

K Y T H E R A

HAGIOS GEORGIOS STO VOUNO





*Yannis Sakellarakis at the excavation site, on Hagios Georgios
sto Vouno. Adonis Kyrou in the background (summer 1993).*

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YANNIS SAKELLARAKIS

KYTHERA

HAGIOS GEORGIOS STO VOUNO

Minoan cult and the Post Bronze Age
history of the site

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A. A CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY
OF MINOAN CULT

New evidence from the sanctuary at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno

1. INTRODUCTION

The excavation of the unlooted Minoan peak sanctuary at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno has provided unique evidence for the cult practiced in Minoan peak sanctuaries. This is a notable development in the study of this type of sanctuary, especially considering the idiosyncratic nature of the latter, by comparison, that is, to the exclusive character of the Minoan palatial or household cult. Peak sanctuary cult, similarly to the cult practiced in sacred caves, was the only cult in Minoan Crete involving the participation of all social classes, without exception, from the elite to the lowly peasants, as is clearly indicated by the offerings. The emerging evidence from Hagios Georgios sto Vouno concerning Minoan peak sanctuaries, crucial to the understanding of Minoan religion as a whole, cannot, therefore remain unexploited.

The identification of the type of Minoan cult practiced in peak sanctuaries, and of the many individual elements of this cult, as revealed by the excavation of an unlooted Minoan peak sanctuary, has an additional value for the study of Minoan religion, which, despite the numerous individual studies, has, paradoxically, never been treated as a whole. One should bear in mind that the study published by M. Nilsson (1950) concerning the Creto-Mycenaean religion, which has for many years been a most important source for the study of Minoan religion as a whole, includes no mention of peak sanctuaries, because the identification of this type of sanctuary postdated even the second edition of the book. At the same time, the first, and only, to date, monograph on Minoan religion, by Nanno Marinatos (1993), is too general. The study of Minoan religion is of course not an easy task. The difficulties associated with the study of ancient Greek religion, are well known, despite the existence of numerous philological sources and inscriptions at the disposal of scholars. Much more difficult is the study of prehistoric religion, with its meager and in any case mute, re-

mains. Minoan religion was accurately described as “a picture book without text” (A. Furumark 1965, 86).

The contribution of N. Platon, as early as 1951 (Platon 1951), to the study of Minoan religion, with the identification of the peak sanctuary, as a distinct type of Minoan sanctuary, has been significant (Dietrich 1969, 257). Nevertheless, the investigation of this particular type of sanctuary did not proceed without obstacles. After the tireless, successive topographical and speleological investigations of P. Faure, in the 1960ies and the 1970ies, on numerous mountains and hills of mostly east and central Crete, and the identification of the exact location of many peak sanctuaries (Faure 1965; 1967; 1969; 1972), the illicit dealers in antiquities embarked on the systematic looting of the sites, so that a great amount of primary evidence for the study of the Minoan cult practiced therein, was destroyed.

During the nearly 50 years that have gone by since Platon’s article, even the identification of this entirely idiosyncratic type of sanctuary has remained obscure for some scholars, since peak sanctuaries were also associated with other types of Minoan sites featuring open-air worship. The scholars that were involved in the study of the cult in Minoan peak sanctuaries disagreed with each other on a variety of topics, not only about the dating or the interpretation of the offerings and their use in the sanctuaries, about the possible breakage of offerings, the burning and/or storage of offerings, the expectations and the activities of the worshippers, even the matter of possible on-site meals, but also about various other theoretical issues concerning the priesthood, the relation of the peak sanctuaries to the political status quo, and the deity worshipped. It is evident that the variety of views expressed about all these and other issues, did not attain universal acceptance amongst the archaeological community, not only on account of the lack of published and, even more to the point, stratified archaeological evidence, as mentioned above, but also because of insufficient knowledge of the abundant material stored in museum storerooms, often the result of looting (B. Rutkowski 1986, 11), which was never taken into account in an overall consideration of Minoan cult.

The Greek archaeological service was unable to deal with the problem and settled for recording a few tens of objects, mostly terracotta figurines, in the catalogue of the by that time official Metaxa Collection, published in 1992 by A. Pilali-Papasteriou (1992). Although the investigations of K. Davaras in many of the repeatedly looted peak sanctuaries did rescue a great number of objects for the museum storerooms, they did not shed any light on the various aspects of the cult, mostly because the specific archaeological data concerning the sites in question were never published.

Unfortunately, A. Karetsou has not yet published the excavation of Juktas, the largest known Minoan peak sanctuary in Crete, although it did begin as early as the 1970ies. The recent archaeological investigations conducted by G. Rethemniotakis and A. Karetsou at the peak sanctuary of Kophinas, also remain unpublished, while important objects from the site did find their way to the Mitsotakis and the Metaxa Collections (Pilali-Papasteriou 1992, 43; L. Marangou 1992, 233).

So it is not merely a case of the absence of important, as yet unknown, objects from the Minoan peak sanctuaries, some of which will one day appear in an auction or a private collection, but mainly the absence of the necessary archaeological data that would shed light on the ritual practices. Because of our incomplete knowledge of the primary archaeological evidence, the study of the cult practiced in Minoan peak sanctuaries remained on a mostly theoretical level and scholarly confusion was inevitable (D. Sphakianakis 2011). Unfortunately, the scholars involved in the study of peak sanctuaries, instead of focusing on the publication of the surviving material, like Rutkowski, with the material from Petsofas (Rutkowski 1991), Pilali-Papasteriou, with the terracotta figurines from the peak sanctuary at Kophinas (Pilali-Papasteriou 1992, 43), and recently E. Papadopoulou and I. Tzachili, with the systematic excavation of the peak sanctuary at Vrysinas (Papadopoulou and Tzachili 2006), focused instead on insoluble theoretical issues. A unique exception to the rule is the investigation of the peak sanctuary at Atsipades (Peatfield 1992, 59-87; Morris and Peatfield 1995, 643-647). K. Davara's publication of only a selected number of individual objects from the enormous number of finds at his disposal (Davaras 1975, 167-168; 1976, 46, 50-52, 55, 137-139, fig. 6; 1980, 87-92; 1981, 45-54; 1988; Davaras and Brice 1977, 5-6), did not really further the study of Minoan cult.

The study of Minoan peak sanctuary cult was marked therefore by the total lack of archaeological evidence. This is exactly what makes the archaeological material from Hagios Georgios sto Vouno so valuable, material often attested in undisturbed Minoan layers, in the only unplundered Minoan peak sanctuary discovered to date. Notable is the remark made by D. W. Jones: "More extensive excavation at some of these sites where soil exists, probably holds out a greater chance of contributing substantially new information" (Jones 1999, 39).

There is one more observation that should be made at this stage concerning the study of the cult practiced in Minoan peak sanctuaries. A few scholars, although quite familiar with Cretan prehistory, were not as well acquainted with ancient Greek popular religion, as others (Nilsson 1953; N. Papahatzis 1990, 1-82), the latter being, in any case, closer chronologi-

cally to Minoan religion than the religion practiced in the Christian monasteries of mediaeval Europe, a comparison attempted in a number of occasions in relation to the Minoan peak sanctuaries (Peatfield 1987, 93). Some scholars, instead of looking into the customs of the faraway Indians in the northwest Pacific (Jones 1999, 32, n. 32) or Sri Lanka, in Thailand (Peatfield 1990, 130) and Bali (Peatfield 2000, 11), should perhaps attend some religious rituals of the 20th century A.D., in out of the way places of Crete. An important tool in the study of this aspect of Minoan cult is a recent book by N. Psilakis (2005), which could help even those scholars that did not have the good fortune to personally observe a popular religious ritual in Crete and have perhaps not reflected on the fears and the hopes of simple people still living in the same place. It is obvious that if some scholars are not in a position to deal with the most basic aspects of the rituals practiced in a shrine without the help of philological sources, they are definitely not in a position to approach the state of mind of the worshippers, concerning basic concepts, such as individual piety, or devotion. A reference by Porphyrius (*Porphyrius, Περὶ ἀποχῆς ἐμψύχων, ἢ περὶ ἐγκρατείας* 2, 15), indicates that a person studying the sanctuary at Delphi is not in a position to truly evaluate the offer of a handful of coarsely ground barley seeds taken out of the sack of a poor anonymous man from Ermione, next to the dedications made by tyrants like Gelon or Hieron, by kings like Croesus or by very rich city-states. Porphyrius's reference to Apollo's acceptance of a poorer, humbler offering, instead of a richer, more ostentatious one, serves to remind scholars their lack of criteria for the appraisal of any offering made by worshippers in any sanctuary, when they all appeal for the same help from above.

It is obvious that the extremely fragmented state of our knowledge for a great number of peak sanctuaries, has forced scholars to proceed with lists of finds collated from more than one sanctuary and at the same time to associate certain cult practices attested in one sanctuary, with more than one sites. As a result, comparisons were made between dissimilar aspects of the cult, as for example between the intensity of the cult and the variously explained ostentatious character of the worship, in a large, central sanctuary, and the humble piety attested in another, unimportant provincial sanctuary. Peatfield went even further when he maintained that only three specific types of votive figurines can be associated with Minoan peak sanctuaries (Peatfield 1987, 90; 1990, 120), as if the needs of the shepherds at Atsipades were the same as the needs of all the pious worshippers in the whole of Crete.

In reality, the material scholars have at their disposal when studying Minoan peak sanctuaries is rather ambiguous; it includes fragments of ob-

jects/implements indicating some type of Minoan ritual, as well as a variety of votive offerings. As regards the former aspect of this material, it has been established that the cult implements used in peak sanctuaries are the same as those used in all the other types of Minoan cult places (Cadogan 1988, 98), which explains to a certain degree the homogeneity attested in peak sanctuaries. As regards the votive offerings deposited by local worshippers, on the other hand, there is a considerable degree of differentiation between sites (Watrous 2001, 195). This is only natural, considering that one should not expect the Minoan colonists and sailors at Kythera to dedicate to Hagios Georgios sto Vouno models of beetles of the species *oryctes nasicornis* (Dietrich 1971, 513; Peatfield 1990, 121). It is therefore not surprising that research on Minoan peak sanctuaries is now focusing more on the differences between sanctuaries (Watrous 1996, 27; Jones 1999, 2–3).

This study, focusing on the Kytherian peak sanctuary at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, is based both on the archaeological evidence, on the various material remains that came to light, aspects of ritual activities, and on the thoughts of the worshippers, naturally in association with the extant data from other peak sanctuaries. Important differentiations between the Kythera peak sanctuary and the metropolitan Minoan peak sanctuaries will be discussed further along in the chapter devoted to Minoan colonization and Minoan thalassocracy in the Aegean. The investigation of the cult practiced in the peak sanctuary on Hagios Georgios sto Vouno is based, not only on the archaeological evidence and the information resulting from the analytical presentation of the finds, but also on comparative evidence from the Cretan peak sanctuaries and of course on the few, yet extremely important, iconographical representations, depicting peak sanctuaries. The study also includes a certain amount of related evidence from the East, as well as some age old cult practices, still attested on mountain tops in Crete.

The study of the cult at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, which involves the comprehensive evaluation of all the material remains that came to light in relation to their archaeological context, is set out in the following sections: 1. Evidence. The location and the landscape, 2. The iconography of Minoan peak sanctuaries, 3. The ritual practices. 4. The deity worshipped.

2. THE LOCATION AND THE LANDSCAPE

St. Soetens, Ap. Sarris and S. Topouzi examine the peak sanctuaries, as a geographically determined location, and more specifically, the peak sanctuaries located on, or in the vicinity of, mountain peaks (Soetens, Sarris and Topouzi 2006, 314). Peak sanctuaries are therefore described as sites located near or on mountain peaks, with at least one mild slope, in an area exploited by man and visible from other sanctuaries (Soetens, Sarris and Topouzi 2006, 315). What they are chiefly concerned with is the political significance of the vertical distribution of sanctuaries (yet see Buxton 2002, 122, where it is stated that a mountain is not defined in terms of its actual height).

The primary defining factor in the study of Minoan cult practices in all Minoan peak sanctuaries, including Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, is the comprehensive investigation of the landscape. Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, as noted above, is not any Kytherian mountain top, but the highest mountaintop in the vicinity of the Minoan colony at Kastri, as was the case with all the other Minoan peak sanctuaries, which not only lie in the vicinity of Minoan palaces and settlements, overlooking them, but also, and most importantly, they oversee, in the strategic sense, the palaces or settlements involved, protecting them from oncoming enemies or other dangers. This is the rule for all the Cretan peak sanctuaries, the deity of which, oversees, protects and defends both palaces and settlements. This is even more so in the case of the sanctuary at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, in the vicinity of a remote Minoan colony, which oversees, not only a large part of the island, but, more importantly, a large part of the southeast Aegean and sea roads of critical importance for Minoan navigation.

It is a well-known axiom in religious studies that the sanctuary defines the site (Burkert 1993, 222). The main factor differentiating Minoan peak sanctuaries from other extra-urban sanctuaries (Watrous 1996), the rural shrines mentioned by M. Nilsson (1950, 272) and B. C. Dietrich (1969, 258, 263), the country shrines mentioned by P. Faure (1969, 206), and the sacred enclosures mentioned by B. Rutkowski (1986, 99), as well as one Minoan peak sanctuary from another, is their location. The most essential element common to all peak sanctuaries is their location, the peak where they were founded, i.e. the concept of height (see Buxton 2002, 121–141, for the importance of the mountain in ancient Greece). The latter is not only universal, but also ancient, and can be traced back to the Ziggurats of Mesopotamia (Müller-Karpe 1974, 620), and to the little country chapel dedicated to Prophetes Elias, built on a large number of mountain tops and hilltops in Greece (Kardara 1966, 160–162). The intensity of the wor-

ship on high places is well attested in Palestine, both at Hanaan and Israel (Albright 1957, 242–258; Vaux 1961, 279–281, 284–288; Biran 1981; Peatfield 1990, 130), in prehistoric central Europe (Rutkowski 1971, 14, where he mentions worship in high places in Africa; 1985, esp. 345–348), and of course in ancient Greece (Langdon 1976, 100; Lauter 1985). Since mountains reach the heavens, it is only natural that they would be considered the home of the gods (Cook 1914–1940, I, 100–117; II, 2, 868–987; Semple 1932, 522; Morgan 1988, 157–158; Buxton 2002, 126–127).

The study of hypaethral poles as means for the epiphany of the god of lightning and rain in Minoan Crete by Chr. Kardara (1966; see also Levi 1981, 40) (Fig.1), including numerous parallels of freestanding poles in the countries of the Near East, has been perhaps overlooked. Weather phenomena have preoccupied the human mind in prehistoric times, something we tend to forget



Fig. 1: Sphragistic cylinder, depicting a free-standing pole, from North Syria (Kardara 1966, 172, fig. 20).

at our technological age. After the decipherment of the Linear B script, the worship of the winds, an integral aspect of navigation, has become a fact, hence the priestess of the winds at the ‘dangerous harbor’ (‘χαλεπούς λιμένας’) of Amnisos. It is also worth noting that the priestess of the winds, ‘A-ne-mo i-je-re-ja’, is mentioned in three Linear B tablets from Knossos (Palmer 1963, 236; M. Gérard-Rousseau 1968, 32, 108; Hiller 1992, 31–32; Sacconi 1964). In any case, worship of the winds is also known from later times, including references in Homer (*Ἰλιάς* Ψ, 192–211), Herodotus (*Hdt VII*, 178), and Pausanias (*Paus. IV*, 35; Hampe 1967, 1). Based on observations concerning the movement of the clouds on mountains, important conclusions could be drawn about the winds, the rain, the moisture and draughts (Kyriazopoulos and Livadas 1967), i.e. for the most important matters in the life of the entire population, including sailors, cattle-breeders, or farmers and that is why Zeus was identified as a weather god (Cook 1914–1940, III, 1–881; Burkert 1993, 273–274). The Greek mountain of Olympus is only one example of the inherently popular concept concerning the ever-present divine power, seated on the highest peak of a mountain (Kyriazopoulos and Livadas 1967, 6–14, for the cult at the top of the Hagios Antonios mountain in Hellenistic times, at a height of 2.817m; Papadakis 1919, 25–34, for the pyre of Herakles on Mt. Oite; Béquignon 1937; Cook 1914–1940, I, 100–117). It is not by chance that only on the highest mountain can the chosen speak with god, whether this is king

Minos (Dietrich 1971, 521, *versus* Rutkowski 1985, for the association of king Minos with Zeus, with reference to Minoan peak sanctuaries), or Moses (Levi 1981, 39), nor is the continuation of worship on mountain peaks, both on mainland Greece and in Crete, pure coincidence (Hutchinson 1962, 218, n. 2; Dietrich 1969, 275). The theological observation of the heavenly phenomena was obviously taking place on mountains: (*Theophr.* *Περὶ σημείων ὑδάτων καὶ πνευμάτων* I 4); *Philon*, *Περὶ προνοίας*, 2.27; *Philostr.*, *Tà ἐς τὸν Τυανέα Ἀπολλώνιον* 2.5; *Petronius*, *Σατυρικὸν* 88, *Iamblichus*, *Περὶ τοῦ Πυθαγορικοῦ βίου* 3.14–15; Buxton 2002, 126. Mountain climbing embodies, even today, the sensation that one escapes from the tumult of the cities, and the concept of solitude, which approaches the sanctity of nature itself (Buxton 2002, 140). According to Strabo, during the *ορειβάσια*, a mountain festival, the people ... *walked through the mountains in procession* (Str., *Γεωγραφικά* I, 474): *τὰς ὀρειβασίας περὶ τὸ θεῖον σπουδάζοντων...* (and IB, 564: *ἐορτή τις ἄγεται... καὶ ὀρειβάσια, θιασεύοντων...*).

These factors, closely associated with the location of the site, are considered of supreme importance in the discussion of the Minoan cult in Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, and will be taken into account in the discussion that follows. It is of course also necessary to emphasize from the very beginning, the most essential aspect of the site, the height of the peak at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno. At 355.62m, it is the highest peak in the vicinity of Kastri, from where the Minoan colonists could address the deity above. Although the height of the Cretan peak sanctuaries is not uniform, it relates to the people living in the vicinity, in exactly the same way. And it is exactly this aspect, i.e. the height of the peak sanctuaries, which provides us with the first, but crucial, indication about the nature of the deity worshipped at these sites, as we shall see below.

Height is perhaps the most essential aspect of all Minoan peak sanctuaries. According to Dietrich (1971, 517): “Surely the salient factor of peak sanctuaries is their position on the summit of a mountain, whatever its height”. Peatfield (1990, 119) maintains that: “The factor of choice is significant in a country as mountainous as Crete”. The peak sanctuary at Thylakas, for example, lies at a height of 521m (Sakellarakis 1970b, 253). For Kythera, and especially for the peak sanctuary at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, height represents an important element that defines the main activities of the Minoan colonists on the island, including those related to ritual (Figs 2, 3). Hagios Georgios sto Vouno is not just another colonial sanctuary, a simple place of gathering for the colonists, and a place of remembrance of customs once practiced in the metropolis. Kythera has always been, over the centuries, an important Aegean naval station and from the peak at Hagios



Fig. 2: Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, southeast slope.



Fig. 3: The gulf of Avlaimon. View from Hagios Georgios sto Vouno.

Georgios sto Vouno, one can easily reconnoiter a large part of the south-west Aegean, as far as Crete. This is not mentioned here in view of the importance of the peak for navigation or in view of its value for possible astronomical observations (Henriksson and Blomberg 1996), which will be discussed further along, but in order to remind ourselves of the character of the Minoan colony on Kythera, of the reasons for the presence of the Minoan colonists on the island and therefore of their religious needs (Peatfield 1990, 120, for the beliefs of the Minoans as regards the location of the epiphany of the deity).

Hagios Georgios sto Vouno was not only a landmark for sailors in the Aegean and for the Minoan colonists of Kythera. The peak, 355.62m high, as it rises abruptly, next to the Minoan colony at Kastri, was ideal for the foundation of a sanctuary, which was also true for the Christian era. This was the reason why it drew the Minoan colonists from Kastri and possibly from other Minoan sites on Kythera, because it fulfills all the prerequisites for the foundation of a peak sanctuary, i.e. the general prominence of the location, accessibility, as well as proximity to and visibility from the settlement (Peatfield 1983, 275; Rutkowski 1986, 92-93, Sakellarakis 1996, 83). The isolation of the peak sanctuary at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, in a far-away location, predictably does not fulfill the last topographical criterion for Minoan peak sanctuaries, according to Peatfield's specifications (Peatfield 1990), i.e. "intervisibility", since there is no visual contact with the network of the Cretan peak sanctuaries or with any other island sanctuaries for that matter.

Although the Christian structures erected on the top of the hill at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, have destroyed some natural features of the Minoan site and possibly some Minoan structures, too, an attempt to envisage what the site looked like, without the modern Christian buildings on top, is perhaps not a hopeless task (Press 1968, 162, for the difficulties involved in the identification of architectural remains in peak sanctuaries). Although a number of rock cuttings on Terrace 1 (Sakellarakis 1995, 127), are not datable, they were definitely not Minoan, on account of the limited size of the terrace, which does not leave any space for elaborate structures. The existence of a building on Terrace 2 is also uncertain.

There is no certain evidence confirming the existence of Minoan built structures on Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, similar to those identified on some of the most important peak sanctuaries in Crete, like Juktas, Petsofas, Traostalos, Kophinas, Vrysinas, and also Piskokephalo and Filioremos, Mazas, Aphentis Christos, Modi, Gonies, and Karphi (Alexiou 1966, 322; 1967, 484; Rutkowski 1986, 11, 96). Buildings were attested in some sanc-

tuaries, i.e. Juktas, Pyrgos, Modi, Karphi, Gonies, Petsofas (Rutkowski 1985, 351–355; Myres 1902–1903, 356; see Pendlebury 1963, 103; Dietrich 1969, 259; Hutchinson 1962, 219; Vavouranakis 2006), a feature also encountered in the iconography of the peak sanctuaries that will be discussed further along. One should also bear in mind that buildings and other constructions attested in peak sanctuaries are thought to have been erected during the MM III period and were short lived (Rutkowski 1986, 52, 186). Nevertheless, strategy, combined with the religious significance of the location, might be corroborating factors for the existence of built structures, or at least light structures, necessary, if only for the protection of the contents of the large pithoi and storage jars found at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno (Tournavitou 2014, 58–67, 134–150).

Forty six fragments of large tub-like pithoi have come to light at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, the vast majority of which (40/46), belong to the Neopalatial period, as well as 25 fragments of palace style jars, also mostly Neopalatial in date (13/15), and a significant number of pithoid jars (161 exs), jugs/amphorae (175 exs), and bridge-spouted jars (189 exs). The majority belong to the Neopalatial period (see Tournavitou 2014). The pithoi, apart from their use for the storage of foodstuffs, would have been also used for the safekeeping of precious ritual utensils or offerings. The construction of a large number of rooms/storerooms at the Juktas peak sanctuary is perhaps indicative of the multiple needs attested at this type of site. As regards built structures, various factors should be taken into account, including the religious significance of each sanctuary, and the topography of each location. The church dedicated to the Timios Stavros on the peak of Kophinas, at the site of the Minoan peak sanctuary, was, until recently, unroofed, the service taking place in the open air. Weather conditions did not permit the building of a roof over this church in the old times (Psilakis 2005, 333).

It is worth keeping in mind that J. Shaw, relying mostly on the iconography of the peak sanctuary on the stone relief rhyton from Zakros, as well as on a certain number of architectural remains at Vathypetro, suggested that the façades of tripartite shrines during the seasonal festivals in peak sanctuaries were not permanent and that the rooms behind, lacked depth. In his own words: “It is likely that such shrines did not have extensive inner chambers, served chiefly as backdrops for religious rites carried out in front of them... The rites were seasonal and sporadic” (Shaw 1978a, 444, 445–448; Morgan 1988, 156; see also K. Majewski 1960, 60; Furumark 1965, 91, for the “symbolic significance” of the tripartite shrine at Knossos). In any case, no structure has been painted on the peak sanctuary depicted in the miniature wall painting located on the north wall of Room 5,

in the West House, on Thera. If there were any permanent built structures, of any kind on Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, they would be located in the central and west parts of the uppermost terrace, Terrace 2.

The existence of Minoan retaining walls on the south slope of the mountain at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, similar to those erected during the Christian era (Figs 4, 5), should be also taken under consideration. On Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, the existence of a number of retaining walls would actually accommodate the spatial organization of the site during the most intensive period of Minoan worship. Artificial terracing was in any case a common practice in many barren, rocky sites, in the old times, facilitating the retention of the meager quantities of existing soil (Myres 1902–1903, 356; Rutkowski 1991, 20; for Pseira, see Clark 1990; Rackham and Moody 1992, 123–130; 2004, 150–151, 206–209, 231, 285, 289, with reference to soil carried to peak sanctuaries). The use of stepped terraces in peak sanctuaries has been also attested at Juktas (Karetsou 1981, 145, Peatfield 1990, 122, 127, proto-palatial in contrast to excavator's views), Petsofas, Traostalos (Rutkowski 1986, 73), Filioremos (Alexiou 1965, 552; 1966, 322; 1967, 484), and has been suggested for the sites of Pyrgos, Modi, Kalamaki (Rutkowski, 1985, 350–351, 354, 358), and Atsipades (Karetsou 1974, 230; 1985, 289; for Petsofas, see Rutkowski 1991, 12, 20–21, reconstruction 18, fig. 1; Watrous 2001, 193–194). In any case, the most prevalent aspects of the site of Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, during the Minoan times, would be its natural features, with rocks in strange formations running down the slope, some abruptly, others more smoothly, including a variety of natural crevices, as attested in the iconography of peak sanctuaries, on the stone relief rhyta (Fig. 6) (Rutkowski 1986, figs 72–75; Psilakis 2005, 331–335, Kophinas). Krattenmaker (1995, 50, 56) also includes the sealing from Chania in the discussion of peak sanctuaries, on account of the location of the building complex on a mountain, and adds two more examples of stylized depictions of mountains in Minoan glyptic art.

An indispensable element of ritual practices in all ancient Greek sanctuaries is the altar on which the fire was lit, the most important of all rituals in any sanctuary, which will be discussed below in relation to sacrifice (Nilsson 1955, 78–79; Vermeule 1974, 12, n. 17, with bibliography; Burkert 1993, 199–200). The Greek altar can be either a built altar or a plain ash-altar. In the simple rural sanctuaries, some roughly piled stones, could easily have served as altars. The existence of an altar was also necessary in the Minoan sanctuaries, which were provided with fixed or portable altars (Yavis 1949, 1–29; Nilsson 1950, 116; Rutkowski 1981, 35–50; for portable altars see Sakellarakis 1970a, 168, fig. 8). Although Peatfield (1990, 122) maintains that: “The ritual focus of the shrine, where preserved and apparent, is



Fig. 4: Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, south slope.



Fig. 5: Terracing on the south side of the hill.

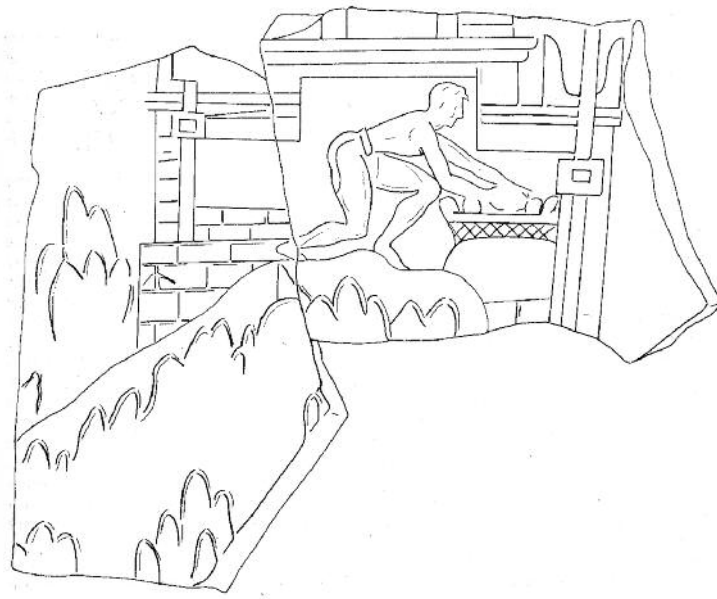


Fig. 6: Fragment of a stone relief vase from Gypsades, at Knossos (Rutkowski 1986, 83, fig. 95).

rarely more than a flat rock ‘table’, or perhaps a cairn of stones”, the fact that this particular aspect has not been really investigated by scholars, is quite interesting. Nevertheless, the existence of two types of permanent, built altars, a table-like type and a stepped altar, as well as the portable incurved type (Fig. 7), has been already confirmed for peak sanctuary sites, if only by their appearance on the well known stone relief rhyton from Zakros; the portable incurved type depicted on the rhyton is similar to the actual altars discovered at the Archanes palace (Fig. 8).

The fact that a permanent, built altar has been excavated at the Minoan peak sanctuary on Juktas (Peatfield 1990, 122, dating it to the proto-palatial period) makes one wonder whether the altars, which must have existed in the other peak sanctuaries too, were of the fixed or portable type. The altar in the Juktas peak sanctuary is a low, rectangular, paved construction, described as a podium by the excavator (Karetsou 1974, 232–233), despite its erection on the highest, and therefore the most sacred point of the peak, next to a large chasm and despite the discovery of important ritual objects nearby. K. Nowicki (1994, 35), mentions that Karetsou (1974, 232–234), “pointed to the location of an altar nearby”. It is nevertheless considered an altar by B. Rutkowski (1991, 53), K. Nowicki (1994, 35, 41), L.V. Watrous (2001, 193), A.D. Peatfield (1990, 122) and N. Marinatos, the latter, despite the uncertainty involved, calling it a stepped altar (Marinatos 1993,

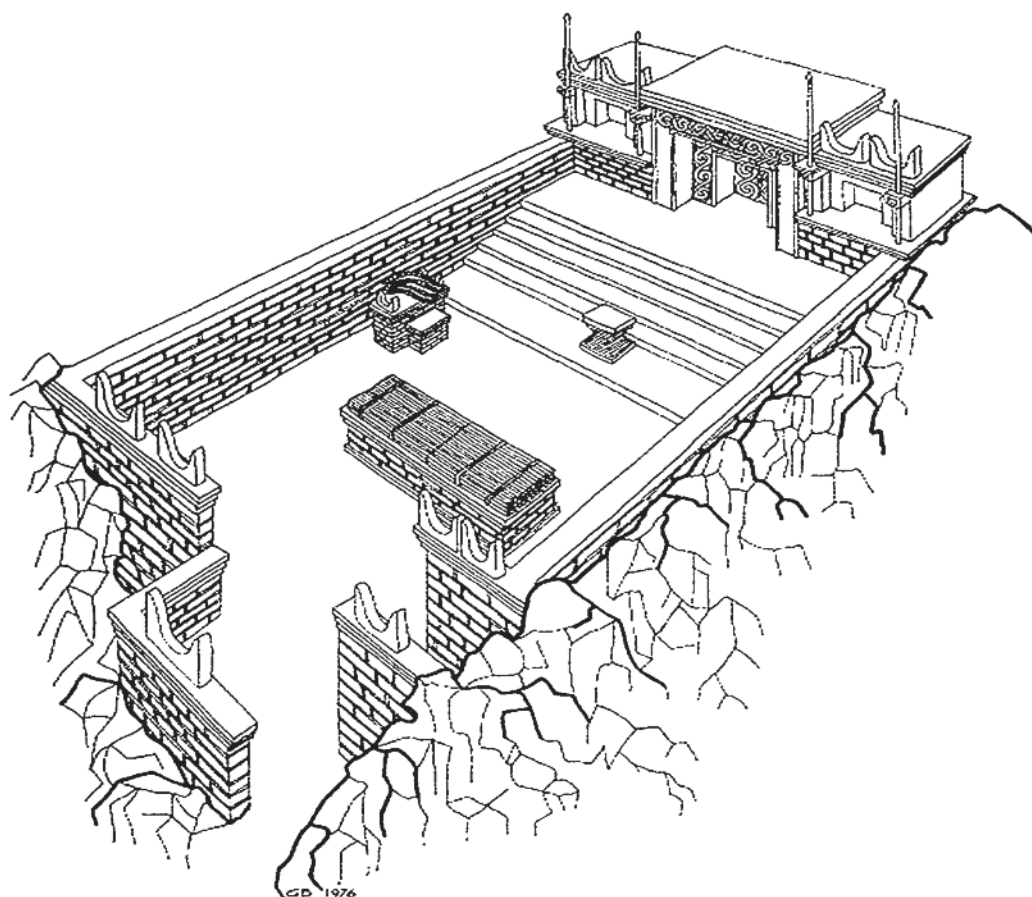


Fig. 7: Reconstruction of the peak sanctuary on the Zakros rhyton (Shaw 1978a, 436, fig. 9).

