cult in the palaces and villas.

The following transitional period covering MM III/LM Ia saw a number of developments. Though the burial structures hardly changed at all, pithoi burials became more common. However, the rock-shelters, sacred caves like Trapeza and Kamares and most of the Messara tholoi were completely or almost entirely abandoned. At Tylissos, the discovery of offering tables, double axes, and idols suggests that at this time the cult place may have been transferred to the houses and towns. By the end of MM IIIb, however, a return to the sanctuaries in the depth of caves took place particularly in Central Crete (Faure, 1969).

The achievements of the first phase of the Late Bronze Age were abruptly disrupted by the devastating explosion of the volcanic island of Thera (1500-1450). Tidal waves and repeated earthquakes brought destruction and desolation to the flourishing towns of Eastern and central Crete. But the Minoan society was not entirely effaced: life in the palaces, villas and towns continued to survive while trade with the Aegean islands and the Eastern Mediterranean spread and soared to its highest peak. In Crete, however, there are hints that changes in the nature of the society had occurred. The peaceful, nature-loving Minoans suddenly became interested in weapons. Warrior tombs from the vicinity of Knossos have yielded tanged arrowheads, spears, cruciform and horned rapiers and short swords for slashing and thrusting, while chariots and corslets were depicted in the records of the Knossos Palace written in Mycenaean Greek. With the replacement of Linear A by the Linear B script there is reason to suspect a major influence on, if not actual domination of Crete by the Mycenaean Greeks.

Changes in the nature of the Minoan religion also took place at this time. Elements such as the sacred knot, and the figure of eight appear more frequently while double-axes and horns of consecration were now elevated to the rank of supreme symbols. In general a dominant, aggressive character derived from the Mainland was superimposed on the carefree spirit of the Minoans.

The replacement of the rocky landscapes of Middle Minoan frescoes by Neo-Palatial processions depicting human being in a predominant role, the increased use of heraldic compositions in glyptic art, and the monumental character of the « Palace Style » pottery betray characteristics of mind diametrically opposed to those of the Minoan.

Despite the continuous development towards individualization of burial structures and despite the process of consolidation of disparate elements of horns of consecration, sea-shells, snake-tubes, and tables of offerings into the cult of the Snake-Goddess (Branigan, 1969), the Late Minoan religion does not continue to a logical culmination the traditions of Middle Minoan times. We must not speak, therefore of a purely Minoan religious expression in the ritual objects, cult places,

and other religious manifestations dating from the Late Minoan II period and onwards without distinguishing Mycenaean influences.

We have attempted to present one approach to the study of the Minoan religious manifestations drawn from the archaeological remains.

Although the study of any prehistoric religion would benefit from a combination of approaches, we have tried to apply the methods of archaeology to the study of Minoan religion in the hope of certain results. In tracing their development through time and contextual relationship with associated phenomena, we have assumed Minoan society and its religion to be both dynamic entities subject to change and development through time and inter-active components within the cultural system.

In so doing, we have tried to establish a more definite line of departure from which future working hypotheses regarding the nature and function of Minoan religion within Minoan society can be presented and tested, in the hope of bringing the benefits of the scientific method to the study of religion.

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Acknowledgment: I wish to thank Dr. Marija Gimbutas for providing me with the opportunity and encouragement necessary for the realization of this paper.

#### RIASSUNTO

Evans, Perssons e Nilsson avevano considerato la religione cretese come un precorritto della religione greca di epoca storica. In seguito, le religioni micenea e cretese furono studiate come un unico insieme, nonostante che molti archeologi avessero mostrato le differenze fra queste due culture. L'autore cerca di tracciare le grandi linee della storia della società e della religione minoica in base alle testimonianze archeologiche, per poterne determinare le caratteristiche indipendenti e originali e mostrare come l'apporto miceneo provocherà un cambiamento radicale nella vita sociale e religiosa di Creta. Si pone così un punto di partenza più preciso per le future ricerche sulla natura e la funzione della religione nel quadro della società minoica.

#### RÉSUMÉ

Evans, Perssons et Nilsson avaient considéré la religion crétoise comme un précurseur de la religion grecque de l'époque historique. Dans la suite, les religions mycénienne et crétoise furent étudiées comme un seul ensemble, bien que de nombreux archéologues aient souligné les contrastes qui opposent ces deux cultures. L'Auteur s'efforce donc de retracer dans les grandes lignes l'histoire de la société et de la religion minoenne à partir des témoignages archéologiques, afin d'en déterminer le caractère propre et de montrer comment l'apport mycénien apporta un changement radical dans la vie sociale et religieuse de la Crète. Il détermine ainsi un point de départ plus précis pour les futures hypothèses de travail concernant la nature et la fonction de la religion dans le cadre de la société minoenne.

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## ON THE INTERPRETATION OF CYCLADIC AND MYCENAEAN FIGURINES

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The Early Bronze Age marble figurines from the Cyclades (Renfrew, 1969, pp. 1-32) and the late Bronze Age terracotta figurines from the Mycenaean world (French 1971, pp. 101 ff.) are examined together, as they provide rather similar examples of the kind of difficulties we encounter when we attempt to interpret objects such as these and suggest the functions they must have served.

For the Cycladic figures we do at least have the help of knowing that, with very few exceptions, they occur in graves, although this fact should not be overstressed since the number of excavated Early Cycladic settlements is smaller than that of tombs (Renfrew, 1972, app. I, pp. 507-525; Zervos, 1957, pls. 36-58, 104-115, 157-166, 174-178, 244-254, 293-302, 319, 333-339). When we deal with the standard types of Mycenaean figurines we are almost completely in the dark both because of their manner of representation and because similar figurines have been found in almost every kind of context, occupation and burial alike, with nothing distinctive about them (French, 1971, pp. 185-187). However, the very fact that they were made of baked clay, and were therefore readily mass-produced, may mean that there was some widely appreciated aspect of their significance and use which is lacking in the Cycladic figurines. By contrast, in using marble the people of the Cyclades had chosen a difficult material to work; although many figures were made, they were obviously never mass-produced. The apparent abundance of stone objects in the Early Cycladic period is probably misleading and may not have had a specific significance, but simply be due to the availability of material.

If we try to identify the figurines as the images of deities we are faced with the great difficulty that none of them possess any attributes of the kind which identify representations of the later Greek gods. The information about identity and function which we seek was a second nature to the people for whom these two classes of figures were made.

The nearest we get to figures with attributes are the Cycladic figurines of musicians. If these Cycladic figures represented deities they must have belonged to a religion in which there were at least two



Fig. 123  
Keros. Seated harpist  
(Athens, National Museum, n. 3908).

deities, one male and one female. The religious content would thus be very simple and the function of the figurines immediately apparent. Such a solution is misleading and, on the whole, not an acceptable way of solving such a difficult problem.

The function of the Cycladic figurines has been the subject of much speculation and various different theories. The general tendency (with two exceptions), has been to look for an explanation which would account for all the figurines, but it is difficult to find one which would preclude all others.

It has been widely held — by Müller (1906, p. 59 ff.), Dussaud (1914, p. 363), Picard (1930, pp. 97 ff.), Wiesner (1938, pp. 97 f.), Zervos (1957, pp. 43 f.) — that the idols are images of the great Mother Goddess, the Anatolian fertility goddess, under whose divine protection and care the dead were placed during their journey to the world beyond. This goddess — Ishtar or Astarte or Cybele — had a dual aspect, one connected with life and fertility and the other chthonic, the latter being emphasized in the figures.

Tsountas (1898, pp. 137 f.) recognised the relationship of the idols to pictures of Astarte, although he did not think that all female figurines were necessarily divine. However, he took their presence in the tombs as evidence of some belief in the afterlife, a view which has been repeated for the same reasons (Sakellariou-Papathanasopoulos, 1965, p. 62). Such a belief may have existed, but its extent and importance are difficult to assess, because of the occurrence of the idols in some tombs only.

More recently Thimme (1965), repeated the Mother Goddess interpretation, has emphasized her chthonic character and that of a Sea Goddess. He maintained that the male figurines with folded arms were also divine, that of the cup-bearer being associated with the later Dionysus.

He based the identification of the idols as a representation of the Mother Goddess on the following points:

a) the monumentality of some figures; b) the existence of double idols (perhaps the prototypes of Demeter and Core); c) the fact that the idols are unable to stand; d) the emphasis on the pubic area; e) the position of the arms.

Doumas rightly criticized this theory and suggested that economic and aesthetic factors were responsible for these features. (1968, pp. 89-90).

Thimme's last point, i. e. that more than two naturalistic idols are never found in the same grave, is proved incorrect by the existence of at least one example (Thimme, 1965; Doumas, 1968, pp. 89-90). Marie Louise and Hans Erlenmeyer (1965) have tried to place the Cycladic figurines in the evolutionary line leading from menhirs and aniconic representations to statues of the deity. The most recent attempt at an interpretation has been that of Renfrew, who saw the female figures as deities or votaries, and the male as votaries. According to him the variety of their forms precludes their interpretation as images of a single deity, but not as those of deities in general (Renfrew, 1972, p. 424).

Nilsson (1950, pp. 290 ff.) rightly maintained that the interpretation of the figures in general as images of goddesses is not founded on any proofs, but only on the supposition that they may have a religious purpose. He preferred to see magical functions in primitive representations and remarked that the cult of the Mother Goddess in the Aegean is an unproved hypothesis. It should be pointed out that belief in the Mother Goddess has been associated with theories about the existence of matriarchy in the primitive Aegean. Both were based on the prevalence of female figurines, among other factors.

It is known that matriarchal societies were thought to be those in which agricultural occupations carried out mainly by women are predominant. The female figurines were taken as the main evidence for the existence of such conditions in the Neolithic period. However, very few of them have definite religious associations, which would justify such assumptions. The majority have been found in settlements and could be connected with fertility rites and magical beliefs, thus representing mortals rather than deities.

In the Early Cycladic society of sailors and pirates there is less ground for theories about matriarchy. The evidence of the figurines themselves is negative, since male figurines, though rarer on the whole, do occur and their contexts are not differentiated. Identification of the female figures with images of the Mother Goddess would leave the male ones unaccounted for. The only evidence for the occurrence of Cycladic-like figures in a specifically cult context comes from the Anatolian site of Beycesultan, where a group of Early Bronze Age I marble figurines were found in the area of the temple (Lloyd-Mellaart, 1962, pp. 269-273).

But even if we were to accept these figurines as the prototypes for the more stylised figures, it is difficult to assume that similarity of function moved in step with similarity of form. The latter could have been adopted in its new home, without there necessarily being an understanding of the function behind it.

Nilsson's most important contribution to the problem of the interpretation of figurines was his statement that the idols may have been conceived and used in more than one way (1950, p. 292), and to this I shall return later. According to him, the absence of any other human figures in the earliest periods gave the Mother Goddess a dominant position in the earliest known phase of religious activity, which is thus seen as monotheism with a female instead of a male deity in an all-embracing role. However the only definite instances of such a female, all-nourishing deity come from the Near East, and relate to a more advanced religious stage. Nilsson's supposition that the form of religion in the Neolithic period was dominated by magic, daemons and a plurality of gods, rather than by a single female deity, holds good. There is no reason to suppose that the Early Cycladic religion would have been different in character. Another point made by Nilsson is that the Great Mothers of Asia Minor (Ishtar, Isis, etc.) are unmistakably related to vegetation cults, whereas the idols are related to human fecundity,



and the origins are therefore different. His own view was that the idols may be substitutes for human sacrifices or gifts to serve the dead men in another world as servants, concubines or musicians, offered on the principle that the image serves the same purpose as the original (Nilsson, 1950, pp. 293-294). This hypothesis resembles that of Hogarth, who believed that the Aegean idols were destined to resume life in the Underworld and satisfy the different sexual appetites of the dead master, hence the difference between fat and lean idols (Hogarth, 1927). These views were attacked by Picard, who denied the connection of the Cycladic figures both with the Egyptian ushabtis and with pictures of the Babylonian naked goddess Ishtar. He rightly pointed out that the cults are an ethnic phenomenon, which is not easily transmitted. His objections against the application of these theories in the case of both the Cycladic and the Mycenaean figurines were based on the evidence of the tombs. He pointed out a lack of interest in everyday necessities and a high degree of idealisation in the Cycladic figurines, which is a feature lacking in the Egyptian ushabtis (Picard, 1930). Nilsson (1950, p. 293) states that the Cycladic idols are generally associated with bones of men, but I am not sure about the validity of this statement. If the function of the figurines were similar to that of the Egyptian ushabtis, this would imply the existence of an Egyptian belief not attested elsewhere.

Mylonas (1959 b, pp. 138 ff.) agreed with Nilsson only in the view that the Cycladic idols were designed for the same use as the Mycenaean terracotta figurines. However this is not proven, because there are no decisive factors such as a similarity of contexts, or a religious and artistic continuity. He suggested that the Cycladic idols also represented divine nurses and attendants, to whose care the dead children were entrusted during their journey to the other world. The difficulty — as Mylonas himself observed — is that while there are some indications that Mycenaean figurines were placed in the graves of children, the Cycladic figurines seem to have accompanied adult burials (Doumas, 1968, p. 90), and may have had a different purpose. The occurrence of fragmentary examples led Mylonas to attribute apotropaic functions to the idols, but this does not necessarily follow. It may simply mean that the idols were used during lifetime (Doumas, 1968, p. 50). Shefold (1965) has attempted to present the idols as figures of Cycladic mythology, like the later Greek heroes and nymphs. The female figures or nymphs are dancing, the male figures or heroes evoke the divine powers through their song. Doumas rightly objected that it is difficult to imagine craftsmen concerned with the rendering of psychic states at this early stage of artistic representation. Also Shefold's view would not explain the posture of the more naturalistic idols with heads held vertically and the pregnant female idols which cannot portray dancers (Doumas, 1968, p. 89).

Doumas started his interesting interpretation with the statement that a people's religion tends to reflect its level of civilisation. In primitive societies, where religion consists largely of superstition and magic, the dead are believed to live in obscurity and darkness, and to be jealous and vindictive towards the living. Their malice and anger must

be appeased by grave offerings. The magic function of the idols preceded their use as religious representations of deities.

The most serious objection to the hypothesis that the figurines portray deities is the evidence of tomb finds: the manner in which they were deposited in the graves does not reflect due reverence. With the exception of a group of figurines found standing in a conch-shell, they are usually found mixed with other objects of mere daily use, occasionally crushed beneath them.

Doumas elaborated one of Thomson's statements about the meaning of the idols in general (Thomson, 1949), namely that they are representations of the female worshipper, made to secure for her the goddess's protection in time of actual or imaginary danger. The fact that fragmentary and repaired idols have been found buried with the dead shows that some of the figurines had been used by the living. As long as the person represented remained alive, the idol guaranteed him security, but after his death it was considered dangerous, as it was charged with magic properties, and it therefore had to be buried together with the corpse.

The large number of female Cycladic figurines was thought by him to reflect the special position of women in the society, which put them in greater and more frequent danger than the men; and the smaller need for divine protection would explain the rarity of male figurines. The presence of the musician, the cup-bearer, and the hunter-warrior figures is understood because of the special function they occupied in the Early Cycladic society, which multiplied the real or imaginary dangers to which they were exposed (Doumas, 1968, pp. 91 ff.).

This theory overemphasizes the existence of an agricultural matriarchy in Early Cycladic society, when there are reasons to doubt this, as has been pointed out earlier. The special place some people occupied, on the other hand, is a sign of a highly organised society with a strong sense of hierarchy and values. Nevertheless, if slightly modified, this hypothesis is perfectly acceptable, at least for part of the figurines. If one were to accept that the people of the Cyclades made idols which served as a kind of amulet to ensure divine protection, this would account for both male and female figurines. The occurrence of idols in graves can be explained on two possible grounds: as cherished possessions they accompanied their owner after death; and they were retained out of superstitious fear.

Still another approach to the interpretation of figurines has been suggested by Ucko. He concluded his re-examination of all the suggested interpretations of Neolithic figurines from Egypt, Crete, Greece and the Near East, (including a discussion of the Mother Goddess hypothesis, which is proved negative for the above-mentioned areas), by some tentative proposals for the function of anthropomorphic figurines based on three variables:

1. The features of the figurines themselves.
2. The archaeological contexts of the figurines.
3. The relevant historical practices from the areas concerned, as well as similar ethnographic practices (Ucko, 1968, pp. 409-414).

Fig. 124  
Syros. Male (?) figurine  
(Athens, National Museum, n. 5380).



His conclusions are: a) that the evidence of the archaeological contexts has shown that it is unlikely that all figurines from one context represent one aspect of a deity; and b) that the study of ethnographical parallels suggests a variety of functions for the figurines, which therefore need not be homogeneous (pp. 427, 443).

Although these conclusions are based on the study of Neolithic figurines of the above-mentioned areas, they are equally applicable to

Fig. 125  
*Schematic Figurines from  
Syros, Naxos, Antiparos,  
Despotiko (Athens, National  
Museum).*

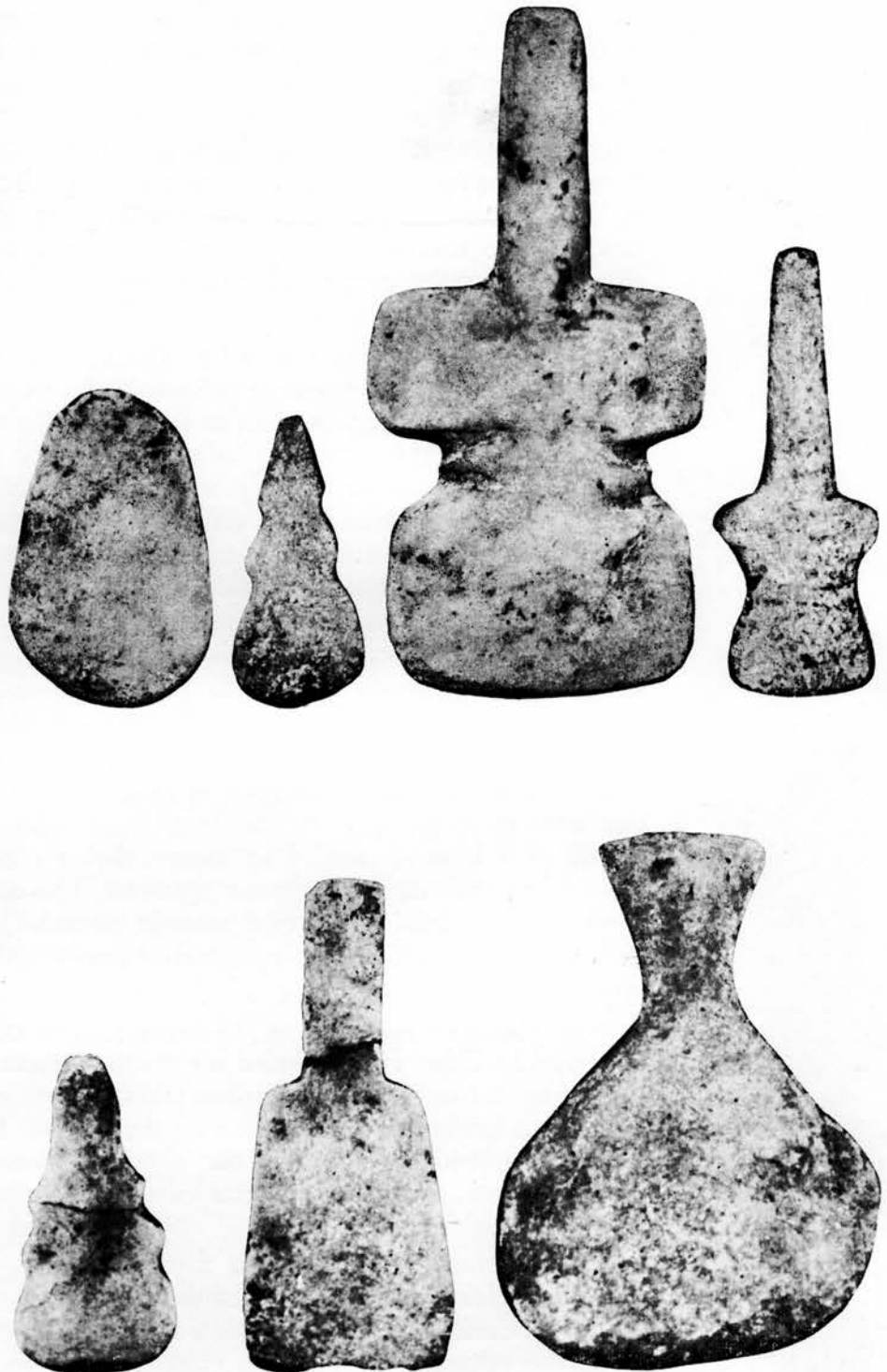






Fig. 126

Syros. Female figurine with folded arms (Athens, National Museum, n. 6174).

the study of our material. In this connection something should be said about the origin of the Cycladic figurines. Renfrew has convincingly argued that the three major types of figurines of the Grotta Pelos culture (Early Cycladic I) the schematic, the Plastiras and the Louros types find convenient prototypes in the Middle and Late Neolithic of the Cyclades and Thessaly. On the contrary the origin of the Folded-arm type of figurines, which is the common type of the Keros-Syros culture (Early Cycladic II) is obscure. The position of the arms may have antecedents of the type of the Hasanoglan figure from Anatolia and others from the Gumelnitsa culture of Bulgaria (Renfrew, 1969, pp. 30 ff.). The only excavated Neolithic settlement in the Cyclades, that of Saliagos near Antiparos, has provided us with parallels for both the naturalistic and the stylized figurines. From this evidence one may suggest that the antecedents of the Cycladic figurines existed within the Cyclades themselves although the Neolithic period there is known mostly from the excavations at Saliagos, I do not think that there is any special reason to assume that the level of Early Bronze Age culture was considerably higher or that the society was extremely sophisticated and very far from primitive practices and beliefs. Most of what little we know about Early Cycladic religion is assumed in the light of Anatolian or Greek Neolithic beliefs. It is quite possible that Early Cycladic society was at a relatively primitive stage, even though the period as a whole reveals high artistic and technical achievements. In a primitive society magic is likely to have played an important role and therefore Dumas's interpretation is possible for at least some of the figurines.