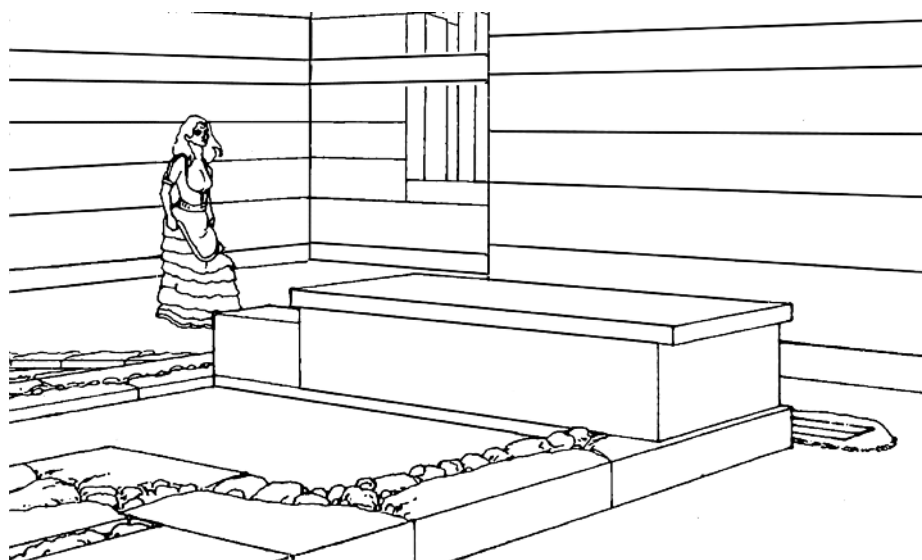


Fig. 8: Drawing of the rectangular built altar from the palatial building at Archanes.

116). The Juktas altar has the shape and the height of the Knossian altars (Nilsson 1950, 116) and of the altar inside the west room of the Anemospilia shrine (Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1981, 218–219; 1997, I, 296, figs. 255–256). A permanent, built altar, of the type attested at Juktas, is also mentioned in relation to the peak sanctuary of Petsofas (Rutkowski 1991, 53), the Filioremos site, Gonies Maleviziou (Alexiou 1965, 552; 1966, 322), where it is described as two bases of a stone offering table or an altar, next to which animal bones were also discovered; 1967, 484) and Atsipades, although in this case the construction is covered with schist slabs and there is a complete absence of bones, which is rather impressive. A. Peatfield (1992, 68), when describing the Upper Terrace of the sanctuary, explains that: “In the center of the pebble scatter was discovered an earth feature set on the natural east west axis of the site. It was roughly circular in plan, defined by soil of a consistency and color different from the adjacent sediments; it was remarkable for a total absence of pebbles or artifacts, contrasted with the finds clustered densely around it. Which suggests that something stood just here, around which offerings were deposited. We are unlikely ever to know for certain what stood in this feature; its shallowness limits the possibilities, but the most likely are: a vessel for receiving offerings, a crude idol, or a baetyl or sacred stone”. Later on, Morris and Peatfield (1995, 646) maintain that: “...this was the main liturgical feature” (see also Watrous 2001, 194), possibly suggesting that this was perhaps a type of altar, as indicated by the pebble surface surrounding it.

It should not be precluded that similar, humble, permanent, built altars existed originally in other important Minoan peak sanctuaries. They were probably destroyed, not only because of their location at the top of the mountain, but also because of the extensive looting practiced at many sites. Such an altar could have also existed on Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, and later been destroyed by the extensive building activity at the site during the Christian era. At the same time, one should not preclude the use of portable, perhaps wooden, altars in various peak sanctuaries, including Hagios Georgios sto Vouno. The popularity of the site (numbers of visitors), and furthermore the obstacles as regards the accessibility of some of these sites, including Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, in different times of the year, might have been a decisive factor in the decision to erect permanent structures, facilitating the safeguarding of any precious ritual utensils, and would have increased the need for the use of portable altars. Besides, the use of portable wooden tables is well known in the ritual associated with an important Minoan sacrifice, the bull sacrifice (Sakellarakis 1970a, 170, fig. 9). It should also be noted that the precise relationship between different types of Minoan altars and the so-called tables of offerings, the portable and

sometimes inscribed objects made of clay or stone, also attested in peak sanctuaries, has not been determined. One such clay specimen, from Petsofas, was identified by B. Rutkowski, as an altar (Rutkowski 1991, 53, 115, no. 5.1, pl. XXXVI.4).

Nevertheless, any constructions at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno during the Minoan period, would be humble, leaving unsullied, not only the outline of the mountain, but also its overall appearance, as was probably the case for most of the Minoan peak sanctuaries. Rituals were not only practiced at the top of the mountain, but also on its rocky slopes, as shown by the depiction of a worshipper on the lower rocky slopes of a peak sanctuary on the fragment of a stone relief vase from Gypsades (Fig. 6), which will be discussed below. It has been already observed that at the peak sanctuaries of Juktas and Atsipades, depositions of offerings were attested inside rock crevices lying lower down the slopes, where some rituals would therefore have also taken place (Karetsou 1974, 232–233, 237–238; Rutkowski 1985, 346; 1991, 12; Peatfield 1992, 67, fig. 7). This was also confirmed at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, where 27 areas of “primary depositions” of offerings were identified (Sakellarakis 2011, 145–332; Tournavitou 2014, 134–150).

There is no need for one to visit the peak sanctuary in Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, at an altitude of 355.62m, nor to become a mountain climber, in order to visualize the landscape of a Greek mountain top, and therefore of Minoan peak sanctuaries, or the animals and the vegetation native to these sites, as they were before human intervention: rocks, a steep, barren landscape, with stepped terracing, many stones and occasionally a strip of soil. This is exactly the picture depicted on the most complete iconographical representation of a peak sanctuary, that on the stone relief rhyton from Zakros: rocks everywhere, a little soil, some sporadic plants, animals and birds. The rocky terrain in Minoan art is depicted with the use of successive, pointed, wavy outlines, filled with a multitude of also pointed, wavy shapes. The similarity between Minoan art and Byzantine iconography in the rendering of the rocks, is worthy of note. Marinatos, on the other hand, influenced by his perception of the Spring fresco at Thera, expressed the view that the rendering of the rocks on the Zakros rhyton is typical of the landscape on a volcanic island (Marinatos and Hirmer 1976, 146).

Before the 20th century A.D., when the dynamic launch of human, machine-driven intervention spread even to Greek mountain tops, and much more so in Minoan times, Hagios Georgios sto Vouno was an open, natural space, visited, seasonally of course, by only few people with special duties, some shepherds, collectors of herbs, and by a much larger population of animals and birds, as was the case with all the Minoan peak sanctuaries. In addition

to their height, the natural landscape was an element of primary importance, common to all the Minoan peak sanctuaries, as we are about to see. As discussed earlier, any existing architectural structures were limited to the absolute minimum, which is also true today. It is characteristically noted that in the most complete representation of a peak sanctuary, on the Zakros rhyton, the main features in the scene, the architectural constructions, occupy less than half of the available space, while the remaining space on this sophisticated work of art is mostly covered by rocks, two wild goats and a few plants. In the same scene, the human presence is trivial. Nature, on the contrary, i.e. the wild goats and the birds, penetrate the limited space enclosed by man, implying perhaps the dominant role of the former on the latter. Concerning Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, it is mentioned below that the Kytherian photographer Em. Sophios, who visited the site before 1956, found three male goats standing arrogantly in the adytum of the church. Nevertheless, nature in peak sanctuaries is not only represented by the animals, the birds and the rocks, but also by the chasms in the rocks.

The chasm, very close to the top of the Juktas peak sanctuary is well known (Karetsou 1974, 233, plan Θ'; Marinatos 1993, 116; Rutkowski 1985, 346, 350; Nowicki 1994, 35) (Fig. 9). At the Petsofas peak sanctuary, a hollow was identified in the bedrock (Rutkowski 1991, 20), at Pyrgos a chasm (Rutkowski 1985, 353) and at Atsipades a natural hole (Watrous 2001, 194). The existence of a chasm in the peak sanctuary at Christos, as noted by Pendlebury (1963, 103) and by Dietrich (1969, 266), is doubtful according to B. Rutkowski (1971, 7). Worship in peak sanctuaries has also been associated with that in sacred caves. Even the construction of the so-called lustral basins, those subterranean Minoan constructions in the palaces themselves, was associated with cave worship (for their relationship to sacred caves, see Jones 1999; Watrous 2001, 194; for lustral basins see Nilsson 1950, 92–94; Platon 1967, 236–245; Alexiou 1972, 414–434; Rutkowski 1972, 229–231, 328; Graham 1977, 110–125; Nordfeldt 1987, 187–194; Andreadaki-Vlaziaki 1988, 56–76; Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1997, I, 230–231).

Perhaps the existence of a chasm at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, and more specifically on Terrace 2, south-southeast of the church of Hagios Georgios, at the point where the large retaining wall is standing to a height of over 5m (Fig. 10), should not be precluded. Excavation in this area was impossible, because of the danger of collapse of the large retaining wall. Nevertheless, the suspicion concerning the existence of a chasm at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, is reinforced by a number of early maps, dating from the 16th – 18th centuries A.D., including the words ‘caverna’, i.e. cave and

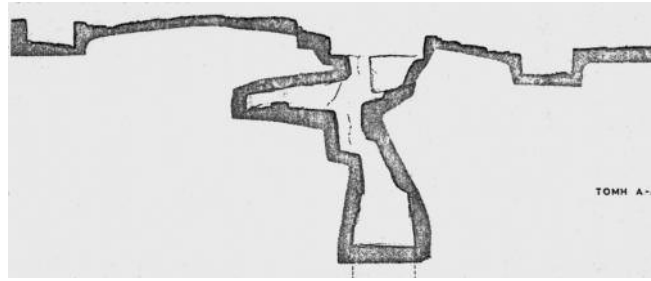


Fig. 9: The chasm in the Juktas peak sanctuary (section) (Karetsou 1981, 143, fig. 6).

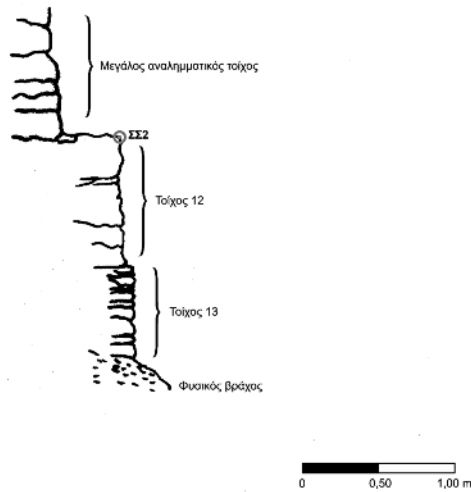


Fig. 10: Section of the large retaining wall on Terrace 2, south-southeast of the Hagios Georgios church.

‘tesauro’, i.e. treasure, rare words on maps, evidence alluding perhaps to some kind of discovery at the site.

On the map by Tomaso Porcacchi da Castiglione/Girolamo Porro, drawn in 1572, at the site of Hagios Georgios sto Vouno were inscribed the words ‘caverna’ and ‘tesauro’ (Livieratos and Boutoura 2003, 205–217; see chapter on Kytherian antiquities, fig. 71). Obviously, later maps copied the 1572 map, hence the variation in the positioning of the two words. On Simon Pinargenti’s map, drawn in 1573, the word ‘tesauro’ lies in the sea and the word ‘caverna’ on land (Tolias 2001, 138). It is worth noting that on the same map, over the word ‘caverna’, there is a drawing of a church on a mountain. On the map by Donato Bertelli, drawn in 1574, the word ‘caverna’ lies on the island of Kythera, opposite Dragonera, and the word

‘tesauro’, in the sea, opposite the small island of Antidragonera, again with a drawing of a small church on a mountain (Livieratos and Beriatos 2001, 156). On a map of Kythera drawn by Francesco Ferretti in 1579, the word ‘caverna’ is also attested (Avramea, Sphyroeras, and Asdrachas 1985, 80, fig. 43β). On a map of Kythera by G. F. Camocio made in 1576 (Camocio 1576), the word ‘tesauro’ is placed in the sea and the word ‘caverna’ on land, opposite the island of Dragonera, and at the site of Hagios Georgios sto Vouno there is a drawing of a church. On a map of Kythera by Abraham Ortelius, drawn in 1584, the word ‘caverna’ is placed on land and the word ‘tesauro’ at sea (Avramea, Sphyroeras, and Asdrachas 1985, 108, fig. 71). On the portolan by Rosaccio Giuseppe, drawn in 1606, the word ‘caverna’, with a drawing of a church, is again placed on land and the word ‘tesauro’ in the sea (Livieratos and Beriatos 2001, 156), similarly to a map by G. Mercator, drawn the same year (Avramea, Sphyroeras, and Asdrachas 1985, 102–103, fig. 67). The map drawn by J. Peeters, in 1685, has an index with numbers. Number ten (10), which has been placed in the sea, is described as ‘Golfe du trésor’ and the number eleven (11), which has been placed on land, again with a drawing of a church on a mountain, as ‘caverna’ (Livieratos and Beriatos 2001, 20, 159). On the portolan drawn by de Witt in 1702, the word ‘caverna’ is also attested (Livieratos and Boutoura 2003). Finally, in the map drawn by J. B. Homann between 1716–1737, the word ‘caverna’ lies on land, between two hills, opposite Dragonera (Livieratos and Beriatos 2001). It is interesting that from 1573 onwards, on the map drawn by Simon Pinargenti, a church is depicted on the Mountain, a drawing copied by Donatto Bertelli in 1574, by G.F. Camocio in 1576, by Giuseppe Rosaccio in 1606 and by J. Peeters in 1685. It is very likely that what is depicted on these maps is the church of the Panagia or of Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, which would be a point of interest to navigators.

As noted above, it is possible that the word ‘caverna’ appearing on the maps of Kythera between the end of the 16th and the beginning of the 18th century A.D., always on the east coast of the island, depicts a characteristic landmark on the latter, identifying its position for contemporary seafarers. It is therefore interesting that the Spanish aristocrat Pero Tafur, who passed from the island of Kythera between 1435–1439 on his way to the Holy Land, mentions a large cave: “I saw also a mighty rock which is very smooth, but which rises to a great height. In the midst of it is a cave, two hundred fathoms high and more than that in depth”. Of those who investigated the island, it is only R. Leonhard (1899, 3) (fig. 65) that commented on the word ‘caverna’ appearing on the maps, claiming that: “der Ort Caverno bezieht sich auf die grossen Höhlen an den NE Küste”. Perhaps Leonhard is referring to Alevrospeilaia-Alevrospelaion on modern maps, the ‘Mehlhöhle’ (Leonhard 1899, 29).

The natural landscape in the Minoan peak sanctuary at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno should be perhaps also considered from the point of view of vegetation. Vegetation obviously varied. Although the deforestation of Greek mountains (Georgoudi 1974; Hallstead 1987, 79-80, Buxton 2002, 123), and especially of Cretan mountains, since Minoan times, is well known (Rackham and Moody 2004, 163-172), the existence of some trees in the area of the sanctuary as a whole should not be precluded. Of course, the rich iconographical corpus in Minoan Crete depicting the sacred tree (Evans 1901; Nilsson 1950, 262-288; Burkert 1993, 78-79), a fig tree, according to B. Rutkowski (1986, 73), a fig tree or an olive tree, according to W. Burkert (1993, 79), does not preserve any evidence linking it with ritual practices in peak sanctuaries, which is why scholars associated sacred trees with palatial or house shrines (Gesell 1985, 58, 65). Although W. Burkert (1993, 79) believes that “such trees are not expected on mountains”, the depiction of a tree in relation to the stepped altar on the stone relief rhyton from Zakros (Fig. 11), indicates the opposite (Platon 1963, 185, sacred tree; 1974, 154, little tree). The new ring depicting a peak

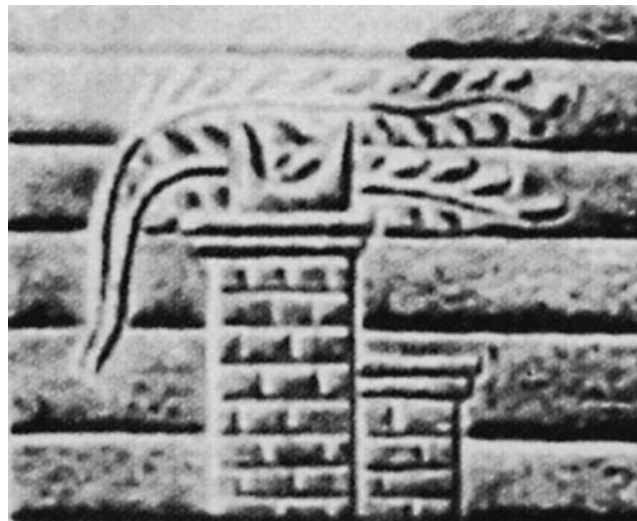


Fig. 11: Detail of stepped altar on the Zakros rhyton.

sanctuary from the tomb on Laonikou St. at Poros, which will be mentioned below, and the Knossos ring at Oxford (Fig. 12), depict a tree behind a building, just as on the Archanes ring (Fig. 13), while Dietrich (1969, 261) identifies a sacred tree on the fragment of a stone relief vase from Gypsades. It now seems, therefore, that the association of sacred trees with open air, even wooded sites, is more plausible. The sanctity of certain wild trees, the so called ‘militses’ (little apple trees), growing on the steep

rocks on Mt Kophinas (Psilakis 2005, 335–337) (Fig. 14), at the site of the Minoan peak sanctuary, is typical of the diachronic value of this phenomenon.

According to Psilaki's estimates, there are over a hundred sacred trees in 20th century Crete and he enumerates eight different ritual acts that are currently associated with these trees (Psilakis 2005, 338–339; Warren 1994). It is also true that the term "sacred tree", both in antiquity, as for example in the case of the willow at the Heraion of Samos, and nowadays,

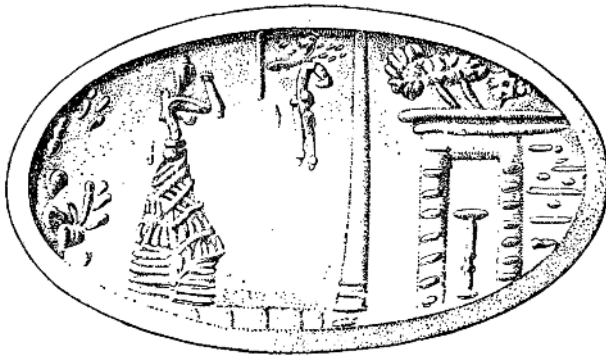


Fig. 12: Drawing of the scene on the Oxford ring from Knossos (Matz 1958, fig. 4).



Fig. 13: The Archanes ring.

was not only used for large trees, as for example the Dodona oak, but also for bushes, and it is certain that every ancient sanctuary had its own variety of sacred tree (Burkert 1993, 195). A modern example worth mentioning is the case of “Saint Myrtle”, in the Paliani monastery in Crete. It has been also noted that the cartographic survey of Cretan churches dedicated to Panagia Myrtidiotissa, alludes to the relationship between Crete and Kythera, from an entirely different point of view (Psilakis 2005, 339, 347–352). The sanctity of the myrtle tree up until modern times at Myrtidia and also in the central Kytherian and hence, the Panhellenic worship of Panagia Myrtidiotissa, provides further corroborative evidence.

The matter of vegetation on Minoan peak sanctuaries should be explored further. The meager vegetation depicted in the peak sanctuary scene on the Zakros rhyton confirms the apparent aridity of the site. Anyone who has climbed up a Cretan or Kytherian mountain top is aware of the sharpness of the landscape, i.e. the absence of trees, which the winds prevent from growing, if of course they even manage to sprout on the bare rocks. It is exactly this type of scene that is depicted on the Zakros rhyton. Never-



Fig. 14: The ritual of the distribution of the apples at Kophinas (Psilakis 2005, 337).

theless, amongst the multitude of rocks dominating the landscape, there is a single spot, where three low plants sprout from the tops of the rocks. One of these plants, which is blossoming, has been identified as a crocus plant. Four crocus flowers grow out of a single stalk among spear-like leaves. The two remaining plants depict, according to Sp. Marinatos (Marinatos and Hirmer 1976, 146), “other flowers”. Both these other plants, growing out of the tops of similar rocks, are identical to the first and are also rather humble, of triangular shape, with a few radiating incised lines representing leaves. It is possible that these plants also depict crocuses that have not yet blossomed. In any case, their proximity to the blossoming crocuses next to them, and their height, suggest that these too represented crocuses about to blossom. In nature, many plants, including crocuses, grow in clumps and do not all blossom at the same time.

The presence of crocuses in a ritual scene, that of the peak sanctuary on the Zakros rhyton, is perhaps not entirely without meaning and might not be simply denoting the landscape, especially considering the well attested relation of this particular plant to Minoan ritual practice (for crocus in Minoan Crete see Möbius 1933, 1–39; Douskos 1980, 141–146; Morgan 1988, 30–32, on the depiction of crocuses in the ‘festoon and pendant’ motif in Minoan pottery and metallurgy; Porter 2000, 614–623; Sarpaki 2000, 660–663; Forbes 1955, 238–298; 1956; 1958; Grieve 1978, 699). Undoubtedly, the closest and most important example is the wall painting of the so-called saffron gatherers from Thera (Fig. 15) (Marinatos 1984, 65–66; Marinatos 1993, 205–209, 211–214; Doumas 1992, figs 116–127; Morgan 1988, 31), which depicts the entire set of ritual acts associated with the crocus plant. Women gather the anthers of the crocus flowers and put them in baskets, which are then offered to the female deity seated on a podium, flanked by a monkey and a griffin. For the interpretation of this scene, many theories have been put forward. N. Marinatos (1984, 61–84; 1987, 123–132) suggested that the crocus gatherers scene depicts a “rite of passage”, without explaining though the special role of the crocus flowers. According to another theory, proposed by L. Morgan, based on the depiction of the plant in the Minoan script (Evans 1909, 213, n. 88; 1921–1935, I, 283, fig. 215; Ventris and Chadwick 1956, 35, 130; Platon 1974, 157–158), and on the popularity of the plant in Thera iconography (Morgan 1988, 182, n. 135), where it is also depicted as part of the decoration of a ship, it is suggested that: “the organized collecting of the crocus flower or stigmas, the implication of associated worship and the transference of the plant to the marine world and as festive bunting for sea-going ships may be glimpsed the idea that the plant’s esteem lay in its economic value as the product saffron for overseas trade”, and that: “considering the rela-

tive importance of the plant in Minoan iconography compared to that of neighboring lands, we may surmise that the Aegean was the major marketing area” (Morgan 1988, 30–31). The best crocuses, according to Pliny, were those grown on Thera (Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* XXI, 17.31–32).

The depiction of crocuses in the otherwise barren landscape of the peak sanctuary on the stone relief rhyton from Zakros (Fig. 17), together with wild goats (Sakellarakis 2004, 14–15), quite popular sacrificial animals, may not be coincidental, and might be an allusion to the season of the festival in Minoan peak sanctuaries. As far as the peak sanctuary on Hagios Georgios sto Vouno is concerned, crocuses are still a typical feature of the landscape (Fig. 16). This is why further information about this particular plant, usually unknown to archeologists, and most useful for the interpretation of the depictions of the plant in prehistoric times, should be supplied at this point.

The crocus plant, with the botanical name *crocus sativus* L., also known as zafora, and more specifically the red pollen of the flower of this plant, clearly depicted in the Thera wall painting, has, in a dried state, important pharmaceutical and flavoring properties and considerable coloring properties too (A. Samuelsson 1996, 289). The ethereal oil extracted from crocus has been also used as myrrh (aromatic oil, perfume), the *Κρόκινον μύρον* (*Anth. Palatina* 11, 34), or the *κροκόμαγμα* (Theophr., *Περὶ ὀσμῶν*... 27; Dioscorides 1, 26). The use of the crocus plant is well known in antiquity, as attested in many ancient authors, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Theophrastus, Strabo, Dioscorides and others (Liddell and Scott; Michal-Lambraki 1984), especially for its coloring properties in the production of yellow color. The crocus is mentioned in Homer, with reference to the coupling of Zeus and Hera, on ground where crocuses had just sprouted: *λωτόν θ' ἐρσέεντα ἰδὲ κρόκον ἠδ' ὑάκινθον πυκνὸν καὶ μαλακόν* (*Iliad* Ε, 348–349). Commentators consider this bedding sensual, and some have even attributed aphrodisiac properties to the crocuses. Yellow crocus garments (*himatia*) are often mentioned by Aristophanes (*Thesmophoriazousai* 138, 253: *τὸν κροκωτὸν πρῶτον ἐνδύου λαβών*, 945; *Ekklesiazousai* 879: *καὶ κροκωτὸν ἡμφιεσμένην*). The use of numerous derivatives from the word crocus, like *κρόκεος*, *κρόκινος*, *κροκινός*, *κροκόβαπτος*, *κροκοβαφής* και *κροκοβαφία*, *κροκοειδής*, *κροκοεῖμων*, *κροκόεις*, *κροκόπεπλος*, *κροκοφόρος*, *κροκόχρως*, *κροκῶδης*, *κροκωτίδιον*, *κροκώτινος*, *κροκώτιον*, *κροκωτός*, *κροκωτοφορέω* και *κροκωτοφόρος* (Liddell and Scott), is indicative of its importance. In any case, the multiple uses of the plant are known even in modern times, both in the East and in Western Europe. It is said that Victor Hugo considered saffron more as a form of light than a perfume. In the Byzantine period the “*κροκάτη μαγειρεία*” is well known. It is men-

tioned in Prodnromos who refers to a woman “ἔχουσιν ἐμβεβλημένον κρόκον”. The crocus was also considered good for the stomach (“εὐσιόμαχος”). According to F. Koukoules (1952, *Κωνσταντίνου Πορφυρογεννήτου, Ἐκθεσις* 468, 16): “ἐκοιτρατεύοντος τοῦ βασιλέως ὁ ἐπὶ τραπέζης παρελάμβανε καὶ κρόκον”...” Ἐχρησιμοποιεῖτο καὶ κατὰ τὸν ΙΖ΄ αἰῶνα ὑπὸ τῶν Κρητῶν οἶνιες ἤρτυον τα μακαρώνια με κρόκον” (Koukoules 1952, 45, *Φωσκόλου, Φορτουνάτος* Α΄ 86, *Συμβολή* 59). In modern Greece crocus flowers are still being harvested in the Little Cyclades, i.e. Sikinos, Thera, Pholegandros and Anaphe and because they are considered a precious commodity, they are sparingly used throughout the year and are only used freely during Easter.



Fig. 15: Saffron gathering on a Thera wall painting (Sheratt 2000, pl. 8).

The archaeologists studying the Theran wall paintings should look into the facts concerning the intensive cultivation of the plant at Kozani and in a number of villages, especially the village called *Krokos*; they should also look into the information concerning the gathering of the flowers, which is still being conducted with baskets and hampers, as in prehistoric times (Doumas 1992, fig. 122). The gathering of the flowers is especially copious, since for one kilo of dried pollen are re-



Fig. 16: A crocus flower.

quired approximately 150.000 flowers. It is characteristically mentioned that the best crocus gatherer can gather 30.000 flowers per day. Concerning the value of the plant during prehistoric times, it should be born in mind that crocus cultivation is the most lucrative cultivation in the area of Kozani today. Every year 6-8 tons are being produced in the area, over 10.000 stremmata (1 stremma= 1,000m²) are being cultivated and this cultivation is worth 1.5 billion drachmas per year.

The cultivation of the crocus in Minoan times is indicated by the wall painting depicting a crocus gatherer at Knossos (Platon 1947, pl. KΘ'). Lyvia Morgan (1988, 31), suggests that the plant was also cultivated on Thera (Fig. 15). Besides, “κροκοφόροι λειμῶνες” are mentioned in antiquity in Greece (Liddell and Scott), while fields for the cultivation of crocus plants (“ζαφοροκήμια”) are mentioned in Crete down to the 20th c A.D. (Havakis, 163–164). Pliny points out that the wild plant is of better quality than the cultivated version (Pliny, *Hist.Nat.* XXI, 17.31). The use of the crocus plant on Crete is also indicated by the fact that it is repeatedly mentioned with the popular name: zaphora. In Crete, which is so rich in vegetation, the following species of the crocus plant are known: *crocus seberi*, *crocus veneris*, *crocus boryi* var. *marathoniseus*, *crocus levigatus* και *crocus cartwrightianus* (see Morgan 1988, 31 for the various colors of the crocus flower in Minoan art).

With reference to the suggested relation of the crocus to Minoan religion, one should also take into consideration the mythology associated with this important plant. Krokos is said to have been the friend of Hermes, who, while playing with the god, was by accident fatally injured on the head;

three drops of his blood fell at the centre of a flower, bringing about the red color of the pollen, which then became the precious commodity discussed above (RE, *Ἐρμῆς*). This myth is strongly reminiscent of a similar myth about the death of Hyakinthos, considered to be a Pre-Hellenic, Minoan, deity (Willetts 1962, 222–223). Here too, it should be noted that Homer, mentioned above, associates the crocus with the hyacinth and the lotus. Concerning the relation of the plant to Minoan cult, it should be also noted that among the 58 aromatic substances, which, together with oil and wine, are currently used for the “ἑψnon”, i.e. the preparation of the sacred myrrh every 10–12 years, during Easter week, with an established ritual, including four stages, starting on Good Monday and concluding on the night of Good Wednesday in the patriarchal church at Constantinople, crocus is used in the first stage, in considerable quantities (exactly 4 okades or 5,120 gram of crocus).

It has been aptly noted, that the wall painting with the saffron gatherers from Thera, which associates the crocus with Minoan cult, “comprises an emblematic rendering of the relationship between the town with its countryside, through a female festival” (Tzachili 1994, 7–33), the scene depicting part of the ritual taking place in the countryside. It is therefore possible that the depiction of crocuses in the peak sanctuary scene on the Zakros rhyton, indicates a special relationship of the plant with open-air worship in peak sanctuaries. In the pottery material from the sanctuary at Kythera, were recorded 16 pottery sherds depicting naturalistically rendered crocuses, mostly in bunches (Tournavitou 2014, 118–125).

All scholars agree that, despite the built structures on some of the major peak sanctuaries, Minoan peak sanctuaries as a whole, along with the so-called rural sanctuaries on the plains and sacred springs (Faure 1967, 138–147; 1969, 206–211), i.e. the extra-urban sanctuaries, were all associated with a form of open-air worship. It has been correctly observed that the essence of ancient Greek sanctuaries is closely related to the surrounding landscape (Burkert 1993, 193–194); the same would certainly be true for the worshippers at a Minoan peak sanctuary, with the sacred trees mentioned above, the various herbs and perhaps water (Morgan 1988, 158, n. 34); the same can be said today for any solitary worshipper, in a modern day, faraway rural church. The importance of open air worship is well attested for ancient Greek religion, where the boundaries of the sacred area are physically defined, where the sacred is distinguished from the secular and the profane (Burkert, 1993, 196), and the area dedicated to the deity is described with the old term “temenos”, a term that in Linear B already describes all landed property (Ventris and Chadwick 1956, 264–266; Palmer 1963, 83, 92–93).

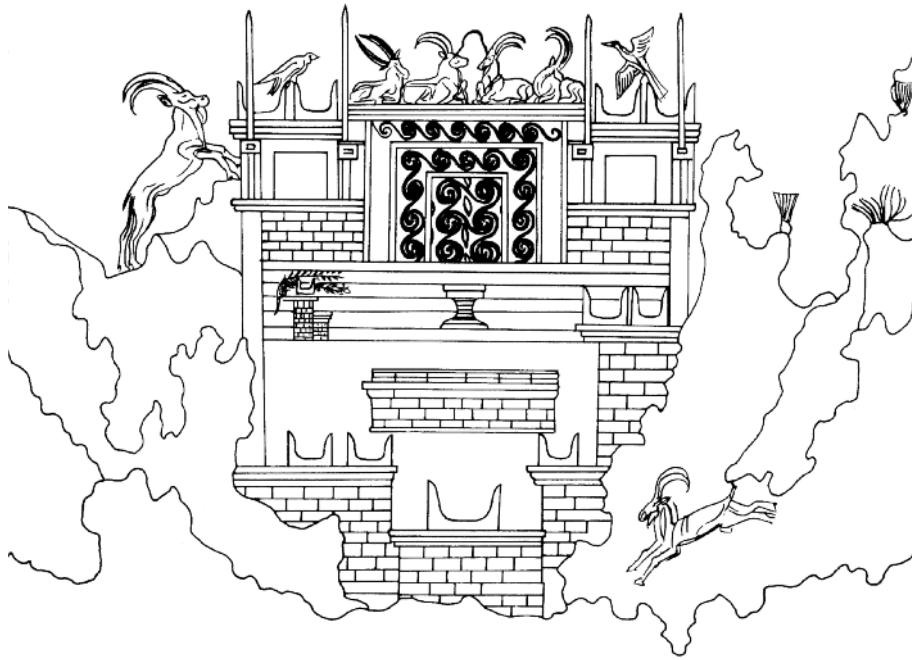


Fig. 17: Drawing of the scene on the Zakros rhyton (Rutkowski 1986, 83, fig. 94).

The definition of the boundaries of Minoan peak sanctuaries should be therefore considered fixed, not only on account of the precinct wall in the Juktas peak sanctuary and the buildings in other sanctuaries, but also on account of the iconography, in the case of the peak sanctuary depicted on the stone relief rhyton from Zakros (Fig. 7). Concerning the gate depicted on the Oxford ring, Press (1968, 161), says: “This may have been the wall surrounding the cult area, or it may have been the wall of an hypaethral sanctuary”. The now widely accepted existence of a sacred tree on peak sanctuaries, as attested both in the scene on the ring from Laonikou St, at Poros, near Herakleion, and on the Knossos ring at Oxford, which will be discussed below, also implies the existence of an enclosure, since a free standing, unprotected tree would have no hope of survival against animals (Matz 1958, 392). Of course, it is impossible to identify the demarcation of the sacred area in every Minoan peak sanctuary, especially considering that, as in ancient Greece, a simple allusion to the sacred area with stones and trees was often enough (Burkert, 1993, 194); the same was true in Minoan Crete, as indicated by the example of the precinct at Anemospilia (Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1979, 350, fig. 1). According to A. Peatfield (1990, 122): “The temenos or sacred area is usually marked by lines of rocks, often natural, but sometimes rudimentary man-made walls”. In any case, in open-air sites, including the more specialized types of site, as for

example the springs, the caves, and, for that matter, the peak sanctuaries, the mountain, with its bare rocks, its crevices and chasms, was an essential element of Minoan cult (Gesell 1985, 1, 12, 57–58). The overall importance of nature in Minoan religion is also attested in Minoan art. That is perhaps why the Minoan peak sanctuaries are so numerous and so widely distributed geographically.

As regards Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, there is one more important aspect of the landscape. Evidence of cult practice was attested only on the south slope of the mountain, facing the Minoan settlement of Kastri (see areas of “primary depositions”). Judging by the topography of the site and the distribution of the “primary depositions” of material on the south slope, all the way down to Terrace 7, one can estimate the area of the temenos, i.e. the sacred area (see Rutkowski 1986, 73, for other Minoan peak sanctuaries). The main approach to the peak sanctuary was probably via a footpath from the milder north slope, as it is today, in the 20th century A.D., for Christian worshippers. There is no evidence for the use of this footpath in Minoan times, or any other evidence of human intervention. Although the access to Minoan peak sanctuaries has not really preoccupied scholars, with the exception of L. Morgan (Morgan 1988, 157), with reference to the depiction of the peak sanctuary in the miniature wall painting from the West House at Thera and of B. Rutkowski, with reference to the Petsofas peak sanctuary (Rutkowski 1991, 20), it is more or less certain that the mode of access was directly related to the rituals taking place at the sanctuaries themselves. L. Morgan’s observation, that footpaths on mountains, and even more so, footpaths along mild slopes, had been obviously carved out through long term use of the routes involved, by both people and animals, is rather apt (see also Rutkowski 1971, 14–15; 1972, 182–183; Bintliff 1977, 59–114, esp. 98–103, and maps, figs. 20–21; Sbonias 2006). The evidence for processions towards Minoan peak sanctuaries is in any case safely attested through iconography, as we shall see further along. That is the reason why the Minoan road to Juktas, the one leading from the Knossos palace to the important peak sanctuary on the top of the mountain, is truly important (Evans 1921–1935, II 66, 761; Rutkowski 1985, 350).

3. THE ICONOGRAPHY OF PEAK SANCTUARIES

a. Depictions of Minoan peak sanctuaries

It is fortunate that in the case of peak sanctuaries, the scenes depicted on Minoan stone relief rhyta, on gold rings, and on a miniature wall painting

from Thera, do indicate the existence of some kind of ritual practice. It is correctly observed by A.D. Peatfield (1990, 128), that iconographical representations of peak sanctuaries, with the obvious exception of the Thera wall painting, are attested in palatial centers. The two fragments of stone relief vases from Knossos and the intact stone relief rhyton from Zakros, as well as the sealing from the so called Central Sanctuary at Knossos, are well documented. To these should be added the gold ring from Tomb Δ at Pylos, the wall painting from the north wall of Room 5 in the West House at Thera and the ring from Knossos, now in Oxford, all depicting peak sanctuaries. Krattenmaker (1995, 50, 56), also includes the sealing from Chania (Hallager 1985), in the discussion of peak sanctuaries, on account of the location of the building complex on a mountain and adds two more stylized depictions of mountains, on Minoan seals. It is worth noting that these scenes, important for scholars studying Minoan religion (Nilsson 1950, 83, 178, 353, fig. 162; Burkert 1993, 77), are rarely discussed by those involved in the study of peak sanctuaries. To the seven examples mentioned above, should be added the new ring from the tomb on Laonikou St., at Poros, near Herakleion.

On the first specimen, a fragment of a stone relief rhyton from Gypsades, near Knossos (Platon 1951, 154–55, pl. H4; Alexiou 1963, 339, pl. ΙΣΤ; Schachermeyr 1964, 159, pl. 32a; Kardara 1966, 176, fig. 28; Rutkowski 1968, 165; Warren 1969, 85, pl. 476; Press 1968, 158; Dietrich 1971, 515–516; Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1971, 47, no. 114, fig. 10; Sakellarakis 1973a, fig. 6; Kaiser 1976, 17, fig. 10a; Shaw 1978a, 440–441, 10; Peatfield 1990, 128, fig. 16; Krattenmaker 1995, 51, pl. XXIc; Beloyianni 2000, 570, fig. 1; Logue 2004, 153, fig. 1), (Fig. 6), there is no doubt that the relief depicts a peak sanctuary, as the rendering of the rocks is similar to that on the Zakros rhyton. At the top of the Gypsades rhyton an asymmetrical tripartite building is rendered, with the so-called flag poles crowned by horns of consecration. At its base, rising above the rocks and on the actual rocks, is depicted a male figure, kneeling with his right leg, his two hands outstretched, arranging something placed inside a vessel lying on the rocks, probably a wicker basket (Shaw 1978a, 440–441: “a man bends down to grasp (arrange, remove?) leaf-like objects from within a large hamper”). With reference to his theory concerning pairs of pithoi, or a combination of a pithos and a baetyl, at the highest points of peak sanctuaries, items which could be associated with the depiction of a number of enigmatic objects on seal-rings, K. Nowicki (1994, 39) actually identifies these objects on the Gypsades rhyton. W. Burkert (Burkert 1993, 93), and recently E. Papatsaroucha (2005, 177–188), identify them as boulders. The scene is on the whole thought to depict the offering made by a worshipper, placed

in a vessel, pot or basket, in a rock crevice outside the building.

On the second fragment of a stone relief vase from Knossos (Evans 1921–1935, II, 752, fig. 486; III, 65, fig. 37; Nilsson 1950, 183, fig. 87; Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1971, 47, no. 113, fig. 10; Kaiser 1976, 14, fig. 6a; Levi 1981, 39; Morgan 1988, 84, 156; Nörling 1995, 60, pl. 10, no. 3; Logue 2004, n. 179, 154, fig. 3) (Fig. 18), is preserved what might possibly be another depiction of a peak sanctuary, mostly because it illustrates a multi-leveled isodomic structure, with flag poles and horns of consecration, similar to the building depicted on the Zakros rhyton. According to Morgan (1988, 209, n. 7), this fragment joins with the previous one from Gypsades. Apart from the isodomic structure on this fragment, two male figures are also depicted, walking along towards the same direction, one behind the other. The torsos of both figures are leaning heavily backwards. Both are only wearing a belt and a Minoan loin-cloth, and one of the two has long hair, down to his waist. The most characteristic feature concerning both male figures is their outstretched left hands, in which they are holding a shallow object of an obviously small size, flat at the top and curved underneath, projecting slightly from the palm of one of the extant figures.



Fig. 18: Fragment of a stone rhyton from Knossos.

The most complete extant image of a Minoan peak sanctuary is that on the famous and much discussed stone relief rhyton from Zakros (Marinatos and Hirmer 1976, 108–110; Platon 1963, 185, fig. 152b, 154a; Kardara 1966, 176, fig. 28; Rutkowski 1968, 165, pl. 1, fig. 1; Dietrich 1971, 515; Platon 1974, 152–155; Kaiser 1976, 22–23; Shaw 1978a, 432–440, figs 5–9; Levi 1981, 40; Rutkowski 1986, 73; Morgan 1988, 84, 156, pl. 117; Peatfield 1990, 128; Lembessi and Muhly 1990, 329–330; Bloedow 1990, 59–79; Nörling 1995, 61, 65–68, pl. 8, fig. 1, pls 11–12, no. 1, pl. VII, 2; Platon 2003, figs 1–11) (Figs 7, 17). In a rocky, mountainous landscape, where only crocus flowers grow and wild goats run free, is depicted an isodomic precinct, asymmetrical in height, with no indication of an en-

trance, and crowned by horns of consecration; the precinct encloses a tripartite shrine. A wide staircase leads to the shrine, from a broad open space before the latter. The two narrower sections flanking the central part of the shrine, built on higher ground, on two isodomic bases, are provided with large openings, once more without any indication of an entrance, and feature a pair of the so-called flag poles. The wide central part of the building, provided with what seems to be the only double doorway in the entire scene, decorated with vertical spirals, is framed on three sides by a running spiral and crowned by another. On the roof of the central part of the building are depicted two antithetic pairs of wild goats looking towards the top of the mountain, which had been carved, as was recently pointed out (Sakellarakis 2006, 162, including full bibliography), in the same shape as the back of the throne in the Knossos throne room. On the cornice of the two lower sections of the building flanking the central part, is depicted a bird, standing on a pair of horns of consecration, also looking towards the centre. Finally, in the open area in front of the shrine is depicted a large trapezoidal altar and two others on the actual staircase, an in-curved portable altar in the center and a stepped altar with a tree, to the left. All three types of altars have been found at Archanes (Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1997, I, 80–82, figs. 62–65, plan 7). It is worth noting that in the detailed depiction of a peak sanctuary from Zakros, in contrast to the scenes depicted on the two fragments from Gypsades and Knossos, the human element is completely absent.

Of special interest is the sealing produced from a metal signet ring, one of the most important and best known Minoan sealings, which came to light in the so-called Central Sanctuary at Knossos (Gill, Müller, and Pini 2002, no. 256 [CMS II.8.]; Nilsson 1955, I, 273, 293, 298, pl. 18,1; Matz 1958, 392–393, fig. 5; Hutchinson 1962, 206, fig. 39; Gill 1965, 58–98; Furumark 1965, 94; Press 1968, 159; Rutkowski 1971, 10; Dietrich 1971, 521; Morgan 1988, 45, 156, fig. 28; Peatfield 1990, 128; Marinatos 1993, 119, 154, fig. 133; 1995, 46, pl. XXa; Burkert 1993, 69, 78; Davis 1995, 17, pl. VIIh; Krattenmaker 1995, 49, pl. XXIa, Palaima 1995, 136, pl. XLIIa) (fig. 19). In the center of the ovoid upper surface of the sealing the top of a rocky mountain is depicted, flanked by heraldic lions, above which stands a richly dressed female figure, with long tresses of hair. The female figure is turned towards the left and holds a vertical staff with her outstretched left hand. To the left of this figure is depicted a two-storey building, crowned by horns of consecration and to the right, a male figure, its torso leaning heavily backwards, wearing a belt and a Minoan loin cloth (Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1971, 69, no. 159, 71, fig. 13, 64, 110, 132), and holding one hand against his forehead. It has been noted that it is not certain whether the female

figure is standing on the top of the mountain or is floating in the air, since the edges of the sealing do not join at this point (Rutkowski 1986, 88, 117, no. 25, fig. 114; Younger 1995, 160, no. 25).

As has recently been admitted by Burkert (1993, 77), it is possible that the ring from Tomb Δ at Pylos also depicts a peak sanctuary (Sakellariou 1964, no. 292 [CMS I]; Matz 1958, 392, 407, fig. 6; Sakellariou 1966, 7, 26, 37, 66, 81; Press 1968, 160, pl. 1, fig. 2; Dietrich 1969, 262; Vermeule 1974, 15, fig. 2f) (Fig. 20). Peak sanctuaries of the Minoan type are not attested on mainland Greece, while the identification of the Maleatas sanctuary at Epidaurus as a Mycenaean peak sanctuary, has no real parallels in Crete (Lambrinoudakis 1976, 206, where Syme Viannou is mistakenly considered a peak sanctuary; 1979, 28; 1980, 43–44; 1981, 62; Burkert 1993, 77; see Press 1968, 160, n. 20). The adoption of a purely Minoan iconographic theme is not unknown on the Mainland (Marinatos 1976; Blegen 1962, 4; Lolos 1998, 52; Korres 1984, 141–152, for relations between Mesenia and Crete, especially through Kythera); the same applies to the influence of Minoan glyptic art on its Mycenaean equivalent (Sakellariou 1966; Sakellarakis 1972b). The existence of stone relief vases decorated with religious scenes on Mainland Greece (Mayer 1892, 80; Reichel 1909, 93, fig. 13; Sakellarakis 1976b, 184), especially scenes depicting buildings similar to those mentioned above in the iconography of peak sanctuaries (Sakellarakis 1973a, figs. 1, 3), is worth noting. Concerning the iconography on the Mycenaean ring from Tomb Δ at Pylos and the scene on the Knossos sealing dated to the Mycenaean period, one is reminded of A. Furumark's observation (Furumark 1965, 89, 93) about the various currents of interactive influences between Crete and Mycenaean Greece: "We have a priori to take account not only of the native Minoan and imported Greek elements, but also of such things as *interpretatio Mycenaea* (i.e. Graeca), immediately and directly as well as indirectly. In the last instance, we must take into consideration, among other things, that impulses imported earlier to the mainland from Crete may have returned to the island in a changed, mycenaeanized form". This observation of the famous pottery specialist is perhaps not only pertinent to pottery and iconography, but to religion as well.

The ring from tomb Δ at Pylos, unknown to the scholars studying peak sanctuaries, was noted by F. Matz, as early as 1958 (Matz 1958, 393) and was confirmed in 1966, by A. Sakellariou (Sakellariou 1966, 7, 26, 37, 66, 81) and in 1968, by L. Press (Press 1968, 160, pl. 1, fig. 2) that it depicts a peak sanctuary. The same idea was also expressed independently by W. Burkert in 1993 (Burkert 1993, 107). This, securely Mycenaean ring (Hutchinson 1962, 206, who also suggested that the Knossos sealing too originated from a Mycenaean ring) depicts, in the so-called dissolved style,

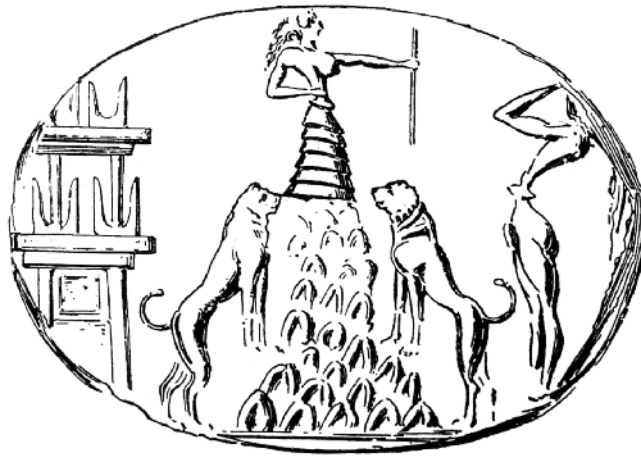


Fig. 19: Sealing from Knossos depicting the “Potnia Theron”
(Gill, Müller, Pini 2002, no. 256; [CMS II.8.1]).

a rocky landscape forming a peak at the centre, on top of which lies a construction with three vertical poles projecting upwards, identified by A. Sakellariou, as horns of consecration. On the upper level, and to the left is floating a male figure, with both hands raised; another figure, standing at a slightly lower level, is looking towards the first one. Between the two male figures is depicted a stylized plant growing out of the rocks. Finally, to the right appears a *caprid* climbing the mountain.

In the wall painting discovered on the north wall of Room 5 of the West House at Thera, a scene described as “the meeting on the hill” (fig. 21, left part of the picture), depicts what is, without doubt, a Minoan peak sanctuary (Marinatos 1972, 37, pl. 101; Morgan 1988, 91, 156–158, fig. 1, 122–123, 125, 127; Rutkowski 1976, 232, fig. 2; Hampe and Simon 1981, 35, fig. 65; Televantou 1990, 315, 318, 321, figs 8, 12; 1994, 63–64, color pls 26–27, 11–12; Doumas 1992, figs. 26–27). In contrast to the iconographic scenes depicting peak sanctuaries discussed above, the Theran miniature wall painting depicts no buildings or other structures whatsoever. What is nevertheless depicted is the procession towards the top of the hill and some kind of ritual at the top. Nine figures are depicted in the scene, again all male, in two groups, four on the left and five on the right. The type of garment worn by the three processional figures on the left, all three wearing the Minoan kilt, is important; this detail coupled with their pose, and the angle of their torsos, is, as observed by L. Morgan, reminiscent of the bronze Minoan figurines. The gestures of the two better preserved figures are also worth noting. One is bringing one hand to his forehead, in the well-known gesture of the Minoan bronze figurines de-



Fig. 20: Ring from a tomb at Pylos (Sakellariou 1964, no. 292 [CMS I]).

picting worshippers, and the second is probably depicted with outstretched hands, as if holding something, like the male figures on the stone relief fragment of the vase from Knossos. The two figures facing each other on the plateau at the top, obviously performing some kind of ritual, are wearing, like the remaining figures of the procession on the right, the long priestly robe, characteristically tied at the neck, with hanging ribbons. It is also worth noting that L. Morgan associates the peak sanctuary scene on the miniature wall painting from Thera, with the adjacent scenes depicting shepherds and animals, and with the one depicting a nearby settlement. It should be noted that B. Rutkowski, who originally supported the depiction of a peak sanctuary on the miniature wall painting from Thera, later, during the Thera Conference, chose to describe it as a “spring sanctuary” (Rutkowski 1976, 232, fig. 2; Morgan 1988, 156, n. 2).

To the scenes depicting peak sanctuaries should be also added one more, as yet unpublished, object, an excavation find discovered in 2003, a gold ring from the Laonikou St. tomb, at Poros, near Herakleion. The ring depicts a peak sanctuary, repeating known iconographical formulas, but also featuring new ones. In the center, at the top of the mountain, is depicted the epiphany of a male figure between two dogs. To the left is shown the decorated gate of a building, with a tall incense-burner, possibly emitting smoke, part of the façade of a building with a tree on the interior, and to the right a female figure paying her respects (“ἡ σεβίζουσα”); behind her a

rock with a bush completes the scene. Individual iconographic elements pertaining to this and to the previous iconographic scenes, will be discussed in detail further along.

Another possible cult scene taking place in a peak sanctuary is possibly depicted on the Oxford ring from Knossos (Evans 1901, 170, fig. 48; Nilsson 1950, 256, fig. 123; Kardara 1966, 179, fig. 29; Matz 1958, 391–392, fig. 4; Dietrich 1969, 262–263), not only because it is suggested by V.E.G. Kenna (1960, 125, no. 250), who maintained that: “the mountainous character of the scene is indicated by rocks and shrubs”, and by L. Press (1968, 161), who maintained that: “the bushes may be taken to represent mountain vegetation”, but mostly because the individual iconographic elements of the scene, the female figure paying her respects (“ἡ σεβίζουσα”), the epiphany of the male deity, the so-called flag pole, the construction with the gate and the vessel, interpreted as an incense-burner, and finally, the sacred tree, are all characteristic of the iconography of peak sanctuaries, as we will see further along. It should be added that D. Levi also associated this scene with Minoan peak sanctuaries (Levi 1981, 40). On the Knossos ring at Oxford the center of the scene is occupied by the epiphany of the male deity, looking towards the left, at the female figure paying her respects (“σεβίζουσα”), behind which the landscape is depicted, i.e. rocks and a bush. The male figure is possibly naked, with streaming hair, and holds a staff that will be discussed later on. The female figure is richly dressed, with a sacral knot possibly depicted on her back, as on La Parisienne (Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1971, 39, about sacral knot, with bibliography).

Immediately to the right of the epiphany of the male deity (for epiphanies see: Nilsson 1950, 352–353, on the Knossos sealing; Matz 1958, 391–395, on the Isopata ring; Furumark 1965, 91, 94 and Sakellariou 1966, 66–67, on the Pylos ring), a tall pole is depicted, of the flag pole type, the upper end of which is beyond the upper limit of the scene. The scene ends on the right with a building; what survives of the building is a door with decorated jambs, framing a tree. The female figure paying her respects (“σεβίζουσα”) and the pole are set on an isodomos base, a rather common feature on signet rings. It should be also mentioned that Matz (1958, 407) believes that the ring from chamber tomb 66 at Mycenae (Sakellariou 1964, no. 101 [CMS I]), depicts a summary rendition of a mountain, while Krattenmaker (1995, 50, 56), includes the Chania sealing in the discussion of peak sanctuaries.

In conclusion, although iconography is considered a primary source for the study of Minoan religion and of the ritual practices involved, unfortunately the extant evidence, the seals and the signet rings, depict summary



Fig. 21: Wall painting from Thera depicting the “meeting on a hill” (Morgan 1988, pl. A).

renditions of religious practices and are difficult to interpret, while the surviving works in the major arts, like wall paintings, are extremely incomplete. The example of the Hagia Triada sarcophagus, with the detailed depiction of a bloodless sacrifice, of liquid and solid offerings, the prayer of a priestess, the bull sacrifice, the collection of the blood and the procession, accompanied by music, is unique.

b. The architecture

The first element of the Minoan peak sanctuary iconography to be investigated, is the depiction of architectural remains, an essential element in the study of ritual practices in peak sanctuaries, since the architectural remains, even when attested in archaeological excavations, in a very small percentage of the extant peak sanctuaries, are meager, as mentioned above. The landscape of the Minoan peak sanctuaries has been already discussed earlier with reference to the concept of altitude, in relation to the natural landscape at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, and with reference to the possible existence of built structures. As regards the landscape in the Minoan peak sanctuaries, what should be noted at this point, in relation to the relevant iconography, is the emphasis on the rocky character of the mountain on stone relief vases, obviously because of the availability of space. The depiction of space and of rocks is not even omitted from the miniature de-

pictions of peak sanctuaries on rings (Sakellariou 1966, 81, for rendition of rocks in Mycenaean glyptic art).

Out of the eight extant iconographic depictions of peak sanctuaries, only the two specimens, discovered outside Crete itself, the miniature wall painting from Thera and the ring from Pylos, lack buildings, something which is not without significance. The existence of buildings on all six of the extant Cretan specimens on the other hand, confirms the fact that peak sanctuaries for the craftsmen who manufactured these objects, for the owners of the rings, and perhaps also for the recipients of the sealings, were associated with impressive, especially pseudo-isodomic constructions. Considering that these iconographic scenes were all discovered in palatial centers (Peatfield 1990, 128), the connection between the depictions of these buildings on works of art and the palaces, is strong. This connection becomes even more pertinent in view of the opinions voiced by some scholars about the tripartite shrines depicted on two of them, the Zakros rhyton and the fragment of a relief vase from Gypsades (Press 1968, 158, Gypsades specimen), which were identified as evidence of palatial cult, a suggestion which indicates that the buildings on peak sanctuaries have the same character as the palatial shrines.

The most complete depiction of a peak sanctuary, that on the Zakros rhyton, apart from denoting the landscape, provides important information as regards the architectural form of peak sanctuaries, with the emphasis placed on the tripartite shrine, the flag poles and the enclosure wall, crowned with horns of consecration. Nevertheless, the other peak sanctuary representations mentioned above, with two exceptions, the fragment of the relief stone vase from Gypsades, which also depicts an, albeit asymmetrical, tripartite shrine, and the fragment of the relief stone vase from Knossos, which depicts the enclosure wall of the sanctuary, do not include traces of the typical architecture associated with the tripartite shrine, as illustrated on the Zakros rhyton. The latter, according to J. Shaw (1978a, 436, fig. 9), (Figs 7, 17), does not depict a peak sanctuary, but a shrine on a mountain slope. It is true that the fragmentary state of the two broken specimens does not allow the reconstruction of the original form of the architectural features depicted on these vases, which would have been particularly interesting, on account of the human activity involved. In any case, the Knossos sealing depicts a two-storey building, which is furthermore located not at the top of the mountain, but at an indefinable place and distance; according to L. Press (1968, 158, 161) and B.C. Dietrich (1969, 262), the building was placed on the side of the main scene, probably because there was not enough space for it at the top of the mountain. A tripartite arrangement on a mountain slope and not on the top of the

mountain, where peak sanctuaries are located, is also attested in the temple of the Human Sacrifice at Anemospilia, on the north side of Juktas (Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1997, I, 273). On both the ring from Knossos, now at Oxford, and the ring from Laonikou St. at Poros, near Herakleion, the scene depicts the open gate of a building, perhaps for the benefit of a column-like object, which will be discussed later on.

Concerning the meaning of the iconographical representation of buildings on peak sanctuaries, especially on the sealing from Knossos, K. Krattenmaker has concluded that the depictions of buildings in the context of peak sanctuary iconography are associated with the palaces. According to Krattenmaker (1995, 56): “The architecture on the Knossos and Chania seal impressions relates to the palatial architecture rather than to the architecture of shrines or ordinary houses, and the iconographic and physical association of mountains are with peak sanctuaries” (see also Rutkowski 1988, 71–99; Peatfield 1990, 122–123; Krattenmaker 1995). This could be a plausible interpretation, especially considering the relationship between palaces and peak sanctuaries. N. Marinatos (1995, 46), believes that the building on the Knossos sealing depicts the palace and not a peak sanctuary, and that the man standing on the right is the king. Nevertheless, there are other pieces of evidence that should be brought into this discussion, evidence that K. Krattenmaker omitted. As noted in the earlier discussion concerning the location and the landscape of peak sanctuaries, only five out of the multitude of extant sites preserve architectural remains, and of those, only the remains on Juktas are really impressive. Nevertheless, even in the case of Juktas, there are no traces of a tripartite shrine, or of isodomic, poros constructions, poros blocks at the site being in a fragmentary condition. Furthermore, the existence of an enclosure wall at that sanctuary, also depicted in the iconographic tradition, does not automatically identify the site as a peak sanctuary, considering that the precinct is not contemporary with the iconographic representations. There are therefore serious problems concerning the acknowledgement of the existence of building facilities on peak sanctuaries, of the form and type attested in the extant iconography.

It is a difficult problem to solve. Of course, no one would expect the foundation of grandiose isodomic poros buildings at every modest rural Minoan peak sanctuary. Therefore, the reconstruction of the buildings on the peak sanctuaries of Traostalos, Petsofas, Piskokephalo, Filioremos, and especially Juktas (Rutkowski 1986, 76–77, fig. 77b), i.e. the peak sanctuaries where the existence of buildings has been attested through excavation, as noted above, is hypothetical and their relation to the extant iconography, is certainly dubious. One should not, nevertheless, exclude the possibility

of a certain stylization in the depiction of constructions in the iconography of peak sanctuaries. It should be mentioned that A. Sakellariou (1966, 80–81), commenting on the so-called base depicted in the form of an isodomic wall on the Knossos ring at Oxford, suggested that it depicts “a conventional platform, unrelated to the scene”, and V. Müller (1925, 91), compared it to a piece of scenery.