Fig. 127

Amorgos. Female figurine with folded arms (Athens, National Museum, n. 3978).



Nevertheless I would still be inclined to follow Ucko in his claim that all figurines may not necessarily have the same function. Study of the contexts of Cycladic figurines has proved:

a) that they mostly occur in graves associated with other tomb offerings. Only a small number have been found in settlements.

b) that they all come from the Early Bronze Age, with one or two possible exceptions (e. g. at Phylakopi and at Kea they have been found in Mycenaean levels, but they may well have survived from earlier periods and been re-used) (Atkinson etc., 1904, pl. XXXIX, n. 1-8; Caskey, 1971). Since fertility is one of the first concerns of primitive societies, I would be inclined to believe that some of the figurines were directly connected with fertility — particularly those with accentuated sexual characteristics, which could be interpreted as fertility charms or amulets, although this function need not have been exclusive. Such concern can be turned primarily towards human fecundity, but it may also be generalised to embrace fertility in vegetation and animals too (Ucko, 1968, pp. 420-422). Since they occur in graves, some could be explained as votive offerings or companions of the dead on their journey to the other world. If it could be proved by skeletal evidence that the few graves Mylonas mentions (1959 b, pp. 138 ff.) really belonged to children, his theory about divine nurses could be applicable in these cases, or the figurines could be dolls.

Ucko maintains that the ethnographic study of the use of dolls has proved that throughout the centuries there has been a tendency to

represent dolls much more often in female than in male form, and that the female dolls are much more carefully made (Ucko, 1968, p. 422).

He argues (1968, p. 432) that if it could be proved that adults kept their dolls and had them buried with them for sentimental reasons (for example because they were childless or even because they had died before marrying), it would be possible to explain the figurines buried with adults in the same manner as those buried with children. Throughout anthropological discussion of dolls is to be found the suggestion that they served either one or both of two possible functions. Of these the first is the purely profane function of entertaining the owner of the doll, while the second makes them the vehicle for sympathetic magic, practised to ensure the well-being of those who carried them and for their eventual success in child-bearing.

Identification of the Cycladic figurines as dolls would explain the variety of their forms and the occasional unusual examples.

Nevertheless, attractive though this theory may be, it would not account for the vast majority of these figures. It would be difficult to apply it in the case of the few very large ones, which, as Renfrew suggested too, would be best accounted for as votaries (Renfrew, 1972, p. 424). We should also consider the possibility that some of the figurines were used as sorcerer's agents or initiation figures (both male and female) (Ucko, 1968, pp. 431, 436-437). In either case — as ethnography has shown — they would have been kept by the person they belonged to until his death and buried with him. On the other hand if one were to argue from the Egyptian custom of the predynastic period, the figurines with folded arms could represent mourners (Ucko, 1968, p. 432). My conclusion is that several ways of interpreting the Cycladic figures are possible and could be correct, providing we accept the stipulation that all figurines need not have had one and the same function. We are faced with different circumstances when we come to consider the Mycenaean figurines. They occur in settlements and cemeteries of the appropriate period (LHIII AI - LHIII C), but there is nothing significant about their distribution. They are frequent on the Greek mainland — with emphasis on Mycenae itself — and very rare in Crete.

Similarities between the two classes of figurines (i. e. Cycladic and Mycenaean) are small and insignificant; both are largely female and there are miniature examples of both. The differences are greater; whereas Cycladic figurines sometimes reach monumental sizes, the standard Mycenaean figurines are generally small, and the larger ones are obviously more elaborate and differentiated. Cycladic figurines range from the most naturalistic to extremely stylised examples, whereas in Mycenaean figurines there are different degrees of stylization. Male figurines occur frequently among Cycladic figurines but there are no animals, whereas among Mycenaean figurines animals are frequent but male figurines are extremely rare (French, 1971, pp. 147-148 and forthcoming *BSA* 1973). The most important point common to the Mycenaean figurines, (i. e. the common Phi, Psi, Tau, etc. female figurines and the animals) and the Cycladic figurines, is that they too could be explained



as having a diversity of functions, as Nilsson also pointed out (1950, p. 292). I would again be inclined to dismiss the interpretations of the Mycenaean female figures as images of the Mother Goddess or other deities. Tsountas (1888, p. 168 f.) saw in them pictures of a goddess, but they are too cheap and poorly made. There is evidence that the Mycenaean could represent their gods more elaborately if they chose to; this is clear from scenes on gold rings, on seal-stones, and from the big idols from Lord William Taylour's excavations at the Citadel House, Mycenae (Taylour 1969, 1970) always assuming that these last are the figures of deities. Another objection to the identification of the terra-



Fig. 128  
*A variety of Mycenaean figurines: A. Phi type; B. Psi type; C. Figurines seated on throne; D. Chariot group from Prosymaa; E. Kourtrophos, Mycenae, Chamber tombs; F. Goddess riding sidesaddle (Athens, National Museum).*

cottas as deities, is the fact that they do not occur exclusively in sanctuaries. If the reading of all the names of deities in the Linear B texts is accepted, we can recognize both male and female deities, and there is no indication either that female deities were prevalent or that there was a continuance of primitive matriarchy.

It has been suggested that at least the Psi-type figurines might be connected with pictures of a goddess, because of their raised arms, generally interpreted as a gesture of blessing. Their derivation from the Late Minoan figurines with raised arms — convincingly divine both because of their contexts and attributes — has been well argued by Alexiou (1958, pp. 179 f.), and is not denied here.

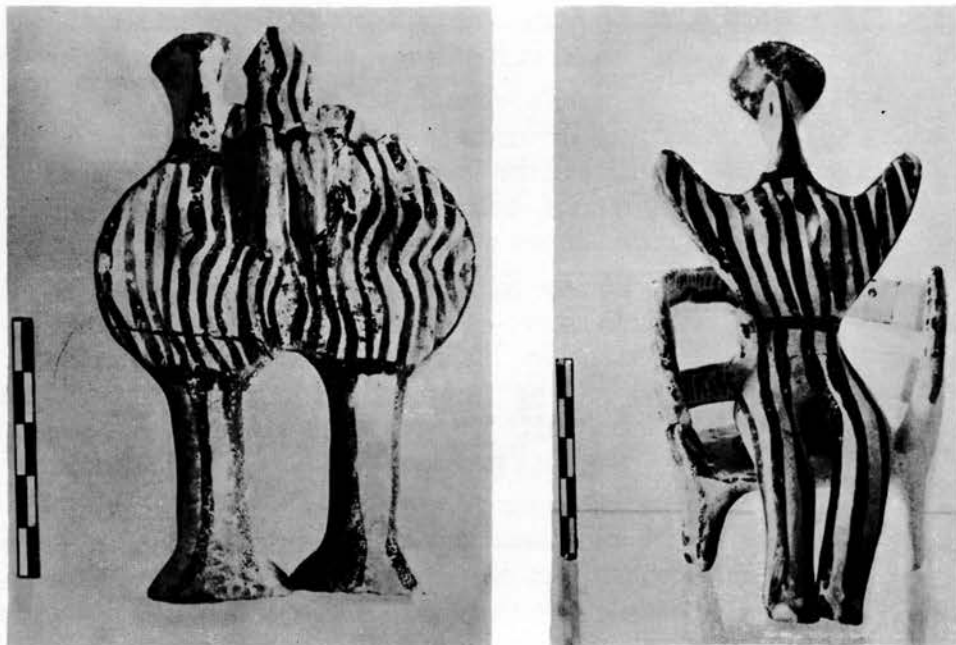
French (1971, p. 107) has rightly sought the origin of Mycenaean figurines in general in Crete, but has pointed out further that they acquired a purely Mycenaean character very soon, so that their origin is hardly recognizable. In view of this statement it seems right to suggest that a change of function might have accompanied change of character, to serve local beliefs and tastes. However it is not denied that figurines found in shrines and votive deposits, can be assigned to religious contexts and associated with deities.

I am very much attracted by the proposal that some of the Mycenaean figurines should be interpreted as dolls or toys. They are cheap and obviously mass-produced, and this theory would account equally well for both female and animal figurines. Chariots, horses and models, could easily be interpreted as playthings. Tsountas's suggestion (1888, p. 167) that the figurines occur in poorer tombs — accepted by Nilsson (1950, pp. 307-308) — is misleading, because he means tombs without finds of gold, amber, ivory, etc., in which cases the difference is chronological. Mylonas (1937, pp. 241-243) observed that the figurines are



Fig. 129  
*Mycenaean figurines of  
standard types (London,  
British Museum).*

Fig. 130  
*Mycenaean figurines. Mycenae, Chamber tombs (Athens, National Museum).*



generally found in poorer graves and in some of the richer, and thought that the reason for this was the difference in burial customs. He identified the figurines of the Phi type as divine nurses, and those of the Psi type as images of a goddess giving blessing. Both types, as well as the animals whose females were for the symbolic supply of milk, were destined to accompany the children during their voyage to the Underworld. The chariots etc. were toys (Mylonas, 1966, pp. 114 f.). He also continued Blegen's attempt to correlate children's burials with figurines, and added examples from Eleusis to the ones from Prosymna (Mylonas, 1937). Blegen had stated that in Prosymna eleven out of the nineteen tombs contained figurines associated with children's bones, for which he proposed that they were either pictures of divine nurses or the children's cherished possessions, playthings or toys, the latter being particularly clear in the case of the chariots. The animals could have had a magical function, that of the symbolic supply of milk in the other world. However, Blegen accepted different identities for similar figurines found in shrines. His suggestions are perfectly acceptable for the figurines found in definite associations of this kind.

It would be difficult to see the female figurines as fertility charms or amulets, for their sexual characteristics are not emphasized. On the contrary they are shown dressed. It is quite possible that some of them were amulets of a different kind and therefore had a magical function. Persson (1931, p. 89) formulated the theory that the female terracottas were substitutes for wives and female slaves, and that the animals and models were placed in graves to serve the dead, in the manner of Egyptian ushabtis. These views were adopted by Nilsson for the figurines found in tombs. For those found in sanctuaries and settlements he suggested different functions: votive offerings or gifts for the former, idols of a household cult for the latter (Nilsson, 1950, pp. 295, 307-308).

Both are acceptable for these groups, but his interpretation for the ones found in tombs was attacked by both Picard and Mylonas.

Picard's view (1948, pp. 246-247) was more generalized: he accepted divine or votive significance for the female figurines and suggested that the animals and groups are objects of everyday life used as offerings, or for some magical or superstitious purpose. All these interpretations are possible in the appropriate contexts.

For the figurines found in shrines, the suggestion that they might be votives or — in the case of domestic shrines — household idols is reasonable. Figurines found in habitation sites and within houses could have been employed as images of ancestors, kept to be venerated by the living.

It would be quite possible to suppose that the Mycenaean wished to make an image to represent their dead kinsmen to prove that they were still remembered and venerated. But here again we encounter the problem that all the figurines are female. Regarding the animals it is possible that they had a magic function and were used in sympathetic magic practices to ensure the fruitfulness of domestic animals.

With modern religious practices in mind, it is tempting to see the figurines as cheap substitutes for the figure of some deity, in the same way that figures are carried and treasured by contemporary Christians. It is also tempting to consider them as, reflecting contemporary practices — as is particularly clear in the case of furniture and thrones — giving them little more than a decorative function. This would account both for repetition and standardisation.

Perhaps the representation of the human figure in this particular stylistic convention had some specific idea behind it in the beginning, but as time went on its reproduction became mechanical and repetitive, no longer requiring a proper understanding of the original belief that had given rise to it. We could thereby account for the mass-production of standard female and animal figurines.

While no single theory as to the identity of Mycenaean figurines seems to suffice, it can be seen that a number of them are possible if the contexts and distribution of the figurines are studied.

## RIASSUNTO

Una funzione religiosa è stata generalmente attribuita a tre classi di figurine dell'età del Bronzo: 1) le figurine cicladiche; 2) le figurine micenee; 3) le figurine cipriote dell'antica età del Bronzo. Per quelle egee si è parlato di rappresentazioni della Grande Dea Madre, di offerte votive, nel caso in cui furono trovate entro tombe, di rappresentazioni del morto, di nutrici divine, oppure di qualcosa di analogo agli *ushabti* dell'antico Egitto.

Le figurine cipriote, d'altra parte, sono state interpretate soprattutto come rappresentazioni della Dea Madre o di una divinità in genere. L'autore discute la validità dell'applicazione del concetto di Dea Madre all'area dell'Egeo durante la preistoria sulla base delle analogie con il Vicino Oriente. Le interpretazioni suggerite dall'autore sono fondate, per quanto possibile, su un accurato esame dell'esatto contesto delle figurine e poggiano su due punti fondamentali: a) tutte le figurine che provengono da contesti differenti non hanno necessariamente la



medesima funzione; b) qualche volta perfino le figurine con lo stesso contesto non hanno necessariamente la medesima funzione.

Sebbene le funzioni magiche e religiose delle figurine, o perlomeno di alcune di esse, non siano negate, si potrebbero suggerire molte funzioni diverse, grazie alla considerazione delle testimonianze antropologiche, allo studio del contesto dei ritrovamenti e di altri fattori. Ci si può così formare qualche idea intorno alla vita sociale ed economica, così come intorno alle credenze religiose di questo periodo.

## RÉSUMÉ

On a généralement attribué des fonctions religieuses aux figurines cycladiques du Bronze Ancien, aux figurines mycéniennes, et aux figurines cypristes du Bronze Ancien. En ce qui concerne le groupe égéen, on a parlé de déesses-mères, d'offrandes votives, de représentations du défunt, de divinités psychopompes ou encore d'équivalent des ushebtis égyptiens. Quant aux figurines cypristes, le fait d'avoir été découvertes dans des tombes fit également supposer qu'elles devaient avoir un rapport avec la religion et représentaient sans doute des divinités. L'Auteur discute la validité de l'application du concept de déesse-mère dans l'Egée préhistorique, sur la base des analogies avec les religions du Moyen-Orient. Les interprétations proposées par l'Auteur se fondent autant que possible sur l'examen détaillé du contexte archéologique et amènent aux conclusions suivantes:

1. Les figurines trouvées dans des contextes différents n'ont pas nécessairement la même fonction.
2. Quelques figurines trouvées dans des contextes semblables n'ont pas nécessairement la même fonction.

Sans nier la destination magique ou religieuse de certaines figurines, les sources anthropologiques et d'autres suggèrent pour celles-ci diverses fonctions possibles et en font de nouvelles sources d'information sur le plan économique et social.

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NEW EVIDENCE ON MYCENAEAN RELIGION: THE LATE  
BRONZE AGE SHRINES AND ALTARS OF MYCENAE  
C. 1300 - 1200 B. C.

Mylonas, George E., Athens, Greece.

The discovery in 1876 by Drosinos of the famous gold ring of the acropolis of Mycenae and its publication by Schliemann created the notion that scenes carved on rings and gems reflected religious practices and beliefs of the Mycenaean times. Thus it was assumed that the woman of that ring seated below a tree represented the Goddess of trees and cultivation to whom votaries were bringing offerings. The figure eight shield in the background of the scene has finally been interpreted as the symbol of the War Goddess. The notion was strengthened by the discovery of other engraved gems and rings and was transformed into a fact by the great discoveries of Sir Arthur Evans in Crete and his fundamental study of the « Mycenaean Tree and Pillar Cult » (1901). The discovery of objects useful to the ritual, such as tables of offerings, libation jugs and rhytons, and finally of the Knossos and Pylos tablets bearing the names of divinities worshipped by the Mycenaean, substantiated considerably the knowledge based on the engraved gems and rings. The latter, the tablets that is, bearing the names of male divinities prove that the religion of the Mycenaean of the Late Bronze Age differed from that of the Minoans which was centered around a Goddess. However, it is generally acknowledged that the Mycenaean borrowed from the Minoans religious notions not conflicting with their own ancestral beliefs and adopted a number of ritual vessels (Nilsson, 1950; Persson, 1942; Mylonas, 1966 - pp. 137 ff.; Ventris-Chadwick, 1956; Palmer, 1963).

These well-established borrowings led to the notion that in the Mycenaean palaces were incorporated the shrines of the people, that the palaces thus had a somewhat sacred character, that the kings living in the palaces acted also as high priests.

The palace on the summit of the acropolis of Mycenae has been excavated completely. There is no part of it that can be considered as a shrine or temple. That shrines were built and used within the Mycenaean acropolis is now firmly established by the remains recently brought to light by excavations. These remains have been revealed on the west slope of the acropolis and immediately to the east of the

so-called Hellenistic tower of the West Cyclopean Wall. In 1886, Tsountas brought to light in that section a structure belonging to the 13th century B. C., now known as the « Tsountas House ». (Tsountas, 1886).

The foundations of that structure are preserved in three levels, the lowermost of which is made up of a series of magazines or basement rooms built along the inner face of the Cyclopean Wall.

The middle level is covered by the remains of a Megaron in the court of which Tsountas found a « bothros » for sacrifices. On the uppermost level, some 2,25 m. above the floor of the Megaron, he revealed the remains of a structure, called structure I in the plan drawn for him by the late Professor W. Dörpfeld, comprising two sections: a larger north and a smaller south section. In the latter, among other things, he found a plaster tablet with a painted representation of a scene of worship. Unfortunately the painting is not well preserved and today it is almost indistinguishable. As reproduced by Gilliéron père, the scene is quite striking. It is dominated by a figure eight shield on either side of which stands a woman worshipping; on its left there stands an altar. Above the shield Rodenwaldt, who published Gilliéron's restored painting, could see the head of a woman which identified the object of the worship of the women as the War Goddess with her sacred symbol, the figure eight shield, and provided the means of establishing finally the identity of the similar figure on the gold ring from the acropolis of Mycenae (Tsountas, 1887, Rodenwaldt, 1912). It was finally and completely excavated by Wace in 1950, but thus far only a brief statement of his discoveries has been given in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies* (Wace, 1951). In the southern section of the room Wace uncovered a semi-circular hearth-altar, by the side of which he found a circular depression for libations. Along the east wall of the room he uncovered a shelf for the placing of ritualistic vessels and the like. On the basis of his finds he concluded that the « building was a shrine, the first of its kind to be discovered at Mycenae ».

In the summer of 1972, Professor Spyridon Iacovides of the University of Athens and I examined once more the structure, revealed what has been preserved of its foundations and contents, and studied very precisely the evidence preserved by its floors. The west side of the north room is not completely preserved, but the foundations revealed proof that it had a width of 4.50 m. and a length of 6.45 m. Some 0.80 m. from the south partition wall of the room and on the median axis of length was cleared again the semi-circular hearth-altar made of clay and covered with plaster of stucco quality and hardness. It rises 0.20 m. above the floor and shows a slightly concave surface. Its maximum width from east to west amounts to 1.35 m., while its length from north to south is 1.40 m. Attached to its southwest corner exists a rounded extension, 0.40 x 0.57 m., made of clay covered with plaster. In the middle of this extension exists a circular depression or hole 0.16 m. in diameter and a depth cleared to 0.30 m. below its opening. At a distance of 0.09 m. from the extension a semicylindrical projection

Fig. 131  
Mycenae. Interior of the  
shrine: A. Altar hearth;  
B. Slaughtering stone;  
C. Threshold to the «ady-  
ton».



is attached to the side of the hearth-altar. This too is made of clay plastered over and exhibits no openings or connection to the body of the altar. Between the extension and the projection is formed a narrow channel, 0.08 m. in width, the plastered surface of which is preserved to a length of 0.63 m. There can be no doubt that the structure is an altar used for cult purposes. Its surface bears signs of smoke and light firing, but these are not intense enough to suggest its use for domestic purposes and for heating.

The almost straight south side of the altar is only 0.80 m. from the rear partition wall of the room where a threshold covered with wood existed leading into the smaller south section of the building. The area between the altar and the threshold was filled with plesia-clay of an average thickness of 0.10 m. Thus it formed a low step on which the priest officiating at the altar would stand while performing the prescribed rites.

0.80 m. to the north of the altar and on the median long axis of the room stands a roughly hewn boulder, averaging 1.15 x 0.70 x 0.65 m., firmly wedged to the natural rock of the hillside below. Its surface, rising some 0.25 m. above the floor, does not present any signs of cutting but was left uneven and rough. The boulder cannot be conceived as a column base or a base for the support of a pillar and can only be accepted as a «slaughtering block» placed there in the center of the room in connection with the altar. Along the east wall of the room exist remains of a bench, averaging 0.90 m. in width, made of clay and plastered with white earth and lime, built over the projecting rocks that judded into the space of the room. It is interesting to remark that the floor of the room preserved beyond the area of the bench is covered

Fig. 132  
Mycenae. Miniature fresco.



with a single coat of lime plaster mixed with tiny pebbles, while the altar possesses ten different superimposed coats of stucco. This may indicate either that the room was not entered by many persons while the altar was used frequently, or that major use, perhaps during a great festival, required the recoating of the altar.

That the room was a shrine, as declared by Wace originally, is self-evident. A wide threshold led from it to the south inner room of the building. This south room seems to have formed the original, older shrine since its original walls were preserved. When later to this original room the north section, the shrine proper, was added, its walls were not demolished but were encased within the outer walls of the enlarged shrine. Then, perhaps, it was transformed into an « adyton » or holy of holies, and in it was found by Tsountas the tablet with the scene of worship of the War Goddess. That tablet may indicate that the shrine was dedicated to that Goddess. The attribution perhaps will explain the slaughtering stone and the libation hole by the altar; blood offerings would have been welcome to a War Goddess. The attribution seems to have been strengthened by a fragment of painted plaster discovered in 1971 in the fill preserved to the southwest of the shrine and the « House of Tsountas ». On that fragment we have a helmeted figure holding before its chest a small winged griffin. The face of the figure is painted white indicating that the helmeted figure is a woman. The « notched plume » pattern covering the decorated band above the forehead, the other two bands covered with the usual Mycenaean element of boar's tusks, as well as the griffin, all indicate the divinity of the woman represented: the War Goddess holding her pet animal, the griffin.

Before the outer northwest corner of the shrine another interesting structure is partially preserved. It has a rectangular shape and it is



oriented east and west. It is composed of a rectangular platform made of pressed earth, some 2.50 m. from north to south and 1.10 m. from east to west, rising some 0.30 m. above the level of the corridor that passes in front of it. The east side of the platform was originally lined by three poros blocks, only two of which remain *in situ*. The uneven upper surface of the blocks and dowel holes of small dimensions on the blocks themselves indicate that they served as a base for a light structure evidently of wood. Beyond the southeast corner of the structure and on the bench of the shrine was revealed an almost circular ring of clay, strengthened by sherds and small stones, the floor of which was covered with a layer of clay; on the small piece of clay that is still preserved we found ashes and carbonized matter, mostly of twigs. There can be little doubt that the structure described is a rectangular altar. On the poros blocks was secured a table for offerings and the platform of earth served as a « prothesis » of the rectangular altar. This structure was the first monumental altar detached from a building found thus far in a Mycenaean site and consequently it is a very important relic. With the shrine to the south of it, it forms a very unique combination.

Access to the rectangular altar and the shrine was obtained by means of a corridor, the beginning of which was located some 3.85 m. above the southeast corner of the shrine, immediately above the opening of the drain that runs along the south side of the « House of Tsountas ». It is marked by a massive threshold of conglomerate, 2.50 m. in length and 0.90 m. in width, that originally was closed by a double wooden

Fig. 133  
Mycenae. A. The rectangular altar; B. The shrine; C. The corridor.



Fig. 134  
Mycenae. The rectangular  
altar.



door; the pivot holes of the poles of the leaves are well preserved on the face of the threshold. The double door was burned and its carbonized remains were found on the threshold. In front of the door a shallow vestibule was formed whose wall on the east side of the doorway was covered with paintings. To the doorway led a road, some 10 m. long and 2 m. wide, starting from the bottom of a stairway which terminated roads from the Palace and the Lion Gate.

From the doorway began an interior corridor, averaging 1.90 m. in width, leading northward in a gradual incline. Its floor was covered with lime plaster mixed with small pebbles and its sides were retained by heavy walls. It is preserved in its whole length, amounting to 30 m., but at its 28th meter of length the corridor turns sharply to the south and proceeds southward in an opposite direction to the one it originally followed. Near its turn and against its eastern retaining wall the remains of a bench have survived and beyond it a stairway leading to an open space before the Megaron of the « House of Tsountas » and ultimately before the so-called « Temple of the Idols », uncovered by Lord William Taylour (1969, 1970). Beyond the stairway the corridor continues and, passing by the rectangular altar, terminates in the facade of the shrine. There can be no doubt that this corridor was a « processional way » a « *pompiké hodos* », used for processions by priests and dignitaries on certain occasions. Its winding course, the door which closed its beginning, its location on the west slope and in the section where so many shrines and altars are to be found, as well as the repeated repairs and resurfacings of its course prove definitely its character. Through it alone, access could be obtained to the altars and shrines of the site.

Immediately to the south of the « Temple of the Idols » in August; 1972, we revealed a round altar, 1.40 m. in diameter, rising from the floor some 0.68 m. It is made of stone and clay and its circumference was strengthened with stones. Great quantities of ashes and burned

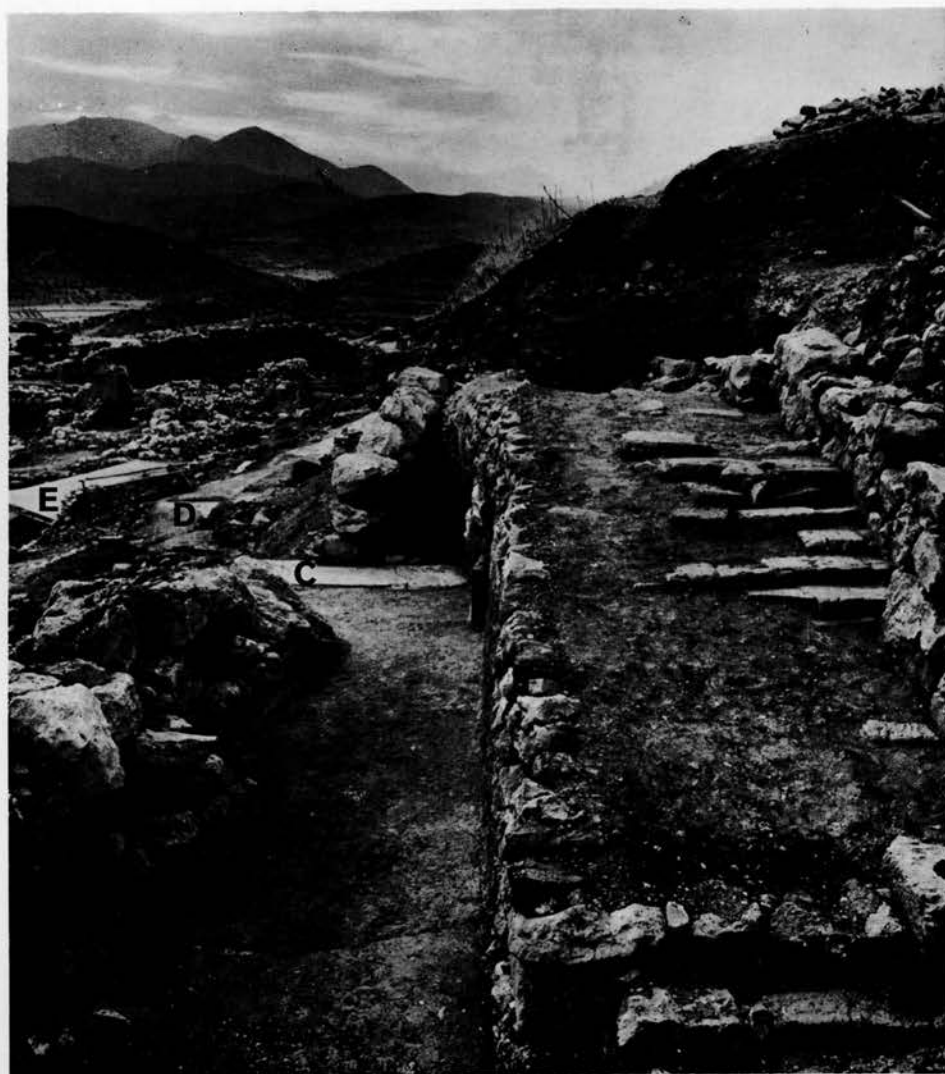
wood were found on top and around it and its area was covered with a thick layer of clay when the altar was no longer in use. From all the evidence obtained it seems that the great round altar, revealed this year, was earlier than the rectangular altar and that it was in use in the second half of the 13th century.

The accumulated evidence obtained through excavations proves that the section of the west slope of the acropolis of Mycenae, whose clearance has been completed this summer, was the Cult Center of Mycenae where shrines and altars were located to which a monumental processional way led. For the first time in the history of Mycenaean research such a Cult Center was revealed by excavation. The existence of such centers in Mycenaean times was indicated by references to Pa-ki-ja-nes, the sacred city of Potnia, in the Pylos tablets (Palmer, 1961, p. 28). Now stands revealed such a Cult Center in the heart of the Mycenaean world.

With the Cult Center should be associated a building we have been clearing for the last three years, to be known as the « Southwest Building ». It was decorated with frescoes of unusual quality; among

Fig. 135

*Mycenae. Stairway and approach to doorway: A. Stairway; B. Roadway; C. Threshold of doorway; D. Area of the shrine; E. « Temple of the Idols ».*





which is a frieze of figure eight shields. Such friezes are known to have decorated the palaces of Knossos, of Tiryns and of Thebes.

The « Southwest Building », however, is not a palace, but a structure erected right against the West Cyclopean Wall at the bottom of the west slope of the acropolis and far away from the Palace. Here the shields could stand only as the symbol of the War Goddess and thus provide another proof that in the great shrine to the northeast of the building was worshipped the War Goddess. Perhaps the « Southwest Building » was used to house the Great Priest and other personnel of the Cult Center and because of this it was so elegantly decorated with frescoes.

The discovery on the west slope of the acropolis of Mycenae of the shrines and altars to which led a monumental processional way will help clear a number of misconceptions and notions developed into axioms that seemed as if they required no farther proof. This discovery indicates that the notion of the existence of the main shrine of the State in the Palace of the king is proved untenable; that the consequent opinion that the Palace was considered sacred because the shrine of the State was incorporated in it is unfounded; that the king therefore could not have been considered as sacred, as it was maintained, because of his association with the Palace and that he could not have been a high priest of a nonexisting shrine in the Palace. Such a high priest would have been stationed near the shrines of the west slope. The « Southwest Building » with its brilliant frescoes could very well have served as his residence, while the other buildings surrounding it could have been used by the lesser priests and personnel of the Cult Center.

Fig. 136  
*Mycenae. The round altar.*





## RIASSUNTO

La nostra conoscenza della religione micenea si basa sopra qualche opera d'arte che raffigura delle scene interpretate come atti di culto, sopra i testi delle tavolette in Lineare B e sopra alcuni parallelismi con il materiale minoico. Tutto ciò rappresenta una fonte assai inadeguata per giungere a una conoscenza precisa e completa. Di conseguenza, ogni nuova testimonianza portata alla luce dagli scavi è di grande interesse. Simili testimonianze sono state scoperte nel corso degli ultimi anni durante gli scavi di Micene.

L'Autore ha ora completamente portato alla luce i resti di un altare monumentale situato in mezzo a santuari, dotato di una impressionante via processionale e fiancheggiato da edifici, probabilmente usati dal clero. L'area in cui tutto ciò è stato scoperto, il fianco occidentale dell'acropoli di Micene, è chiaramente il centro culturale della cittadella e questo dimostra l'esistenza di simili centri in epoca micenea, così come è testimoniato anche dalle tavolette di Pilo. Accanto alle fondamenta di queste strutture sono stati scoperti anche frammenti di affreschi di natura apparentemente religiosa. L'insieme delle scoperte arricchisce considerevolmente la nostra conoscenza delle pratiche religiose dei Micenei.

## RÉSUMÉ

Notre connaissance de la religion mycénienne est fondée sur quelques oeuvres d'art qui portent des représentations de scènes supposées religieuses, sur le texte de tablettes en Linéaire B et sur des parallèles avec le matériel minoen. Ce ne sont là que des sources très inadéquates pour ce qui est d'une connaissance précise et complète. En conséquence, chaque nouveau témoignage mis au jour par les fouilles est important. De tels témoignages ont été découverts au cours des dernières années par les fouilleurs de Mycènes. L'Auteur a maintenant complètement dégagé les restes d'un autel monumental situé parmi des sanctuaires, doté d'une imposante voie processionnelle et flanqué de bâtiments qui furent probablement utilisés par le clergé. La zone où furent faites ces découvertes, c'est-à-dire le versant occidental de l'Acropole de Mycènes est clairement le centre culturel de celle-ci. Ainsi se voit démontrée l'existence de centres de ce type à l'époque mycénienne, tels que les mentionnent les tablettes de Pylos. A côté des fondations de bâtiments, on retrouva également des fragments de fresques, apparemment de nature religieuse. Cet ensemble de découvertes enrichit considérablement notre connaissance des pratiques religieuses des Mycéniens.

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## MASSACRE ET SACRIFICE HUMAIN: DEUX CAS D'INTERPRÉTATION

Mariën, Marc-E., Bruxelles, Belgique.

Deux fouilles consécutives, effectuées dans une même région de Belgique, nous ont mis en présence de deux séries d'ossements humains portant des traces très nettes de lésions; toutefois, les circonstances de leur découverte obligent à interpréter de façon complètement différente l'une et l'autre série de traumatismes.

Dans le premier cas il s'agit de très nombreux ossements humains, découverts en 1962 dans une grotte, le Trou de l'Ambre, à Eprave (prov. de Namur) (Mariën, 1970). Les circonstances de découverte démontrent nettement qu'il s'agit ici d'une grotte de refuge: près du foyer de la salle principale se trouvait une série d'instruments en fer, deux haches à douille, des forces, une tarière, une petite fourche, une mèche, une gouge, trois briquets, une grande anse de chaudron, ainsi qu'un petit soc de charrue, des outils de bois de cerf et d'os, une demi-douzaine de fusaiöles, et des fragments d'assiette, de bol et de cuiller en bois. Les tessons d'une quarantaine de poteries de différents types appartenaient nettement à un faciès régional du début du La Tène tardif, le « Groupe de la Haine » dont l'aire de répartition se situe à quelque 80 kilomètres à l'ouest d'Eprave.

Les ossements humains furent découverts au bout d'un couloir en forte pente et étaient entassés en un volume assez réduit, bien qu'il fût établi qu'il y entraient les restes, souvent très fragmentaires, de soixante-quinze individus dont quarante-cinq adultes et trente enfants. De nombreuses connexions anatomiques purent être constatées, prouvant qu'il ne s'agissait pas d'un ossuaire. En outre, une série d'ossements portent des traces de lésions, démontrant que les réfugiés furent sauvagement massacrés, mais rien ne permet d'interpréter cette tuerie même comme un acte religieux.

Parmi les lésions se remarquent celles du crâne 2 dont une partie de la face a été broyée, à la suite d'un choc violent qui en détacha l'os malaire et le maxillaire supérieur gauche et fractura également la mandibule, séparée en deux à partir de l'alvéole de la canine gauche que le choc violent fit sauter (Delsaux, 1970, p. 210). D'autre part on put

constater chez certains individus de très graves lésions aux membres inférieurs; il faut citer particulièrement un tibia (n. 7), sectionné par un instrument tranchant au milieu de la diaphyse, et un fémur (n. 22) dont l'épiphyse supérieure a été atteinte de toutes parts, mais particulièrement par deux fortes entailles: les agresseurs se sont manifestement acharnés ici sur des corps déjà à terre. Ailleurs, la trace d'une pointe de fer dans la face antérieure d'une vertèbre lombaire (n. 12), montre qu'une des victimes fut touchée dans le ventre par une arme acérée dont la pointe resta fixée dans l'os et y laissa dans la suite une trace de rouille.

Tous ces détails nous forcent à imaginer une extermination désordonnée qui n'a rien à voir avec une exécution à caractère religieux ou même avec de l'anthropophagie rituelle. Ce sont toutetois les lésions sur les vertèbres cervicales qui sont les plus fréquentes: de longues stries parallèles, parfois au nombre de trois, entamant la face antérieure de plusieurs d'entre elles (vertèbres n. 4, 5, 7, 8, 11), ont été produites par le fil d'une épée ou d'un couteau et démontrent que ces victimes furent égorgées. En d'autres cas cependant l'assaillant a tenté de séparer la tête du tronc: par un coup porté de face, les vertèbres cervicales

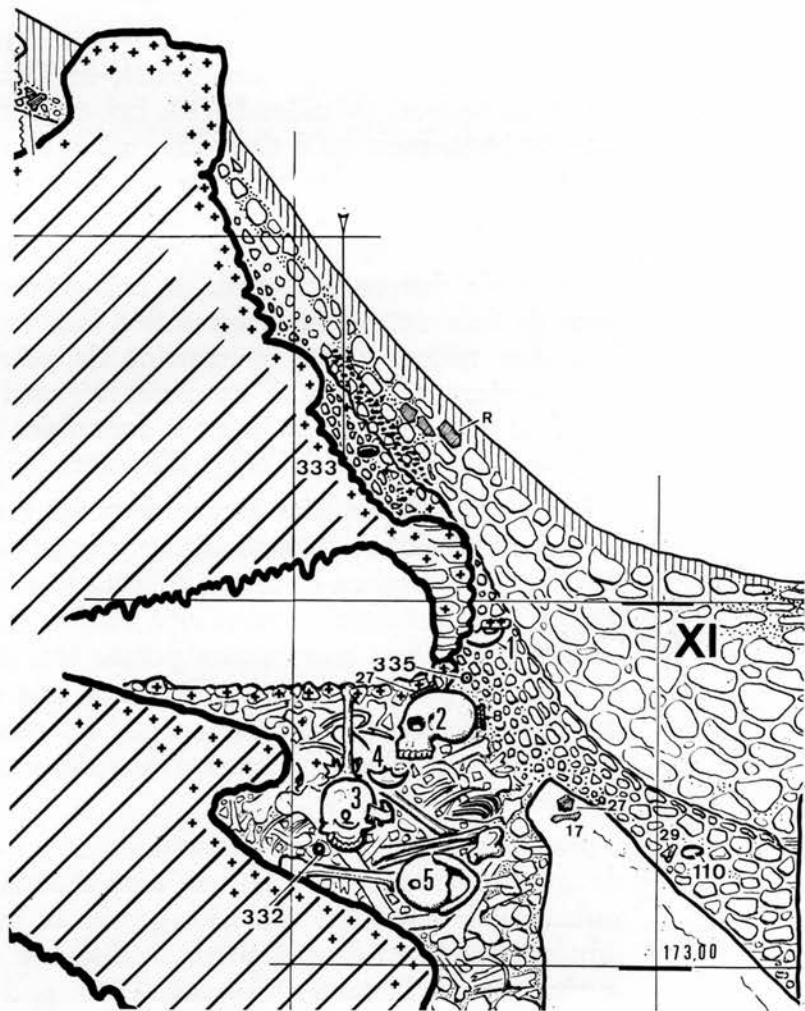


Fig. 137  
*Trou de l'Ambre, à Eprave. Ossements humains entassés au bout du couloir.*



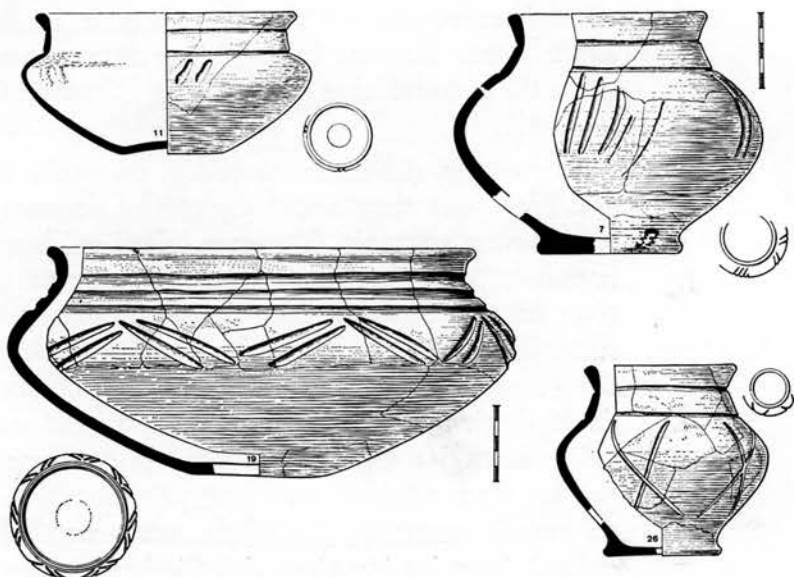
ont été sectionnées sur toute leur largeur, en deux cas (vertèbres 3 et 6). Deux autres victimes reçurent par derrière (vertèbres 1 et 2) un coup qui a dû entamer chez l'une d'elles la moitié des masses musculaires de la nuque.