A. Sakellariou (1966, 36), when discussing the rings depicting a gate and a small column, especially the ring no. 86 (Sakellariou 1964, nos. 86, 119, 126 [CMS I]), asks: “is it a simple depiction of a building, represented by its entrance or its façade, or could it be some kind of altar?”. Decisive arguments for or against any of these suggestions, do not seem to exist (Dietrich 1969, 262, on the Knossos sealing).

A decorated gate, as on the Zakros rhyton, is also attested on the ring from the Laonikou St. tomb, at Poros. F. Matz (1958, 391. n. 5–6, fig. 4), refers to a gate/opening (Öffnung), when discussing the Knossos ring at Oxford (Evans 1901, 170, fig. 48; 1921–1935, I, 160, fig. 115; Nilsson 1950, 256, fig. 123). That ring, which is included in the list of peak sanctuary representations, because: “the mountainous character of the scene is indicated by rocks and shrubs” (Kenna 1960, 125, no. 250), will be discussed later with reference to the column and the epiphany.

K. Krattenmaker (1995, 50), who includes the Chania sealing in the discussion of peak sanctuaries, on account of the location of the building complex on a mountain, adds two further stylized representations of mountains in the corpus of Minoan seals (Krattenmaker 1995, 56).

Shaw’s hypothesis concerning the occasional, impermanent character of the façade of tripartite shrines on peak sanctuaries during the seasonal festivals, as mentioned above, would be a solution to the problem. According to Shaw (1978a, 444, 445–448): “It is likely that such shrines did not have extensive inner chambers, served chiefly as backdrops for religious rites carried out in front of them... The rites were seasonal and sporadic”. E. F. Bloedow’s and L. Platon’s suggestions concerning the representation of the palace of Zakros on the Zakros rhyton (Bloedow 1990, 59–78; Platon 2003, 46), will not be discussed here.

Another enigmatic element concerning the buildings on peak sanctuaries, is related to the interpretation of the so-called ‘flag poles’, as they were named by Stylianos Alexiou (1963), especially considering that flags, according to the proffered Egyptian parallels, do not appear on any other type of Minoan iconographical religious representation, even if the sanctuaries are depicted in a festal context or if their entire facades are illus-

trated, as in the case of the Zakros rhyton, which does not include any human figures. Earlier, Alexiou (1964, 84), had associated the tall lance-like objects with spears, an opinion shared by W. Stevenson-Smith (1965, 71), which was recently reinstated by L. Platon (2003, 340, 354), emphasizing moreover the secular interpretation of these objects in the religious representations where they appear. This interpretation is also unlikely though, not only because the other, so-called square capitals, appearing alongside these lance-like objects, are not related to actual spears, but also because neither are the shafts referred to by L. Platon, as depicted on the Mycenaean cylinder seal from Kazarma, with a small sphere at the top (Pini 1975, no. 585 [CMS 5.1–2]).

B. Rutkowski (Rutkowski 1971, 11) believes that the so-called ‘flag poles’ are related to the worship of a female deity accompanied by a male god. A pole standing on a base is also attested on the Oxford ring.

To the representations depicting poles should be also added the specimen depicting a boxer (Gill, Müller, and Pini 2002, no. 280 [CMS II.8.1]), boxing being a sport practiced in various festivals (see conical rhyton from Hagia Triada).

Concerning these freestanding Minoan poles, one should keep in mind Chr. Kardara’s suggestion, that they were the means for the epiphany of the god of lightning (Kardara 1966, 176–181). Perhaps this theory should be taken more seriously, considering that these poles appear on all the extant representations of buildings on peak sanctuaries, with the exception of the Knossos sealing, but also because wherever their upper end is preserved, the pole is tapering upwards, as was the case on the Zakros relief rhyton and on the new ring from the Laonikou St. tomb at Poros. It is also worth noting that the so-called capitals are absent on the last specimen (Laffineur 2005, for the so-called capitals). It is finally observed that all the known Minoan examples depict two freestanding poles on either side of a gate. Chr. Kardara mentioned not only the two famous freestanding poles of the Solomon temple (Kardara 1966, 150–157), but also many other examples of freestanding twin poles related to gates in later Greek periods (Kardara 1966, 192–199).

D. Levi (1981, 40) associates the poles with the Hyakinthus shrine at Amyklai, and the festival celebrated in honor of Hyakinthus at Tylissos, near the peak sanctuary at Pyrgos.

The representation of a peak sanctuary on the Thera wall painting, confirms the theory that some peak sanctuaries were not provided with any buildings at all, which suggests that others might have had plain structures

that left no traces behind. The lack of buildings on some peak sanctuaries suggests that worship at these sites was not meant to be secret, conducted in a closed space, away from impious eyes (Vermeule 1974, 8, for the open air character of Minoan cult). As underlined above, with reference to the location and the landscape associated with Minoan peak sanctuaries, worship took place in the open air, hence the emphasis in iconographical scenes on the landscape, on vegetation, on trees, animals and birds.

The peak sanctuary iconography contributes, nevertheless, other interesting clues concerning the cult practices at these sites. Judging by the iconographical representations of peak sanctuaries, there were various types of altars used, including table-like, stepped and incurved examples, as well as utensils, and it is also certain that ritual activity was not restricted to the top of the mountain; it extended lower down along the slopes, always in the open air, among the rocks. The rocks and the mountain were the dominant features. The natural elements of the landscape seem to have participated in the sacred ritual, the crocuses, the sacred tree, the wild goats, sacrificial animals, and the birds, symbolizing the epiphany of the deity.

The prevalence of the male element in the iconography of peak sanctuaries is impressive and is in agreement with the percentage of male and female bronze figurines that came to light at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno. Men take part in the procession, men perform the rituals at the top and men make offerings to the deity. Although only the female figure depicted on the Knossos sealing is, according to most scholars, a deity, on both the Oxford ring at Knossos and on the unpublished ring from the Laonikou St. tomb from Poros, near Herakleion, a male deity is depicted, as it appears in epiphany (see Ch. 5). Considering that on the same rings a female figure is depicted in the act of paying her respects (“σεβίζουσα”), it seems that uncertainty lies behind every conclusion concerning religious matters. The gestures of the figures depicted in peak sanctuary iconography, and other iconographic elements, as for example the use of certain utensils in the processions or other religious rituals, will be discussed separately and in more detail further along. What should be noted at this point is the relative wealth of iconographic material related to peak sanctuaries, including representations in different artistic mediums, evidence of the popularity of this outstanding form of Minoan worship, especially during the Neopalatial period, which coincides with the peak in the cult practiced at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno.

4. THE RITUAL PRACTICE

The identification of some of the objects brought to light in peak sanctuaries as “objects of ritual use” is difficult. Even more difficult is the identification of the ritual practices involved, the whole venture being also hampered by the lack of published information concerning the archaeological context of these objects, with the exception of the peak sanctuary at Atsipades. According to Dietrich (1969, 257): “The least understood of Minoan cult sites are those on, or near, the summit of mountains... To give a full account and interpretation of this kind of cult and the exact nature of the deity about whom the ritual involved, alas, cannot be done: theories and conjectures, however finely spun or attractive, are as easily produced as they are refuted”.

Objects used in an ancient cult should not be only viewed from a chronological, typological, historical, technological, and of course a religious point of view; one should also delve into the ritual practices involved. The study of the ritual practices of an ancient cult, in this case of the Minoan peak sanctuary cult, in association of course with all the other evidence available to scholars, reveals the most essential element in this study, the experiencing of everyday life in another time zone, the needs and the fears, and therefore the beliefs and the hopes of the people living in those faraway times, for divine help.

The inherent difficulties in the study of Minoan religion, especially the lack of any written sources, has dissuaded, even eminent scholars, from embarking on a comprehensive study of ritual practices. The ritual of Minoan animal sacrifice, which I worked on many years ago (Sakellarakis 1970a; 1972b), was subsequently pursued even further by Nanno Marinatos (1986), who did not associate animal sacrifices with peak sanctuary cult. However hard one looks into the numerous studies on peak sanctuaries, the word “prayer”, essential in every religion, is nowhere to be found, the only exception being F. Matz (1958, 391). Efi Sapouna-Sakellarakis (1995) has studied the gestures of the Minoan bronze figurines from Crete, in relation to the different stages of prayer and has recently presented the official views of various scholars, with reference to the bronze figurines from Kythera, closely related to their Minoan counterparts (Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2012, 140–154).

The study of the cult practices in Minoan peak sanctuaries has not gone beyond the level of general observations (Marinatos 1993, 118).

The following chapters endeavor to fill precisely this gap. Different aspects of the cult practices involved are examined separately, i.e. the ritual procession of priests and pilgrims to the sanctuaries, the time of the festival, the sacrifice, the practice of the lighting of fires and pyres of all kinds, the meals taking place on site, the possible ritual breakage of objects, prayer, libations and offerings made by the worshippers, dances, music and other activities accompanying the rituals, matters involving the priesthood and the worshippers, and of course, as far as that is possible, the matter of the deity worshipped at the sanctuaries.

It should be also noted that evidence pertaining to animal sacrifice is meager at the Kythera sanctuary. Evidence to this effect has been located mostly on Terrace 2, in the south part of the area between the two churches, and on Terrace 7. The existence of a ritual pyre is on the whole dubious by comparison to the extant evidence from Crete (Davaras 1974, 210; Rutkowski 1988, 90, 93, for the sanctuary at Keria Maleviziou). Since ritual practices in different sanctuaries were, in any case, not identical (Jones 1999, 32, tables 1, 6, 9, 10), one cannot draw any conclusions by comparing different sites.

a. The time of the festival

Specialists in ancient Greek religion have emphasized that, in the same way that the sanctuary determines the site, the festival determines the time of the festivities (Burkert 1993, 222), and therefore an attempt to determine more precisely the time of the procession to the Minoan peak sanctuaries and of the festival itself, would be rather useful. A number of the scholars studying peak sanctuaries have given some thought to the matter. Kostis Davaras (1976, 245) alluded to “certain fixed days”, Alan Peatfield (1990) suggested that the festival took place “once a year” and Bogdan Rutkowski (1991, 53), believed that the festival on peak sanctuaries took place “once or several times a year”. Nanno Marinatos (1993, 118 n. 259), clearly in favor of the theory supporting the existence of pyres in Minoan peak sanctuaries, suggested that “whereas pilgrimage may have been frequent and regular, only once or twice a year would great bonfires have been lit”. It is obvious that these aphorisms represent generalities, do not touch upon the matter of the precise time of the celebrations on peak sanctuaries, often built in places, where, because of the weather conditions, access was not possible for large periods of time, and most importantly, they do not take into account the basic principle of religious studies, that the festival determines the time of the festivities. Only Lyvia Morgan (1988, 158), in her study of the miniature wall painting on the north wall of room

5 of the West House on Thera, depicting a ritual on a peak sanctuary, has actually discussed the time of the festivities in peak sanctuaries, providing important ethnographical parallels.

There is no real doubt that religious festivals, both in antiquity and in modern times, in both urban and extra-urban settings, ranging from the Panathenaic festival, to the festival in honor of Hyakinthus, were conducted within a strictly determined period of time; the latter suggests that festivities on Minoan peak sanctuaries would probably also follow a similar principle. The procession to the peak sanctuary and all the established ritual practices, involving the participation of a large number of worshippers, would have also taken place in this specific period of time. The existence of a specific period of time for the festivities though, would not preclude the use of the sanctuary at any other time of the year for individual expressions of reverence, as is also true nowadays. This is perhaps what B. Rutkowski had in mind when he suggested that the ascent to the Minoan peak sanctuaries took place “once or several times a year”, as noted above.

There is also no doubt, that, as nowadays, the established time for festivities, both in extra-urban sanctuaries and in the Minoan peak sanctuaries, would not include the winter months, mainly on account of the difficulties in reaching the sites; festivities would be mostly held during the summer months, as exemplified nowadays by the festival on Greek mountain tops, in honor of Prophetes Elias, on the 20th of July (Hutchinson 1962, 219; Morgan 1988, 156). Schachermeyr (1964, 158), has actually noted: “Wie heut-zutage so ziemlich jeder Ort in der Peloponnes einen eigenen Elias-Berg besitzt, dürfte in minoischer Zeit jeder grössere Platz sein eigenes Höhenheiligtum gehabt haben”. The same is true for the feast of Timios Stavros (Holy Cross) on the peaks of Psiloreitis and on Kophinas on the 14th of September, of the transferable, but always summer festival of the Analipsis (Ascension) on Nida, and of the Aphentis Christos (Christ the Lord) on the 6th of August, on Juktas. It has been already noted that the deity worshipped on Cretan mountain tops is Aphentis Christos (Christ the Lord) and not Prophetes Elias, as on the mainland (Pendlebury 1963, 272, n. 3; Rutkowski 1985, 346). It is also well known that the worship of Zeus on mountain tops, as a weather god, was supplanted by the worship of Prophetes Elias, also associated with high places (Cook 1914–1940, 163–186; Semple 1932, 529; Megaw 1963, 142–143), and on Cretan mountain tops, by Aphentis Christos (Christ the Lord), Timios Stavros (Holy Cross), or the Hagio Pneuma (Holy Ghost), and less so by Prophetes Elias. Morgan has aptly noted (1988, 158, n. 27), as mentioned above, the importance of mountains in the peak sanctuary cult, for the observation of atmospheric conditions, of the winds and the rain, the mountain peaks

providing the safest source of information about the weather for the animal breeders, the farmers and the sailors (Semple 1932, 522). She also mentions that, according to Theophrastus (*Περὶ σημείων ὑδάτων καὶ πνευμάτων καὶ χειμώνων*... I, 3): “...particular constellations which were the celestial timekeepers of the winter rains, weather signs were found chiefly on high mountains, especially those rising from the sea and exposed to rain-bearing winds”.

As noted above, July is the month with the greatest number of religious festivals in the Cretan countryside and on the Cretan mountains (Psilakis 2005, 255). The period between July and August, also because of the abundance of fruits, would perhaps be the most appropriate time for the festivities on Minoan peak sanctuaries, with special reference to the prominent role of nature worship, endemic in Minoan religion. Even so, it is not at all certain that festivities in all Minoan peak sanctuaries would have taken place at the same time of the year, something that is also indicated by the wide range of votive offerings in some of those sanctuaries. Even the celebrations in honor of Orthodox Christian saints associated with magic or with the cure of specific illnesses, as for example the Saints Kosmas and Damianos on the 1st of July, the Saints Kyrikos and Ioulite, on the 5th of July, Saint Marina on the 17th of July, Saint Paraskevi on the 26th of July and Saint Panteleimon on the 27th of July, point to the same conclusion.

Of course, one should not exclude the possibility that festivals in some Minoan peak sanctuaries located at low altitudes and established in the vicinity of settlements, took place in springtime. One such case is the peak sanctuary on Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, where the modern peak festival is celebrated on the 23rd of April. Morgan (1988, 158), influenced by the presence of shepherds in the peak sanctuary scene on the miniature wall painting from Thera and citing ethnographic parallels of rituals practiced by mainland animal breeding communities, claims that festivals on peak sanctuaries took place in the spring, the time that sheep were being moved from lowland pastures to the mountains. The animal breeding festival on the 23rd of April, the day set for the celebration of Hagios Georgios at Arachova, mentioned by Lyvia Morgan, is a typical example (Megas 1963, 113–116, esp. 114). Although the author rightly observes that the first day of spring is not a fixed day in the calendar and is celebrated on different days between March and May, she is wrong in her belief that the sheep herds in Crete are moved to the mountain pastures on the 25th of March, which is a national holiday. At Psiloreitis, the most important animal breeding festival is not associated with the day when the herds are driven to the mountain pastures, which is in any case not the same in all the Cretan mountains,

but with the day set for the shearing of the sheep, especially the overnight preparations (Burkert 1993, 222).

In conclusion, it should be stated that since festivities on the Minoan peak sanctuaries did not only concern shepherds, but also other groups, like farmers and sailors, the day of the festival may have not been the same for all the groups involved or for all the extant peak sanctuaries. According to the study of the archaeo-zoological material by Katerina Trantalidou (2013, 465-560), especially the large number of chicken bones discovered in the Kythera peak sanctuary, and judging by the climatic conditions and the macroscopic examination of the chicken bones, it seems that pilgrims visited the site during the summer. These extra-urban celebrations would have probably taken place, as noted above, during the spring and the summer. It should also be noted that crocus flowers bloom on the mountains in spring, and in the plains from the fall (A. Genetzakis, pharmacist working in herb lore).

b. The ritual objects

The Minoan tradition

Although the miniature representations of peak sanctuaries in Minoan art are responsible for the limited amount of evidence concerning the objects/implements used in peak sanctuary rituals, some of the latter have actually survived. The scene on the stone relief rhyton from Gypsades depicts what looks like a wicker basket. The worshippers on the stone relief rhyton from Knossos are holding a stone ladle in their left hand. On the Laonikou St. ring from Poros and on the ring from Knossos, now at Oxford, a column-like object is depicted, described as an incense-burner.

On the fragment of the stone relief rhyton from Gypsades a shallow vessel with two handles is illustrated, which has been interpreted in several different ways. Nevertheless, after the discovery of the wall painting with the saffron gatherers from Thera (Doulas 1992, fig. 122, n. 203), there is no doubt that what is depicted on the rhyton is a wicker basket (Alexiou 1959, 350; Dietrich 1969, 261, “basket with offerings”), similar to the two baskets depicted on the Thera wall painting (Televantou 1994a, 127; Beloyianni 2000, 570–575), to the vessels depicted on the Hagia Triada sarcophagus (Marinatos and Hirmer 1959, pl. XXVIII) and in the wall painting of the crocus-gatherer from Knossos (Evans 1921–1935, pl. IV). The explicit depiction of the weave in the case of the basket in the Thera examples is not attested in the other two depictions of the vessel, and it is therefore

possible that they were made of another material. A similar object in clay has been actually attested in the east room with the bloodless offerings, in the Anemospilia sanctuary, near Archanes (Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1997, fig. 250; see Warren 2000, 578). The placement of fruits inside the specimen depicted on the Hagia Triada sarcophagus alludes to the offering of unidentifiable objects on the relief rhyton from Gypsades (Shaw 1978a, 440-441, “leaf-like objects”). Stylianos Alexiou (1959, 350) appropriately describes the object depicted on the relief rhyton from Gypsades, as a “pannier” and Beloyianni (2000, 575), successfully associates the Theran vessels with the Homeric “*κάνεον*” or “*κάνιστρον*” (*Od.* γ 442 *ἔχεν οὐλὰς ἐν κανέῳ*, κ 355 *χρύσεια κάνεια*, ρ 343 *περικαλλέος ἐκ κανέοιο*; *Il.* I 217 *καλοῖς ἐν κανέοισιν*, Λ 630 *χάλκειον κάνεον*), which could be also associated with the later “*κανοῦν*” (RE, λ. *κανοῦν*). The dedication of bloodless offerings in similar containers in Minoan peak sanctuaries should be therefore considered certain, especially since, as noted by Beloyianni (2000, 572), wicker baskets are used even nowadays for similar offerings in churches. Although it is of course impossible to determine what the worshipper on the relief rhyton from Gypsades is doing exactly, a “sacrifice of fruits”, according to Press (1968, 158), “leaving a basket of fruits”, according to Vermeule (1974, 11), “bending down to grasp (arrange, remove?) leaf-like objects from within a large humper”, according to Shaw (1978a, 440–441), or “bending to handle the contents of a basket”, according to Marinatos (1993, 121), the identification of the vessel is perhaps enough.

The second vessel appears twice in peak sanctuary representations, especially on the stone relief rhyton from Knossos, depicting the procession of worshippers. In at least one of the two cases, where the entire outline of the vessel is preserved, it is depicted as a small, shallow, object, flat on top, with a curved underside. Evans described it as an “offertory bowl” (Evans 1921–1935, II, 752) and Nilsson simply as a “bowl” (Nilsson 1950, 183), similarly to the more recent descriptions by Logue (2004, 154) and Nörbling (1995, 60) (“Opferschale”), while Platon and Pararas (1991, 46, n. 27), claim that the vessels depicted on the stone relief vase from Knossos were meant to be placed over other vessels (Banou 2012, 349, Λ5). Nevertheless, the wider curvature of the front side of the vessel on the left, indicates that it was provided with an off-centre base, suggesting that it could be identified with the stone ladles, well known in peak sanctuaries (Figs 22, 23), and similar to those that came to light at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno.

The third, rather strange, vessel depicted on the ring from the Laonikou St. tomb at Poros, requires a much longer discussion. At the entrance of the building enclosing the tree, between the two poles and exactly at the

centre of the decorated door and before it, is depicted an object, which most probably represents an incense-burner (for alleged examples of Minoan incense-burners see Nilsson 1950, 140, 349). The object has a tall column-like body, tapering outwards uniformly at the top and resting on a splaying base. Exactly above the object is depicted a row of dots in a triangular arrangement, rising upwards and swaying slightly to the right. Since the movement of the hair of the male figure on the same ring is also depicted with a row of dots, a well known convention for the rendering of flowing hair in other Creto-Mycenaean rings (Sakellariou 1964, nos 126, 127, 191, 219 [CMS I]; Platon and Pini 1984, no. 326 [CMS II.3]; Gill, Müller, and Pini 2002, nos. 256, 133 [CMS II.8.1]; Pini 1988, no. 28 [CMS XI]; Kenna 1960, 125, no. 250, pl. 20, no. 1919, 56), the impression is given that the arrangement of the dots depicts wisps of smoke emanating from something that is burning on the said column-like object, hence its identification as an incense-burner.

Although the similarity of the object depicted on the ring from the Laonikou St. tomb at Poros, to that depicted on the Oxford ring from Knossos (Fig. 12), with a similar pictorial syntax, is striking (Evans 1901, 170, fig. 48; 1921–1935, 160, fig. 115; Nilsson 1950, 256, fig. 123; Matz 1958, 391–392, fig. 4; Kenna 1960, 125, no. 250; Kardara 1966, 181; Younger 1988, 142; Platon and Pararas 1991, 33), Rutkowski (1983), who undertook a detailed study of ritual scenes, including the later Cypriot and Greek “Kandelaber”, did not make any mention of the significance and the use of the vessel in Minoan religion. It is also worth noting, that the scene on the Oxford ring mentioned above, depicting a hypothetical peak sanctuary, and the ring from the Laonikou St. tomb at Poros, feature, not only a pole, but the epiphany of a male deity and a figure paying its respects. The fact that the column-like object discussed is depicted in both cases at the centre of the gate of a structure enclosing the sacred tree, is particularly important.

This column-like object is not only depicted on the ring from the Laonikou St. tomb at Poros and on the Oxford ring; it also appears, in an abbreviated form, on a whole series of Creto-Mycenaean rings. Matz pointed out three rings depicting built structures enclosing the sacred tree. At the centre of the opening or gate, is depicted an upright, column-like object (Matz 1958, 391). These specimens include: **1.** a ring from Mycenae, chamber tomb 91 (Sakellariou 1964, no. 126 [CMS I]; Nilsson 1950, 256, fig. 124; Persson 1942a, 172, no. 4), **2.** a ring from Mycenae, chamber tomb 84 (Sakellariou 1964, no. 119 [CMS I]; Persson 1942a, 174, no. 10; Nilsson 1950, 259, fig. 127), and **3.** a ring from Kalyvia in the Messara (Platon and Pini 1984, no. 114 [CMS II.3]; Persson 1942a, 171, no. 2; Nilsson 1950,



Fig. 22: Inscribed stone ladle from Kythera.

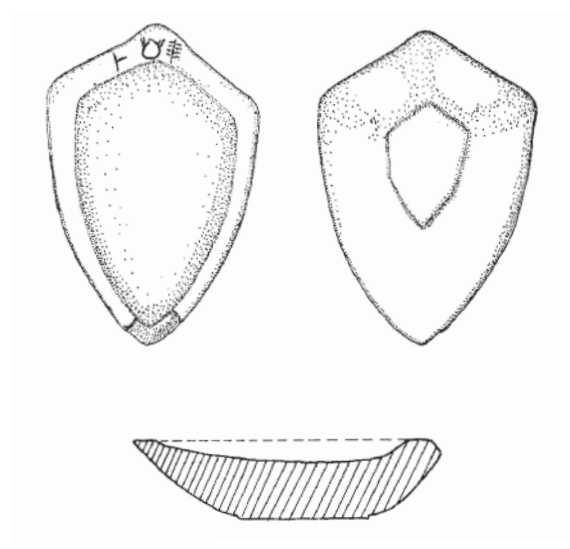


Fig. 23: Drawing of the stone ladle on Fig. 22.

268, fig. 133). On two other rings, the column-like object is depicted before the gate of a structure which does not enclose a tree, sacred or not. To these should be added four other specimens: **1.** a ring of unknown provenance in Berlin (Pini 1988, no. 28 [CMS XI]), **2.** a ring of unknown provenance in the Herakleion Museum (Platon and Pini 1984, no. 326 [CMS II.3]), **3.** a ring from tholos tomb A at Archanes, depicting, in an abbreviated manner, the same type of column-like object, with dots, standing before a narrow gate (Sakellarakis 1967, 280; 1973b, pl. 95a; 1983, 60; Sakellarakis and Sakellaraki 1997, II, figs 722–724), and, perhaps, **4.** the ring from Mega Monastiri (Pini 1975, no. 728 [CMS 5.1-2]; Platon and Pararas 1991, 34, fig 14λ), which also possibly depicts smoke, as the ring

from the Laonikou St. tomb at Poros. Pini (1975, no. 728 [CMS 5.1-2]), describes it as an “undeutlicher Gegenstand”. Platon and Pararas (1991, 49), also note the association of the column-like object with the sacred tree, although they are not aware of Matz’s work. Although the preservation of some of the shallowly incised details on the ring from Mega Monastiri, as for example the rendering of the right hand of the first figure paying its respects, is not particularly good, the depiction of a column-like object, that approximates the drawing made by Platon and Pararas (1991, fig. 14λ), is visible in both the photograph and on the cast made of the ring. The identification of the column-like object on this ring is reinforced by its position before the gate of a building and most importantly, by the rendering of dots on its upper surface, which were perhaps here too meant to depict the smoke emanating from an incense-burner, as on the other recorded specimens. It should be noted that this column-like object, depicted at the centre of gateways, and often associated with sacred trees, was also associated by Platon and Pararas (1991, 33), with the stylized depictions of an iconographic motif floating freely in space on the rings from Archanes (Fig. 13) (Sakellarakis 1967, 280; 1973b, pl. 95a; 1983, 60; Platon and Pararas 1991, 93; Sakellarakis and Sakellaraki 1997, II, figs 722–724), Mochlos (Platon and Pini 1984, no. 252 [CMS II.3]; Seager 1912, 91, fig. 52; Persson 1942a, 84; Nilsson 1950, 157, fig. 64; Sourvinou-Inwood 1973, 154–155; Marinatos 1989, 140; Platon and Pararas 1991, 33–34), and the Agora of Athens (Fig. 24) (Pini 1975, no. 173 [CMS 5.1]; Platon and Pararas 1991, 35). One of various conflicting views expressed about these objects, maintains that they represent double-axes depicted upside-down (Pini 1975, no. 173 [CMS 5.1-2]), or an Egyptian “Djet-like object” (Marinatos 1989, 140). The similarity of the column-like objects on the two rings from Archanes and Mochlos is notable, and it is very likely that this type of object represents a stylized, free-floating rendering of the column-like object discussed above, as attested on the other rings, while the rings from Archanes and Mochlos depict, not only the sacred tree, but also a building with a gate. It should be noted that the small column-like object is not related to the depictions of large columns of the type attested on the Lion Gate at Mycenae, or with columns of the type depicted on the ring from Kalyvia in the Messara (Platon and Pini 1984, no. 102 [CMS II.3]).

This column-like object, described by Matz as pillar-like, was variously described by scholars as a “pillar” (Nilsson 1950, 257), as a “tapering pillar” (Kenna 1960, 125, no. 250), as a “column” (Persson 1942a, 50; Nilsson 1950, 228, 257), as a “small column” (Younger 1988, 142), as a “column with a tripartite capital” (Persson 1942a, 43), as a “baetyl” (Persson 1942a, 39, 52), as a “tall, narrow baetyl” (Persson 1942a, 39), as a “female baetylic

pillar” (Evans 1921–1935, I, 60, Oxford ring in relation to the Juktas peak sanctuary), and finally as a vertical line (Persson 1942a, 47). As regards the ring of unknown provenance from Berlin, the familiar depiction of the column-like object at the centre of the gate, lead Persson to propose the existence of a double gate (Persson 1942a, 67–68). With the exception of Matz, scholars, and especially Persson, did not make the connection between the two objects, hence the variety of interpretations. Concerning the ring from chamber tomb 55 at Mycenae, Persson (1942a, 56), stated: “The gate on the right is particularly well depicted; therefore the possibility of assuming an offering table with a central support, which would otherwise be suggested, is excluded. In the open aedicule is to be seen a small column with a base and double capital, a more developed form of the baetyl”. It is worth noting that A. Persson’s interpretation of this column-like object in his discussion of the Knossos ring at Oxford, was perhaps influenced by his involvement in the study of Creto-Mycenaean lamps (Persson 1942b, 102–111), since he describes it as “a tall standing lamp of a well known type” (Persson 1942b, 102–111), without noting its positioning at the centre of a gate and most importantly, without referring to the depiction of this object on the large Tiryns ring (Sakellariou 1964, no. 179 [CMS I]), which he had himself interpreted as an incense-burner. His exact words were: “In the opening appears what Evans and Nilsson considered a free-standing column, with two rings on the shaft, a clearly marked basal plate, and strongly projecting cover-plate. My own opinion is that it is a tall standing lamp of a well-known type” (Persson 1942b, 102–111). The simi-



Fig. 24: Ring from the ancient Agora of Athens (Pini 1975, no. 173 [CMS V.1]).

larity of the column-like object as depicted in Minoan art, with the object depicted before the seated deity receiving the offerings of the daemons on the Tiryns ring, which has already been interpreted as an incense-burner, is remarkable (Nilsson 1950, 349; Marinatos and Hirmer 1959, 122; Kardara 1966, 180; Burkert 1993, 94). In any case the similarity of the column-like object with the tall stone Minoan lamps (Warren 1969, 57–58) is obvious.