Devant ces différents procédés, on serait tenté de supposer que les assaillants ont simplement égorgé les femmes dont ils dédaignaient la tête comme souvenir de guerre, alors qu'ils essayèrent de décapiter les hommes, pour s'emparer, selon la coutume celtique bien connue, des têtes comme trophées. Bien que le matériel osseux du Trou de l'Ambre soit très incomplet, du fait des conditions de conservation très variables des ossements, la discordance entre le nombre de 45 adultes et celui de la dizaine de crânes recueillis pourrait confirmer l'hypothèse d'un enlèvement des têtes masculines: la coutume nous est connue, autant par les monuments figurés que par les textes et peut encore avoir été en grande vogue au II<sup>e</sup> siècle avant notre ère ou durant les années qui suivirent les invasions des Cimbres et des Teutons; les luttes entre les Aduatiques et les peuplades plus anciennement établies dans la zone de la Meuse, ne contribuèrent certes pas à adoucir les moeurs. Le contexte du massacre du Trou de l'Ambre doit se situer, au point de vue chronologique, selon les données de la céramique et des objets de parure, au début du I<sup>er</sup> siècle avant notre ère, les victimes, à en juger d'après les types de poterie, appartenaient indubitablement au « Groupe de la Haine » dont l'aire de répartition se situait au sud de la Haine, entre Mons et Leval-Trahegnies (Mariën, 1970, pp. 245-252; 1961).

Parmi le matériel archéologique découvert dans le Trou de l'Ambre, les éléments à caractère religieux ne font pas totalement défaut. En effet, le grand vase 28 attire l'attention par son décor très particulier, à alternance de trois séries de rouelles à 4 rayons et de doubles cercles concentriques, au-dessus d'une double ligne sinueuse sous laquelle sont tracés six cercles simples; ce vase est comparable à des exemplaires plus récents de Leval-Trahegnies, de Péronnes-lez-Binche, de Brunehaut-Liberchies (Hain.), de Rancennes (Ard.) (Mariën, 1970, pp. 63, 66, 112, 224; 1967, p. 36; Faider Feytmans, 1947, pl. III) qui peuvent être considérés comme de véritables vases planétaires, précurseurs des vases à bustes de divinités, d'époque romaine.

Un second élément, probablement à caractère religieux, est constitué par cinq « barres de foyer », placées, selon le témoignage des premiers explorateurs de la grotte, en forme d'étoile (Mariën, 1970, pp. 79-80, 125-129, 222-224, 226): il peut s'agir ici d'une disposition symbolique, image des rayons de la roue solaire, emblème du Taranis céleste, mais aussi du Dispat<sup>er</sup> infernal. On ne pourrait donc qu'émettre une longue série d'hypothèses concernant l'identité de ceux qui placèrent ce signe sacré dans le sol du Trou de l'Ambre, juste sous l'entrée de la caverne, et concernant leurs intentions. On pourrait encore citer un bol de bois, rempli de graines de céréales et recouvert soigneusement d'une pierre tectoniforme, (Mariën, 1970, pp. 98-99, 100-102); on ne pourrait cependant, sur le plan religieux, avancer aucune explication pour cette disposition, bien que des associations de trouvailles de squelettes humains

Fig. 138  
 Trou de l'Ambre, à Eprave.  
 Poterie de la Tène  
 tardif.



avec des offrandes de céréales aient été citées, e. a. pour Byci Skala et Agtelek (cf. Zimmermann, 1970, p. 64, n. 31).

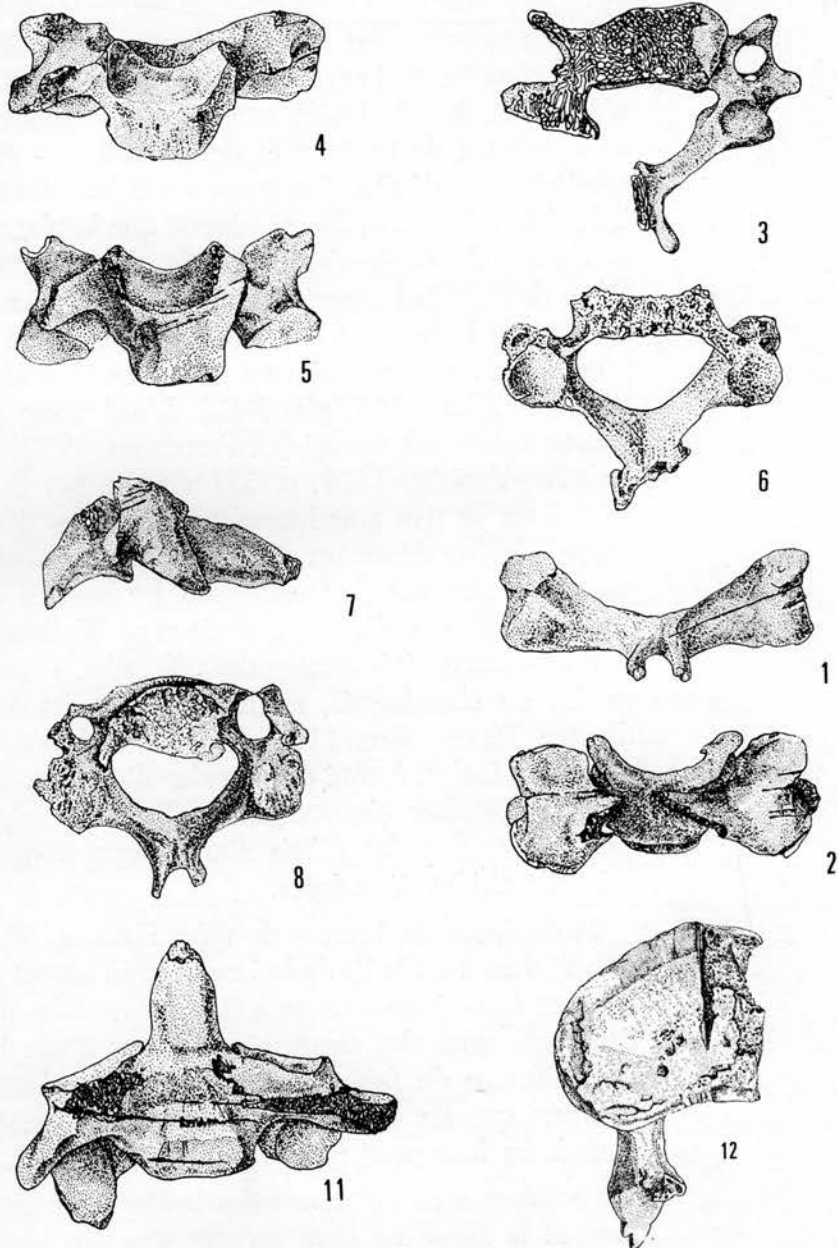
Le second cas à examiner est la découverte de sept mandibules dans une des strates de la plage devant la Galerie des Petites Fontaines, au Trou de Han (commune de Han-sur-Lesse, prov. de Namur), non loin de la sortie de la Lesse (Mariën - Vanhaeke, 1965, pl. 15; Mariën, 1970, pp. 246-250; Delsaux, 1970, pp. 253-254). Une coupe fut exécutée en 1964-65 qui révéla une couche d'habitat du Bronze final, remaniée par les eaux de la Lesse qui creusèrent dans la berge une petite crique dans laquelle se déposèrent dans la suite, après la formation d'un plancher stalagmitique, trois strates de l'Age du Fer. La dernière de ces strates, très charbonneuse, est datable par la présence de tessons provenant de poteries ovoïdes, décorées au peigne ou au balai et caractéristiques de la phase Nauheim (LT III b). Ces résidus de foyer recouvraient, séparée d'elle seulement par quelques lentilles de sable fluviatile arrachées à la paroi, une couche grisâtre, renfermant sept mandibules humaines, dont six (n. 2-7) étaient massées sur un espace d'une cinquantaine de centimètres. Les débris osseux reposaient sur une couche de concrétion stalagmitique, épaisse de 3 à 4 centimètres, formant la séparation avec la strate inférieure (V) de l'Age du Fer qui ne contenait que quelques tessons difficilement datables et quelques débris de fer; ce plancher stalagmitique remontait presque verticalement derrière les mandibules, en revêtant la pente abrupte de l'ancienne crique. Une des mandibules (n. 6) avait été touchée directement par la chaleur du foyer superposé.

La datation de la strate à mandibules ne peut se faire que dans certaines limites, les tessons présents étant peu typiques; de toute façon la couche appartient à la période de La Tène, peut-être à une phase assez tardive, mais antérieure à la phase Nauheim. Il est à noter que dans aucune des strates, il n'a été trouvé de céramique, comparable à celle du Trou de l'Ambre, distant seulement de 3 kilomètres.

Trois mandibules (n. 1-3), à en juger d'après l'excellent état de la denture, ayant appartenu à des adultes encore jeunes, présentent des lésions très nettes aux angles; cette abrasion est extrêmement nette sur la mâchoire 2 qui, en outre a été sectionnée dans sa partie gauche après la première prémolaire. Il ne fait aucun doute que les lésions aux angles des mâchoires proviennent du fait que les têtes ont été « artificiellement séparées des corps » (Delsaux, 1970, p. 253), en d'autres termes, qu'ils sont la conséquence d'une décapitation.

Que les mandibules se soient trouvées isolées de tout autre ossement (sauf un petit fragment d'occipital) et reléguées en tas, comme résidus, au pied de la paroi stalagmitique du fond, ne peut s'expliquer que par le fait que des têtes de décapités aient été placées, probablement dans

Fig. 139  
 Trou de l'Ambre, à Eprave.  
 Vertèbres à lésions.



le voisinage immédiat, sur la plage des Petites Fontaines, sur des pieux, et qu'ensuite la décomposition des chairs ait provoqué le détachement des mandibules: celles-ci, alors que les crânes restaient en place, sont tombées à terre et ont été repoussées comme rebut.

Si l'on accepte cette explication de la découverte des mandibules, il faut admettre qu'à un certain moment de l'Age du Fer la grotte ne servit plus d'habitat de refuge, comme le montrent encore les trouvailles du Bronze final, mais bien de sanctuaire ou de lieu sacré. A l'extrémité gauche de la paroi du fond fut découverte une pierre de forme oblongue au bout très lisse et arrondi et fichée droit en terre au centre d'une très nette décoloration du sol; la signification de ce « menhir », haut d'une cinquantaine de centimètres, reste énigmatique!

On doit alors se demander à quel moment cette conversion eut lieu et jusqu'à quand le Trou de Han conserva son caractère sacré.

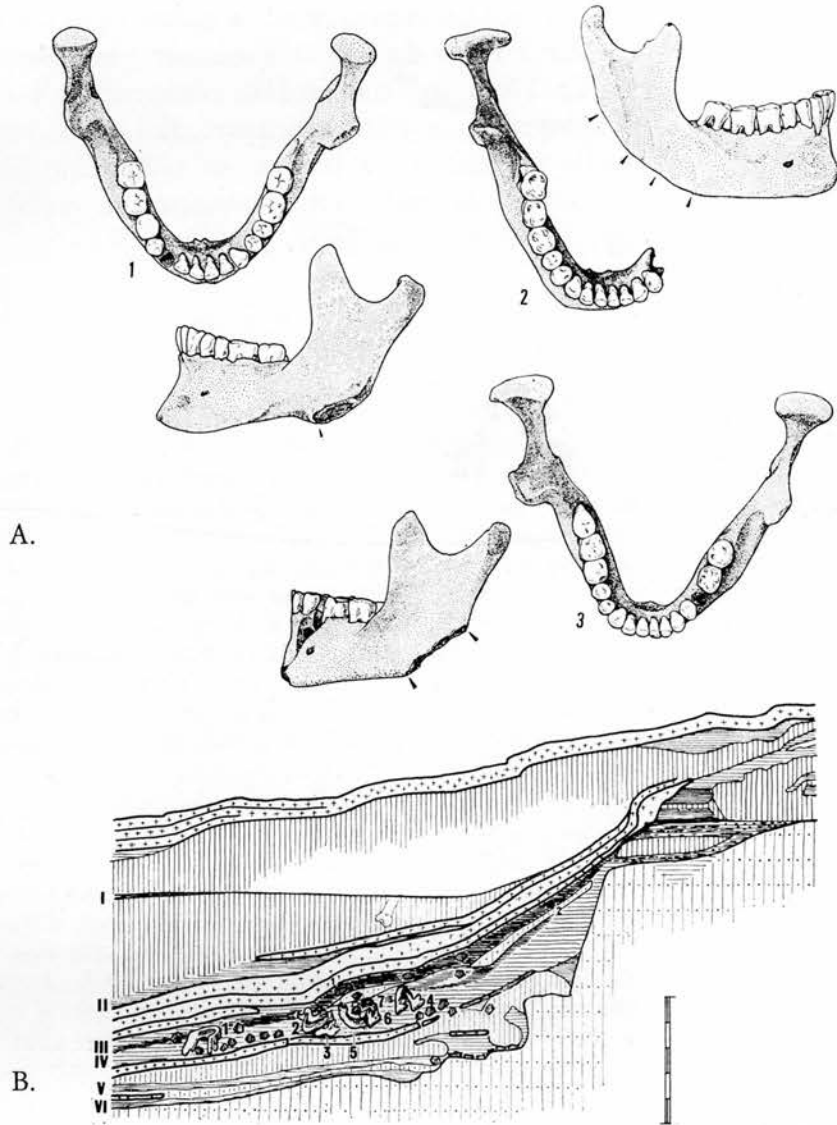
La découverte, sur la plage devant la Galerie des Petites Fontaines et au pied de la berge, au fond de la Lesse, de séries considérables d'outils, haches à douille et à ailerons, gouge, scie, alènes, couteaux, de fragments de poteries et de fusaïoles — éléments domestiques par excellence — démontrent que cet emplacement servit de lieu de refuge à des hôtes d'autant plus nombreux que la plage, durant la période sèche et chaude du Subboréal était sans doute beaucoup plus étendue qu'à l'Age du Fer. Les types d'outils et de poteries du Bronze final, s'échelonnant du Hallstatt A 2 au B 3, semblent par ailleurs, démontrer qu'il y eut plusieurs occupations successives (Mariën, 1964, pls. 5-14; Mariën-Vanhaeke, 1965, pls. 3-11). L'utilisation primordiale de la grotte comme habitat de refuge (cf. Petrequin, 1970, pp. 110-111; Petrequin-Urlacher-Vuailat, 1969, p. 35) n'exclut pas la pratique de l'offrande à la rivière: le très grand nombre d'épingles découvertes au fond de la Lesse, chiffre dépassant largement la cinquantaine, les boucles « en sangsue » plaquées de feuille d'or, les boucles d'oreilles de type Sinsin, même le collier à disques d'or de type Wollmesheim, pourraient au besoin être interprétés comme des offrandes, plutôt que comme des objets perdus ou abandonnés, au même titre que les tessons de céramique d'usage. Zimmermann (1970, pp. 52-92 *Exkurs: Funde aus der Grotte von Han*) inclut, à côté des boucles d'oreilles, les offrandes de céréales: il faut cependant observer qu'au Trou au Salpêtre, ces graines furent découvertes dans les débris d'une coupe tronconique, du Bronze final, près des résidus d'un foyer.

Trois épées de bronze de type Hallstatt C 1 et leurs bouterolles, découvertes dans le lit de la Lesse, apparaissent isolées de tout contexte, et de ce fait demanderaient à être interprétées plutôt comme des offrandes que comme des armes perdues lors d'une bataille; cette hypothèse est renforcée du fait que la présence des bouterolles semblerait bien indiquer que les armes sont parvenues au fond de la Lesse, engagées dans leurs fourreaux (Mariën-Vanhaeke, 1965, pl. 12).

Le même type de trouvailles isolées se présente au La Tène initial, lorsque la Lesse ne livre qu'une série de fibules, de belle qualité, à



Fig. 140  
 Trou de Han (Han-sur-  
 Lesse). A. Mandibules à  
 traces de décapitation pro-  
 venant de la plage devant  
 la Galerie des Petites  
 Fontaines; B. Stratigra-  
 phie.



appendice se terminant par une tête d'anidé très stylisée ou par un balustre; l'absence de tout contexte, ainsi que la qualité des objets démontrerait qu'il s'agit d'offrandes et non de vestiges d'un habitat de refuge (Mariën, 1964, pl. 15; Mariën-Vanhaecke, 1965, pl. 14).

Après le dépôt de la strate aux mandibules, le Trou de Han dut être à nouveau occupé, à partir de la phase de Nauheim (LT III b) comme habitat de refuge: la strate III de la plage comporte en effet un véritable foyer, contenant des fragments de poteries, à décor au peigne ou au balai; des poteries de même type, en même temps que des fibules de type Nauheim, des perles de verre jaspé ou à décor hélicoïdal jaune et une monnaie de potin, furent découverts au fond de la Lesse (Mariën, 1964, pls. 16-17; Werner, 1955).

Le Trou de Han conserva ensuite uniquement le rôle d'habitat de refuge durant la période romaine, le moyen-âge et les temps modernes (Mariën, 1964, pls. 18-23; Mariën-Vanhaecke, 1965, pls. 16-20).

L'utilisation exclusive de la grotte comme sanctuaire semble donc se limiter à l'Age du Fer et s'affirmer plus particulièrement à la période de La Tène: le Trou de Han constituerait à cette époque un exemple remarquable de grotte-sanctuaire, fait établi principalement par la trouvaille d'ossements à lésions, se présentant dans des circonstances de découverte spéciales (cf. Zimmermann, 1970, p. 65; Mason, 1950, pp. 238-243; Ross, 1967, pp. 106-107).

#### RIASSUNTO

In due località della provincia di Namur, in Belgio, il *Trou de l'Ambre* a Eprave e il *Trou de Han* a Han-sur-Lesse, sono venuti alla luce numerosi resti di ossa con tracce di lesioni. Questi due ritrovamenti hanno dato luogo a due opposte interpretazioni, a causa delle circostanze della scoperta. Nel primo caso, al *Trou de l'Ambre*, si tratta del massacro di 75 individui (45 adulti e 30 bambini), perpetrato in una grotta che serviva da rifugio, nettamente caratterizzata dalla presenza di un focolare e di oggetti di uso quotidiano (strumenti di ferro e di osso, ceramica e recipienti di legno, fusaiole). I corpi mutilati dei rifugiati, selvaggiamente massacrati (lo testimoniano le lesioni delle vertebre cervicali e lombari, delle ossa facciali e delle gambe), furono buttati sul fondo di un corridoio in forte pendenza. Non si può dedurre in questo caso nessun elemento di ordine religioso.

Al *Trou de Han*, invece, sette mascelle (di cui tre con tracce molto nette di decapitazione), trovate insieme, nello strato IV della spiaggia davanti alla Galleria delle Piccole Fontane, sotto a uno strato con frammenti fittili della fase Nauheim (La Tène III B), devono essere interpretate come « residui » di teste tagliate, probabilmente fissate su dei pali, disposti sulla spiaggia all'interno della grotta. Bisogna quindi ammettere che alla fine dell'età del Ferro, il *Trou de Han*, era considerato come un *santuario*, fatto che sarebbe confermato dalla presenza isolata di fibule degli inizi del La Tène. A quest'epoca un luogo di culto si sarebbe sovrapposto a un precedente luogo di abitazione, attestato, per il Bronzo Finale, da una gran quantità di oggetti di uso quotidiano.

#### SUMMARY

Two sites in the province of Namur in Belgium, the *Trou de l'Ambre* at Eprave and the *Trou de Han* at Han-sur-Lesse, have revealed bones bearing traces of lesions. Because of the context of their discovery, these two finds give rise to contrasting interpretations. In the first case, at the *Trou de l'Ambre*, it was a massacre of 75 persons (45 adults and 30 children), carried out in a cave whose use as a shelter is clearly indicated by the presence of a hearth and objects of daily use (iron and bone implements, clay and wooden vessels, and spindle whorls). Lesions on the cervical and lumbar vertebrae, facial and leg bones of the victims bear witness to the savage massacre of the refugees. Their mutilated bodies had been cast to the bottom of a steeply sloping passage. No element of a religious nature can be extracted from this instance. In the second case, at the *Trou de Han*, seven jaw-bones, three of which bore clear traces of decapitation, were found together in level IV of the shore in front of the Gallery of the Small Wells, under a potsherd layer of the Neuheim phase (La Tène III b). These must be interpreted as the « remains » of severed heads, which had probably been impaled on poles placed on the shore inside the cave. From this one must conclude that at the end of the Iron Age, the *Trou de Han* was considered as a shrine; and this hypothesis is supported by the presence of isolated fibulae, dating from Early La Tène. A cult site must have supplanted a dwelling site, which is documented by the presence of a great number of objects of everyday use dating from the Late Bronze Age.

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## IL SIGNIFICATO DELLE PALETTE NELL'ARTE RUPESTRE DELLA VALCAMONICA.

Ferri, Silvio, Pisa, Italia.

Nel quadro della complessa ricerca, alla cui soluzione la presente nota sulle palette vuol rappresentare la prima esperienza, la preoccupazione etnografica occupa un posto privilegiato. Infatti la esemplificazione disegnativa è già così estesa — e si allargherà vieppiù di anno in anno grazie agli sforzi programmatici del Centro — che ci si sente autorizzati a domandarci: dato che i documenti hanno ormai una serie di 'costanti' e di qualificazioni psicoreligiose ben determinate entro una cronologia bimillenaria, sostanzialmente accettata, è lecito ipotizzare l'esistenza di un *ethnos*? Possiamo cioè, direttamente o indirettamente per via di esclusioni, dare un nome a questa gente? dai lineamenti figurativi enucleare l'uomo, che più o meno nascosto, sta dietro di loro?

Il quesito — se è lecito, ed io penso che sia anche necessario ormai — presuppone e richiede una pregiudiziale metodologica: diminuire a poco a poco l'esegesi del singolo *gräfema* e sostituirvi l'esame e la compressione dei contesti. Già alcuni casi hanno dimostrato che quest'allargamento di angolazione visuale è metodologicamente obbligatorio. Questa gente esprime ideograficamente non solamente ciò che vede e ciò che tocca, ma anche ciò che sa, ciò in cui crede, ciò che pensa, ciò che teme, ciò che spera: tutto con una stessa identica fiducia rappresentativa. Entro un'applicazione totalitaria, in arte, di un universo animistico che si regola unicamente su rigide interdipendenze magiche, si può arrivare anche ad un estremo, che può sembrare assurdo: ipotizzare cioè la possibilità della rappresentazione figurata della voce, della velocità, del rumore.

E' un popolo che non possiede una storia civile, come i Mesopotamici e gli Egizi, ma sa che dopo la morte sopravvivrà; conosce il binomio inscindibile della vita dell'oggi e della vita del domani, ma i fatti giornalieri dell'aldiquà e le più o meno terribili vicende dell'aldilà appaiono mescolati nella sua mente senza una linea di demarcazione. La vita nelle valli coi cervi, coi duelli etc. si continua con un'altra vita, dove le stesse occupazioni si alternano a eventi più difficili, a passaggi più pericolosi; dove, invece dei mansueti caprioli, si troveranno creature abnormi e mostruose. E' una grande sequenza descritta, nella quale il

libro dei vivi e il libro dei morti si compenetrano, pur presentando ciascuno lineamenti propri.

Noi, ormai smagati e demistificati, facciamo distinzione con una certa sicurezza fra concreto e astratto, ma per questa gente — come per quella di Porto Badisco in Puglia — il mondo circostante è unico: non esiste la rappresentazione di una cosa tangibile e di un'altra cosa concettuale o simbolica: vita e morte — ripeto — non costituiscono due fatti contrapposti, sono bensì due concetti sequenziali nel senso che al primo succede il secondo sullo stesso piano naturale; concreto e astratto, reale e simbolico sono voci di uno stesso lessico figurato — il lessico della loro vita composta di due metà equivalenti, una prima e una dopo, ma che fanno ovviamente un tutto. E' un mondo che contiene in se stesso la giustificazione della sua stretta connessione e interdipendenza.

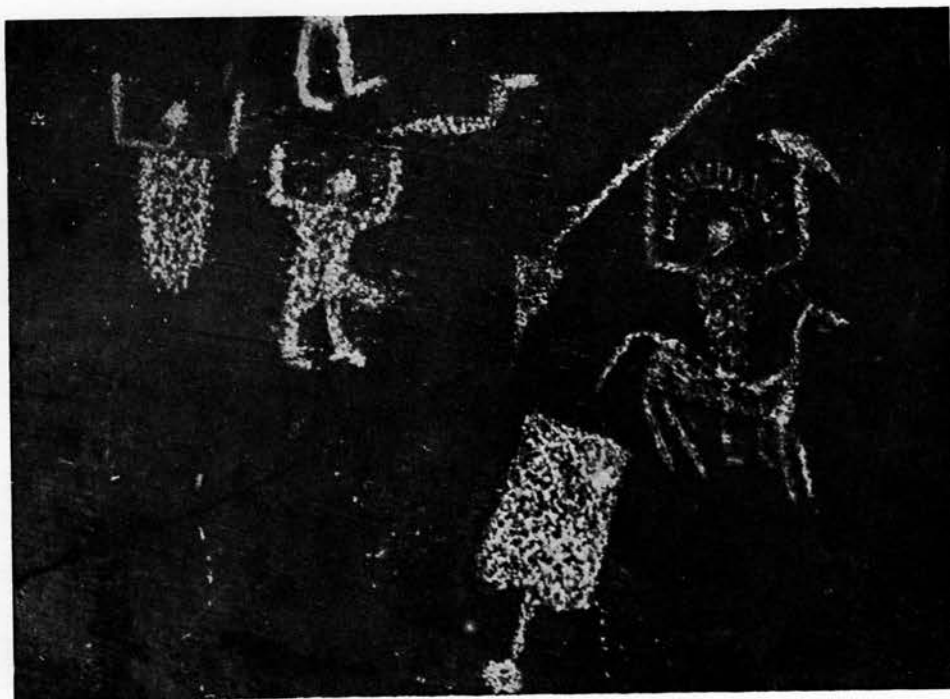
Con questa comprensione critica dei graffiti Camuni, i quali, così, si presentano in regolare veste di libro genetico di un determinato gruppo etnico, è impossibile che non si riveli qua e là qualche figura o, meglio, qualche complesso che ammettano una esegesi concordante o addirittura coincidente con le nozioni già acquisite per altra via nella nostra ricostruzione protostorica. Noi attendiamo fiduciosi che si manifesti questa, necessaria del resto, consonanza, e che il popolo disegnatore di Valcamonica abbandoni il suo misterioso anonimato.

La « paletta » è un rettangolo con peduncolo fornito di un bottone terminale o occhiello, o doppio occhiello. Dal punto di vista archeologico oggetti simili in bronzo, ferro o legno si trovano nelle tombe di tutta Europa: saranno migliaia, ma un catalogo non esiste. Nelle sole rocce di Valcamonica Anati ne conta circa un migliaio.

I contesti in cui appaiono le palette — è evidente che la paletta avulsa da un contesto non può assumere valori esegetici — in Valcamonica sono principalmente i seguenti:

- 1) paletta come arma venatoria. E' molto noto il cervo 'chiuso' da tre palette (Anati, 1964, p. 177); in genere ogni animale da catturare ha la sua paletta.
- 2) paletta pentagonale con lancia che 'parte' dal corpo della paletta (Anati, 1960, fig. 41, 12).
- 3) paletta connessa con labirinto (Anati, 1960, tav. 18<sup>a</sup>).
- 4) catena di due o tre palette (Anati, 1960, 26, 101).
- 5) paletta associata a 'orante': frequentissima.
- 6) paletta tenuta da un uomo a uno dei lati del rettangolo, col manico in alto (Anati, 1960, p. 63; 1964, 181).
- 7) paletta con telaio (Anati, 1960, p. 81).
- 8) paletta usata come scudo (Anati, 1964, p. 183).
- 9) paletta e 'disco solare' (Anati, 1960, p. 103).
- 10) paletta in scena di duello: 2-3 palette accompagnano il feritore; un 'orante' è presso il ferito (Anati, 1960, p. 93).

Fig. 141  
Particolare della scena che  
mostra la paletta ai piedi  
del Capo della processio-  
ne. Naquane, Roccia n. 1  
(da Anati).



Varie sono le esegesi, generalmente noncuranti delle esigenze di funzionalità: rasoi, bipenni, remi, oggetti per suffumigi; infine anche specchi.

Dal complesso della documentazione risulta che l'oggetto è autonomo, autosufficiente; in linguaggio tecnico e, ovviamente, in area magica è fornito di 'mana'. Ne consegue, già in sede metodologica, che quando una paletta presenta due occhielli (cfr. Fig. 143), questi debbono o possono considerarsi come gli 'occhi' dell'ente magico costituito dall'oggetto; e infatti è ovvio il confronto con gli idoli di forma analoga della Spagna e di Cipro (Kühn, 1954) forniti di occhi, collari, monili e vesti ricamate. In quest'ordine di cose rientrano i casi seguenti: una paletta con un lungo collo come un animale (Anati, 1960, p. 98); una paletta presso un uomo che pone lo scudo sopra la testa, vale a dire presso un 'morto' (statuette Sardegna: Ferri, 1963).

La paletta, pertanto — sempre in accezione magica — accompagnandosi al morto, è un ente che determina 'morte'.

C'è un solo oggetto che in una concezione animistico-magica primitiva corrisponda a queste condizioni: lo specchio. E la documentazione scritta è ampia e concorde, e nel mondo classico e nel mondo non classico. E' in ogni modo un fatto religioso di stretta osservanza indoeuropea: lo specchio significa morte e produce morte.

Per ulteriore chiarezza elencherò alcune delle fonti antiche e moderne sull'argomento; sarà così più agevole trovare, caso per caso, i riscontri esegetici. Osservazione fondamentale è che 'come l'immagine di una persona nell'occhio di un'altra è la persona stessa', ne consegue che l'occhio e lo specchio — ambedue per una stessa legge ottico-

magica — ‘ attraggono e trattengono ’ l’anima della persona n. II, la quale quindi, è dimezzata e depauperata da parte della persona n. I; è pertanto destinata a morire (Hastings, 1915).

Una statua, l’ombra al sole, anche il solo nome pronunciato, e quindi a maggior ragione l’immagine nello specchio di una data persona, equivalgono in potenza alla persona stessa; avviene pertanto un trasferimento dalla persona alla sua immagine: « der jenige sterben muss, welcher seinen Doppelgänger sieht ». (Negelein, 1902). In conseguenza si evita, per esempio, di porre uno specchio dinanzi al morto, perchè si teme di avere un secondo morto (ibi); analogamente rompere uno specchio significa morte. Insomma, in linea generale, ‘ sich im Spiegel zu betrachten bedeutet Tod ’ (Gruppe, 1902).

Nelle fonti antiche classiche troviamo particolari molto istruttivi nel ciclo di Perseo e di Dionysos.

Per Perseo è costante nei mitografi il motivo dello scudo speculare che Perseo tiene davanti a sè; la Gorgo vi guarda dentro, e, per definizione, vedendo se stessa, si pietrifica, o, almeno, si indebolisce per dimezzamento; così Perseo può ucciderla (Apollod. II, 4). In Servio (ad Aen. VI, 289). ‘ Perseus prae se scutum ferens speculi candore perlucidum in umbra eius vidit caput Gorgonae et ita aversus accedens (cfr. *apestramménos* di Apollod. loc. cit.) id amputavit ’. E la versione più antica è forse questa: Gorgo, vedendosi nello specchio di Perseo — che procedeva volto in dietro — moriva o si pietrificava. Anche nel Liber monstrorum 1,38 Perseo procede ‘ scuto vitreo defensus ’.

E per Dionysos la procedura è anche più semplice: Efesto prepara lo specchio, il dio vi guarda se stesso, si depauperava e viene fatto a pezzi (*merismós*) dai Titani (Gruppe, 1902, 1027, 6; poi Plotino e Proclo trasformano l’uccisione e lo squartamento in versione panteistica; Kern, 1922, n. 209).

Entro questo quadro di psicologia popolare penso che tutti i casi più o meno anomali delle nostre palette possano essere risolti. Per esempio, il telaio portato da due uomini e fiancheggiato da palette (Anati, 1964, 134) rappresenterà il momento in cui lo strumento di lavoro viene portato fuori di casa e deposto sulla tomba della tessitrice; tela e fusi sono strettamente connessi colla vita umana: si pensi soltanto alla tela di Penelope, che non finiva mai, non certo per le nozze dei Proci — tarda esegesi razionalistica — bensì in quanto collegata colla vita di Ulisse.

Piuttosto sarà interessante constatare la debolezza costruttiva della cronologia dei manufatti archeologici, cronologia che, al momento presente, appare ferrata e incontrovertibile, ancorata come è a una pretesa linea evolutiva di esteriorità formale. Le palette con collane, monili e ornamenti muliebri vari sono considerate degenerazioni nobili e artistiche rispetto alle palette semplici e nude (il fatto che gli specchi classici sono rotondi è un puro fenomeno di funzionalità: essi servivano effettivamente per il viso). Noi adesso abbiamo dimostrato che la paletta è un ente vivo e letale; come ente vivo e agente esso può





Fig. 142  
Aquileia. La stele di Maia Severa (Foto Soprintendenza).

ben essere concepito come un ente umano dal momento che è l'uomo che lo crea per suo uso e consumo. Orbene, le palette più tarde, in età del Ferro avanzata, sarebbero le più vicine, anzi le uniche vicine al modello originario? Sarebbe cioè avvenuta una specie di inconscio ritorno alle origini? E se è così — e non può essere altro che così — che cosa vorranno significare quei due occhielli del manico se non i due occhi della letale divinità, il cui corpo è pensato nel rettangolo della palette? (Fig. 143).

Conclusione inevitabile e d'importanza capitale: l'esame obbiettivo delle palette ci ha portato in uno stadio protoclassico del mondo classico. Siamo ormai fuori della Preistoria: questi popoli non sono nè selvaggi nè anomali, sono bensì « nostri ». Ci conferma in questa diagnosi tutta una serie di altre constatazioni, che potranno esser fatte e che appaiono ovvie, una volta rimossa l'etichetta troppo comoda di enigma preistorico. Non solo, ma in probabile connessione con questa civiltà, anche molti monumenti inspiegabili della valle Padana potranno domani trovare la loro ragione di esistere.

E per una piccola soddisfazione agli archeologi classici ricorderò una stele 'romana' di Sofia nella quale entro il consueto medaglione funerario vi è uno specchio al posto del busto o testa del morto; e la notissima stele di Maia Severa nel Museo di Aquileia, nella quale è ritratta la giovane defunta nell'atto di mostrare uno specchio, non a ritrarre le proprie sembianze, pur giovanilmente venuste, bensì davanti alla faccia del visitatore, quasi a ricordargli che domani morrà anche lui.

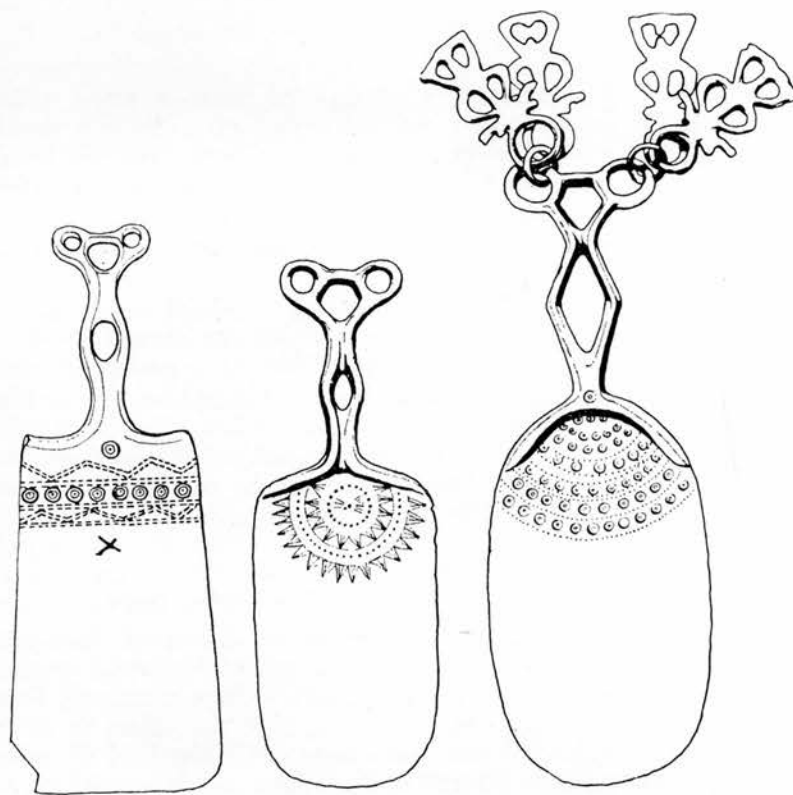


Fig. 143  
Palette rituali (da Zuffa, fig. 9, m. 38, 34, 31).

## RÉSUMÉ

La palette est un rectangle de métal ou de bois — plein ou vide, muni d'un pédoncule à bouton terminal, ou à oeillet simple ou double. Du point de vue archéologique, de tels objets en bronze, fer ou bois se retrouvent dans les tombes, en Italie et en Europe: il y en a des centaines, voire des milliers, mais il n'en existe pas de catalogue. Sur les roches du Valcamonica, Anati en compte près de mille. Au Valcamonica, la palette apparaît principalement dans les contextes suivants:

a) palette douée d'une signification relative à la chasse (trois palettes « enferment » un cerf; ailleurs elles « couvrent » l'animal; habituellement chaque animal à capturer est pourvu de sa palette; b) palette pentagonale munie d'une lance qui part du corps de la palette; c) palette associée à un labyrinthe; d) chaîne de 2 ou 3 palettes; e) palette associée à un « orant »; f) palette tenue en main par un angle, le manche dirigé vers le haut; g) palette tenue par le manche; h) palettes associées à un métier à tisser; i) palette employée comme bouclier; l) palette et « disque solaire »; m) palette dans une scène de duel: 2 ou 3 palettes accompagnent celui qui porte le coup, un « buste d'orant » se trouve près du blessé.

On a proposé diverses interprétations de ce motif, généralement sans tenir compte des contingences historiques ou fonctionnelles (rasoirs, bipennes, battoirs, rames; Monseigneur Bonomelli suggère d'y voir des « miroirs »). De l'ensemble de la documentation, il résulte que l'objet est autonome, auto-efficace, en langage technique, est pourvu de « mana ». Il s'ensuit, sur le plan méthodologique, que lorsqu'une palette présente deux oeillets, ceux-ci peuvent être considérés comme les « yeux » de l'entité magique à laquelle ils appartiennent. Et en fait, toujours au niveau méthodologique, il est impossible de ne pas rapprocher la palette des « idoles » de forme similaire d'Espagne, de Chypre, etc., qui sont pourvues d'yeux, de colliers, bijoux et vêtements brodés. On trouve une palette à côté d'un personnage qui tient son bouclier au-dessus de la tête, ce qui revient à dire « mort ». La palette est un objet qui accompagne le mort et donc, en termes historiques, un « objet qui produit la mort ». Il n'y a qu'un seul objet qui, dans la tradition primitive, corresponde à ces conditions: le miroir. La documentation écrite est ample et concordante sur ce point, dans les mondes classique et barbare: il s'agit de toute manière d'un fait religieux appartenant étroitement au monde indo-européen: le miroir signifie mort et produit la mort.

## SUMMARY

The paddle is a rectangle of metal or wood, solid or hollow, with a kind of handle with a terminal button or a single or double eyelet. From the archaeological point of view, similar objects, made of bronze, iron or wood, are found in graves in Italy and Europe: there are hundreds, if not thousands of them, but they have never been catalogued. Anati has counted almost a thousand of them on the rocks of Valcamonica. There the paddle appears mainly in the following contexts:

a) a paddle whose meaning is related to the hunt (three paddles « encircle » a stag; elsewhere, they « cover » the animal; usually every animal to be captured is accompanied by a paddle); b) a pentagonal paddle accompanied by a lance protruding from the body of the paddle; c) a paddle associated with a labyrinth; d) a chain of two or three paddles; e) a paddle associated with a « praying figure »; f) a paddle held in the hand by the corner, the handle pointing upwards; g) a paddle held by the handle; h) paddles associated with a loom; i) a paddle used as a shield; j) a paddle and a « solar disc »; k) a paddle at the scene of a combat between two figures: there are two or three paddles beside the victor, and a « praying bust » beside the wounded figure.

Several interpretations of this motif have been advanced, most of which take no account of historical or functional contingencies (razors, double axes, paddles for beating laundry, oars, « mirrors »). From a consideration of all the documentation, it is clear that the object is autonomous, self-sufficient, or in technical terms, has « mana ». On the level of methodology it follows that when a paddle has two eyelets, these may be considered as the « eyes » of the magical

entity to which they belong. Still on the methodological level, it is impossible not to compare the paddle to the « idols » of a similar form in Spain, Cyprus, etc., which have eyes, necklaces, jewels and embroidered clothing. A paddle is found beside a person holding his shield above his head, which means that he is « dead ». The paddle is an object which accompanies the dead, and is therefore, historical terms, an object which « causes death ». There is only one object in primitive tradition which corresponds to these conditions: the mirror. The written documentation is rich and all leads to the same conclusion, in both the classical and barbarian worlds: this is a religious fact which is closely related to the Indo-European world: the mirror signifies death and causes death.