Interestingly enough, the object depicted on the ring from the Laonikou St. tomb at Poros, copies faithfully, not only the form, but also the function of some other Creto-Mycenaean stone vessels, similar to the tall stone lamps. Some years ago, during my study of the Mycenaean stone vases (Sakellarakis 1976b), I noted two stone vessels from Mycenae, shaped like capitals; one of those was provided with holes at its base, meant to facilitate its attachment to some kind of shaft (Sakellarakis 1976b, 185–186, pl. XIV.41; Platon and Pararas 1991, 12, nos. 10–11). This observation helped me associate these Mycenaean stone vessels with the well known capital from Zakros (Platon 1963, 165 pl. 142β; 1974, 58, fig. 29; Sakellarakis 1976b, 186, pl. XIII:36; Platon and Pararas 1991, 17, no. 26, fig. 26, pls 11–13), also provided with holes at its base; in this case too, the holes were meant to facilitate its attachment to a small column-shaft. A similar case can be made for a small stone column from Zakros (Platon 1965, 205; Sakellarakis 1976b, pl. XIII; Platon and Pararas 1991, 20–21, no. 41, pls 9, 41); the latter preserves on the upper surface, not only attachment holes, but also part of a stone protuberance, that would facilitate its safe attachment to some kind of a crowning element. Proof of the existence of small Creto-Mycenaean columns, assembled from two separate pieces, perhaps not of the same material, i.e. a plain (for Zakros see also Platon 1978, 294, fig. 5; Platon and Pararas 1991, 21, no. 42, pl. 10, 42, figs 16–17, 23–24, no. 52, pls 11, 52, with protuberance; for one specimen from Palaikastro, see Dawkins 1902–1903, 290–296; Platon and Pararas 1991, 19, no. 34; for one specimen of unknown provenance, see Platon and Pararas 1991, 26, no. 43, pl. 12, 63, figs 19–20), or an elaborate shaft (see examples: 1. Evans 1921–1935, II, 521–522, fig. 325; Zervos 1956, fig. 467, 2. Evans 1921–1935, I, pl. VI; Zervos 1956, fig. 468, 3. Evans 1902–1903, 144, fig. 89 and 4. Dawkins 1923, 139, fig. 121A; Zervos 1956, fig. 466; Platon and Pararas 1991, 29), and a variously shaped crowning element, led me of course to their association with the well known Tiryns ring (Sakellariou 1964, no. 179 [CMS I]), which confirmed the existence of an actual Creto-Mycenaean vessel, previously only known through iconographical sources. In 1985, A. Lembessi discovered at the Syme Viannou sanctuary, a crowning element made of stone, provided with a projecting element on each flat

surface. This crowning element she then associated with a small stone pier, also with a projecting element (tenon) on the upper surface and with a stone offering table, also with a projecting element (tenon) at the base, without indicating that she was aware of my earlier study, and successfully reconstructed a composite offering table with a pier-like support (Lembessi 1985, 278, pl. 136γ, fig. 6; Lembessi and Muhly 1990, fig. 22; Platon and Pararas 1991, 9, 13, no. 15). As regards the iconography of the eight rings mentioned above, Lembessi refers only to the ring from Knossos, now at Oxford.

This reconstruction prompted Platon and Pararas (1991, 9), to present a summary overview of the evidence concerning stemmed offering tables in the Aegean, including a list of the material discovered in excavations, a brief discussion of the general morphological characteristics and the typology of these objects, a presentation of the relevant iconographical material, according to their typological classification, their geographical and chronological distribution and finally, a discussion of their use (for the ritual use of real specimens, especially those discovered together with other objects of religious use, see Platon and Pararas 1991, 47). Nevertheless, since the largely unpublished material was presented only as a list of objects (Platon and Pararas 1991, 24–25, nos. 54–60), including specimens of uncertain identification (37 out of the 63 specimens in the catalogue of the stone fragments listed by the two scholars (Sakellarakis 1976b, 185–186, pl. XIV.41; Platon and Pararas 1991, 12, nos. 10–11), their identification as parts of offering tables or lamps is considered problematic (Platon and Pararas 1991, 17). Because of the incomplete nature of the evidence concerning the primary data, and the apparent diversity of the material, this study only touched upon certain aspects of the matter and did not add any new evidence to the interpretative corpus concerning the pier-like object depicted on the ring from the Laonikou St. tomb at Poros. Moreover, the stone discs (Platon and Pararas 1991, 10, no. 1, 14, nos. 16–17, 16, no. 22), or the low offering tables mentioned (Platon and Pararas 1991, 10, no. 3), are apparently not related to the offering tables standing on a tall column-like or pier-like support, while on many of the fragmentary specimens cited by the two scholars, there is no evidence of projecting elements (tenons).

The initial identification of a vessel that was used in Minoan ritual, a vessel until now known only from iconographical representations, is notable. The association of the column-like object depicted at the opening of the gate of a building, on the ring from the Laonikou St. tomb at Poros and on the ring from Knossos, now at Oxford, with actual stone examples, and even more importantly, its depiction on so many Creto-Mycenaean rings with

religious scenes, underlines its importance in ritual practices. It is also worth noting that both the iconography and the actual morphology of the crowning element of this column-like object, display specific elements indicative of the function of the vessel. Judging by the Tiryns ring, this vessel was undoubtedly designed to receive liquid offerings, hence perhaps the hollow on some of the actual stone specimens (Platon and Pararas 1991, 28). It is nevertheless certain that this was not its only function. The flat upper surface of the crowning element in the stone specimens (Platon and Pararas 1991, 27–28), obviously unsuitable for liquids, points to the placement of solid offerings, naturally of unknown type.

The ring from the Laonikou St. tomb at Poros, which provided the occasion for this detailed study, as well as the ring from Knossos, now at Oxford, both suggest the use of this vessel at the gate of a structure enclosing the sacred tree and located in a peak sanctuary. The ring from the Laonikou St. tomb at Poros, depicting the undulating dots above the vessel, possibly signifying smoke, also betrays its use as an incense-burner. Perhaps further proof of this interpretation is the depiction of a similar object, again in relation to the gate of a built structure, on a Mycenaean ring from Mega Monastiri (Pini 1975, no. 729 [CMS 5.1–2]). The use of incense in Creto-Mycenaean ritual is also suggested by some evidence in the Linear B texts (Lejeune 1959, 139–145; Burkert 1993, 115).

The *portable clay vessels* described as *braziers* or *incense-burners*, examples of which have also come to light at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, are well known. These vessels are not at all similar to the vessel depicted on the ring from the Laonikou St. tomb. Nevertheless, their use for the transportation of ashes, does not exclude their parallel use as incense-burners (Televantou 1994, 148, fig. 12). In the material from Atsipades the same type of vessel is described as a “lamp”. The presence of vessels described as incense-burners by Georgiou (1986, 40–41), is doubtful in the sanctuary at Kythera. Related to these objects is the vessel depicted in the well known wall painting of the “priestess”, in room 5 of the West House at Thera (Fig. 25) (Marinatos 1972, 43, pl. 100, described originally as full of figs; Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1981, 501; Doumas 1983, 84; 1987, 157; 1992, 47, pl. 24; N. Marinatos 1983, 1–19, esp. 5; Morgan, 1988, 31–32, 143–144; Televantou 1994, 178–179, n. 33). There is no doubt that the female figure in the wall painting is holding in her left hand an elaborate vessel, similar to the so called braziers or incense-burners (Evans 1921–1935, IV, 1012, fig. 962, pl. XXXV; Caskey 1960–1961, 272, pl. 98c; Georgiou 1986; Schofield 1990, 204, fig. 4, “fireboxes”), and is putting something inside the vessel from a smaller vessel, held in her right hand. Eirini Papageorgiou (2000, 959, fig. 1), in an attempt to associate the “priestess” with the so



Fig. 25: Priestess holding a brazier, on a Theran wall painting (Marinatos 1972, pl. K).

incense in antiquity, and whose name has been given to a number of mountains and villages in Crete since ancient times (Psilakis 1996, 161–162), is notable. Another endemic plant, used both in Greece and Crete, is *ladanon* (λάδανον) (Pfister 1914, 273). *Styrax* is characteristically mentioned by Mnesimachus (Ἰππότερος 1, 62: ὁσμὴ σεμνὴ μυκτῆρα δονεῖ λιβάνου ... σμύρνῃς ... στύρακος). The knowledge of the Minoans as regards the properties of the plant, is possibly indicated by a myth preserved by Plutarch about the flight of Radamanthis to Boeotia and the transport of *styrax* from Crete, to Haliartos in Boeotia (Λύσανδρος 28, 4: Οἱ δὲ Κρήσιοι στύρακες οὐ πρόσω περιπεφύκασιν, ἃ τεκμήρια τῆς Ραδαμάνθους αὐτόθι κατοικήσεως Ἀλιάρτιοι ποιοῦνται, καὶ τάφον αὐτοῦ δεικνύουσιν). The association of *styrax* with ritual practices is in any case indicated by the epithet *Styrakitas* (Στυρακίτας), used for Apollo at Eleftherna (Murr 1890, 67; Aly 1908, 52; Willetts 1962, 170; Stampolidis 1996, 111). Stampolidis suggests that the round object Apollo is holding in his hand on the Eleftherna coins, is resin from the *styrax* plant, which is also depicted on the coins, a notion that according to Willetts (1962, 66, 68, 70–71), is related to the ancient worship of the sacred tree. It is therefore possible that the resin from the plant was also used in Minoan times.

As regards the vessel depicted before the gate of a number of buildings in Minoan peak sanctuaries, which was earlier identified as an incense-burner, especially in view of the possible depiction of smoke coming out of it, and its relation to the sacred tree, the diversity in the renderings of the actual

vessel in archaeological contexts, suggests that this might not have been its only use.

Finally, mention should be also made of the numerous clay models of *horns of consecration* (Π116-Π139; Banou 2012, 251–428), discovered, both at the top of the mountain of Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, and in the lower Terraces 5–7. Most of the specimens were attached to clay models of buildings or to other vessels. Similar objects have been attested at Vryssinas (Davaras 1974, 211) and Juktas (Karetsou 1981, 408). It is a well known religious object, an eminently Minoan symbol, interpreted in various ways. More specifically, Schliemann, Evans and Nilsson have interpreted the horns of consecration as bull horns, a notion also adopted by later scholars. Powell on the other hand, who has summarized all the different theories (Powell 1977, 70–82; Banou 2012, 398–400), interprets the horns of consecration as a symbol of the sun rising between mountain tops, pointing out the existence of a round disc between the “horns” on gold sheet ornaments, and therefore identifying it as a symbol of rebirth.

Ritual and functional vessels at Kythera

The use of a variety of vessels and objects is a given fact in all ritual contexts, including the Minoan peak sanctuaries. Nevertheless, as noted above concerning Minoan religion in general, research is difficult and it is not always possible to differentiate the vessels and the objects used in every single ritual in the Minoan peak sanctuaries, from the votives, or the wide range of functional objects that have come to light. It is not surprising that the finds from the peak sanctuary at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno cannot be all securely assigned to these three categories of objects and that there are finds that can be assigned to two or more categories. Since universal religious practice implies that various common, everyday objects are consecrated through the ritual act itself, it was decided that in some cases the objects should be listed under two or more different categories (see above and Tournavitou 2014). It should be also noted that due to the lack of objective criteria, the distinction between these categories of objects is often dubious. Peatfield for example (1990, 127–128), disagrees with Gesell’s differentiation (1985, 2–3), between votives and fixed ritual vessels (see Jones 1999, 31), while Watrous (1996, 28), identifies all the objects found in peak sanctuaries as “votives”.

Out of the multitude of objects that came to light at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, some bronze specimens, like the double axe, some stone objects, like the ladles and the offering tables, and some clay objects, like the horns of consecration and many types of vessels, especially the rhyta, vessels

transformed into rhyta, juglets, composite vessels, fruitstands, braziers, vessels with through holes, miniature tripod vessels, miniature bird's-nest bowls, and ritual stands, are usually closely associated, for various reasons, with Minoan ritual, even if, in most cases, their precise relation to the latter has not been ascertained. All the related finds from the peak sanctuary at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno are discussed below in this context.

A characteristic example is the small bronze axe (Fig. 26), found on Terrace 7, the symbolic use of which in Minoan Crete is generally widely acknowledged (Cook 1914–1940, II, 513–543; Evans 1921–1935, I, 435–447; Picard 1948, 199; Nilsson 1950, 194–229; Buchholz 1959; Rutkowski 1981, 91–97; Burkert 1993, 97–98). There are 34 known, albeit unpublished double axes in sheet bronze, two large and 32 smaller specimens, all discovered at the Juktas peak sanctuary (Karetsou 1981, 146, fig. 14; Peatfield 1990, 127, who thinks that these are the only double axes in peak sanctuaries), as well as the double axes found at the peak sanctuaries of Plagia (Faure 1963, 496, n. 1; 1967, 116; Alexiou 1963, 399, 406; Rutkowski 1968, 21; 1971, 7), Vrysinas (Jones 1999, table 4) and Kophinas (Faure 1967, 124; Dietrich 1971, 513). The small double axes are rightly thought of as symbolic (Burkert 1993, 97) or ritual (Davaras 1976, 72–73). In Nilsson's view though (1950, 195), who claims that: “in the Minoan civilization the double axe is the most conspicuous, the real sign of Minoan religion and is omnipresent as the cross in Christianity and the crescent in Islam”, the presence of the double axe in peak sanctuaries incorporates the notion of consecration. In any case, it has been observed that in Minoan Crete the double axe is associated with a female deity (Burkert 1993, 97). Indicative of the discreet presence of the specific symbol in the sanctuary at Kythera, is the fact that the double axe, especially the version with a sacral knot, is attested only once in the ceramic repertory, on a LM IB conical rhyton (K815-93/B5/1; Tournavitou 2014, 81–89, 424, fig. 70), found on Terrace 7, in an area with “primary depositions” (see below, rhyta).

The presence of *horns of consecration* at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno is also significant. Twenty four clay models have been recorded (Banou 2012, 398–400) (Fig. 27), and only one certified instance on a pottery vessel with plastic decoration, a LM IA miniature hemispherical cup, decorated with horns of consecration, provided with a central leaf-like element, just below the rim (K270; Tournavitou 2014, 115, 322, fig. 16). In two more cases, a straight-sided cup (K238; Tournavitou 2014, 38, 238, fig. 14) and a rhyton (K807; Tournavitou 2014, 84, 423, fig. 69), branches are possibly depicted between horns of consecration (Tournavitou 2014, 38, 318, 423).

Horns of consecration, both actual specimens and iconographical depictions of the motif, are quite common in Minoan Crete (Nilsson 1950, 165–190; Davaras 1976, 273; Gesell 1985, index; Peatfield 1990, 127; Burkert 1993, 96–97), and have been interpreted in various ways, as mentioned above. The appearance of horns of consecration in the majority of the iconographic representations of peak sanctuaries is quite interesting. They appear, as we shall see, not only on the Zakros rhyton and on the fragments from Gypsades and Knossos, but also on the sealing from Knossos and Hagia Triada (Nilsson 1950, 180, fig. 84). Sakellariou (1966, 7, 26, 37, 66, 81), suggested that three beams projecting above a construction on the Pylos ring, depict horns of consecration. Examples of the latter have also come to light at other peak sanctuaries, including Vrysinas (Jones 1999, table 7).

The stone vessels discussed below, the *offering tables* (Nilsson 1950, 126.; Picard 1948, index; Gesell 1985, index; Rehak and Younger 2001, 408) and the *ladles*, were definitely used in some kind of ritual practice; they had no functional use, they have been attested in places of worship and it is very likely that they were offered to the deity, along with their contents, some kind of perishable commodity. At Hagios Georgios sto Vouno four stone offering tables (Λ1-4; Banou 2012, 251–428) (Fig. 28), seven clay offering tables (Π172-178; Banou 2012, 251–428) (Fig. 29) (Banou 2012, 380–381), and part of a composite vessel (Π179; Banou 2012, 251–428) have come to light. Stone offering tables are quite common in religious sites.

Their discovery at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, in a single location, like the scorpions, is perhaps indicative of certain ritual practices. Offering tables have also come to light at Petsofas, Traostalos, Juktas, Kophinas and Vrysinas (Jones 1999, table 8). The special function of the offering tables is also indicated by inscriptions in the Linear A script attested on some of the extant specimens, including the offering tables found in the five main peak sanctuaries mentioned above (Peatfield 1990, 127). At Hagios Georgios were also found five parts of “*vessels for multiple offerings*”, obviously kernoi.

At the sanctuary on Kythera have been also recorded six stone ladles (Λ5-10; Banou 2012, 251–428), one of which (Λ5), bears a Linear A inscription (Fig. 23) (Sakellarakis 1996, 83–84, pl. 10b). Inscriptions in the Linear A script are also attested on some other ladles (Nilsson 1950, 124–125; Warren 1969, 48–49; Gesell 1985, 127–128 and index; Rehak and Younger 2001, 408), as on the example from Troullos at Archanes (Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1997, II fig. 583), and in peak sanctuaries, as attested by the inscribed specimen from Juktas. This type of ladle has been also attested

at Mycenae and on Kea (Sakellarakis and Olivier 1994, 346, including bibliography). The use of this type of object in the Minoan peak sanctuary ritual is possibly also attested in the iconography, as exemplified by the fragmentary stone vessel discussed below, from Knossos (Fig. 18) (Kaiser 1976, fig. 6a). As already observed, the presence of inscriptions on ladles and offering tables should be viewed as a reflection of the interest of the upper classes, especially the palatial elite, in the popular cult practiced on peak sanctuaries, something that is also exemplified by the raw materials used for the manufacture of these vessels, much more expensive than clay, which served as a rather cheap substitute.

The range of ritual vessels used in Minoan peak sanctuaries was obviously much wider, especially in the most important of these sanctuaries; in the corpus of ritual vessels should be probably included the incense-burners, also attested in Minoan iconography. Although some vessels were possibly made of wood and have therefore left no traces, the majority was made of clay.

As regards the pottery corpus in the Minoan peak sanctuaries, including the sanctuary at Kythera, the differentiation between the vessels transported there as “common objects of everyday use”, as “ritual vessels”, or



Fig. 26: Bronze sheet in the shape of the double axe.



Fig. 27: Clay horns of consecration.

as “votives”, is in most cases, not only impossible, but to a certain degree meaningless, both on a theoretical and on a practical level (Peatfield 1990, 127; Watrous 1996, 28).

Objects of everyday use are often used in ritual practices and the dedication of a vessel becomes a ritual act. Nevertheless, among the items listed under the category: “vessels/objects of ritual use”, various functional categories of vessels have been identified (open drinking vessels, cooking vessels, specialized ritual vessels, closed pouring vessels, storage vessels, eating vessels), all associated with the ritual practices in this type of site. According to this approach, among the “vessels of ritual use” are theoretically included two different groups of vessels: “ritual vessels” and “votive vessels”.



Fig. 28: Fragment of a stone offering table.

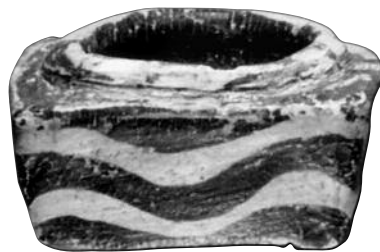


Fig. 29: Clay offering table.

The “*ritual vessels*” would certainly include “specialized” *libation vessels* for liquid offerings, such as the *rhyta*. The depiction of peak sanctuaries in Minoan Crete only on a select category of stone relief vessels, mostly *rhyta*, might not be coincidental. At the sanctuary on Kythera were found 55 clay miniature *rhyta* (K803-K857; Tournavitou 2014, 81–89, 422–433, figs. 69–73) (Fig. 30), and 14 fragments of other types of vessels transformed into *rhyta* (K858-K871; Tournavitou 2014, 90–92, 433–437, figs 75–76), i.e. a total of 69 *rhyta*.

At the sanctuary were also recorded 1.068 fragments of non-functional pouring vessels (juglets/milkjugs), four composite vessels, 25 jugs/amphorae (Fig. 31), 15 bridge-spouted jars, three basins and kalathoi, all of which were possibly used in ritual practices, in association with *rhyta*, or other types of vessels (see Tournavitou 2014).

There is also a large number of conical cups of normal size (166.753 fragments) (Fig. 32), and miniature versions of the latter (291). Cups of normal size were obviously used for the manipulation of liquid or solid substances, while the miniature versions were probably used for symbolic offerings. The same applies to the nine miniature pithoid vessels, which can only be interpreted as imitations of larger storage vessels, similarly to the miniature tripod vessels, and the miniature bird’s-nest bowls. The composite vessels must have also played a role in the ritual (see Tournavitou 2014).

The discovery of parts of 42 braziers (K952-K993; see Tournavitou 2014, 97–100, 449–455, figs. 82–83), well known in the Cyclades and Crete, implies their use in ritual practices, perhaps the transportation of burnt organic matter; the same applies to the six “fire-boxes” and “incense-burners”, vessels with through-holes (K994-K999; 100–101, 455, fig. 84), a type of incense-burner like the one held by the “priestess” on a Thera wall painting (Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1981, pl. 154a, 499). The stands, the fruitstands, 16 clay vessels/objects with plastic decoration and perhaps some of the lids were also related to ritual activities (see Tournavitou 2014).

Gesell (1985, 13), associates the objects found in the “Tripartite Shrine” and the “Loom-Weight Basement”, with the peak sanctuaries: “The deposit as a whole suggests that the cult was a modification of peak sanctuary cult adapted for use in the palace”. The discovery of the sealing with the depiction of the female deity on a peak sanctuary in the “Tripartite Shrine”, represents, according to Gesell, further evidence to this effect. In the “Loom-Weight Basement” was also found a palanquin, a means of transport indicating open air worship.

Gesell (1985, 76) associates the objects, the altar and the pit from the Piazzale dei Sacelli in Hagia Triada, with the peak sanctuaries, and concludes that they were involved in: “a type of ceremony similar to that of the earlier peak sanctuaries”.

Objects of everyday use and ritual meals

The use of a wide range of vessels and a variety of other objects in all ritual practices, and hence in the rituals practiced in Minoan peak sanctuaries, has been already acknowledged. As noted above though, the difficulties involved in the study of Minoan religion as a whole, are considerable and it is not always possible to differentiate between the different objects used in all the ritual practices in Minoan peak sanctuaries. It is of course impossible to make the differentiation between ritual, votive and functional objects for all the finds that came to light at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, and there are definitely finds that could belong to all three categories. According to universal religious practices, common objects of everyday use are consecrated through the ritual act itself. Precise differentiation between these categories of objects is therefore uncertain, since there are no objective criteria. Peatfield, for example (1990, 127–128), disagrees with Gesell’s differentiation (1985, 2–3) between votives and fixed ritual vessels (see Jones 1999, 31), while Watrous (1996, 28), identifies all the objects found in peak sanctuaries as “votives”.



Fig. 30: Conical rhyton (clay).

Among the multitude of objects that came to light in the sanctuary at Kythera, some may be identified with a greater degree of certainty as objects of everyday use, as for example the tripod cooking pots (13.031 fragments). Cooking pots were found in 27 areas of “primary depositions”, just like the braziers and the rhyta (see Tournavitou 2014). This type of cooking vessel, used in activities related to the preparation of food, would have obviously been part of the communal meals taking place after the ritual sacrifice. An equally practical function should be assumed for a large number of the conical cups (903 intact specimens and many more fragmentary examples), drinking vessels that were also used for eating (see Tournavitou 2014); in Hagios Georgios sto Vouno conical cups were at-

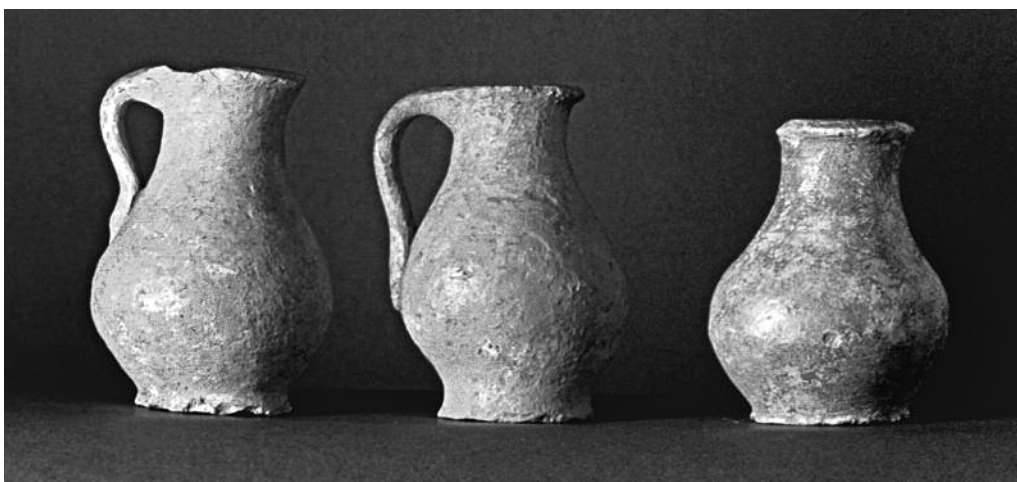


Fig. 31: Juglets (clay).

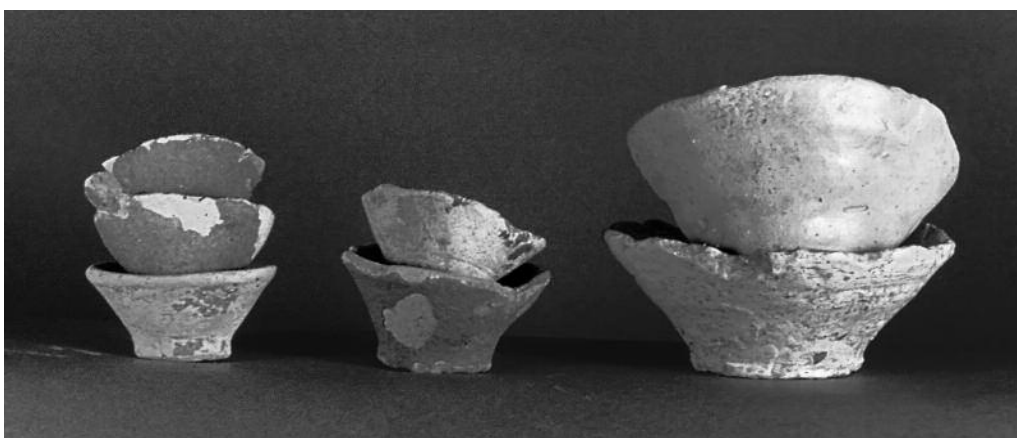


Fig. 32: Conical cups (clay).

tested, as were the cooking vessels, from quite early on in the Old Palace period. This does not include the miniature versions, which, in a peak sanctuary, would have also served other, ritual needs. The same applies to the bridge-spouted jars and the wide range of closed pouring vessels, like the jugs/amphorae (175/206) and the 13 kalathoi, the use of which is not always clear (see Tournavitou 2014).

The animal bones from the sanctuary at Kythera, mostly belonging to sheep and goats, preserve butcher's marks. Although some of the bones are carbonized, and are clearly remnants of burnt sacrifices, the vast majority are possibly remains of ritual meals (Tournavitou 2011, 733–752; Tran-

talidou 2013, 465–560). At the sanctuary were also recorded, according to Trantalidou, mostly marine mollusks and some edible land snails.

The differentiation between ritual sacrifices and “communal meals”, which demonstrates the participation of all the worshippers in ritual practices of social import, is difficult (Wright 2004, 133–134). This practice is attested in Crete (Borgna 2004, 256), both in secular meals and in the context of funeral rites, a custom still practiced today all over Greece.

The corpus of vessels of everyday use includes 46 fragments of pithoi and other types of storage vessels (pithoid vessels), as well as 24 lids (see Tournavitou 2014). The basins and the discs (57 specimens), as exemplified in the sanctuary with the Human Sacrifice at Anemospilia, near Archanes (Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1997, I, 257–262, tripod cooking vessels), at Juktas (Karetsou 1978, 254–255), at Atsipades (Peatfield 1992, 68, 70), at Kophinas (Rutkowski 1986, 87) and on the contemporary fragment of a stone relief vase from Knossos (Gypsades) (Kaiser 1976, fig. 10a, Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1969, 399–406), were obviously also used for ritual offerings (see also Tournavitou 2014).

c. Votives

There is no doubt that the majority of the finds that came to light in the Minoan peak sanctuaries belongs to the category of votive offerings. As observed, contact with the deity is effected through gifts (Burkert 1993, 94). The gift is reciprocated with a gift and through this perpetual exchange of gifts the relationship between human beings and the divine is eventually fulfilled. Since the gift is purely symbolic, a proof of the relationship of human beings with the supernatural, it can be replaced with an icon. All sacred places, since prehistoric times, during Greek antiquity later on (Rouse 1902), down to modern times (Psilakis 2005), have been inundated with all kinds of votives, ranging from the most precious, to the most inexpensive of gifts. Flowers, fruits and olive oil are even nowadays the most common offerings in various popular rituals in Crete. As expected, the number and the variety of votive offerings at every peak sanctuary, including Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, depended on the special needs of the local populace. The corpus of votives in Minoan peak sanctuaries has been differentiated into a class of votives also attested in other peak sanctuaries, i.e. those attested only in peak sanctuaries, like the models of pests or models of body parts, and into a class of votives not attested in peak sanctuaries, but common in other types of sanctuaries (Dietrich 1969, 266–267). As noted above, some of the ritual vessels were also possibly treated as votives.

The numerous votive offerings from Hagios Georgios sto Vouno discussed below, include human and animal figurines, mostly in bronze, but also in clay, model body parts, i.e. hands, legs, phalluses, bronze blades and tools of various types, jewellery, vessels of different types, and also models of buildings, small spheres, loom-weights and spindle-whorls, fragments of ingots and slag (Varoufakis 2012, 241–247).

The most important group of votives in Hagios Georgios sto Vouno is undoubtedly the *human figurines*, especially the 84 bronze figurines, the human figurines made of clay being very few by comparison. Out of the 21 clay figurines, 16 are male (Π11- Π16; Banou 2012, 255–267), and five represent body parts (Π17- Π21; Banou 2012, 267–269) (Fig. 33). Exactly the opposite is true in all the other known Minoan peak sanctuaries, where the human figurines in bronze comprise a small minority by comparison to the clay specimens (Jones 1999, table 2; Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1995). Hagios Georgios sto Vouno has yielded a total of 84 bronze figurines, 83 of which were brought to light through excavation, one specimen, as noted above, having been handed in to the National Archaeological Museum in the beginning of the 20th century A.D. At the sanctuary were also found two cut-outs of human figures made of bronze sheet, i.e. a male and a female figure (X4, X5; Sakellarakis 2012, 213–238). The corpus includes ten female and 74 male figurines, both intact and fragmentary (see Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2012, 1–212). It is generally believed that human figurines represented worshippers and not deities (Peatfield 1990, 127), although Peatfield (1990, 121–122) does not exclude the possibility that some specimens represented priestesses. It is also generally believed that human figurines represent substitutes of the worshippers themselves, a statement symbolizing their perpetual presence at the sanctuary, commemorating their brief, seasonal visit (Morgan 1988, 157; Burkert 1993, 92), an offering of thanks for an illness cured and an entreaty for the health of those who made the dedication (Rutkowski 1991, 57; Marinatos 1993, 117), similarly to modern *tamata*. The various postures of the figurines were studied and interpreted by Efi Sapouna-Sakellarakis (2012, 3–208). Perhaps the larger specimens, as for example the hands and part of the body of a figurine (Π9, Π10, Π3; see Banou 2012), belong to somewhat larger sacred images, carried around in the context of various rituals, as exemplified in scenes depicting a hand holding a small figurine dressed in a priestly robe (Boulotis 1979, 59–66; Kritseli-Providi 1982, 39, 40, color pl. Γ, B2, pl. 6a; Crowley 1995, 475–491; Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2012, 141, n. 785).