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## LA RELIGIONE DEI VENETI ANTICHI: CONTRIBUTI LINGUISTICI

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Se il titolo indica il tema della trattazione, il sottotitolo ne identifica limiti e nucleo metodologico nel rapporto tra una tecnica di accertamento dei dati (se si vuole, filologia specifica) e l'utilizzazione degli stessi in una scienza « orizzontale », quale la storia delle religioni. La difficoltà si avverte appieno in casi come il nostro in cui esista una dicotomia di fatto tra la figura dello storico delle religioni e quella del filologo in grado di utilizzare appieno i dati. Esistono soluzioni di fatto: lo storico delle religioni rinuncia a occuparsene o prende dati di seconda mano (dati già oggetto di interpretazione su cui non è in grado di reagire); oppure il filologo si improvvisa storico delle religioni, senza avere né la preparazione né il « gusto » di tale scienza (dove, sia detto di sfuggita, la connotazione negativa che, presso alcuni storici della religione, ha la qualificazione di « filologo »: comprensibile quale reazione, la negazione della filologia stessa — cioè della tecnica di accertamento dei dati — sarebbe altrimenti un non senso).

Se è vero che tali soluzioni di comodo vanno respinte, non si vede bene d'altro canto cosa sostituirvi: si vive anche qui l'aporia, denunciata per un caso analogo dal Dumézil (1954, 17 - 20) del rapporto tra filologie particolari e scienza generale. Ci pare che l'aporia sia sanabile in una concezione dialettica dei rapporti fra le opposte posizioni: nel nostro caso con un'operazione di recupero dei dati, potenzialmente atti a entrare in un discorso storico-religioso, portati a un livello di esplicitazione tale che siano utilizzabili da uno storico delle religioni; senza, tuttavia, che la manipolazione subita, quale prezzo per entrare in circolo, sia irreversibile. Un'operazione del genere proponiamo in questa comunicazione considerando i dati linguistici. La stessa operazione si può fare con iconografia ecc. Con una attenzione, però: non tutti i dati sono, agli effetti della storicità, su uno stesso livello epistemologico. Il che ci riporta ad una pregiudiziale essenziale per un'area e un'epoca quale la nostra, in cui i dati non sono omogenei, nel senso che sono in parte desunti da testi (con ideologia) cioè storici, in parte senza storia. Su ciò ritorneremo: mi preme sottolineare quanto, rivolgendosi a preistorici, è meno avvertibile, e cioè l'esigenza di omogeneità

del corpus di dati: per i preistorici il corpus è di massima omogeneo. Naturalmente resta, in ambito di preistoria, la questione di quale conoscenza storica e ideologica tali dati possano essere portatori: di ciò ha fatto il punto, in apertura di congresso, un Maestro quale Leroi-Gourhan.

Come punto di partenza, e centrale nella nostra ricerca, prenderemo i teonimi: non singolarmente, cioè nel loro « significato » (o etimologia), ma nel loro sistema. Questo angolo visuale è, dal punto di vista onomastico, il solo corretto, in quanto il nome non ha, come pertinenza primaria, funzione semantica, bensì funzione identificativa, cui assolve secondo un determinato sistema: tale sistema sarà organizzato, ovviamente, per identificare nel modo migliore la realtà (come tale non linguistica): nel caso dei teonimi l'ideologia sottostante. Ne consegue che dalla forma in cui si presenta il sistema sono inferibili dati relativi all'ideologia sottostante il sistema stesso: di tali dati va però specificata la posizione epistemologica, onde evitare estrapolazioni indebite. Le iscrizioni venetiche non offrono, di massima, conoscenza storica, nel senso di realizzazione individua di cui siano noti i termini intrinseci (chiameremo questa [storica] interpretazione sostanziale); offrono invece conoscenza tipologica, in cui si individuano le condizioni di possibilità di una eventuale realizzazione storica e, correlatamente, la probabilità stessa di ciò (chiameremo questa interpretazione formale).

Lo iato tra le due posizioni è netto. Per il livello formale è sufficiente un corpus adeguato (come quantità) e un corretto inquadramento. Per il livello sostanziale è necessaria una conoscenza storica (in senso stretto, cioè proveniente da testi), che, come è ovvio, può non esserci: nel caso del mondo paleoveneto di massima non c'è. Per tale assenza non valgono surrogati, che se non nettamente riconosciuti, sono piuttosto deleteri. Non sono surrogati, ma esigono una particolare manipolazione i dati storici esterni: nel nostro caso notizie di autori greci e latini (Prosdocimi 1971, pp. 717 - 718).

In una posizione più ricca di storia, ma non ancora 'storica' *tout court*, sta la tradizione italica non romana (osca, umbra ecc.), dal cui studio possono venire modelli per il nostro tipo di lavoro: modelli che riteniamo validi, previa, in essi, la distinzione tra momento formale e sostanziale; e, ovviamente, previo riconoscimento del diverso grado di storicità tra l'ambito paleoveneto e quello italico. Tali lavori sono quelli ben noti di Latte (1926) e Kerényi (1933) le cui tesi, come si è sostenuto altrove, (Prosdocimi 1971, p. 689) sono contrarie ma non contraddittorie; anzi complementari, generate da due diverse prospettive: dinamico-genetica nel Latte; sincronico-sistematica nel Kerényi. Brillante e, come spesso, pregevole in singoli punti, l'intervento di Altheim (1932) non segna un progresso metodologico, come quello, successivo e legato, del Kerényi.

Innovatore lo studio del Devoto (1937) sul panteon iguvino: sia per l'omogeneità del corpus utilizzato, sia per l'esplicitazione del procedimento formale (consentito da caratteristiche sintattiche nel sistema 'teonimo-epiclesi') nella restituzione di un sistema gerarchico (dissentiamo invece dall'interpretazione sostanziale, Prosdocimi 1971, pp. 690 - 691).

Detto ciò, non significa che lo studio dei singoli teonimi (= « etimo-

logia ») sia privo di valore o illecito. Al contrario: ma anche qui a patto di aver chiari i limiti, il senso e le condizioni di validità dell'operazione stessa. Riservandoci di riprendere e sviluppare questo punto in altra sede, si rinvia ai cenni in Prosdocimi (1969a, 1969b, 1969c, 1971).

Dobbiamo considerare anzitutto se quanto rimane della cultura paleoveneta permetta uno studio, sia pure scheletrico, del tipo prospettato. In caso affermativo, saranno da individuarne gli estremi: nuclei di forza e riflessi marginali.

La base per uno studio c'è: 1) Per il fatto estrinseco che ci sono almeno due complessi — stipe di Reitia a Este e stipe di Lagole — con un corpus da considerare omogeneo e, nella somma dei singoli testi, sufficientemente rappresentativo. 2) Per il fatto intrinseco che l'attributo divino ha una sintassi particolare rispetto al teonimo (questo fatto formale offre condizioni — sia pure diverse nella genesi e nella realizzazione — del tipo di quelle offerte dalla unidirezionalità degli attributi delle divinità iguvine, su cui Devoto, 1937; Prosdocimi, 1971, pp. 689-691).

In venetico l'epiteto divino precede il nome divino: *S'ainatei Reitiai*; *S'ainatei Trusmusijatei*; *termonios deivos*. In ciò solidale con la successione aggettivo-sostantivo: *per volterkon vontar*; *op voltio leno* (qui potrebbe rientrare anche *termonios deivos*). Al contrario nella formula antroponomastica l'appositivo (formazione aggettiva) segue il nome individuale. L'anormalità è ovviamente nella forma onomastica, e non viceversa; le spiegazioni possono essere molteplici. Ciò che importa ai nostri fini non è però la spiegazione, ma la constatazione del fenomeno. Per quel che concerne l'onomastica ciò è di primaria importanza, quale discriminante tra sequenze antroponomastiche e non (Prosdocimi 1972, § 5.5): il che dovrà essere un apriori che solo una reale contro-evidenza potrà annullare (pertanto, appresso, sono discusse alcune di tali sequenze anomale, quali potenziali espressioni teonimiche).

Come si è detto, l'unidirezionalità sintattica permette, qualora vi siano più epiteti o nomi (cfr. il citato esempio iguvino), di delineare una gerarchia. Ma permette anche una illazione di qualche importanza: le formule teonimiche vanno col lessico e non con le formule antroponimiche; cioè sono semantiche e non puri mezzi di individuazione; cioè gli epiteti nati dal lessico come significanti (e trasparenti-motivati) sono mantenuti con uno sfondo ideologico prossimo a quello da cui è generato l'epiteto stesso.

A ESTE (stipe Baratela) si hanno i seguenti tipi (al dativo).

*Reitiai* (da solo): Es 24, 26, 30, 31 (?), 32, 33, 40, 41, 42, 46, 47, 48, 49 (-an), 50, 51, 53, 54, 55, 57, 61, 63 (?), 71, 72, 73.

*Porai* (da solo): Es 23, 67, (per *Vebelei* apposto v. sotto).

*S'ainatei Reitiai*: Es 25, 27, 44, 56, 64, 65 (?) integraz. prob., 68 (?).

*S'ainatei Reitiai Porai*: Es 45.

*S'ainatei Porai*: Es 58.

A LAGOLE (non si considerano le abbreviazioni e frammenti di incerta restituzione; si normalizza, salvo hapax, al dativo):

*Trumusijatei*: Ca 5, 7, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 21, 28, 31, 32, 33, 34 (?), 60, 62 (?), 64, 65, 66, 69, 73;

*Tribusiati*: Ca 9, 59;

*S'ainatei*: Ca 18, 20, 67, 68;

*S'ainatei Trumusijatei*: Ca 6, 11, 22, 23, 25, 27.

Tutte le forme ricorrono da sole e pertanto hanno, o hanno raggiunto, lo status di teonimi propriamente detti. *S'ainatei* fornisce la chiave del fenomeno (in seguito modifico in parte le tesi sostenute in *LV I*, pp. 98 - 101) in quanto a Este non compare *mai* da sola, mentre ciò avviene frequentemente a Lagole. Il numero di esempi è sufficiente per escludere la casualità: *S'ainatei* ha raggiunto lo status identificativo (teonimo autonomo) a Lagole, mai a Este. Interessa qui non tanto la localizzazione del processo, quanto il processo stesso: pertanto eventuali (futuri) esempi di *S'ainatei* autonomo a Este, direbbero solo che il processo ha attinto anche lì lo stadio finale. Ma, ciò dicendo, riaffermerebbero il processo stesso. Tale processo non è ignoto alla religione italica (osca, umbra ecc.) e, delineato con vari nomi ('Abspaltung', 'Atomisierung') ha rappresentato il meccanismo (Latte, 1926; cfr. Prosdoci, 1971, p. 689) della proliferazione di teonimi e/o figure divine. Per quanto esiguo, l'indizio è importante in sé (quale modello esplicativo all'interno del Veneto) e, nei riflessi genetico-comparati, rispetto all'Italia peninsulare. Valido per *S'ainatei*, lo schema può valere anche per altri casi: non vi fosse la sequenza *S'ainatei Reitiai Porai*, si potrebbe già ammettere, almeno quale possibilità, che *Reitia* (in cui *-ia* indica una probabile formazione aggettiva) sia l'epiclesi autonomizzata da antica data di una divinità «X». La presenza della sequenza su citata, con *Reitia* premessa a *Pora* (cioè nella posizione dell'epiteto), indica in *Reitia* un antico epiteto di *Pora*, la quale ultima diviene allora la divinità originaria del santuario atestino. Questa proposta, che rovescia una vulgata, troverà certamente delle resistenze, non giustificate se dettate dall'abitudine mentale; legittime solamente se tendono ad annullare o limitare il valore di un unico testimonio. Per quanto *unus*, il teste non è privo di valore e indica che '*Reitia* sta a *Pora* come *Sainati-a Reitia*': cioè che *Reitia* è un'epiclesi. Potrebbe aiutarci la cronologia relativa: ma, come è noto, non è possibile fissarla neppure a grandi linee dato il modo con cui il materiale pervenne al Museo. Per la natura di deposito della stipe una cronologia su cui fondarsi sarebbe comunque impossibile a stabilirsi. Delle quattro attestazioni, due (Es 58, 67) sono mute a questo riguardo; Es 45 è invece il chiodo più elaborato con il testo più complesso tra le iscrizioni votive: può essere un caso; Es 23 rappresenta la lamina più completa (unica a possedere un alfabetario completo di vocali) potenzialmente modello alle altre (l'eventuale *-tj-* > *-ts'-*, essendo sporadico il fenomeno, non è indizio cronologico in alcun senso): anche qui si riscontra un formulario più ricco del solito; entrambi i formulari, se anche non si volesse considerarli più ricchi, sono senz'altro anomali rispetto allo standard. Ma questa



è in Este appunto una caratteristica delle iscrizioni più arcaiche, in quanto si va delineando che la « secchezza » formulare è uno stadio raggiunto e non originario (Prosdocimi 1972 a, § 2; 1972 b, § 3.2.1).

A questo indizio, sia pure tenue, se ne associa uno esterno: se, come pare, è valida l'identificazione (Mastrelli, 1960; cfr. LV II, pp. 153-4) della nostra *Pora* con *Pora mater* dei glossari, si capisce perchè *Pora* (qualificata come *mater*) e non *Reitia* vi sia giunto.

Infine un indizio interno: alla morfologia di aggettivo in *Reit-ia* si oppone quello di sostantivo in *Por-a*.

Questi indizi possono essere vanificati se presi singolarmente; ma riuniti contribuiscono a rendere meno scioccante l'affermazione (risultante dalle considerazioni sulla sequenza 'epiteto-teonimo' e, in correlato, dall'analisi sintattica di Es 45) che la divinità originaria del santuario detto di *Reitia*, sia in realtà *Pora*. Detto ciò la sincronia e il sistema affermano i diritti rispetto alla trafila genetica, nel senso che, sia pure originariamente epiteto di *Pora*, *Reitia* è ormai autonomo e con questo nome viene indicata la divinità per la maggior parte della vita del santuario stesso, come testimonia il numero di dediche a questo nome. Una ulteriore domanda sullo status teologico di *Reitia* rispetto a *Pora* è destinato a restare senza risposta, per assenza del contesto ideologico; così pure senza risposta, ma qui perché non pertinente, dovrebbe restare una eventuale domanda sullo status di *Reitia* rispetto a *Pora* nella mentalità dell'utente medio.

La sintassi dell'epiteto divino impone di rivedere Es. 67: in questo testo, mutilo, insieme con la nuova lettura... *p]orai vebelei ka* [... (cfr. LV I, pp. 174-5) M. Lejeune proponeva di riconoscere in *vebelei* un epiteto divino, sottoponendolo a tentativi etimologici di cui nessuno evidente (cfr. LV II, pp. 195-7). Un epiteto hapax, in un formulario stereotipo a molti esempi (con esclusione dunque della casualità) è di per sé sospetto, ma a priori non si può escludere. La nostra presunta epiclesi segue e non precede il teonimo *porai*: dunque si dovrebbe immaginare un'infrazione alla normalità sintattica; oppure un rapporto diverso tra i due (*porai* epiclesi di *vebelei*; due teonimi autonomi associati per sincretismo). Soluzioni possibili, ma *difficiliores* e *ad hoc*. Non resta che separare i due dativi, e considerare *vebelei* dativo della persona per cui si fa il dono (questa sintassi si ritrova in Es 40, 42, 43, 45, 46, 57): pertanto un antropónimo e non un teonimo. *ka* [...] potrebbe essere l'iniziale dell'appositivo dei *vebelei* o del nome individuale del(la) dedicante. Pertanto *vebelei* va tolto, fino a prova contraria, dal repertorio teonimico.

Per quanto concerne Lagole, oltre al fatto già rilevato per *S'ainatei*, il metodo formale non offre molto altro; comunque offre una indicazione relativa al problema 'trumusijati-tribusjati'. I due termini non compaiono mai associati; non vi è successione cronologica (*trumusijati* che, per numero di attestazioni e grafia [...] potrebbe essere considerato più antico, ha pure forme a grafia latina: Ca 21, 59, 60, 62, 73), sono in un identico luogo di culto (a priori indizio di identità della divinità a cui sono riferiti): sembrano pertanto in distribuzione complementare (per essere più precisa l'affermazione avrebbe bisogno di un maggior numero di ricorrenze *tri-*), in altre parole allomorfi. Allomorfia implica sincronia, cioè non dice nulla sulla genesi: in altre parole è ammissibile sia una origine identica con differenziazioni (fonetica e/o morfologica e/o paronomastica) sia una confluenza parzialmente o totalmente sinonimica di due forme originariamente distinte.

Il discorso sulla autonomizzazione, fatto per *S'ainatei* autorizza a non scartare l'ipotesi che entrambe le denominazioni (o la denominazione nei due aspetti) siano originariamente epiteti di un nome non attestato (per l'antichità in cui sarebbe avvenuta la sostituzione?): al che sarebbe non sfavorevole l'interpretazione che vede in *-ati-* un morfema, e non parte del nome di *Ecate* (per la discussione LV II, pp. 183-7). Ma il tutto è pura ipotesi, e pertanto da lasciare in epochè.

Un problema connesso, ma anche indipendente, è quello relativo al sesso della divinità di Lagole: se in *trumusijati-* si riconoscesse il riflesso di una *Ecate*, il problema non esisterebbe. Ma posto in forse ciò, nessun dato sembra decisivo per una divinità femminile: per quanto sappiamo le forme in *-tei*, *-tin* possono essere sia maschili che femminili. L'apriori favorevole a un essere femminile è bilanciato dal sincretismo romano: le dediche sono ad Apollo (LV I, pp. 484, 554, 562 nr.i Ca I-IX).

Alcuni indizi sono per una divinità femminile, anche se non si può basarsi su *S'ainatei*, che, pur non avendo distinzione formale dalla forma atestina riferita a *Reitia* (dove l'indicazione per un femminile), non può essere prova del genere, non sapendo noi se vi fosse una distinzione morfologica in tali temi (è possibile appunto che non vi fosse); neppure il fatto che *S'ainatei* diventi autonomo a Lagole è significativo in tale senso, in quanto ciò è successivo al suo stato di epiteto.

Piuttosto si dovrà notare che in Ca 33 l'abbreviazione (?) in *-ija* è flessa all'accusativo *-ijam* (la stessa abbreviazione in Ca 25, 62 ne indica la non casualità), il che è comprensibile solo se interpretabile quale parola completa in *-a*: l'interpretazione di un'abbreviazione quale forma completa in *-a* presuppone il riferimento ad essere femminile.

Inoltre a Valle di Cadore è una « *Libera* » (v. appresso): il legame topografico col culto di Lagole sarebbe avvalorato — qualora si accetti — dall'interpretazione data da M. Lejeune (1966, pp. 412-413) alla sigla *str* (Ca 4 bis): *s(ainatei) tr(ibusiatei)*.

Va esclusa la possibilità che *teuta* costituisca l'abbreviazione di un epiteto *\*teutati*, corrispondente al *Toutati* di una dedica del Noricum (CIL V 4320, cfr. LV II, p. 166 e n. 6): per la sintassi di Ca 24 (*u.teuta*: cfr. *u donom*) e di Ca 13 (*teut [a] toler*).

Rinunciamo a discutere i singoli punti, per cui rimandiamo, intanto, ai lemmi in LV II, pp. 157-61 (*Reitia*), 153-155 (*Pora*), 163-171 (*Tribusiatei* - *Trumusiatei*); 163-166 (*S'ainatei*): con meno fiducia nelle « etimologie » ivi proposte.

Quanto sia aleatoria e arbitraria una etimologia di teonimo senza neppure quel sostituto della semantica che è la teologia sottostante (Prosdocimi, 1969 a, b, c, d), è evidente per *Reitia*. Etimologizzata con *\*rekto-*, equivalente di lat. *rectus*, ne è stata fatta una « *ῥέκτος*, dea del diritto (Pauli) o una *ὀρθία* secondo la spiegazione dello scoliaste a Pindaro [ad Ol. III, 54]: (*ὀρθωσία*) ὅτι ὀρθοῖ εἰς σωτηρίαν ἢ ὀρθοῖ τοὺς γεννομένους» con parallelo nella *Orthia* spartana e con valenza iatrica sviluppata da quella di « *Geburtshelferin* » (Vetter e, prima, Conway-Whatmough; sostanzialmente accettato in LV II, pp. 157-161). Il Lejeune (1971, p. 269) ne ha proposto una etimologia diversa che partendo da *\*rei-* (Pokorny, IEW, s. v., « *ritzen* »: « *élargissement divers par -b-, -k-, -p-*; mais *-t-* non encore attesté ») fa economia dell'ipotesi *\*-kt-* > *-it-* e che si inquadra correttamente nello sfondo culturale del santuario che è un centro scrittore o di speculazione sulla scrittura (LV I, p. 99 sgg.; II, pp. 45-8; Prosdocimi, 1970; e spec. Lejeune, 1971, p. 269): « Cette racine, sous une forme amplifiée *\*rei-t-*, aurait pu donner un nom vénète *\*reito-* (neutre?) de l'écriture, et la divinité d'Este aurait pu à partir du V° s., recevoir l'épiclèse de *\*reit-ya-* (« celle du *reito* », « celle que concerne l'écriture ») ». Ma esiste una terza possibilità — finora non contemplata — anche più evidente formalmente e ben fondata su dati archeologico-culturali finora trascurati, ma posti nella giusta evidenza nella tesi di laurea di G. Bonesso (tesi tuttora inedita, discussa presso la Facoltà di Lettere dell'Università di Padova, anno acc. 1967-68, relatrice la prof.