The dedication of body parts, especially ailing body parts, in peak sanctuaries is a strong argument in favor of the theory that the main reason for

worshippers seeking refuge in peak sanctuaries was the protection or restoration of their health (Davaras 1976, figs 138–139). Scholars seem to agree on this matter (Gesell 1985, 44, 54, 65; Morgan 1988, 158; Peatfield 1990). It is worth noting that models of human body parts are only attested in peak sanctuaries (Dietrich 1969, 259). Throughout history, human beings resort to the divine to ensure their longevity, to pray for illnesses, especially serious ones, to pledge the highest form of recompense at their disposal, and to deliver this recompense to the gods after their cure (Myres 1902–1903, 381; Davaras 1967, 102; 1976, 247; Rutkowski 1972, 173, prayers or thanksgiving for healing). It is exactly this need that is reflected in the dedication of models of human body parts by the pilgrims at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, which included five male figurines and votive body parts made of clay (Π17–Π21; see Banou 2012), a clay phallus (Π22; Banou 2012), two bronze phalluses (X2–X3; see Sakellarakis 2012), a small clay plaque with plastic decoration (Π201; see Banou 2012), seven bronze sheets (X6–X12; see Sakellarakis 2012), two models of hands (X13–X14; see Sakellarakis 2012), and five models of gowns (X15–X19; see Sakellarakis 2012), similarly to many metropolitan Minoan peak sanctuaries, like Petsofas, Traostalos, Ziros, Plagia, Thylakas, Mazas, Juktas, Filioromos, Kophinas, Atsipades and Vrysinas (Jones 1999, table 2). Naturally, models of human body parts in Minoan peak sanctuaries have been associated with similar votive offerings dedicated by worshippers in the Greek sanctuaries of Asclepius, and with modern day *tamata* (Van Straten 1981, 65–151; Peatfield 1990, 122; 2000, 11). Theories suggesting that the models of human body parts served as amulets (Jones 1999, 33) or as indications of the existence of apotropaic rituals, related to apotropaic deities (Dietrich 1969, 267–269), have not been widely acknowledged. Jones (1999, 33) is of the opinion that the models of human body parts are dated to the Old Palace period, a claim not sustained by the evidence from Hagios Georgios sto Vouno.

The bronze phalluses and the single clay phallus from Hagios Georgios sto Vouno (X2, X3; see Sakellarakis 2012), should be discussed separately. Clay parallels to these specimens are only attested at the peak sanctuary on Kythera (Π22; see Banou 2012, fig. 15, pl. 3) and at Atsipades (Peatfield 1992, 75, fig. 23; Watrous 2001, 196, fig. 24) (Fig. 34). Rutkowski (1986, 88, n. 69) believes that “a find shaped like a phallus from Koumasa” (Xanthoudidis 1924, 50), was dedicated for purposes of fertility. Perhaps the presence of bronze phalluses at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno should be also associated with the discovery, at the same site, of a bronze scorpion (X1) (Fig. 35), especially considering the mythological connection of the scorpion with the male genital organs in Minoan Crete (Sakellarakis 1997, 459–460).



Fig. 33: Head of a clay figurine.

In contrast to the multitude of clay *animal figurines*, attested in all the Minoan peak sanctuaries (Jones 1999, table 3), the extant specimens in Hagios Georgios sto Vouno are few (Fig. 36). There is a total of 93 specimens, including 67 bovids (Π83-Π89), one caprid (Π95), a pig (Π96), an equid (Π97), a dog(?) (Π98), five possible deer horns (Π90-Π94), as well as one bronze and a number of clay scorpions, a beetle and ten birds (see Banou 2012). The models of household animals in peak sanctuaries can be interpreted in two ways: i.e. they

could represent offerings made for the protection of the animals or substitutes for actual sacrifices (Jones 1999, 33). Other scholars, like Rutkowski (1991, 57, n. 91) and Peatfield (1990, 120–121) suggest that the figurines were deposited by shepherds for the protection of their herds and others, like Davaras (1976, 245), believe that they represent cheap substitutes of actual sacrifices. Dietrich (1969, 259), wrongly suggests that animal figurines are only found on peak sanctuaries. It is worthy of note that, although the majority of the animal figurines in peak sanctuaries represent bovids (Peatfield 2000, 12), according to Trantalidou, who studied the zoo-archaeological material from the excavation, the most popular animals represented at Hagios Georgios are the goats, the young sheep, the hares and especially the chickens, which reached the Aegean, along with other novelties, in the 2nd mil. B.C., through commercial exchanges. It seems that they all reflect the natural habitat and the paleo-economy of the island (Trantalidou 2013, 465–563). As regards the bovids, which are also attested in the sanctuary, it is a well known fact that the bull was the most important sacrificial beast in Minoan Crete and therefore the bovid figurines probably represent substitutes of actual sacrifices.

The *agrimi* figurines are usually interpreted as dedications made by hunters (Jones 1999, 34), like the models of birds, attested in some of the Minoan peak sanctuaries, such as Plagia, Thylakas, Juktas, Atsipades and Vrysinas (Jones 1999, table 3). While birds have a special relationship with the divine in Minoan Crete (Nilsson 1950, 333), being associated with the epiphany of the deity, the ten *bird figurines* at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno (Π104-Π113; see Banou 2012) (Fig. 37), also bring to mind the later Kytherian worship of Aphrodite. As regards the models of pests, current opinion is in favor of an apotropaic interpretation, i.e. that they were dedi-

cated to the deity as a plea for protection (Peatfield 1990, 121; Jones 1999, 33). To this category also belongs the single bronze (X1) and the four clay scorpion figurines (II99-II102), as well as the one clay model of a beetle (II103), that came to light at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno. The presence of the scorpion in Minoan Crete, its symbolic appearance in the myths of Orion and Minos, and its relation to the male genital organs, was investigated a few years ago (see Sakellarakis 1997, 423–472; 2012, 218–229, for scorpion).

Beetles of the type *copris hispanus* in Crete are provided with a horn. The horn (II103) discovered at Kythera belongs to this type of beetle. The discovery at

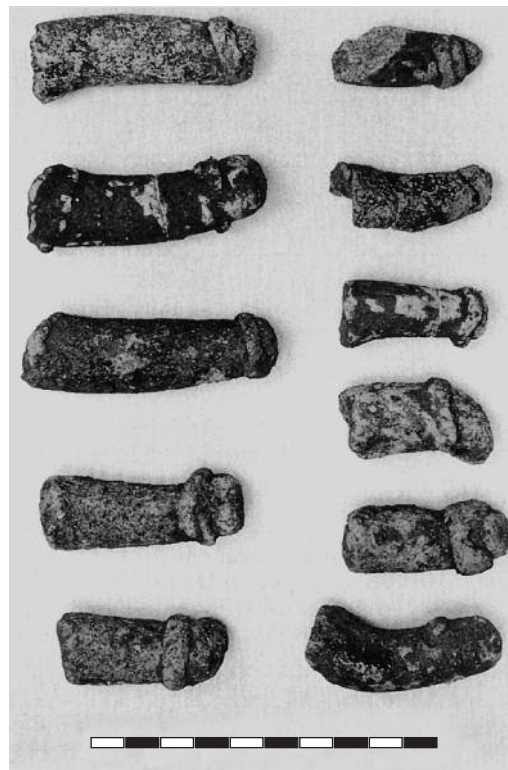


Fig. 34: Clay phalluses from Atsipades (L.V. Watrous 2001, 196, fig. 24).

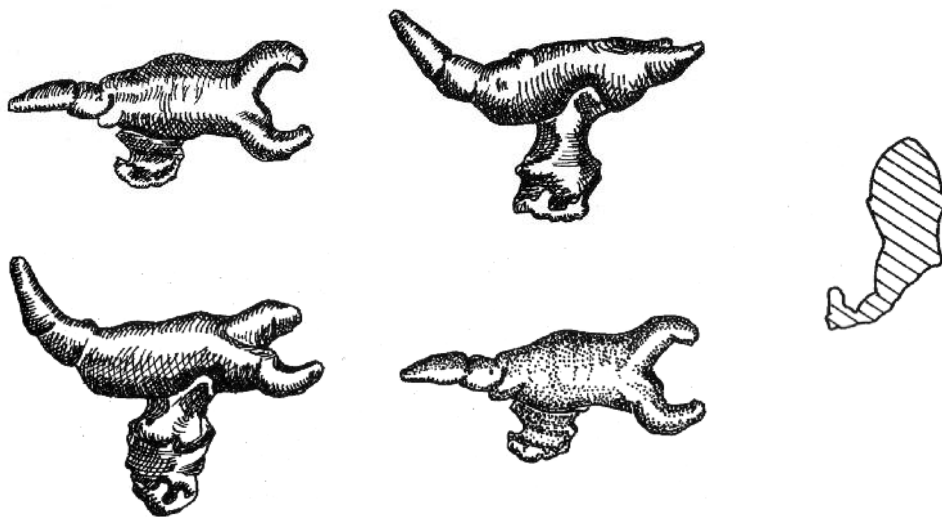


Fig. 35: Bronze figurine of a scorpion.

Piskokephalo of a beetle figurine carrying its young on its back is considered a symbol of maternity and good luck, or is possibly an offering, a plea for fertility. In Egypt, *scarabeus sacer* is associated with the worship of the sun. Because of its hibernation and its awakening, later, it also symbolizes rebirth.

A number of other types of votive offerings at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, including blades, models of tools and gowns, were made in bronze. The possible votive use of the small bronze axe (X20) has been discussed above, in the section devoted to the ritual objects (Sakellarakis 2012, 216). The sanctuary has also yielded 109 blades and small knives, 98 blades of regular size (X21-X130), and nine small blades (X133-X134, X137-X138, X140-X144, X151, X157), also attested in other peak sanctuaries (see Sakellarakis 2012, 231–234; see also Jones 1999, table 4, for small knives from Kophinas; 1999, 34, for weapons as a thanksgiving offering to the deity). The models of tools, not more than ten, include spatulas (X146-

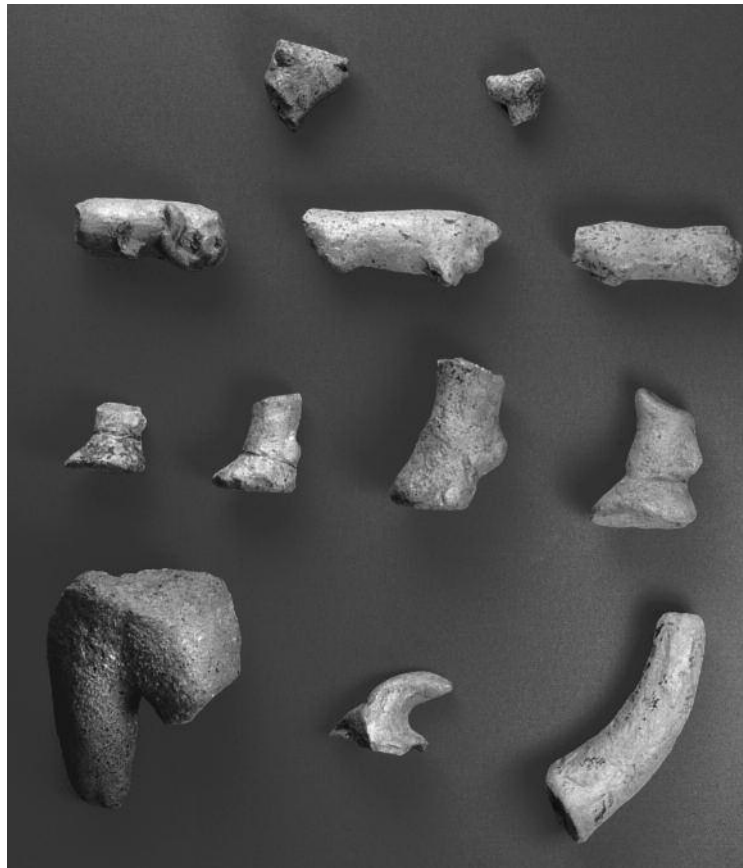


Fig. 36: Fragments of clay animal figurines.

X148), and various other types of handled tools (X149-X150, X152-X156) (see Sakellarakis 2012). Worthy of note is the presence, at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, of fragments of ingots and metal slag (Mangou and Ioannou 2000, 207–217; Varoufakis 2012, 241–247: six bronze ingots and slag, X175).

Apart from the bronze tools, there were also five fragments of stone tools, including two chisels (Λ19-20), two obsidian blades (Λ21-Λ22), and the model of an axe (Λ23), fragments of stalagmites and stalactites, as well as unworked pieces of rock crystal, rosso antico and lapis lacedaemonius, raw material also used for the manufacture of stone vases (see Banou 2012, 350).

To the category of precious personal offerings, dedicated as thanksgiving offerings to the deity (Jones 1999, 34), should be also included six fragments of stone vases (Λ13-Λ18), in a variety of stones, a possible sword pommel (Λ37), 17 stone beads (Λ24a-ε, Λ25-Λ36) (see Banou 2012, 355, for beads in other peak sanctuaries, such as Juktas and Kophinas), two gold ear-rings (Xp 1a-β) and a gold sheet (Xp. 2), obviously associated with a piece of jewellery, and the horn of an ivory figurine (ΕΛΦ 1) (Banou 2012, 358).

As noted above, the miniature versions of many vessel types discovered at the Kythera sanctuary can be also safely classified as votive; they would be used in rituals, as cheaper substitutes of the normal-sized vessels (miniature cups, tripod vessels, juglets/milkjugs, birds-nest bowls and some vessels with plastic decoration) (see Tournavitou 2014, 40–48, 81–100, 104–105, 134–150).

Closed vessels, including storage vessels, pithoi (K447-K547), pithoid vessels, palace-style jars (K548-K562), jugs and bridge-spouted jars (K682-K738), cannot be always classified as ritual or votive vessels, unless they were dedicated for their contents, liquid or solid (olive oil, wine, fruits), and in this case they would be offerings made by the worshippers to satisfy the needs of specific ritual practices. The same applies to tripod cooking pots (K739-K802), used in the preparation of ritual meals, as well as many of the conical cups, only a limited percentage of which is attested in areas of “primary depositions” (Tournavitou 2014, 30–31, 139–140). Pithoi have been also attested at Kophinas (Rutkowski 1971, 17) and at the sanctuary with the Human Sacrifice at Anemospilia (Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1997, I 275, fig. 220, 278, fig. 227).

The discovery of carinated cups (K360-K387), footed hemispherical cups (K352-K359), straight-sided cups (K150-K257), Light on Dark decoration on jugs, including the use of purple bands, discs (K426-K446), rhyta with



Fig. 37: Clay figurine of a bird.

plastic decoration, closely related to Cretan specimens, and specimens decorated with Barbotine, all indicate that the site had been used as a peak sanctuary since the Old Palace period (MM IB-MM II) (see Tournavitou 2014, 3–22).

Apart from the clay objects mentioned above, there are a few other examples of votives at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno. The loom-weights (Fig. 38), and the spindle-whorls can be classified as household equipment; their dedication at peak sanctuaries, also true of tools in general, has been interpreted as a gesture of thanksgiving to the deity involved (Jones 1999, 34). The nine loom-weights (II185-II193), that came to light at the peak sanctuary on Kythera, also attested at the Kastri settlement (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, pls. 59-60), indicate the identity of the dedicator/s. Loom-weights are also attested at the peak sanctuary at Karphi (Jones 1999, table 7), and other sanctuaries, like Anemospilia (Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1997, II, figs 450, 452). Although two spindle-whorls also came to light at the sanctuary (II194-II195), it should be noted that the spindle-whorls discovered at the settlement at Kastri are not of the same type. Spindle-whorls have also been attested at the Atsipades peak sanctuary (Jones 1999, table 7). Another clay object from Hagios Georgios sto Vouno is a small spherical object (II197) (Fig. 39), similar to others found at the peak sanctuaries of Petsofas and Juktas (Rutkowski 1986, 90, fig. 118a). They are objects difficult to interpret, and have been variously compared to the Buddhist prayer-beads (Myres 1902–1903; Davaras 1976, 248), or to animal dung (Rutkowski 1986, 90).

Two more categories of clay votive objects, albeit fragmentary, are represented at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, namely 32 fragments of architectural models (Fig. 40) (II140-II171), only 16 of which were known until now, and clay plaques, two of which (II144, II151), have been identified as three-dimensional renderings of landscapes (Tzachili 2011), as well as 15 clay objects, possibly clay plaques or fragments of plaques (K1077; K1081;

K1082; K1083; K1084-K1087, K1088, etc.; see Tournavitou 2014, 111–116). The fragments of architectural models (Π140-Π171) can be compared to similar specimens from the peak sanctuaries at Petsofas and Juktas (Jones 1999, table 7), as well as to other unpublished examples (Banou 2012; Tournavitou 2014), while the clay plaques can be compared to finds from Petsofas (Jones 1999, table 7). Architectural models, as for example the well known house model from Archanes (Sakellarakis and Sakellaraki 1997, I, 139, fig. 28), have been also attested in secular buildings, and were probably used as house-models, while the architectural models from peak sanctuaries were possibly votives ensuring the protection of the household (Schoep 1994, 189), a kind of “icon stand”. At the sanctuary on Kythera were also found the model of a piece of pastry (Π196), a weight for fishing nets (Π198), probably the offering of a fisherman from neighboring Avlemon, two clay models of ingots (Π199a-b), part of a pottery wheel (Π202), obviously the offering of a potter, and a clay bead (Π230). A small plaque depicting an eye (Π201) could represent a votive associated with healing (see Banou 2012).

At this point one should perhaps also mention two model tritons made of clay (Π114-Π115). Tritons have been attested primarily in religious contexts and usually serve as rhyta, and as instruments producing sounds, as indicated by the seal from the Idaean cave, depicting a female figure before an altar. Marine life is represented by appliqué ornaments attached on vases (Π207), the model of a snail attached on a plaque or vessel (K1073, K1096), snails (K1075, K1079), and shell-fish attached on vases (see Tournavitou 2014, 111–113). Vessels and plaques with appliqué decoration have been also attested at Palaikastro, Malia, Anemospilia (Sakellarakis and Sakellaraki 1997, II, 548–562), Thera, Vrysinas, etc. (Tzachili 2011). “Marine”



Fig. 38: Stone loom-weights.



0 0,5 1 cm.



Fig. 39: Clay sphere.

decoration on vases is not only a chronological indicator for the LM IB period, but, as demonstrated by Mountjoy and Sapouna-Sakellarakis (Mountjoy 1985; Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1988–1989; Tournavitou 2014, 125–126), it is quite common in sanctuaries.

On the whole, the differentiation between the corpus of votives from the sanctuary at Kythera and the other known peak sanctuaries is notable. At Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, human figurines are statistically more common by comparison to the few animal figurines that came to light. It is also worth noting that again, in contrast to the known metropolitan peak sanctuaries, these figurines, from Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, as well as other votives found at the site, are made of bronze. The discovery of stone objects, especially the inscribed stone ladle (Λ5), considered “prestige artifacts” (Peatfield 1990, 127), is perhaps an indication that all the extant votives were manufactured in palatial workshops (Peatfield 1990, 11). The latter, as well as the small number of votive animal figurines, probably dedications of farmers and animal breeders, also suggests the participation of worshippers belonging to higher social classes.

d. Processions

Processions, as exemplified on the stone relief rhyton from Knossos, are the most familiar ritual activity in the peak sanctuary scenes discussed above. Processions toward the mountain sanctuaries (*ὀρειβάσια*), were, according to Strabo (*Γεωγραφικὰ IB*, 564), a regular part of the festivals,

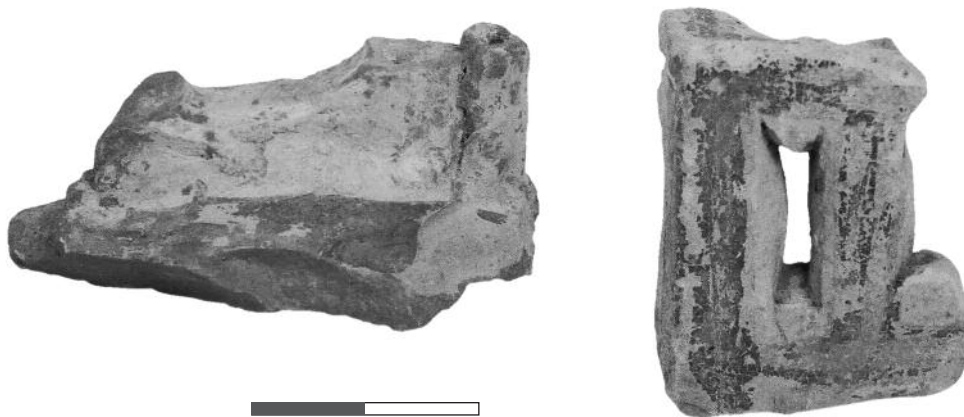


Fig. 40: Fragments of clay architectural models (of buildings).

during which ἐν πομπῇ διήρχοντο τὰ ὄρη (they walked through the mountains in procession). Processions are a dominant element in Minoan iconography, especially in wall paintings (Evans 1921–1935, II, 719). The processional element is alluded to even in miniature religious scenes of Creto-Mycenaean art, despite the lack of available space, as exemplified in the depiction of isolated figures, male and female, in pairs and/or in groups. The latter are often wearing special garments (Marinatos 1993, 137), and are carrying a variety of objects, i.e. long poles, double axes, various fabrics (Fig. 41), vessels (Müller and Pini 1999, nos. 6, 9–13, 26 [CMS II.6]; Müller and Pini 1998, nos. 7, 10–17 [CMS II.7]; Gill, Müller and Pini 2002, no. 266, 269 [CMS II.8.1]), or slaughtered animals (Sakellarakis 1972b), in a processional manner. As noted above, Minoan iconography depicts two basic types of ritual activity, processions and dancing (Burkert 1993, 92).

In ancient Greek religion, religious festivals that do not include a procession, i.e. without the official, active participation of various people in a procession, involving a number of stops, on a road considered sacred, and including festive garments, and the transportation of objects of different kinds, are a rare sight (Burkert 1993, 222–225). In the *Mémoires* of Pavlos Vlastos published a few years ago (Sakellarakis 1990) under the title “The sacred/holy procession of the pious to Mt Ida in Crete”, he describes the pilgrimages to Timios Stavros (Holy Cross), on Psiloreitis, during 1860 and 1872; as we shall see below, these pilgrimages will be associated with the pilgrimages of the Minoans to the peak sanctuaries (Sakellarakis 1990). In the most recent book published by Nikos Psilakis concerning the popular rituals in Crete, there are abundant descriptions and photographs of various religious processions (Fig. 42), with crosses, icons, banners, the pious worshippers holding boughs of basil in their hands, especially with reference to Kophinas, the site of the Minoan peak sanctuary (Psilakis 2005, 264–266, 328–330, 390–402, 460, including index).

The processional element then, a ritual element expressing the needs, the fears or even simply the piousness of a group of people, or just pompousness, the need to display clothing and equipment, is a primary element in every religious activity, and much more so in the case of a popular ritual, which was practiced periodically, in a faraway place, as was the case with the Minoan peak sanctuaries.

Judging by the pictorial elements preserved on the fragment of the stone relief rhyton from Knossos, i.e. the distance between figures, the uniformity of gesture, figures with extended arms holding small identical objects, and the emphatic bending of the torso backwards, the ritual character of the scene becomes obvious and the idea of processions leading to the Minoan

peak sanctuaries, becomes a certainty (Figs 6, 18). The figures depicted are young, barefooted males. These are the only confirmed facts about the scene. The fragmentary state of the specimen allows only conjectures concerning the participation of women in the procession or about the vessels being carried and their contents. The participation of women in the processions towards peak sanctuaries cannot be denied as a possibility, if only on account of the participation of richly dressed females, with idiosyncratic headgear, in processional scenes on Minoan sealings (Müller and Pini 1999, no. 13 [CMS II.6]; Gill, Müller and Pini 2002, nos. 266, 269 [CMS II.8.1]). The processional transport of a number of vessels of different types should be also considered certain, even if only on account of the apparent exhibitionism inherent in the ritual. In processional scenes associated with peak sanctuaries, as attested on stone vases, the extended arms signify the act of offering; on sealings, the processional element is illustrated by men and women carrying poles, double axes, fabrics and vases (Watrous 1996, 79, 80; Rehak and Younger 2001, 421).

As regards the various kinds of objects carried in procession to peak sanctuaries, the most likely candidates would be some of the ritual vessels that have come to light in the sanctuaries themselves, like the stone offering tables and the ladles. Another likely category of objects would be the tripod offering tables made of plaster, which were, in at least two cases, at Nirou Khani (Xanthoudidis 1922, 15–16) and at Archanes (Sakellarakis

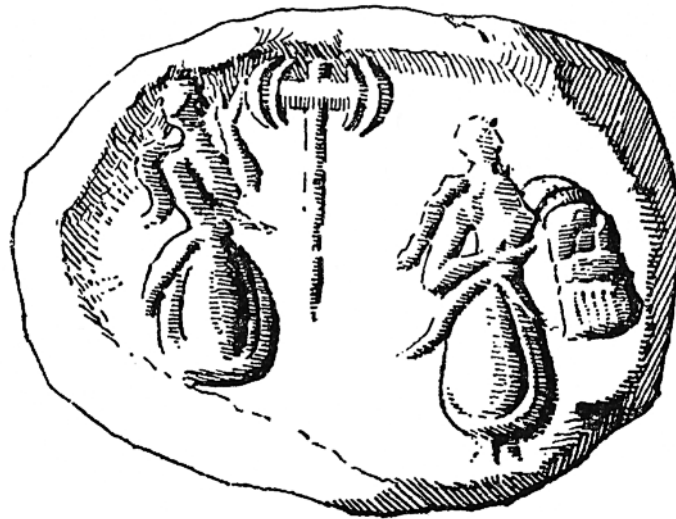


Fig. 41: Sealing depicting the offering of a double axe and a piece of cloth (Schachermeyer 1964, 149, fig. 73b).



Fig. 42: Procession of pilgrims on Kophinas (Psilakis 2005, 331).

and Sakellarakis 1997, II, 504–505, fig. 494), stored in considerable numbers, and the use of which has been attested at Juktas. There is nevertheless one more candidacy, the contents of the so called treasuries of the sanctuaries, which have come to light in the palaces of Knossos (Evans 1921–1935, II, 820–826, fig. 537) and Zakros (Platon 1974, 117–130), with their unique, sophisticated contents, all intended for display.

The use of the contents of sanctuary treasuries in certain processional religious rituals should be considered certain and a ritual procession leading from the palace at Knossos or from the palatial building at Archanes, to the important peak sanctuary on Juktas, is very likely, as is the construction of a road leading from Knossos to the top of the mountain, perhaps a processional “sacred” way, as attested in ancient Greek religion (Burkert 1993, 223). Moreover, the use of the contents of sanctuary treasuries in processional rituals related to worship on peak sanctuaries is perhaps made more plausible by the appearance of the latter on stone rhyta, the only vessels which depict scenes representing peak sanctuaries in Minoan art (Marinatos 1993, 122), a significant factor in favor of their use in peak sanctuaries.

Another matter of interest as regards ritual processions in extra-urban sanctuaries, especially in Minoan peak sanctuaries, is the participation of some high ranking members of the religious and the political elite, especially in view of the evidence concerning the transport of elite personnel in palanquins. In the so-called Central Palace Sanctuary at Knossos, where the sealing depicting a peak sanctuary mentioned above was found, were discovered fragments of a wall painting, known as the “palanquin fresco”, which features a covered wooden litter (Sakellarakis 2006); in this palanquin is seated a male figure, dressed in long priestly robes, and carried by other male figures (Evans 1921–1935, II, 770–773, figs 502–503). The actual use of palanquins as a means of elite transportation is in any case confirmed by the clay model of a litter from Knossos (Evans 1921–1935, I, fig. 166G; II, 158, fig. 80). It is notable that Evans associated these finds with a “*sedia gestatoria*” of a *Papa Re*, and more specifically with an official procession of high ranking Knossians to the peak sanctuary on Juktas. Naturally, a ritual procession, of the luxury implied as regards the important peak sanctuary at Juktas, should not be necessarily considered part of the established norm in all the surviving peak sanctuaries, especially the ones in the countryside. Whatever the status of individual sanctuaries though, what should be considered certain is the existence of some kind of procession towards the peak, including the procession from the settlement at Kastri to Hagios Georgios sto Vouno.

As regards the modern day festivities at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, providing a glimpse of the route followed and of the rituals practiced at the site of the Minoan peak sanctuary, N.G. Fatseas from Fatsadika on Kythera recorded the following on the 1st of May 1947: (translation of the Greek text)

“On the 23rd of the previous month, in memory of Saint George Tropaio-phoros, one of the Great Martyrs of the Church, all the Kytherian churches bearing his name, celebrated in his honor. On the mountain near Avlemon the festivities were almost as grand as the festivities held before the war, both as regards the prevailing religious feeling, and as regards the number of the attending pilgrims. It is truly consoling that our people rediscover in time, in their old customs, the joy and the inner relief with which our fathers were brought up... The pilgrims arrived at the site on the evening of the day before the official feast day, after many hours of walking, their toils being fully compensated by the beauty of the landscapes and the magic of nature in springtime. (The route went through) Hagios Vasileios, then, through well watered Per-atis, with its age-old plane trees, Paliokastro, with the remains of the ancient fort, Kalamitsa, Paliopoli with its extensive olive groves, against the magical backdrop of the deep blue sea and then uphill – climbing the mountain, from the top of which the view is as good as from a plane. The pilgrims were received, by Prokopios Mormoris, the pious Father Superior of the monastery of Hagia Moni, with his natural kindness and courtesy, descendant of one of the oldest families on our island, as we all know. Barefooted women also came to the site, their hearts burning with faith, to ask the saint to save their children, to cure their sick kins-folk, to receive good news from those in foreign lands, in America or Australia, or to pay off a solemn vow, made during difficult times to the soldier Saint of our Holy Church. At night, during Vespers, the holy church, decorated with the elaborate mosaics of the Byzantine era, was full to the eaves by pious and charitable people, assembled there from all the villages on the island. Most of them came from Livadi, including Ioannis Kasimatis, otherwise known as Detoros, 83 years old, present for the 45th time in a row. There were many other elderly people too, whose strength of faith overcame the weakness of their old age. There were also many people from Chora, Katouni, Skoulianika, Fatsadika, Alexandrades, Friligianika and the surrounding area, Avlemon, etc. And none of them regretted the troubles they went through during their pilgrimage to the site. Both Vespers and Compline, as well as the Holy Service the next day, conducted by the sweet-voiced Father Superior Mormoris, enchanted everyone. Late at night, in the rooms of the Father

Superior in the monastery, there was dancing, according to the ancestral custom, with violins and lutes and clever verses by local impromptu poets. The holy loaves of bread were piously provided by Mrs Eugenia G. Andronikou from Chora and by Panagiotis I. Gianniotis, from Livadi. On the evening of the holy feast, after the pilgrims cleared out the remains of the food from the night before, they descended the mountain, and returned to their homes, with, in addition to everything else, the moral satisfaction that this year too they managed to contribute to the preservation of one of our most beautiful traditions. It should be noted at this point, that both the holy church and the related buildings, including the cistern, are now in serious need of repair, as a result of the indifference displayed at various times by the various wardens of this holy pilgrimage of ours.” (Fatseas, Εφημ. *Κυθηραϊκὴ Δράσις*, 15 Μαΐου 1947).