G. Fogolari). Il Bonesso, studiando la topografia del santuario, ha messo in evidenza la sua stretta relazione, meglio interdipendenza, con l'alveo dell'Adige e le dune affioranti, tanto da affacciare, sulla sola base tipologica, una interpretazione di *λιμναία*, *λιμναίτις* per la divinità ivi venerata.

E allora si affaccia la etimologia \**reitia-* da un nome indeuropeo (corradicale di lat. *rivos*, sl. *reka*, gall. *Renus*) del « fiume, corso d'acqua » che ha continuatori nel sscr. *retas* (verbo *rinati* < ie. \**rei-*), mbt. *ride* « Bach ».

[Si richiama, nella prospettiva negativa di cui sotto, una ulteriore possibilità, connessa con l'accezione semantica del sscr. *retas-* che significa, fin dal Rigveda, « flusso seminale » (in questo ambito anche le altre forme corradicali). Posto che la formante *-as-* (ie. \**-es-/os-*) rimanda ad una base \**reit-*, cioè radice \**rei-* con allargamento in *-t-*, si potrebbe dedurre una *Reitia* « dea della fecondità » o simili].

E' possibile, anzi probabile, che questa sia la corretta etimologia: ma dal punto di vista del metodo ha solo funzione negativa. Mostra cioè che nessuna ha l'evidenza per imporsi; cioè che nessuna è una etimologia seria (il che significa seriamente fondata); e che, nessuna essendo privilegiabile, nessuna va di conseguenza avanzata per correttezza di metodo e per non ingenerare precedenti fasulli alla futura manualistica.

Data la natura di questo scritto, non ci soffermeremo su ulteriori dettagli o su punti particolarmente problematici, limitandoci a segnalarne l'esistenza:

ESTE: Es 75 e la sua connessione colla stipe votiva del Palazzo del Principe; \*Es 120 (edita in Prosdocimi, 1969 d) e la sua possibile connessione con un santuario ai Dioscuri (altra ipotesi in Prosdocimi, 1969 d, cit.).

PADOVA: Pa 15 e la finale in *-oi* indicante divinità maschile (cfr. il culto aponeuse di Gerione).

VICENZA: Vi 2 con *termonios deivos* (LV II, s.vv. e I, pp. 384-387).

Vi 3 e la stipe votiva affine a quella di *Reitia*.

In connessione il culto di Magré con dediche in « retico ».

Ci soffermeremo invece qui su due altri casi, in cui l'interpretazione sostanziale è strettamente legata a quella formale, secondo il principio sintattico esposto sopra.

La dedica sul bordo della situla di Valle di Cadore (Ca 4) richiede un discorso approfondito, sia per le discussioni cui ha dato adito, sia, e specialmente, perchè una interpretazione (che noi riteniamo probabile) è gravida di implicazioni non solo per la cultura locale. Il testo principale suona: *eik goltanos doto louderaï kanei*. Lascio da parte i problemi grafici per concentrarmi su *louderaï kanei* già interpretato come teonimo; interpretazione messa in dubbio dal Lejeune, in favore di un antroponimo seguito da un aggettivo (« *carae* »), poi ripresa dallo stesso, con l'ipotesi supplementare che *kanei* possa essere « la cagna (infernale) » attribuita a Libera-Persefone. La presenza del verbo *doto* è per la dedica a una dea; nel caso di un formulario eccezionale per una sepoltura la regola sintattica di cui si è parlato sopra esclude che *loudera-* sia il nome e *kanei* un attributo, mentre ammette che *louderaï* sia apposto a *kanei*, come epiteto: si dovrebbe allora pensare al femminile di *loudero-* « figlia » (con altro inquadramento v. sotto). Pur non scartando tale ipotesi, la presenza di *doto* fa propendere per un teonimo. In questo caso *kanei* verrebbe a essere il determinato e *loudera* il determinante (cioè l'attributo): per cui la comparazione con lat. *Libera* non è così immediata teologicamente come lo è l'identità formale. A complicare si aggiunge l'attraente identificazione (Pisani) di *kanei* con sscr. *kanyā* « fanciulla » (cfr. Thieme, 1963, p. 239 sgg.) che



riporta immediatamente al gr. κόρη (rispetto a cui verrebbe a trovarsi nella posizione di calco). Se la convergenza di indizi indica la bontà della identificazione di massima, la loro concatenazione è tutt'altro che chiara e si intravede male la meccanica del processo.

Anzitutto meraviglia come DUE volte — e bisogna ammettere INDEPENDENTEMENTE — cioè a Roma e nel Veneto, una κόρη sia stata trasposta con un derivato di \*leudhero- (*Libera*; *Loudera*): una \* Ἐλευθέρα, quale matrice greca comune, è una ipotesi ad hoc. D'altra parte è noto un altro calco di κόρη: osco *futír* « figlia ». Nei riguardi di Roma, il calco osco indica una via lessicale autonoma, ma può indicare un parallelo semantico (non necessariamente di dipendenza: la *Libera* romana è di secoli antecedente al bronzo d'Agnone). Aggiungendo che la formula venetica richiede il sostantivo centrale in *kanei*, e che d'altra parte, in *loudera* non ha senso riconoscere una \*leudhera nel significato di « libera » (o affini), che, del resto non spiegherebbe l'identità col latino, pare di poter proporre lo schema interpretativo seguente:

	— ven. (dat.) <i>louderai kanei</i>
gr. κόρη	— lat. <i>Libera</i>
	— osco <i>futír</i>

In cui osco *futír* (figlia) e ven. *kanei* sono parziali sinonimi, per la resa di κόρη. Il lat. *Libera*, altrimenti inesplicito, potrebbe rappresentare una soluzione semantica analoga, il che postulerebbe un *libera* « figlia ».

Ci rendiamo conto della difficoltà: ma, possibile quale virtualità di 'langue', va almeno avanzata quale ipotesi da verificare o condannare in sede latino-italica. Per quanto possa apparire tirato ci pare l'unico che offra una spiegazione unitaria di elementi che presentano coincidenze che non possono essere attribuite al caso. Se così fosse (v. appresso) si dovrebbe ammettere per lat. \**libera* un filone latino diverso da quelli a noi noti e soppresso da altri in una nuova coiné o, quantomeno, uno o più riassetti nella terminologia della parentela; della quale, al seguito di uno studio di E. Risch, si sono applicati di recente più studiosi (Lejeune, Lazzeroni, Hamp), dimostrando, se non altro, la complessità della questione e la probabilità di stratificazioni secondo epoche e domini linguistici, ma anche, ed è più importante, secondo diverse pertinenze, cioè secondo appartenenza a sistemi diversi (giuridico; teologico; familiare), in parte interferenti. Da ciò è astrattamente postulabile che si sia attualizzata una virtualità di langue per rendere evidente lo status particolare di un « figlia » riferito ad una dea (eventualmente in assenza del mito giustificativo). Questa spiegazione è già in Altheim (1931, spec. p. 31) che porta a sostegno un passo di Cicerone (de nat. deor., II, 62) « sed quod ex nobis natos liberos appellamus, idcirco Cerere nati nominati sunt Liber et Libera, quod in Libera servant, in Libero non item ». L'Altheim non inquadra correttamente il fatto (anche in assenza del termine osco *futír* altrimenti interpretato fino al 1935), che andrà invece rivisto secondo i criteri di pertinenza semantica e di livelli di pertinenza della stessa, nel quadro (come si è accennato sopra) di una stratificazione eventuale (e proba-



bile) della terminologia della parentela secondo i diversi ambiti giuridico-ideologici. Il venetico avrebbe, indipendentemente, sfruttato la stessa possibilità, avendo applicato la stessa parola (derivato di \**leudhera*) in un contesto, ove, come in latino, vi coesisteva il termine (pl.) *loudero*- « figli » (Es 45; cfr. LV II, pp. 134-6).

E' dunque da supporre che il gr. κόρη « figlia-fanciulla » sia stato reso in osco col termine per « figlia »; in latino con quello per « figlia » (?) ma con status lessico - semantico, particolare; in venetico con una scissione concettuale in « figlia » (*loudera*) e « fanciulla » (*kanei*), riunita mediante il sintagma attributivo « alla fanciulla figlia », in cui la successione significa « alla fanciulla che è figlia ». Se è valido questo discorso - se si vuole tirato (e che sarà da ridiscutere) ma che offre l'unica possibilità logica di soluzione delle coincidenze ecc. - si deve presupporre una notevole conoscenza in loco del mito greco relativo.

In un lavoro in corso di stampa (Prosdocimi, 1973) ho rivisto la grafia delle iscrizioni di Idria della Baccia, (LV I, pp. 591-7 597) confermando, con diversa giustificazione, la traslitterazione interpretativa del Lejeune (1951, 1965) *laivnai vrotai* (in cui *i* è graficamente reso da *h* a scala). Come è noto il Vetter vi vedeva una menzione divina. Correggendone la lettura, sia formalmente che sostanzialmente, M. Lejeune (1951) aveva buon gioco a dimostrare l'improbabilità dell'interpretazione del Vetter e ne faceva un caso di formula onomastica femminile (in *-na*) eccezionalmente invertita (appos. + nome indiv.). A questa interpretazione ci si è attenuti in LV I, p. 593 (s.v. Is 1) e II, pp. 127-128 (s.v. *Laivnai Vrotai*). Diversamente, in un articolo coevo a LV, il Lejeune (1965) pur non rinunciandovi completamente, pone seri dubbi sull'interpretazione, ritornando all'idea di una dedica (senza, beninteso, i confronti formali del Vetter): « *outré les deux vases et la fibule, la tombe 14 renfermait un umbo de bouclier, ce qui paraît inconciliable avec une sépulture féminine. — On est dès lors (quelque hypothèse étymologique qu'on fasse sur les deux mots en cause) ramené à l'idée d'une dédicace: soit que des objets votifs eussent (comme l'imaginait Vetter) fortuitement échoué dans une sépulture; soit que la divinité invoquée fût de celles dont le culte était lié aux croyances d'outré-tombe.*

*Dans la mesure où cette dernière hypothèse serait fondée, elle pourrait n'être pas sans conséquence pour l'interprétation d'autres textes funéraire vénètes »* (Lejeune, 1965, p. 159).

L'argomento non pare in sè decisivo perchè ammette almeno altre due spiegazioni: 1) come degli oggetti votivi possono essere finiti in una sepoltura, così lo possono anche quelli di un'altra sepoltura (di donna!); 2) il dativo poteva essere di appartenenza (di una viva) e finito come corredo funerario (per un morto: eventualmente marito o parente della donna). Su questa base esterna l'interpretazione del 1951 non pare scossa. Lo è invece dall'argomento sintattico di cui si è parlato sopra. Dalla successione normale 'attributo + teonimo' risulta che *laivnai vrotai* è probabilmente una menzione teonimica, in cui *Vrota* è il nome e *Laivna* l'epiteto il che si accorda colla struttura formale (-a ~ -na). Con puri nomi divini si fa poca strada. Sia permesso però,

a titolo di ipotesi, di vedere in *laivna* un derivato di *\*laiwos*, che non sarebbe fuori posto per una divinità infera (una dedica a divinità infera in una tomba è forse anche in Ca 4; entrambe sono in sé le spiegazioni più semplici e si sostengono, poi, a vicenda). *Vrota* è isolato: ma prima di pensare, tramite una rad. *\*wert-* (in cui tra l'altro non torna grado apofonico) a una *Εἰλιθῦια* (Vetter), sarà da ricordare un possibile prestito da *φορθία* di cui è conosciuta la variante *φο-* (modifico qui, in considerazione di una mutata prospettiva, quanto affermato in *LV* II, p. 128) che è tra le attestazioni più antiche (fine VII sec. a.Cr.). Un indizio fonetico favorevole all'imprestito è l'assenza del venetico di sequenza *-vr-*, che non è un fatto casuale dovuto a scarsa documentazione, come mostra l'assenza, della lista dei nessi tautosillabici, della serie con *v* (*r, n, l*) mentre esiste quella con *vb-* /*ff*/ (cfr. *LV* I, pp. 101 sgg.; II, 23-27 e ora Lejeune, 1971, spec. p. 289).

## RÉSUMÉ

Le rapport entre l'histoire des religions et les sciences auxiliaires devient une dialectique entre science et techniques d'élaboration des données. Dans notre cas, les sciences qui servent de technique sont la linguistique, l'archéologie, la philologie et éventuellement l'étude des traditions populaires. Le glottologue privilégiera les données linguistiques, ce qui, dans la perspective méthodologique précédemment définie, ne sera pas une incorrection, mais constituera plutôt un moment nécessaire en vue d'une synthèse finale qui soit non pas interdisciplinaire mais supradisciplinaire. Partant de l'étude de la forme, et non de la substance des théonymes, on arrive à la conclusion que les paléovénètes possédaient un système, au moins embryonnaire, de type « italique », dans lequel les attributs divins tendent à l'autonomie. Le phénomène est étudié dans différents centres de la culture paléovénète (Este, Lagole di Calalzo, Cadore, Idria della Baccia, Vicenza, etc.). Après avoir établi ce cadre général et examiné quelques cas douteux, l'auteur étudie la terminologie relative au sacré, particulièrement celle des dédicaces et inscriptions funéraires. On peut en tirer des détails sur les cultes mêmes, dans leurs rapports avec la structure de la société et son niveau culturel. Enfin, certains passages des auteurs grecs et latins peuvent donner une substance historique, c'est-à-dire une clef idéologique, aux cultes locaux.

## SUMMARY

The relationship between the history of religion and its auxiliary sciences becomes a dialectic between science and data processing techniques. In our case, the sciences used as techniques are linguistics, archaeology, philology, and sometimes the study of popular traditions. The glossologist will give preference to linguistic data, and in view of the above methodological perspective, this is not wrong, but represents a necessary stage towards a final synthesis which will be supra-disciplinary rather than interdisciplinary. Starting from a study of the form of the theonyms and not of their content, we reach the conclusion that the Palaeoveneti had an embryonic system of the « italic » type, in which the divine attributes tend to be used autonomously. We study this phenomenon in various centres of Palaeovenetic culture (Este, Lagole di Calalzo, Cadore, Idria della Baccia, Vicenza, etc.). Having established this general framework and looked at some problematic cases, the author studies the sacred terminology, particularly that used in the dedications and funeral inscriptions. From this one can deduce some details of the cults themselves, in their relation to the social structure and cultural organisation of the society. Finally, certain Greek and Latin texts give a historical substance, or ideological key, to the local cults.

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## DEBAT SUR L'AGE DU BRONZE ET DU FER EN EUROPE

### *Sur les Iles Canaries.*

- GRAZIOSI: Nous avons bénéficié d'un aperçu général sur les gravures des Canaries et je voudrais demander certaines précisions: les spirales, les serpentiformes « intestinaux » et les curvilignes se retrouvent-ils dans toutes les îles ou à côté de ces motifs là y a-t-il d'autres signes également?
- BELTRAN: Dans l'île de La Palma il existe d'autres choses, des ensembles de lignes et de points par exemple. Les signes les plus complets sont ceux que j'ai montré, et aussi les plus fréquents. Les figures composées de lignes droites sont exceptionnelles.
- GRAZIOSI: Mais y a-t-il un ou plusieurs faciès?
- BELTRAN: Il faut bien se rappeler deux choses: chaque île constitue une unité, et chacune d'elles, étant en fait une sorte de cul-de-sac, a connu un développement spécifique. La majeure partie du matériel que j'ai montré provient de la Palma. L'art des Canaries couvre une longue période chronologique et a donc connu une évolution qui se termine par une dégénérescence. Il n'a pas commencé avant l'épisode mégalithique, c'est-à-dire avant le néolithique récent.
- GRAZIOSI: Non si può avere una cronologia? Tu hai parlato di età del Bronzo.
- BELTRAN: Il s'agit d'une hypothèse de travail: Néolithique et âge du Bronze.
- GRAZIOSI: Dal punto di vista archeologico cosa abbiamo per il popolamento delle Canarie? I Guanci sono in rapporto con il tipo di Mecht el-'Arbi.
- CAMPS: Les Canaries doivent actuellement être considérées comme des provinces espagnoles. Mais si l'on veut bien se référer à la position géographique des îles, la recherche de comparaisons avec la zone atlantique et l'Europe en général est un peu gênante; car ce qui frappe en effet c'est la proximité et la primauté du fait africain. Dans l'archéologie et dans l'art rupestre des Canaries, rien n'échappe à la présence africaine, tout ce qui se trouve aux Canaries existe également en Afrique. Le peuplement de ces îles par des descendants des hommes de Mecht el-'Arbi se situe à une époque assez tardive, à un moment d'aridité avancée où l'élevage des bovins n'était plus possible. C'est pourquoi le cheptel des Ganches ne comptait pas de boeufs mais des chèvres et des chiens.
- GOMEZ-TABANERA: On peut cependant considérer les Canaries comme le cul-de-sac des cultures méditerranéennes. L'ancien type méditerranéen d'organisation sociale matrilineaire y est attesté, on y trouve les figurines stéatopyges, les pintaderas, les spirales et tant d'autres éléments. La religion mégalithique est arrivée jusque là. Les Canaries primitives ne connaissaient pas la navigation.
- BELTRAN: Ces discussions nous écartent trop du sujet central de ce symposium. Le problème de la navigation me paraît bien difficile à résoudre avec le peu d'éléments dont

nous disposons (pas de stratigraphie et pas de datation au C. 14). Il ne faut pas être trop pressé dans les comparaisons pour un sujet encore si peu étudié; beaucoup de problèmes restent sans solution. On trouve les pintaderas à La Palma seulement, les peintures et figurines peintes à Gran Canaria: ce sont des phénomènes isolés.

### *Sur le Trou de Han.*

DE MARINIS:

Vorrei sapere dal Prof. Mariën, quale è la datazione dell'orecchino d'oro trovato nella grotta del Trou de Han e in particolare, se si può situare stratigraficamente prima o dopo l'arrivo dei guerrieri hallstattiani armati di lunghe spade.

MARIËN:

Non mi sono soffermato su questo particolare avendo già scritto in proposito e avendo fatto una comunicazione al Congresso di Praga proprio su questo argomento. Gli orecchini di foglia d'oro stampigliata (lavorata a sbalzo) appartengono al tipo Sinsin, noto nel Belgio, nel Brandeburgo e nello Schleswig-Holstein. Questo tipo si può confrontare con gli orecchini a panierella dell'Inghilterra scoperti in tumuli in associazione con bicchieri campaniformi; in Irlanda; in Portogallo in tombe a corridoio. Tuttavia il tipo Sinsin si deve datare alla fine dell'età del Bronzo.

Al Trou de Han sono stati scoperti cinque pendagli discoidali di foglia d'oro decorata a cerchi concentrici con umbo centrale, simili a quelli che si trovano a Wollmesheim e che si datano al periodo Ha. A. Uno di questi pendagli era stato riparato con un frammento di orecchino tipo Sinsin. Dobbiamo pensare perciò a una datazione Ha A 2 - Ha B, anche in base agli altri ritrovamenti effettuati nella grotta di Han.

### *Sur la zone alpine.*

VAN BERG:

Pourquoi l'accouplement décrit par Seglie au sujet des gravures du Pinerolese ne pourrait-il être un accouplement simplement humain, plutôt qu'une hiérogamie; sur quels éléments vous basez-vous pour parler de hiérogamie?

SEGLIE:

Même s'il s'agit d'un accouplement humain, je pense que l'on a voulu sanctifier ce dernier.

ANATI:

Ovviamente non si può decidere a priori se tali figurazioni di accoppiamento siano di carattere sacro. Anche se non si trattasse di hierogamia, potrebbe esistere, allora come oggi, una identificazione tra unione fisica e unione sacrale.

MORI:

L'unica differenza a cui voleva alludere van Berg è che non sono due esseri non umani.

SEGLIE:

Nè l'una nè l'altra cosa. La presenza di un certo simbolismo getta una luce di sacralità.

ANATI:

Si conoscono, nell'arte rupestre, figure di accoppiamento tra esseri soprannaturali, ad esempio quella di Derrynablaha in Irlanda, ma sono casi estremamente rari per ora.

GRAZIOSI:

Già il Prof. Pons mostrava queste incisioni e poi ha continuato a ripresentare sempre le stesse cose. Si è allargata l'area delle scoperte? Il repertorio sembra veramente poco ampio. Non si può dire nulla su queste incisioni, presentano un ambito troppo ristretto. In Liguria molte incisioni sono recenti. Che cosa avete trovato oltre le cospicue e le croci?

SEGLIE:

Effettivamente alcuni simboli si ripetono con molta insistenza. Essi dovevano avere un carattere fondamentale per chi li istoriava.

CHRISTINGER:

Pour ce qui concerne les figures d'échelles, dans plusieurs récits du Moyen-Age, l'échelle symbolise l'accession à un monde supérieur, en général la montée au Paradis. Diverses traditions d'Europe occidentale se rapportent à ce symbolisme que l'on peut rapprocher de degrés, de marches ou d'étages connus dans des religions d'Asie ou d'Afrique. Des graffitis chrétiens et des gravures rupestres,

datant de la fin de la période de Hallstatt ou du début de la période de la Tène, reproduisent des échelles qui, dans la plupart des cas, semblent ne conduire nulle part. Il convient de mentionner les échelles du Val Camonica qui, dans quatre cas connus, sinon plus, donnent accès à une demeure. Ces représentations sont à mettre en relation avec diverses pratiques chamanistiques plutôt qu'avec des systèmes religieux élaborés.

- ANATI: L'échelle de la stèle de Triora semble mener au monde souterrain plutôt qu'au ciel. Néanmoins, même dans ce monument, elle apparaît comme un lien avec l'au-delà.
- CHRISTINGER: L'échelle est un symbole qui se répète depuis la préhistoire et qui persiste dans l'époque historique.
- GRAZIOSI: En Ligurie, il y a des figures d'échelles qui sont très récentes.
- MAYA: Il y en a aussi qui sont préhistoriques. Comme au Mont Bégo.
- CHRISTINGER: Je voudrais ajouter deux remarques de caractère descriptif à la communication de Mr. Ferri. Personnellement, je ne connais pas, au Val Camonica, de palette pourvue de deux yeux. De plus, je ne pense pas qu'à l'époque où ont été gravées les palettes, le miroir rectangulaire était utilisé au Val Camonica. De nombreuses tentatives ont déjà été faites pour expliquer la palette. Engler a proposé de la rattacher au culte du soleil. Cook a fait remarquer que Thor tient parfois à la main une palette. La forme de la palette rappelle également l'objet en bois utilisé dans le jeu du *Hornuss*, jeu populaire encore pratiqué actuellement dans certains villages de Suisse allemande. Enfin, je voudrais ajouter au dossier une croyance curieuse du folklore alpin: celle des « crieuses de nuit », femmes qui, en battant l'eau avec une palette pendant la nuit, auraient eu le pouvoir de déchaîner les éléments.
- MAXIA: Au nombre des trouvailles faites dans la Grotta Fantavi en Sardaigne il y avait un miroir de cuivre. La datation au C 14 a donné pour résultat: 850 av. J.-C. Il y avait encore trois autres objets intacts: un couteau, un rasoir et un trépied. Tout le reste du matériel était cassé. Il devait s'agir d'objets pour le mort.
- DE MARINIS: L'interpretazione che ha dato il prof. Ferri delle palette nelle incisioni rupestri della Valcamonica come specchi, si basa sulla analogia con determinati manufatti archeologici, le palette di bronzo. Già R. Forrer interpretò le palette bronzee come specchi, interpretazione che però non ebbe molta fortuna. Le palette bronzee si trovano nelle culture di Este e di Villanova, ma la zona dove meglio si possono studiare nella loro evoluzione tipologica è quella della cultura di Golassecca. Qui si trovano a partire da una fase avanzata del Bronzo Finale (Ha B 1) e gli stessi tipi appaiono nella stessa epoca in Svizzera (a Prot Alban e a Montlingerberg). Hanno forma ovale, il manico a tortiglione terminante con un solo occhiello: la palette è decorata a graffito. Possono effettivamente far pensare a degli specchi. Lo stesso tipo di palette continua ad apparire nella prima età del Ferro con lievi variazioni tipologiche. I tipi con manico desinente a due occhielli sono comunque del VI secolo a. C. Le palette sono trovate in tombe a incinerazione, poste dentro urne di terracotta. Però con il V secolo a. C. (Golassecca III) la palette diventa di ferro e continua a trovarsi nelle tombe a incinerazione. Vi è evidentemente continuità di uso e di significato rituale tra esemplari di bronzo e esemplari di ferro. Questo fatto vanifica l'interpretazione delle palette come specchi, poichè nel caso di quelle di ferro non si può più pensare a tale uso. A cosa servivano le palette trovate nelle tombe a incinerazione? Erano destinate a raccogliere le ceneri del morto dall'ustrino dopo la cremazione e a deporle nell'urna. Un famoso testo hittita che descrive il rituale funerario di un re o di una regina, ci informa che dopo aver spento il rogo le ceneri venivano raccolte con uno strumento d'argento chiamato « lappa », che si può tradurre probabilmente proprio con palette.
- GOMEZ-TABANERA: Quelli delle palette non sono occhi e non lo sono nemmeno negli idoli della penisola iberica. Di tutti gli idoli non credo che ce ne sia uno solo che porta occhi. Queste palette possono essere interpretate anche come valore economico,

si pensi al talento fenicio; e nessuna comparazione è possibile nel mondo archeologico. Si lavora troppo di fantasia, bisogna essere più scientifici e senza troppe divagazioni e soprattutto rimanere nell'ambito del contesto culturale.

MAXIA: Le palettes della Valcamonica e gli idoli spagnoli sono due cose diverse che non vanno confuse.

GOMEZ-TABANERA: A propos du rapprochement entre palettes et idoles espagnoles, deux objections doivent être soulevées: pour nombre de ces idoles, les « yeux » semblent plutôt représenter les seins. D'autre part, aucune de ces idoles avec yeux ne ressemble vraiment aux palettes. Dans la recherche du matériel comparatif, il faut veiller à ne pas isoler les éléments envisagés de leur contexte.

ANATI: There are more than 500 representations of « palette » in Val Camonica; most of them have been traced and many have been published. They have also been analyzed in terms of their context. About fifty different theories on their significance have been heard in the last twenty years. Indeed this figure has stimulated much imagination and yet its meaning is still unclear. Though De Marinis' hypothesis is very valuable and interesting, we still have insufficient data for a valid interpretation.

Three examples of the contexts in which « palette » are found may be remembered:

A - Near Paspardo, a giant phallus has a series of « palette » inside. This example seems to substantiate the idea of *mana*, but we have only one example of this kind.

B - Another « palette » was found depicted on a wagon again near Paspardo. This would seem to indicate a particular reverence for this symbol or object.

C - The « palette » is most commonly found in scenes of combat. The victor is usually accompanied by a « palette » and the victim by a praying bust. Two such scenes from the Great Rock of Naquane are well known.

The « palette » is found also in connection with looms, with hunting scenes, and with scenes of cult. There is no doubt that the « palette » must have represented a very important object or symbol for the cult. But we cannot be certain yet whether we can consider this figure to represent a symbol, an object, or both.

GRAZIOSI: What is the date of the earliest « palette »?

ANATI: They start appearing in the Late Neolithic and are found throughout the Bronze Age and on into the Iron Age. This figure has a long life but is rather localized in Val Camonica. It is concentrated mainly in the zones of Naquane, Nadro, Cimbergo and Paspardo. However, it appears also in other groups of rock-art, such as that of North West Spain.

CAMPS: Je voudrais apporter un élément supplémentaire au dossier de la « palette », une analogie frappante qui me vient à l'esprit: au nombre des gravures protohistoriques d'Algérie orientale existe un personnage, tenant dans la main droite un objet rectangulaire, et représenté dans une position comparable à celle de la Potnia Therôn. Ce thème est repris une cinquantaine de fois. L'objet rectangulaire interprété parfois, à tort, comme un bouclier, est peut-être à mettre en corrélation avec le groupe des palettes.

ANATI: Le dieu gaulois Succellus avait une palette en main, comme dans le couple divin de Sarrebourg. Succellus a été appelé « Bon Batteur », pour ce que ça peut valoir.

MARIËN: Je suis très étonné d'entendre parler de miroirs de bronze devant les représentations du type « palette ». Je pense pour ma part au rasoir rectangulaire qui se développe à l'Age du Fer, plutôt qu'au miroir qui n'est pas attesté en Europe occidentale avant l'époque étrusque.

MAXIA: Je ne suis pas d'accord avec ce que vient de dire Mr. Mariën, car en Sardaigne on a bel et bien un miroir de cuivre, daté de 850 av. J.-C., dont j'ai déjà parlé.



ANATI: Nous avons écouté encore quelques théories sur la palette. Il y en a déjà assez, que j'ai eu l'occasion de résumer il y a quelques années. Je pense que cette discussion n'a pas apporté de solution au problème. Elle a néanmoins créé une ultérieure curiosité scientifique et a eu l'avantage de laisser ce problème ouvert. Qu'est-ce que la palette? La question n'est pas résolue. Pour ma part, personne ne m'a encore convaincu de sa théorie.

*Sur la Scandinavie.*

HVIDTFELDT: Prof. Almgren has provided very precise dating for Bronze Age rock-art in Scandinavia. How was the dating done: was it related to Val Camonica dating? Are the engravings similar?

ALMGREN: The dating was carried out on the basis of a detailed study of styles: a purely Swedish or Scandinavian approach to the problem. The geometric style, with angular bodies, dates from Bronze Age period III. Some dates are debatable, but we have a clear idea of the evolution and there are some fix points.

SEGLIE: Ci sono delle relazioni tra il ciclo sud-scandinavo e il ciclo artico?

ALMGREN: The two were totally different cultures. The northern rock carvings represent a life based on hunting; contacts with the southern groups are very hard to substantiate. The northern group is also very hard to date, but it is an art of hunters. The southern group is also named « agricultural group » and shows a Bronze Age mentality.

GIMBUTAS: Has Almgren attempted to identify the figures bearing weapons in South Scandinavian rock art with the images of male gods in Germanic mythology? For example, the spear-god might be compared with Odin, and the hammer figure with Donar (?).

ALMGREN: The general conception seems comparable to that of old Indo-European religions: specific gods are probably not named individually. The change from the hammer to the spear seems to indicate some parallels.

GIMBUTAS: The fertility god has a sword in later Scandinavia.

ALMGREN: The word « Lord » was used for gods, not a specific name.

MARSTRANDER: The ship is perhaps a Bronze Age attribute.

ALMGREN: We can only make hypotheses, but the change in the type of arms, at the same time, in the same area, may be significant for identifying gods.

GIMBUTAS: The Lithuanians worshipped superhuman hammers as late as the 15th century A. D., and Slavic sanctuaries near Stetten in North Eastern Germany included shields and spears which were worshipped until the 12th century. This shows a definite relationship.

CHRISTINGER: Does Swedish folklore or tradition provide any evidence to explain the horned and winged figures? We know of German and Swiss figures in similar carnival disguise, in masks, and there are many related folk tales in Switzerland. They could also be compared with the Val Camonica Schnabelgeis, which has horns and a beak.

ALMGREN: No, there is no such tradition in Sweden. Few masks are found in Scandinavia as opposed to Western Europe or Indo-Europeans. The Scandinavian engravings probably represent horned helmets. Some early Hallstatt helmets have been preserved, but all from the Bronze, not the Viking Age. These also have bird beaks and what may be two eyes, and they may perhaps be related to Central European beliefs.

CHRISTINGER: Is there not a link with Germany? (Gunderstrup). In France (Orange), we find a helmet with a wheel between the horns.

ALMGREN: Many beliefs reached Scandinavia from Europe during the Bronze Age, but thereafter Scandinavia is more isolated and probably reverts to the aniconic representation of deities. In this sense it differs from Germany (cf. Tacitus on the Germanic tribes).

- MONSEN: Concerning bird figures, in a Norwegian fairy-tale of possible mythical origin, a princess has 12 brothers who are wild ducks in daytime. She saves them from the evil spell by making shirts to them but the youngest prince is left with a duck's wing instead of one arm; could this motif be connected with the bird-engravings in Scandinavia?
- ALMGREN: At Kivik, the man portrayed without arms is wearing a Bronze Age cloak, while the others shown are not birds, but the mourning widows of the deceased man. These figures are in a tomb and have connections with the dead.
- MARSTRANDER: Almgren's assertion that after the Bronze Age there was a return in Scandinavia from the depiction of personalised gods to the aniconic tradition is most unusual. Is Tacitus the only basis for this assertion?
- ALMGREN: The engravings in the Late Bronze Age, periods 5 and 6 (Hallstatt C and D), show a return to the depiction of ships and artistic symbols. This continues into the Early Iron Age, with the traditional ships.
- MARSTRANDER: But why should there have been a return to aniconic concept when the gods had once been represented?
- ALMGREN: Representations of gods are very few and last for only a short period between two aniconic traditions. This seems to be attributable to a brief period of continental influence.
- VAN BERG: Almgren compared two engravings, one from Norway, the other from Val Camonica. Both show two figures: one with large hands in a position of worship, the other without arms or sex. Almgren suggested that this showed the worship of a divinity. But a similar opposition is found in children's drawings. Here the person without arms or sex is usually the artist and the figure with large hands and indications of sex is a figure of power, the child's father, for example. Psychological studies show that children feel weak. Is this another possible interpretation?
- ALMGREN: In Nordic carvings, figures without arms usually represent people wearing cloaks; these are people of « independent means » who do not have to work, and the cloak is a sign of their status. Figures with large hands are so rare in Nordic engravings as to constitute something very special, so one may assume that they are gods.
- ANATI: The fact that they are rare, can hardly be considered a proof that they represent gods. Their figurative context, the scenes in which they are represented, should be used to substantiate or dismiss this hypothesis.
- GHOSH: The move towards a psychological interpretation (comparison with children's drawings) is most interesting. Drawings may be divided into three main categories: a) accidental, such as those done by chimpanzees; b) instinctive (all children's drawings fall into this category); c) prehistoric (based on tradition). The latter two categories must be strictly separated; though I do not feel myself competent to comment on Almgren's interpretation of the Scandinavian example.

### *Sur la Grèce.*

- ANATI: Mylonas' discoveries may have wider implications, as Mycenae was part of the European culture. Various different forms of objects are found in different places, but the spread of some concepts transcends a single culture or area. The scutiform figure, for example, which is a rather peculiar and specific depiction found in the rock art of Val Camonica, is represented also at Mount Bego, in the French Maritime Alps, in the Atlantic Megalithic art and in other groups of prehistoric art. Such a figure has several characteristics which are repeated in the different areas and very likely illustrate some concepts which must have been shared by various cultures. One of these groups, at Luine, shall be visited during this symposium. There we shall see also an open-air shrine which has some analogies with Mycenaean open-air shrines described by Prof. Mylonas. The presence of common concepts, of similar figures or of similar structures does not imply a similarity of culture as a whole.
- MYLONAS: I would be delighted to maintain that the Mycenaean taught the Camunians! However, this development may have occurred independently in many places,

since the form of the shield is determined by the fact that it was made from a calf's hide, minus the legs, stretched on a wooden frame.

SWAUGER:

I would like to offer another conquest for the Mycenaeans. At the Ashdod site in Israel, where I have been working, a single-block circular stone and a rectangular block were found in association with Philistine figures. The Philistines, after all, were Mycenaeans; and the object was probably established in the late Canaanite period and merely used by the Philistines.

MYLONAS:

The Philistines were certainly from the mainland, if not actually Mycenaeans. Hittite, Anatolian, and Babylonian parallels have been found too. It is too early to be dogmatic, but this is certainly the first real Mycenaean find, from Ashdod, dated about 1200 B. C. (?) and it is completely different from the Minoan.

CHAO:

The goddess shown in the fresco was only 16 cm. high. Did the Mycenaeans really make goddesses so small?

MYLONAS:

In Minoan and Mycenaean times there are such miniature frescoes and they usually have religious significance, so it is clear that size is not related to divinity. Sometimes the human figures are much larger than the buildings represented.

GIMBUTAS:

These excavations are fascinating for their Minoan, Old European and Indo-European and early Greek warrior elements. One of the most interesting features is the bird goddess with a shield and a helmet. How did she develop? She would seem to have roots in the Old European culture. In the Bird and Snake goddess, modified by the Indo-European influence, Athena was also portrayed with a helmet and shield.

MYLONAS:

Certainly Athena was helmeted and was the giver of victory, so she really represents the war goddess, rather than Ares who, though actually the god of war, was rather a comic figure. But to develop this idea, we must first establish the existence of the bird goddess on a scientific basis. The pinched nose may be merely a technical detail. If we study the Mycenaean figurines, we find that the clay figurines have more or less a naturalistic nose but not those in marble. Because the marble used was in flat sheets, the figurine has to have a flat head, and the upward thrust of the nose was the result of an attempt to give the impression of depth. In order to draw the parallel suggested by Gimbutas, we must first establish the older type in a scientific way.

GIMBUTAS:

The helmeted and shielded goddess certainly represents the link between the Old European and Indo-European Mycenaean culture. Athena is associated with the snake, as her Neolithic predecessor, the Bird-and-Snake goddess.

MYLONAS:

The snake is certainly found, as is the golden owl in Pylos, but when and why the owl, the frog, etc. were used in relation to a female divinity is not yet known.

GIMBUTAS:

What is the origin of the name Mycenae?

MYLONAS:

The origin is not known, though there are several theories. For instance, it has been suggested that there was a large number of cows there, and that the name derives from 'Moo'-cenae! Or alternatively that Perseus, seeking for a place to build the town, saw a large mushroom (Myka), picked it, and a spring of water rose from the ground, so the town was called Mycenae. Or again, that the daughter of one of the early kings was called Myka. Mycenae, the plural form, might denote the constellation of small groups of settlements which became one city with a collective plural name. In general, we have to say that the derivation is not really known. It may be pre-Indo-European, or at any rate derive from non-Greek-speaking Indo-Europeans.

GRIFFITHS:

Mylonas' thesis proved that in Mycenae the main religious centres were situated outside the palace. But are we to take it that this is true for Crete, and particularly for the palace of Knossos, which is full of religious symbols?

MYLONAS:

We must distinguish between the Minoan and Mycenaean religions which are certainly different and there is need of an internal study of Mycenaean religious practices as well as Minoan ones. The conclusion drawn in my paper is only valid for Mycenae. We certainly know of the existence of shrines within the palace of Knossos in the Minoan civilization and from this it has been concluded that state shrines exist within the palaces. However, of the three palaces we know in the Mycenaean civilization, none has a shrine! Tirynthe, excavated by



Dörpfeld; Mycenae, excavated by Tsoundas, Wace and by us; and Pylos, excavated by Blegen. In the palace of Pylos, a stucco-covered stone (which may be an altar), was found within a court, but no other evidence has been found, though it is true that the villagers had been looting the site for a long time. So, limiting oneself to Mycenae, one must say that there is no evidence of the existence of shrines within palaces; in Minoan religion things were different.

Miss Chao should see Katozakro, which was destroyed early, but contains interesting evidence on Minoan religion.

CHAO:

I have visited Katozakro recently and agree that this palace provides very interesting evidence for the study of the Late Minoan Palatial religion. It should be noted, moreover, that the evidence for Cretan Prehistoric religion from the excavated palatial areas need not reflect the overall religious beliefs of the ancient Cretans.

TAMVAKI:

(Gives a reference to the publication of Prof. Platon) Some objects have strong religious associations and from Crete we know of altars on the mountain-side surrounded by wild animals; these antedate all mainland influences.

GIMBUTAS:

The sources of material on the civilization of the Cyclades and of the Neolithic Old Europe are very different. The Cycladic figurines come exclusively from graves and therefore present a smaller range of types than do the Neolithic figurines, which come from habitation sites and from graves. I believe that the Cycladic figurines are masked, even if they are made in marble; this is true also of the fluteplayer. It is also true that red colouring is used on many of them, and this is very significant.

TAMVAKI:

The fact that the Cycladic figurines are found in graves certainly makes them very specific; nevertheless variations in types do exist. Figurines are found in different contexts, but there is need of very careful investigation before we assume that they serve religious functions. The Cycladic figurines are not masked; their form originates in the technical problem of the use of marble mentioned by Professor Mylonas. Red colour has been associated with death by some researchers and examples have been found in Palaikastro. But there may be some other reason for the use of red colour, and I do not believe that it is associated with death.

GIMBUTAS:

You should not overlook the Neolithic figurines found in graves: there are parallels. For instance, in the cemetery of Cernavoda of the Hamangia culture, Rumania. This may be the source of the Cycladic figurines. The grave images are of a specific « chrysalid » type, and both male and female images are found.

TAMVAKI:

We cannot base assumptions on the figurines found in association with graves, because the evidence is insufficient. Male figures are certainly rarer, and if more are found, we will need to examine other hypotheses.

TINE':

Alcune statuette cicladiche pubblicate dallo Tsountas presentano delle caratteristiche uguali a quelle delle figurine egiziane del Gerzeano. Ci può essere un rapporto diretto. Anche le tombe a grotticella provano questa relazione, e così pure altri oggetti, come spilloni a testa ornitomorfa.

TAMVAKI:

Non credo che l'origine di queste figurine possa essere cercata in Egitto.

TINE':

Ho studiato il problema in un articolo: Origine delle tombe rupestri: contatti fra Gerzeano ed Egeo. Piggott è d'accordo con questa tesi, che cioè l'origine della cultura cicladica sia nell'Egitto predinastico. Anche Gordon Childe mostrò queste connessioni.

TAMVAKI:

There may indeed be possible parallels in Egypt, but there is no need to look so far afield for parallels when we can find them in mainland Greece, the Cyclades, and even, perhaps, Central Europe.

TINE':

Molte di queste statuette sono state trovate in tombe sia in Egitto, che nelle Cicladi.

MYLONAS:

The Cycladic figurines, particularly the older ones, are predominantly female. If they were indeed placed in the graves to supply the needs of men in the Underworld, are we to assume that women had male figurines to help them in the Underworld? But why do we not find them? We have to answer this question before we can make such assertions.