The same religious festival was described in 1961, as follows: (translation of the Greek text)

“On the 23rd of April, the festival of Saint George was celebrated magnificently in the historical holy church on the Mountain, in the area of Avlemon. The weather was fair and the road, in the construction of which Mr. Lazaros A. Vatikiotis, from the Village of Tsikalaria, and Nikos G. Fatseas, from the village of Fatsadika, are playing a leading role, has been completed, for most of its length, so that the cars can come as near as ca. 500m from the church. This was a contributing factor to this year’s celebration being attended by more than 200 worshippers, from various villages on the island. At night, Vespers was conducted, with a strong religious feeling, by the Father Superior of the monastery of Agia Moni, Mr. Euthymios, a holy monk, and then the service of the Great Compline, before a large congregation; after the end of the service the members of the congregation, having dined on the provisions they had brought from their villages, happy with the festivities as a whole, departed for their homes” (Εφημ. *Κυθηραϊκὴ Δράσις* 15 Μαΐου 1961, no. 224, 4).

Even nowadays (Easter Monday, 6th of May 2002), the festival on Hagios Georgios sto Vouno is a major event at Kythera. According to D. Komis (20/6/02), Vespers was attended by more than 200 people, two thirds of them Kytherian, and more specifically, in order of arrival, the entire community of Avlemon, but also Kytherians from the Mitata and the Friliganika, and fewer people from Livadi, Chora, Karvounades and Potamos.

e. The sacrifice

The arrival of the procession to the peak sanctuary signaled the commencement of the ritual and of the festive celebration, in which both the priesthood and the worshippers participated. Obviously, the processional transport of the ritual vessels would have been preceded by various preparations and adjustments at the sanctuary. N. Marinatos (1993, 118), suggests that it was exactly during the preparations for the celebration of the festival at Minoan peak sanctuaries that the latter were cleared of the old votive offerings, which were then destroyed, either by fire, or by being thrown in rock crevices, similarly to the “destructive sacrifices”, “Vernichtungsoffer” in Scandinavia, as an act of regeneration, so that the old would give its place to the new (Burkert 1979, 132, 134, for Daidala). This view is not acceptable though, not only on account of the geographical distance involved as regards the Scandinavian customs, but mostly because such destructive customs had other motives, and were in fact related to manical mournful situations, associated with feelings of sorrow. Destructive mania, as K. Meuli has demonstrated (1941, 194; 1946, 185–288:202), is a universal phenomenon, also attested in prehistoric Crete, as exemplified by the cutting up of the horse in tholos tomb A at Archanes (Sakellarakis 1970a, 205–208; Sakellarakis and Sakellaraki 1997, I, 263–264, figs 205, 207). Nevertheless, the votives in ancient sanctuaries were an integral part of the sacred site and in cases of clearing operations, renovations, or extension of the sanctuary, etc., they were buried in the surrounding area in specially prepared apothetes. In the rock crevices were placed “primary depositions” of material (see Sakellarakis 1970b, 255, for Thylakas Mirabelou; Tournavitou 2014, 137–148).

Sacrifice was the most important sacred ritual in ancient Greek religion, usually involving the slaughter of the animal, the collection of its blood, the carving of the carcass, the removal of certain parts of the animal, which were then thrown to the pyre and, finally, the consumption of the meat by the worshippers (see Weilhartner 2005). And of course it should not be forgotten that, as in ancient Greek religion (Burkert 1993, 142–145), the commonest religious motive for a sacrifice, was the collection of the blood of the animal. The presence of rhyta in Minoan peak sanctuaries could be perhaps associated not only with simple libations, but with the disposal of the blood of the animal. The sprinkling of the altar with the blood of the sacrificed animal is also a possibility, for which there is a Minoan iconographic parallel in the miniature wall painting from Thera, depicting a peak sanctuary (Marinatos 1986, 34).

Although the ritual sacrifice of an animal is attested in a number of variations, according to local custom, the basic structure of the ritual is identical and obvious: it involves the sacrifice of the animal, i.e. ritual slaughter, followed by the consumption of the meat (Burkert 1993, 135–141), and it is certain that this was also the case in Minoan Crete (Nilsson 1950, 229; Furumark 1965, 95). The ritual of animal sacrifice in the Creto-Mycenaean world, as confirmed by iconographical evidence, has been studied some years ago (Sakellarakis 1970a), and although it has been generally accepted as a fact (Marinatos 1986), it was never discussed in relation to the Minoan peak sanctuaries (see Rutkowski 1985, 346: “Auch Blutopfer wurden dargebracht”, while Vermeule (1974, 12, 61), disputes the existence of animal sacrifice in Minoan Crete).

The existence of a built stone altar, a makeshift stone construction or a portable wooden sacrificial table (Fig. 43), in peak sanctuaries, has been already mentioned by Alexiou (1966, 322; 1967, 484: “two bases of a stone offering table or altar, near which were found animal bones”) and Sakellariou (1966, 37, suggesting that the Pylos ring depicts an altar crowned by horns of consecration). Rutkowski considered the actual existence of an altar so important, that he included it in his reconstruction of the peak sanctuaries at Juktas, Pyrgos, Petsofas, Modi, Karphi and Gonies (Rutkowski 1985, 351, fig. 1, for Juktas; 354, figs 4–5 for Pyrgos; figs 6–7 for Petsofas; 355, fig. 8 for Modi; fig. 9 for Karphi), a reconstruction which was later rejected by Peatfield (1990, 122). Nevertheless, according to ancient Greek custom, animals could be sacrificed on a peak sanctuary on an ash-altar as well. Burkert (1993, 95), acknowledges animal sacrifice on peak sanctuaries, not only on account of the extant animal bones, but also on account of the so called ash layers. The matter of the existence of ashes in Minoan peak sanctuaries, discussed at length by various scholars, especially in relation to meals and the burning of offerings (see below), is only indirectly related to the matter of animal sacrifice on peak sanctuaries. This is because the sacrifice of an animal is not the same as the burning of its carcass, which belongs to another stage of the ritual. As observed by Burkert (1993, 95), altars were not intended for the burning of sacrificed animals, but for the placement of offerings and the pouring of libations. Some scholars, referring to the animal figurines that came to light in peak sanctuaries, have interpreted the figurines as substitutes of sacrificial animals (Davaras 1976, 245; Morgan 1988, 158). Others believe that the animals depicted on the Zakros rhyton and on the Pylos ring, are sacrificial (Matz 1958, 393, 407; Sakellariou 1966, 67; Simon 1969, 151; Burkert 1993, 77). According to Sakellariou (1966, 67), the wild goats on the Zakros rhyton and on the Pylos ring, are either guarding the sanctuary or are just part of

the landscape. It is worth noting that animal sacrifices are attested on Greek mountains, in relation to religious rituals, even during the 20th century A.D. (Megas 1963, 113–116; Morgan 1988, 158).

The most important factor in the study of sacrifice on peak sanctuaries is, of course, the discovery of osteological remains. It is unfortunate that the preliminary reports of excavators concerning the osteological material are brief. Platon, according to Watrous (1996, 25), does mention animal sacrifices. Karetsou (1975, 334), in her excavation report for the Juktas peak sanctuary, mentions the existence of “some horns of sheep or goats, animal bones and bones of birds” (see Marinatos 1993, 116), as well as “some horns of sheep or goats, part of the skull of a goat preserving the horns, a few bones of small animals and birds” (Karetsou 1976, 410), while Davaras (1974, 211), reports the existence of “teeth of bovids, boar’s tusks, in one case along with the jaw bone”, for the peak sanctuary at Vrysinas. Jones mentions animal bones in three sanctuaries. Although the sheep, the goats and the pigs are of course well known sacrificial animals in Creto-Mycenaean iconography, the excavation data concerning the recorded osteological material has many gaps; for example, there is no chronological information associated with the sacrifices, and therefore Nowicki’s theory (1994, 40–41), suggesting that sacrifices in peak sanctuaries did not take

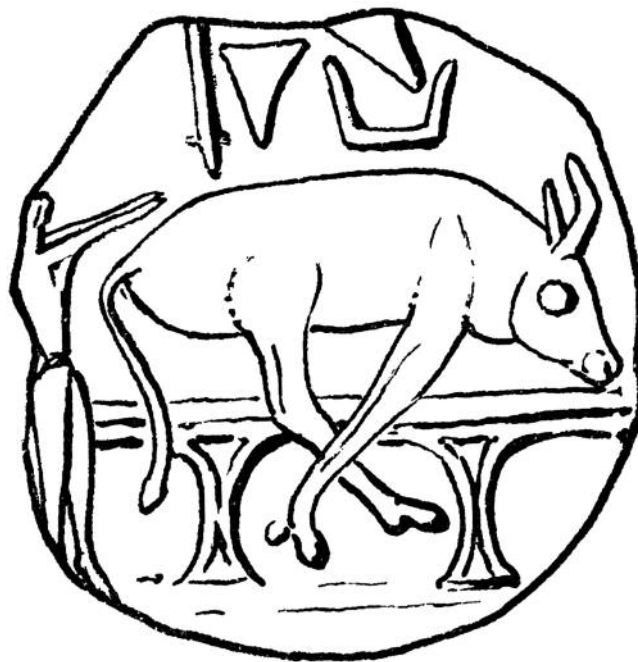


Fig. 43: Seal depicting the sacrifice of a bull, possibly on a portable table.

place before the MM II period, cannot be substantiated. He nevertheless agrees with Peatfield (1992, 66) that animal bones are only attested in sanctuaries during the Neopalatial period (Nowicki 1994, 35, 41). As regards the important peak sanctuary on Juktas, the absence of bones of bovids, especially bulls, the main sacrificial animal in Minoan Crete, is indeed surprising. Only concerning the Atsipades peak sanctuary does Peatfield mention the absence of animal bones, which is indeed unexpected (see Peatfield 1992, 66; Watrous 2001, 194, about the absence of animal bones at Atsipades).

Most importantly: in none of the peak sanctuaries has the osteological material so far been studied by a specialized zoo-archaeologist and therefore the study of the osteological material from the “primary Minoan depositions” at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, by K. Trantalidou, is crucial to the understanding of the facts. In her study (Trantalidou 2013, 465-560), she has identified bones of sheep, goats, and pigs. Sheep and goats comprise 88% of the osteological material, the former being attested in slightly higher numbers, mostly young animals, less than two years old. The sacrifice of a weasel is rather interesting, while the corpus of sacrificial animals also includes chicken. Pigs do not exceed 5.52% of the osteological material, a relatively low percentage on the whole, possibly representing ten animals. Bovids come last, with an even lower percentage in the osteological material (2.13% of the total), representing seven animals.

According to K. Trantalidou, the religious and secular use of the animals cannot be easily identified, especially with reference to osteological material from animals that are regularly exploited for their nutritional value. In addition to that, the surface wear on the bones has eliminated many of the original butcher’s marks that would have provided some information for the carving of the animals. Also, the bones were exposed at the site for a considerable period of time, possibly for years, before they were buried in the earth. According to Trantalidou, only 2.67% of the bones were carbonized, assuming, that is, the characteristic black color caused by low temperatures and the gradual disappearance of the organic components of the bone. The state of preservation of the animal bones from the peak sanctuary at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno is completely different from that of the osteological material associated with the so called Heracle’s pyre on Mt Oite (Papadakis 1919, 25-33).

f. Pyres (in collaboration with I. Tournavitou)

Fire, one of the most fascinating, for some *the* most fascinating, element of nature, the source of light, the source of life, and the ultimate, the most impressive destroyer of all forms of life, is a diachronic religious aspect both in the Aegean and beyond. Although there are no indications, or any specific evidence for the existence of fire-worship in Minoan Crete and the ancient Greek world in general, as was the case in other ancient, mostly eastern civilizations, including Persia and Mari (Albright 1957, 242-258; Burkert 1993, 79, 147, 149), it has been established that fire played an important role in numerous ancient and modern day religions (Nilsson 1923, 144, 146-148; Platon 1951, 151-152, 159; Burkert 1993, 77-79, 145, 149, 262; Megas 2004, 54-57, 137-139, 149-150, 164, 207-208, 213-214, 240-246, 259-261, 270-271, 274, 277, 282, 287-289; Psilakis 2005, 58, 74, 136, 188-189, 247, 277-278, 330, 332-333). In the ancient Greek world, the fire that destroys, also purifies body and soul and leads to redemption (*Euripidis*, *Ῥρέστεια*, 40, *πάντα γὰρ καθαίρει τὸ πῦρ*; Burkert 1993, 145, 175-177, 180-181). In ancient Greek mythology, according to the myths of Damophon and Heracles, fire purifies the hero from his mortal aspects (mortal = impure?), and renders him immortal (Burkert 1993, 148, 180-181, 436-437), a theory linking the purifying properties of fire with healing. Fire festivals in Greek antiquity are usually associated with the worship of gods like Hera, Artemis and Demeter and demi-gods like Heracles, while the use of fire is widely attested in rituals, such as the sacrificial offering of animals to the gods or the dead and in purification rites. According to Nilsson (1923, 144, 146-148; 1950, 75), festivals involving pyres are mostly attested in central Greece. In the festival of Artemis Laphria, live animals were thrown into the pyre, at Patras/Kalydon, and Prinias. Effigies of human figures and other objects were thrown into the pyre at Hyampoli in Phocis. In the festivals of Hera, a xoanon of the goddess was thrown into the pyre and occasionally other statues from other Boeotian towns. Parts of sacrificed bovinds and offerings made by common people were thrown into the pyre at the top of Mt Kithairon and at Tithorea in Phocis. Other festivals include the pyre of Heracles on top of Mt Oite, and the pyre-festival in honor of the Kouretes at Messene, where animals were also thrown into the fire, the Kouretes being the protectors of domesticated animals. Judging by the extant inscriptions in Crete and the hymn of Palaikastro, the Kouretes were described as yearly fertility daemons. Finally a yearly festival, featuring a large pyre, is reported as taking place at the top of Larissa at Argos, and at Lyrkeia (festival of torches), and a holocaust of sacrificed animals is reported before the statue of Koronis at Titane. Platon (1951, 151, 159), emphasizes the links of these gods

with Crete: “Especially important is the survival of the ritual of pyres at the top of mountains and the holocausts performed there during ancient Greek times, all being rituals related to gods or daemons, occasionally appearing as demigods or heroes, originating, or closely associated with pre-Greek Crete, like Artemis Laphria, and Hera Nymphagogos”. Burkert (1993, 77–78, 137–138, 144–149, 262), offers a more comprehensive analysis of the use of fire in religious contexts and in relation to individual gods.

In the Greek world and beyond, pyres had, and still have, a special role, in customs that are often peripheral to official religion. In the Greek world, pyres, in both urban and extra-urban contexts, with the exception of those serving purely practical needs, as for example for protection from the weather and the wild-life, or even from the darkness of the night, are mostly associated with purification, collective or personal, both physical and moral, and are consequently directly related to the notions of health and strength, the fertility of the earth, the fertility of people and animals, the aversion of evil, the passing from one cycle of nature to another, even the influencing of this cycle. Fires are also associated with communication with the divine and represent the most magnificent statement of the sanctity of a site.

In the feast of Ypapante (Presentation of the Lord) on the 2nd of February, large fires were lit inside the Panagia Arkoudiotissa cave at Akrotiri in Chania, and outside all the country churches in honor of Ypapante, on the eve of the feast, or on the same day, for protection against the cold (Psilakis 2005, 74). For the same reason a large fire was lit at Juktas on the festival of Aphantis Christos-Metamorphosis tou Sotiros (Christ the Lord-Transfiguration of Christ) (Psilakis 2005, 278). During the festival of the Ypsosis of Timiou Stavrou (The Raising of the Holy Cross) on the 14th-15th of September, on the mountaintops of Crete (Psiloreitis, Kophinas), when the pilgrim’s journey to the church lasted two days, fires were lit for protection against the cold, halfway up the mountain, on the Mitata, where the pilgrims took a rest, while fires accompanied their final, nightly ascent, after midnight. Finally, a pyre was built at the entrance of the church at the top, for those who did not fit inside the small country chapel (Psilakis 2005, 328–333, 335). In the fires lit for the feast of Ai Giannis (Saint John), on the 24th of June, during the summer solstice, ancient rites concerning the purifying power of fire have survived in Christian times; he who jumps over the fire without treading on the charcoals, will be healthy all year round and will be alive the coming year to do it again, free of all evil (Megas 2004, 259–260; Psilakis 2005, 247).

The Christmas and New Year fires are considered a symbol of health and happiness for the New Year, light and life being one and the same thing, and the light, a sign of birth (Megas 2004, 57). During Easter, an effigy of Judas is burnt in a public pyre (Megas 2004, 213). In Crete, after the effigy is burnt, the act of jumping over the fire represents an act of personal purification, the flame being attributed with the power to cleanse (Psilakis 2005, 188). In the festival in honor of Constantine the Great and his mother Eleni, on the 21st of May, the treading of the fire by the Anastenarides in Macedonia incorporates the notion of purification, mostly moral (purification from injustice) and the regeneration of the participants (Megas 2004, 244–245, n. 1).

Spring fires, especially during the last Sunday of the Carnival, and the burning of an effigy representing the Carnival, similarly to the holy light from the day of the Anastasi (Resurrection), are associated with fruitfulness and fertility. The ashes from the burning of the effigy are scattered in the fields (Megas 2004, 137–138, 150, 164). The fires burning in the houses throughout the 12 days of Christmas (Dodekaimero), and the pyres lit on Christmas Eve and on Christmas day in public places, are clearly apotropaic, averting all evil (Megas 2004, 54–55, 57). The same applies to the new fire lit on the 1st of March and to the holy light from the day of the Anastasi (Resurrection) (Megas 2004, 164), as in ancient Greece and Rome (Megas 2004, 208). The ashes from the fire in the Ai Giannis (Saint John) feast in June are also used in an apotropaic way (Megas 2004, 259).

Within the household, the renewal of the house fire on the 1st of March symbolizes the end of a cycle and the beginning of a new one (Psilakis 2005, 136). On the same level, the fires lit outside the houses in Crete just before the Anastasi (Resurrection), in which old things from the house are being thrown, similarly to the holy light from the day of the Anastasi (Resurrection), represent the end of a cycle (Psilakis 2005, 188). A similar notion is associated with the Ai Giannis (Saint John) fires, on the 24th of June, the fires lit in honor of the Metamorphosis of Sotiros (Transfiguration of Christ) at Lesbos, where fires are built at crossroads, and people jump over the fires, and the fires lit during the Ypsosis of Timiou Stavrou (Raising of the Holy Cross), on the 14th of September (Megas 2004, 257, 259, 276–277, 287). The fires during the festival of Hagios Antonios in Crete, on the 17th of January, large fires built in the cave-like churches dedicated to Hagios Antonios, represent an attempt to influence the cycle of nature, i.e. early rites of passage, the pyres ensuring the change of the seasons in the middle of winter, and aspiring to the acceleration of the cycle of nature and the passing into spring (Psilakis 2005, 58). Similar notions are involved when it comes to the fires lit, mostly on mountaintops,

during the festival of Prophetes Elias, Lord of thunder, rain and weather in general. The pilgrims light during the night a large fire with incense/frankincense, as an offering to the saint, while the population living on the plains responds with other fires, over which they jump or around which they dance (Megas 2004, 270–271).

The ultimate motive and the ultimate expectation of those walking on fire, as exemplified by the dancers, members of the Anastenarides in Macedonia, is communication with the divine (Megas 2004, 241). It is also believed that festivals on mountain tops had the same motive (Psilakis 2005, 277). During the four big summer festivals, which in Crete are celebrated mostly on mountain tops (Prophetes Elias, Saint Panteleimon, Metamorphosi tou Sotiros-Tranfiguration of Christ and Ypsosi tou Timiou Stavrou-The Raising of the Holy Cross), large fires are lit at night, on the eve of the feast, to emphasize the sanctity of the site and to display the location where the festivities take place (Psilakis 2005, 277–278).

Human activities accompanying these fires include mostly communal, usually circular dances, jumping over, or treading on the fire (Judas fires, fires for the feast of Ai Giannis-Saint John, Anastenaria) (Megas 2004, 214, 259, 261, 240–246; Psilakis 2005, 188, 247), and occasionally the throwing of objects or offerings into the fire (May wreaths in the fires for the feast of Ai Giannis-Saint John in June and frankincense in the fires for Prophetes Elias) (Megas 2004, 259–261, 271; Psilakis 2005, 247).

One of the most popular and most disputed theories as regards the ritual practices on peak sanctuaries, concerns the existence and the importance of ritual pyres, which, as suggested, represented the conclusion of major rituals and in which, when they went out, various offerings were thrown by the worshippers, especially figurines, pottery and parts of sacrificed animals. The deposits containing ashes, animal bones and votives, made of clay, or other materials, inside or outside hollows or rock crevices, have been interpreted as the result of the periodical, ritual clearance of the sacred area, after the end of these rituals (Myres 1902–1903, 357–358; Platon 1951, 102–103, 114, 151, 157–158; Karetsou 1975, 334, 342; 1976, 410–411, 413–414, 417–418; Peatfield 1983, 277; 1992, 66; Rutkowski 1986, 91 (including parts of sacrificed animals); Marinatos 1986, 14–15, 36–37, 39, 49; 1993, 118–119; Bergquist 1988, 32; Burkert 1993, 77–79; Watrous 1995, 394; 1996, 92). Despite the scarcity of published archaeological evidence in mostly looted peak sanctuaries, an entire corpus of theory was developed, suggesting the existence of extensive pyres in Minoan peak sanctuaries, on an exclusively theoretical basis, which has dominated modern research. The occasion for the almost blind acceptance of this the-

ory was provided by the published views of J. L. Myres concerning the peak sanctuary at Petsofas (Myres 1902–1903, 357–358), reinforced by the limited nature of the information concerning the Juktas peak sanctuary. A detailed re-evaluation of the subject of “ritual pyres” has now become absolutely essential, especially after the rather negative evidence, as regards the existence of large ritual pyres, which emerges for Atsipades and Hagios Georgios sto Vouno at Kythera, the only so far unlooted peak sanctuaries.

The theory promoting the existence of extensive ritual pyres in Minoan peak sanctuaries, which was initially put forward by J.L. Myres (“bonfires”), based on the evidence from the excavation at Petsofas (Myres 1902–1903, 357–358, 360, 378, 380), and by N. Platon in the first synthetic study of the then known peak sanctuaries (Platon 1951, 96–160), soon enjoyed widespread acceptance, while the numerous finds from the Juktas peak sanctuary (Karetsou 1975, 334, 342; 1976, 410–411, 413–414, 417–418), reinforced the view that the custom of large ritual pyres was a fixed feature of the ritual practices in peak sanctuaries in general. The theory was also adopted by Doro Levi (1981, 38). Rutkowski, who initiated the term “canonical peak sanctuary” (1988, 74), was generally in favor of the theory introduced by Myres and Platon, about large annual ritual pyres, accompanied by the custom of throwing in the flames votives, pottery and parts of sacrificed animals. Rutkowski (1971, 4, n. 16), adopted all the arguments of the Myres and Platon theory, including the explanation put forward to justify the absence of traces of burning on the extant votives, concluding that “the evidence regarding the fire festivals is rather abundant”. He later elaborated on the theory, suggesting that “Während der Feierlichkeiten hat man in der Regel ein Feuer entzündet, d.h., man errichtete einen Brandopferaltar, und in das erlöschende Feuer warf man Weihgeschenke aus Terrakotta, hauptsächlich Haustier- und Menschendarstellungen” (Rutkowski 1985, 346), and that “Beachtenswert ist eine Streuung der Asche, bzw. Der Opferschicht über eine beträchtliche Fläche” (Rutkowski 1985, 348). According to Rutkowski (1986, 91), “parts of the dead sacrificial animals were possibly also thrown into the fire”, and “usually a mere fire-altar was lit - that is a simple bonfire. The worshippers threw clay votives and pottery into the embers of the dying fire” (Rutkowski 1991, 53; also 1985, 352, 354, figs. 4–5, reconstruction of pyre at Pyrgos; 354, figs. 4–5, reconstruction of pyre at Petsofas).

Peatfield, the excavator of the sanctuary at Atsipades, who initially defends the established theory about the existence of large ritual pyres, suggesting a “network of sacred pyres”, built on the same night over the entire island, the existence of extensive ash layers in “all” the peak sanctuaries (Peatfield 1983, 277), and the existence of a homogeneous ritual in all the Minoan

peak sanctuaries (1992, 61), in the same publication (1992, 66), gradually recants as regards the archaeological evidence from the excavation of the sanctuary at Atsipades. After mentioning the almost complete absence of layers with carbonized matter and animal bones from the sanctuary at Atsipades (1992, 66), he goes on to dispute the published data for ash layers, “dark, sticky layers”, in the excavation reports of other peak sanctuaries, as untrustworthy and lacking in scholarly proof (1992, 66), concluding that the archaeological evidence concerning smaller sanctuaries of the Old Palace period is in reality dubious or altogether non-existent (1992, 66). Although he also refers to the corresponding absence of bones from Petsofas and other sanctuaries, which he doesn’t name (1992, 66), his conclusion that ash layers and animal bones and therefore the practice of ritual pyres in peak sanctuaries is only attested during the Neopalatial period (1992, 66), is not valid.

Despite the general opinion, being in favor of the existence of large ritual pyres in peak sanctuaries, there were certain scholars who disputed, not only the necessity, but even the existence of the ritual, as for example B.C. Dietrich (1969, 269), who suggested that “The fire ritual at Petsofas is too thinly documented”, and K. Nowicki (1994, 31-32), who stated that: “... the figurines available for studies do not seem to be burnt. The whole idea of “the bonfire”, which has appeared so often in later studies on the Minoan peak sanctuaries, must be reconsidered, at least for the Pre- and perhaps also for the Proto-palatial period”. He also claimed that: “The exact stratigraphical position and the character of the ash layer in Petsofas calls for verification” (Nowicki 1994, 34, n. 29). Both Nowicki and Watrous stated their disagreement with Peatfield’s view about the homogeneity of the peak sanctuary cult (Nowicki 1994, 40, n. 55; Watrous 2001, 194), while Marinatos (1993, 119), disputed his theory about a single network of ritual pyres. Finally, Jones (1999, 32–33), in his synthetic study of peak sanctuaries and caves, although he mentioned that evidence supporting the existence of a pyre is attested in more than half of the acknowledged peak sanctuaries in Crete, he emphasized the fact that the data for the existence of pyres are not particularly numerous and that their frequency is in reality unknown. Kyriakidis, in a recent study on peak sanctuaries (2005, 137) also refers to large nightly ritual fires:

In the formation of scholarly opinion about the ritual practices in Minoan peak sanctuaries, the primary consideration should be the justification of the existence, the frequency, and the diachroneity of these pyres, while other substantial matters, such as the activities accompanying the suggested pyres (throwing of objects and parts of sacrificed animals, preparation of food, communal meals, jumping over the fire),

and the pleas of the worshippers for health, fertility, aversion of evil, and communication with the divine, come second. Important evidence is also furnished by the extant iconography, in this case scenes depicting peak sanctuaries with pyres.

The existence of a built altar does not automatically presuppose sacrifice accompanied by fire (Bergquist 1988, 32; Burkert 1993, 95), and altars are rarely attested in the extant peak sanctuaries, the only exceptions being the built, stepped altar at Juktas (Karetsou 1974, 231–232; 1975, 330; 1981, 138, 141), the possible altar or offering table at Gonies Malevyziou (Alexiou 1966, 322; 1967, 484), probably hypaethral and partly stone paved, at the centre of the site (Rutkowski 1986, 80; 1988, 79–81), and three other cases of hypaethral structures, at Vrysinas (Rutkowski 1986, 80, “...excavations have brought to light the remains of ..., as well as part of a stone altar, which has survived to a height of 0,30m”), Prinias Siteias (Rutkowski 1988, 87: “The main terrace: It is thought that between the crack and the northern group of rocks an altar must have stood near a rock that was partly damaged when the modern datum was being built. In the centre of terrace I, stands a rock measuring 0.8m by 1.5m and about 1.5m high, which, according to Davaras, might have been used as an altar. Davaras noted that a funnel had been made in it, for carrying away the blood of the sacrificial animals. Judging from the position of this rock, we may take it that this was the most sacred rock in the cult area”), and in Pyrgos Malevyziou, in Pera Korphi (Rutkowski 1988, 87–88: “Near the cult building is a stone in which a rectangle has been hollowed out. It may have been a sacrificial table put into secondary use... One half of a pair of limestone horns of consecration was found near the building, and may have come from an altar erected before the building on terrace I”). Although Rutkowski mentions the existence of a single altar at Juktas, he then goes on to assert his belief that a terrace or a system of terraces and one or more altars, were most probably the only architectural constructions in many peak sanctuaries (Rutkowski 1988, 74–76). In none of the cases mentioned is there any reference to traces of burning on the constructions involved. The black burnt earth and the ashes, in which a large number of pottery vessels, votives and animal bones were found, in the vicinity of the altar at Juktas, belong, according to the excavator, to the Old Palace period (ash-altar) (Karetsou 1978, 247, 258; 1981, 146).

Although traces of burnt black or reddish soil or burnt patches on the bedrock itself, identifying the location of the pyre, seem commoner, the lack of detailed publications in the vast majority of the excavated peak sanctuaries makes this kind of research, rather difficult. Extensive areas with burnt, mostly reddish, but also black soil, were identified at the Juktas

sanctuary (Karetsou 1974, 232, 234; 1975, 342; 1977, 419–420; 1978, 235, 241–242, 247; 1980, 341–342; Jones 1999, table 9), at Petsofas (Myres 1902–1903, 357–358; Platon 1951, 120; Rutkowski 1991, 19; Jones 1999, table 9), and Kophinas (Davaras 1961–1962, 287; Rutkowski 1988, 83; Jones 1999, table 9), while at Traostalos multiple pyre locations were identified, scattered both on the plateau at the top, and in a series of niches of the bedrock, at the foot of the slope, east of the plateau (Rutkowski 1988, 89; Chryssoulaki 1999, 311–312). More dubious are the references to the sanctuary at Vigla Siteias (Rutkowski 1988, 90; Jones 1999, table 9), where an ovoid hollow with soil, probably burnt, ashes and animal bones, was located at the top of the hill, and at Modi Siteias (Rutkowski 1988, 84–85; Jones 1999, table 9), where black soil with ashes and figurines was identified in the area of wall 5.

As regards Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, the archaeological evidence, not only concerning the existence of a ritual pyre, but also the burnt material from pyres, is extremely thin on the ground and often ambiguous in character. Traces of pyres have been identified in only two locations, both on Terrace 2, at the top of the mountain, the most important and most easily accessible terrace in the sanctuary. Only in one of the two locations, in the south part of the area between the two churches, is preserved a layer, 0,35–0,38 cm thick, with sporadic traces of burning (Layer 2, 92/Area 2/4), lying above the bedrock (see Tournavitou 2014, 134–150). The stratigraphical context of this layer and the synthesis of the pottery associated with it, almost exclusively Minoan, confirm its relation to the Minoan peak sanctuary (Neopalatial period: disturbance 1.79%, see Sakellarakis 2011, 173; Tournavitou 2014, 134–135, table 17). In the second location, again on Terrace 2, in the east part of the site, in the area south of the south wall of the Hagios Georgios church, the remains of a pyre are associated with architectural remains of a post-Bronze Age period and a large percentage of post-Bronze Age pottery. Therefore, although the layer involved is basically Minoan (Tournavitou 2014, 134–135, table 17, East part, Minoan deposit, on the bedrock, later disturbance: 17.50%), the location featuring the remains of a pyre, in the southeast corner of the area, below a later, stone-paved floor, contains mostly later pottery (93/A61, disturbance 74.35%, see Tournavitou 2014, table 17). The deposit included, apart from a relatively moderate number of tripod cooking pots, four fragmentary braziers, with two unique examples preserving traces of burning on the interior (K983–K984). In the same deposit were also recorded 18 intact conical cups, one intact juglet, one fragmentary miniature vessel transformed into a rhyton, one miniature tripod vessel, five vessels with plastic decoration, six discs and other storage vessels (see Tournavitou 2014, 134–150).

Extensive, verified traces of pyres, representing large, uniform areas or small isolated fires, have been located only in five out of the 26 acknowledged peak sanctuaries (37 according to Rutkowski), including the four largest and most important sanctuaries in Crete (Juktas, Kophinas, Petsofas, Traostalos). The vast majority of the list of 26 peak sanctuaries (24/26), including Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, are acknowledged by three different scholars (Rutkowski 1988; Peatfield 1992, fig. 1; Jones 1999). Nineteen of those are described as acknowledged peak sanctuaries by all three scholars (Atsipades Korakias, Vigla Siteias, Vrysinas Rethymnis, Juktas, Gonies Malevyziou-Filioremos, Zeros Siteias, Thylakas Mirabellou, Kalamaki Siteias, Karphi Lasithiou, Kophinas Monofatsiou, Mazas Pediados, Modi Siteias, Xykephalo Siteias, Petsofas Siteias, Plagia Siteias, Prinias Siteias, Pyrgos Malevyziou, Speli Voritsi in Hagios Vasileios, Traostalos Siteias), while five of those are mentioned by only two of the scholars (Ambelos Siteias, Demati Monofatsiou, Etiane Kephala Siteias, Keria Malevyziou, Tapes Mirabellou). Although Korakomouri Sphakas in Siteia is a relatively new site (Tzedakis et alii 1999, 317-326), it is mentioned as a peak sanctuary in relatively recent publications (Kyriakidis 2005, 14). At Hagios Georgios sto Vouno only one certain pyre location has been identified (Sakellarakis 2011, 164-205; Tournavitou 2014, 134-135). The extant pyres are associated with both palatial periods.

Although the recorded instances of burnt material from pyres, i.e. soil with ashes and carbonized organic matter, are more numerous or are more frequently mentioned by the excavators, the published accounts do not venture beyond general statements, that do not touch upon matters of substance, as for example the extent, the thickness and the contents of these deposits.

Deposits with ashes, mostly in hollows and crevices of the bedrock are attested, according to Jones (1999, tables 9, 10), in 15 out of the 26 acknowledged peak sanctuaries, including Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, Vigla Siteias, Juktas, Gonies Malevyziou-Filioremos, Zeros Siteias-Korphe tou Mare, Thylakas Mirabellou, Kophinas Monofatsiou, Mazas Pediados, Modi Siteias, Xykephalo Siteias, Petsofas Siteias, Plagia Siteias, Prinias Siteias, Pyrgos Malevyziou, Traostalos Siteias and Vrysinas (Davaras 1974, 210; Rutkowski 1988, 90), and possibly the sanctuary at Keria Malevyziou, where Rutkowski (1988, 93) records the existence of ashes in rock crevices and hollows. At Atsipades, where the archaeological evidence does not support the existence of ritual pyres, animal sacrifices and preparation of food at the site (lack of animal bones, seeds), the excavator mentions the existence of a small deposit with carbonized material, in a niche of the bedrock in the Upper terrace and few traces of ashes in the soil from the upper

layers, obviously modern (Peatfield 1992, 66). These deposits, attested in 65.38% of the peak sanctuaries, include mostly fragmentary pottery and figurines, as well as other categories of votives (Jones 1999, table 10).

At Hagios Georgios sto Vouno the burnt material from pyres, which includes scattered pieces of charcoal, burnt wood, ashes, and burnt matter in general, is mostly attested on Terrace 2. Here too the identification of the burnt material with the Minoan peak sanctuary is often extremely dubious, on account of the high percentage of later pottery in the layers involved (see Sakellarakis 2011, 164–205; Tournavitou 2014, 135–136, table 17). It is moreover interesting that the largest quantities of carbonized and burnt matter, almost the entire quantity of burnt wood and one of the two locations with traces of ashes, are attested in layers where the majority of the pottery is dated to the post-Bronze Age period. As regards the other two categories of layers, the category with exclusively Minoan material, and the category with a considerable quantity of later sherds, ca. 23–40% of the pottery material, it is obvious that the quantity of burnt material involved is small or minute. Unfortunately, only four layers with traces of burning or with burnt material from pyres at the sanctuary can be identified with areas of “primary depositions” of votive material (Terrace 2: MM deposit; West part, MM-LM I deposit; East part, Minoan deposit; Terrace 4: Layer 3, see Tournavitou 2014, 135–136, table 18), a fact that weakens the alleged connection between the suggested ritual pyres and ritual depositions in rock crevices.

Despite the small number of sanctuaries preserving the remains of one or more pyres, the considerable number of sites with *remains of material from fires/pyres*, i.e. burnt soil with ashes, and carbonized organic matter, is impressive (ca. 65%); it is also indicative, not only of the popularity, but also of the frequency of the custom. With the exception of Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, where such remains are few and far between during the Minoan period, the geographic distribution of this type of material in other peak sanctuaries, the number of deposits involved and their size is in most cases, not detectable. Once again, the only exceptions to the rule are the three sites of Juktas, Petsofas, and Kophinas, the evidence concerning which is more abundant, even though they are still unpublished.

Traces of burning on objects and organic matter (pottery, figurines, other votive offerings, animal bones), is a familiar issue, directly associated with the activities accompanying the suggested fires (i.e. throwing of votive offerings or sacrificial animals in the pyres). It has however been impossible to test, since the relevant data, mostly ignored or ingeniously avoided in the published reports, are in reality very poor. Information about traces of

burning on the extant pottery is almost nonexistent. One would expect more information about traces of burning on various votive offerings, i.e. human and animal figurines, models of human body parts, etc., which are more often mentioned in excavation reports and other publications. Nevertheless, this type of information is sadly lacking. Scholars are apparently more concerned with art historical, typological and other matters.

Myres (1902–1903, 356–387), the first to introduce the subject of ritual pyres and to suggest that votive offerings were actually thrown into these pyres, does not mention anything about traces of burning on the extant votive offerings from Petsofas. Platon (1951, 103, 150–151), who embraced Myre's theory, is however forced to admit the absence of "obvious traces of burning" on the figurines. In an attempt to explain this phenomenon, he suggests that they were perhaps "thrown... when the pyre was being extinguished...". We know nothing about the state of most of the portable finds from Juktas. There is no information whatsoever concerning traces of burning, not even for the votive offerings discovered on the step of the built altar (stone offering tables, figurines, etc.) (Karetsou 1974, 232; 1981, 146). In a lecture about the clay animal figurines from Juktas, at the Danish Archaeological Institute in Athens, Maria Zeimbeki (1998), who has studied the animal figurines from the site, was negative as to the existence of traces of burning on the votives. In the discussion after the lecture, it was generally acknowledged that the ritual throwing of figurines and other objects in pyres at peak sanctuaries is a theoretical construct concocted by scholars who have never actually examined the relevant material. The only sanctuaries which have yielded votive offerings with explicit traces of burning are Traostalos (Chryssoulaki 2001, 60–61, on stone discs and on many of the animal figurines) and a new site at Korakomouri Sphaka. According to the excavators: "A large percentage of the portable finds, human and animal figurines, pottery, miniature vessels, bear clear traces of burning" (Tzedakis et alii 1999, 323; see also Schlager 1995, 1–24).

At Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, none of the votive offerings of the Minoan period preserves any traces of burning. This is also true of the finds in the single Minoan layer preserving the remains of a fire; none of the finds in this layer, the pottery material included, preserved any traces of burning (Sakellarakis 2011, 173, fig. 6; Tournavitou 2014, 134, 136, 533–535, table 17, distribution map 18). As far as the pottery is concerned, the percentage of specimens with traces of burning is really very small and does not exceed 0.15% of the total. It concerns ten different vessel types, mostly tripod cooking vessels, conical cups, jugs/amphorae, and juglets. The remaining types of vessels are represented by one or two specimens each. Judging by the types of vessels represented, it is worth noting that in the vast ma-

jority of the cases (91% of the total), the traces of burning could have been the result of primary use and were probably not caused by their being thrown or placed into a pyre (Tournavitou 2014, 136–137).

The remaining specimens represent a really small minority, i.e. 9% of the pottery material with traces of burning, and 0,013% of the total. In two cases, it appears that two miniature vessels, a disc and an intact bird's-nest bowl, had been actually placed and not thrown into the fire, judging by the distribution of burn marks and by the intact state of one of the two examples. The vast majority of the sherds had been burnt in places, both inside and out, and it seems that they had been broken before they came into contact with fire. They are open drinking vessels (conical cups), closed storage vessels (jugs/amphorae), including a closed vessel with floral decoration, as well as specialized vessels, of possibly ritual use (juglets and a miniature vessel with plastic decoration). It is worth noting that the majority of these vessels are made of red, mica clay, the clay commonly used for vessels meant to come into contact with fire, like the tripod cooking pots and do not bear any traces of painted decoration (see Tournavitou 2014, 134–150).

The emerging evidence, concerning their distribution and their association with areas of “primary depositions”, as well as with fires or layers preserving burnt material from fires (ashes, carbonized organic matter), is equally interesting (Tournavitou 2014, 136–137, tables 17–18). Of the two miniature vessels that had been possibly placed on a fire, the disc (K427-93/A16/2), discovered in Terrace 2, at the top of the hill (Terrace 2, west part, MM-LM I deposit, later disturbance: 0-0,14%), is the only intact vessel in the whole deposit; the latter has been identified as a “primary deposition” area, including burnt material. The pottery associated with this particular vessel included no later material. In this layer were also found many bronze and clay votive offerings, many animal bones and sea-shells, but very few traces of burnt material (Tournavitou 2014, 55, 136–137, tables 17–18). The miniature bird's-nest bowl (K1031-93/A1/2), was found on the same terrace, but in a surface layer, which did include a few traces of burnt material, many animal bones and some sea-shells (Terrace 2, surface layer south of the Panagia church, later disturbance: 71,53%) (Tournavitou 2014, 104–105, 136–137, table 17).

The vast majority of the remaining specimens, which had come into contact with fire after they had been broken, intentionally or by accident, was attested in layers identified as “primary deposition” areas, especially on Terrace 7, which has nevertheless yielded no traces of fire or burnt material from a fire (Terrace 7, square 1, Layers 2, 3; Terrace 7, square 5, Layer 1;

nine fragmentary conical cups-93/B4, B5; seven fragmentary jugs/amphorae-93/B4, B5; four out of six juglets in 93/B13, 94/B40A). Most of the deposits identified as “primary deposition” areas are in fact located on Terrace 7. It is worth noting that out of all the specimens preserving traces of burning, only two vessels were found in the same layer on Terrace 2, a miniature open vessel with plastic decoration (K1073 – 93/A35/1 – Πινλ. 6) (Tournavitou 2014, 113, 137), and the disc (K427-93/A16/2), which had been apparently placed on an open fire. The other two, a fragmentary juglet, and part of a closed vessel with floral decoration, were found together in the same layer, on Terrace 3. Two of the 25 specimens that are not associated with “primary deposition” areas, were found on Terraces 5 and 7, respectively. It is interesting that none of the preserved specimens were found in the only area preserving traces of a pyre on Terrace 2, between the two churches (Tournavitou 2014, 136–137, tables 17–18).

Finally, it is worth noting that as regards the group of sherds preserving traces of primary burning, i.e. the tripod cooking pots, the two braziers, and the incense-burner, only the latter was found in a layer with burnt material from a fire dated to the Minoan period; the two braziers were discovered in the same layer at the top of the hill (Terrace 2), where remains of an apparently post-Minoan pyre have been identified (see above).

According to Jones (1999, tables 9, 10), animal bones are attested in only six of the acknowledged peak sanctuaries, i.e. Vrysinas, Juktas, Gonies Malevyziou, Mazas Pediados, Traostalos Siteias, and Agios Georgios sto Vouno on Kythera. The absence of animal bones from Petsofas is doubted by Nowicki (1994, 31). The animal bones were apparently discovered in contexts associated with burnt earth and ashes. Animal bones were also recorded, according to Rutkowski (1988, 90), at Vigla Siteias. Only at Juktas is the precise find spot of the animal bones specified (room 1, Old-palace votive pit/altar area), as well as the species of animals involved (Karetsou 1975, 333; 1976, 410; 1978, 238, 247, 258, Room 1, bones of small animals, and birds, in a thin layer of ashes/pyre-layer 8). It was also reported that the votive pits of the Old-palace period on Terrace 1 included both animal bones and sea-shells. The layer associated with the pyre, near the altar, yielded a large quantity of animal bones, mostly sheep and goats, followed by pigs, bovids and a few bird bones. The bones from sheep and goats preserve butchery marks. At Traostalos, although burnt animal bones are associated, not only with the ritual pyre at the top of the hill, but also with the pyres in the entire area of the sanctuary, it is pointed out that the total number of bones is small and they are therefore interpreted as remains of sacrifices (Chryssoulaki 1999, 316).

The systematic study of the animal bones from Hagios Georgios sto Vouno (Trantalidou 2013, 465-500), is the only of its kind, as far as peak sanctuaries are concerned. According to Trantalidou (2013, 465-500), the animal bones from the sanctuary are most probably remains of meals (butchery marks). In the “primary deposition” areas the vast majority of the bones, an average of 88%, belongs to sheep and goats, followed by pigs (an average of 5.52%), and bovids (2.13%), while birds constitute only 1.95% of the total. It seems that 76% of the birds were partridges and pigeons. It is worth noting that only 2.67% of the animal bones in the sanctuary were carbonized.

The exceptionally small number of peak sanctuaries which have yielded votive offerings or pottery with traces of burning (3/26) and the even smaller number of sites with evidence of carbonized animal bones, especially if they are compared to the multitude of peak sanctuaries preserving evidence of burnt deposits, suggest that the custom of ritual pyres should be disassociated from the throwing of objects, votives/pottery or parts of animals, into the fire. Only three sites, i.e. Traostalos, Korakomouri Sphakas, and Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, have yielded a small number of votive offerings with traces of burning (see section on votives), while carbonized animal bones are again reported in only three cases (Mazas, Traostalos, and Hagios Georgios sto Vouno). In the first two sites (Mazas and Traostalos) carbonized animal bones are mentioned in a very general manner, for a small number of bones; in the case of Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, carbonized animal bones constitute a very small percentage of the total number of animal bones at the site.

Finally, as far as the last diagnostic criterion for the existence of ritual pyres in peak sanctuaries (extra-urbans sanctuaries) is concerned, i.e. the iconographic representation of a pyre, the evidence is extremely limited. The only scene in Minoan iconography possibly depicting the use of fire on a peak sanctuary features a tall incense-burner, which seems to be smoking before the gate of a building, on an unpublished gold ring from the tomb on Laonikou St., at Poros, near Herakleion. Shaw’s interpretation of the central altar on the Zakros rhyton (Shaw 1978a, 436-437, fig. 9), the upper level of which is said to represent fuel – wood – for the lighting of a fire, alludes to the existence of a real pyre in an open air sanctuary. Judging by the archaeological evidence in a considerable number of peak sanctuaries and caves, this total absence of iconographic representations of the ritual use of fire in Minoan art, is probably indicative of the selectiveness in the iconography of the prehistoric Aegean and of the ineffectiveness of iconography as a media for interpreting prehistoric ritual practices in general. There are no references to the use of fire in the Linear B documents and

it does not feature among the numerous ritual practices depicted on the Hagia Triada sarcophagus (Marinatos and Hirmer 1959, pl. XXVII–XXIX), which, however, does not depict a peak sanctuary ritual.

Despite the absence of iconographical evidence concerning the use of fire in Minoan peak sanctuaries and despite the rarity of objects/votive offerings with traces of burning, judging by the rest of the archaeological evidence, the existence of a pyre in a considerable number of peak sanctuaries, and more specifically, in over 50% of the acknowledged Minoan peak sanctuaries, is indisputable. Judging by the extant evidence in the sites, where the existence of pyres has been attested, both during the Old-palace and during the Neopalatial periods, the diachronic character of the custom is also indisputable. The frequency of the custom cannot be ascertained in every case, except perhaps in sanctuaries such as Juktas, Petsofas and Traostalos, where the thickness of the deposits (Petsofas, Juktas) or the number of the extant pyres (Traostalos), allude to its frequency. It is on the whole very likely that there was considerable differentiation as regards the popularity of the custom, even among the remaining sanctuaries, where the existence of a pyre has been documented. What does seem certain is that the use of pyres was not a general practice, part of a homogeneous cult ritual practiced in all the Minoan peak sanctuaries, as was suggested for many years, by many scholars (Platon 1951; Rutkowski 1986; 1988; Peatfield 1983; 1992, among others).

Beyond the general lack of information concerning this specific aspect of the cult for the vast majority of the sanctuaries, there are two sites, Traostalos and Korakomouri Sphakas, which have yielded objects with traces of burning, as was explicitly stated in the published reports. Although the information concerning the number and the type of objects involved is very limited, the evidence does seem to suggest rituals involving the practice of throwing objects into the pyre. At Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, traces of burning, as we saw, have not been attested on any other type of votive object, except pottery. Even in this case, the traces of burning on the vast majority of the extant material (91% of the total), allude to the preparation of food (tripod cooking pots) and the transportation of coals (braziers), as the main causes for the burning marks on the specimens involved, both of which can be traced back to the primary use of the vessels. Of the remaining 9% of the material, two vessels/fragments of vessels, both miniature, had probably been placed on a pyre (disc, bird's-nest bowl), and could be therefore considered as part of a symbolic ritual offering.

Other uses of fire

The use of fire on peak sanctuaries for the burning of incense, was, judging by the published material, rather limited. A fragmentary specimen from Hagios Georgios sto Vouno (K994-93/A6/1) has been tentatively identified as an incense-burner (Tournavitou 2014, 101). An indeterminate number of votive incense-burners has been reported in connection with the peak sanctuary at Traostalos (Chryssoulaki 2001, 63). The discovery at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno of only two stone lamps made of *rosso antico* (Λ11-93/Γ, Λίθ. 17; Λ12-93/Ε13/Λίθ. 3; see Banou 2012, 350–352), suggests an, albeit limited, need for light, obviously during night rituals, at least in this particular sanctuary. Peatfield (1992, 70, fig. 12), on the other hand, describes the clay braziers from the peak sanctuary at Atsipades, as “lamps”. Nocturnal rituals could easily have included vigils, as witnessed in modern day Greek and Cretan country churches. The lighting of torches would be necessary for the nocturnal climb, of both priests and worshippers, to the peak sanctuaries lying far away from the settlements, especially on moonless nights. The narration concerning the “Sacred walk of the faithful to Mt Ida of Crete”, by Pavlos Vlastos during 1860 and 1872 (Sakellarakis 1990, 22–23), is truly evocative: (translation from the Greek)

“The agile young men participating in the climb, walk ahead, holding torches and setting fire to the shrubs, the thorns and the *loutsas* (λουτοαί, a native bush), etc. which abound on either side of the footpaths, so that those who pass through these paths as they climb up the mountain, most of them inexperienced and lacking in exercise, will have enough light and will be able to see ahead. This climb up the lower slopes of Mt Ida is quite pleasant and enjoyable, especially when there is a large number of pilgrims; this is because the fires built with thorns and shrubs, that are being lit on either side of the road, each fire lasting over a quarter of an hour, and new fires being lit as they go up, form lines, which light, as we said, those going up, and can be seen, shining brightly from afar. These fires are often visible from as far as Rethymnon and the Lefka Ori (White Mountains), as well as from all the settlements/villages facing this side of Ida, illuminating the pilgrim’s progress up the mountain, for those watching from afar”.

The narrative then continues:

“This climb is also arduous and agonizing, because those that are out of practice get so tired, that they have to stop after taking 20 or 30 steps, so as to sit down and rest, or rest on their feet for a few minutes, in

order to recover their strength. One might ask, why don't they do the climb in daytime, when they would not have to light fires, when they would not have to deal with the cold of the night, when they would be able to see with the light of day and they would know where they are and how close they are to the top. Experience has shown to those who climb the mountain often, usually residents of close-by villages on Mt Ida, that climbing during the night is preferable for many reasons, and is certainly easier for the pilgrims, especially those climbing for the first time and those out of practice. Those who go climbing in the daytime sweat a lot, because of the arduousness and the agony of the climb, and also because of the heat generated by the sun; they also find that it gets colder as they climb up, which is not good for their health, since they get thirsty from the laborious climb, when they ought to abstain from taking water, or if need be, only wine mixed with water. Also during the daytime, people reach their limits much quicker and get twice as tired as during the night and therefore the strength of the climbers begins to wane when they see the top of the mountain moving away from them as they climb up, and always remains in the same faraway spot. Dispirited by weariness and arduous effort they would thus prefer to retreat and go back... (to their homes)."

This imaginative description by Vlastos indicates, perhaps better than any modern research, the living conditions of worshippers in a Minoan peak sanctuary and at the same time, the simplicity of a "pleasant" ritual, which also includes the use of fire.

Beacons

Φρυκτωρία = warning through fires. The word comes from the word *φρυκτός* (= πυρός/torch) and *ώρη, ώρα* (= care, solicitude, welfare, protection, Latin *cura*).

Pyres were lit on the top of mountains, for other, one could say, strategic reasons (*Iliad* Σ 211–213; Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* 489–490: *τάχ' εἰσόμεθα λαμπάδων φαεσφόρων φρυκτωριῶν τε καὶ πυρὸς παραλλαγάς*; and 590; for the importance of warning fires and for other means of visual communication, see Polybius, X 42, 7–8, X 43–47; also see Walbank 1957–1979).

It should be noted that thunder and thunderbolts, i.e. electrical charges on mountaintops, a natural phenomenon, caused by the differential electric potential, often helps seafarers to spot dry land. In the Middle Ages thunder was considered a sign sent by God ("*διοσημία*") and was also called "Elmsfeuer", after a certain saint (Saint Elm). It has been observed that in

both Spain and Portugal, Saint Erasmus was called Elmo, and was worshipped as the patron of ships (Brockhaus Encyclopädie 1968, 469). Also worth noting is a piece of information provided by Conrady (1882, 102, n. 5), who published the journals of four German travelers in Palestine. He mentions that the so called *Elmsfeuer*, was also called *Helenenfeuer*, perhaps because Helen, like her brothers, Castor and Pollux, eventually became constellations. It is also possible that the term “Helen’s fire” is associated with the island of Kythera, where the myth of Helen of Troy was treated as a local story during the Middle Ages. Another well known myth is the myth of Nauplios, the father of Palamidis, who lit fires on Mt Kaphireas to trick the Achaeans, so that they would crash onto the rocks.

Warning fires were lit at strategic locations or, during antiquity, in military camps (McCredie 1966, 28, 50, 57, 91, 117–120, “signaling stations”; for camps see Sapouna-Sakellarakis, Coulton and Metzger 2002; Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1989, 29, including bibliography; and Panagiotakis 2003, 70). According to W. Miller (1910, 329): “After the capture of the Venetian posts in the Peloponnese by the Turks, Kythera became very important for Venice, on account of its geographic location. At that time Kythera was the only harbor between Zakynthos and Crete. It also served as an excellent observation post for messages to be easily transmitted from the Peloponnese and for ships sailing at a long distance. There was always a guard on the promontory of Hagios Georgios, especially during the dangerous months between March and October, and torches were lit at night, making known the approach of the Turkish fleet to the government in Crete. To make a long story short Kythera were the eyes of Crete” (Miller 1908, 635).

Zade Sinan Tsigal, from Genova, great vizier and Admiral of the Fleet of Suleiman the Magnificent (1494-1556), who called Kythera the “Lantern of the Archipelago”, was possibly referring to this coastal hill of Hagios Georgios sto Vouno (Dapper 1702; Petrocheilos 1979, 14, 81; the information is repeated by Grasset Saint-Sauveur 1800, 3, 330–337 and by Kendrick 1822, 81).

The use of fire for the transmission of messages was also known in Kythera during the Middle Ages. Chr. Maltezou also mentions that Kythera is described in a Venetian document as the “lantern, or eye of Crete” (Maltezou 1997, 314; Tsiknakis 2003, 73–85; Gasparis 2003, 155–171).

Fires lit at the tops of mountains, on islands and coastal areas alike, were used to warn the population against pirates. Many fires meant many ships. A bright fire at night meant that the sea is safe. During daytime they used dry brushwood to create a lot of smoke.

The mountain is a landmark, setting boundaries and limits, watching, controlling, and ensuring the sovereignty of the community over the surrounding area, also warning, through fires, members of the priesthood, who have assumed other roles, that are not strictly religious (Psilakis 2005, 278).

g. Ritual (?) breakage of objects (in collaboration with I. Tournavitou)

Anybody with a modicum of archaeological experience is familiar with pottery fragments or other objects, often the same vessel being scattered over a wide area, as for example the rock-crystal rhyton from Zakros, that was put together from hundreds of pieces. It is a phenomenon attested in both settlements and cemeteries. Of course the reason behind the “destruction” is different in each case. In settlements, it might be caused by earthquakes or human intervention; in cemeteries it could be associated with customs associated with gatherings/rituals and funeral meals, a custom still practiced today. The deliberate destruction of objects is of course associated with the theories alluding to ritual destruction, of mostly funerary offerings (Äström 1987, 213–217; Soles 1999, 787). In the context of funerary rituals, Soles (1999, 787), makes an interesting differentiation between the ritual breakage of an object (pottery), which is considered as marking the end of a ritual act or expressing some kind of emotion, prejudice or excess wealth/status, and the ritual “killing” of an object, which is usually subjected to only partial destruction or burning at a pyre. In both cases the object is removed from the world of the living and the act indicates a change of ownership.

The fragmentary material in peak sanctuaries has been treated differently and the proposed interpretations are quite extravagant in many ways.

The theory propagating the ritual breakage of objects in Minoan peak sanctuaries was first introduced by Myres (1902–1903, 357–358), with reference to the material from Petsofas and was, from the beginning, associated with the activities accompanying the ritual pyres. These activities were allegedly completed with the placement of the organic remains of the pyre, along with the fragmentary votive offerings, in hollows, fissures or crevices of the bedrock. Myre’s view was adopted by Platon (1951, 150–151), in his synthetic study of the peak sanctuaries (see *Pyres*). In Petsofas, the absence of fragments of larger, mostly animal figurines, was attributed by Myres (1902–1903, 358) to periodic cleaning of the remains of the pyre, part of the on-site preparations for the next pyre. Platon (1951, 102–103, 114, 151, 157), judging by the finds at Mazas, not only adopts Myre’s theory, but also adds that: “it was verified that...” “...many of them (figuri-

nes)...” “...in fragments, had been placed (in the fire) from the start and pieces of these objects were found in nearby hollows”. This view was also accepted by Davaras (1981, 3).

More recently, when Rutkowski (1986, 91; 1991, 53), adopted Myre’s theory concerning the ritual pyres, he also adopted the theory about the deliberate throwing/breakage of votive offerings into the pyre; he also specifies that this practice was possibly preceded by an initial dedication-placement of the offerings by the pilgrims in front of the shrine and a later re-location of the offerings by the priest-chief priest, on the altar, without giving any thought to the vast majority of the sanctuaries that do not preserve any traces of an altar. A similar view, as regards the use of altars is adopted by N. Marinatos (1993, 118–119), who suggests that the objects involved, be they new offerings or broken votive offerings from previous years, about to be withdrawn/removed from public display, were either thrown in the large ritual pyres or directly into the fissures/hollows of the bedrock. This implies that some chasms must have served as bothroi-apothetes (Marinatos 1993, 118–119). The “Vernichtungsoffer” she refers to though (Marinatos 1993, 118–119), has a different meaning in Greek ritual practices.

Peatfield (1990, 127–128), disassociates the custom of the deliberate breakage of objects from the existence of ritual pyres. While emphasizing the fragmentary state of the material at peak sanctuaries in general, he suggests that the breakage of objects represented an act of ritual disposal, which finally transforms all the finds (pottery and ritual vessels included) into votive offerings (Peatfield 1990, 127). He also maintains that the objects are dedicated to the deity through a variety of rituals and are then destroyed so as to prevent their future use. In his presentation of the Atsipades sanctuary, although he is naturally concerned about the processes by which the vast majority of the finds ends up broken, in hollows or crevices of the bedrock (Peatfield 1992, 67, 73), he repeats and for the first time documents his belief concerning the ritual breakage of objects (pottery, figurines, etc.) in peak sanctuaries. He views the ritual breakage of objects as a ritual offering to the deity, which takes place after the completion of other ritual practices that he doesn’t specify.

Concerning Traostalos, Chryssoulaki (2001, 64), tentatively suggests that the finds discovered in rock crevices had rolled down to their present position from higher up the slope, obviously by accident; at the same time she believes that the finds discovered in “large, shallow hollows...” had deliberately been placed there as offerings (Chryssoulaki 1999, 311). In a more recent publication (Chryssoulaki 2001, 62) she seems to have whole-

heartedly accepted the practice of throwing objects in pyres, and also the breakage of the majority of the votive offerings in ritual pyres; the remains of these pyres, she claims, were eventually placed in hollows/crevices of the bedrock. Tzachili (2003, 328), when she presents the fragmentary pottery material from Vrysinas, the vast majority of which was found in hollows/crevices of the bedrock, suggests that the fragmentary state of the pottery is the result of natural processes (erosion), and a combination of human interventions, both contemporary with the peak sanctuary itself and from the period after its abandonment, while Watrous (1996, 93), silently circumvents, rightly in our opinion, the matter of the deliberate breakage of objects, speaking instead, of deliberate placing of votive offerings in chasms, fissures and niches (Karphi, Atsipades, Mazas).

Finally, although Jones (1999, 31–32, n. 32), agrees with the deliberate breakage of at least some objects, especially pottery and clay offerings, which he identifies as a ritual withdrawal of dedications, emphasizing the expendable nature of the raw material, he states that he disagrees with the theory concerning the deliberate destruction of vessels or objects made of more expensive materials, a view also shared by P. Rehak (1994, 1–6). Jones also disagrees with Peatfield's theory (1990, 127–128) concerning the permanent storage of ritual vessels/symbols from peak sanctuaries, in palatial shrines. Jones's view is corroborated by the large number of precious objects discovered at the Juktas peak sanctuary (bronze, gold, etc.), and much more so in the peak sanctuary at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, where, despite the long use of the site, the finds included jewelry, stone objects (offering tables and a sword pommel of rock-crystal) (see Banou 2012, 251–428), various bronze objects (Sakellarakis 2012, 215–234), and above all, the 84 bronze figurines (Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2012, 3–169), a huge number for a single site, some of which are broken.

In the ancient Greek world, this practice, i.e. the breakage of votive offerings within the sanctuary has not been attested. When sanctuaries were cleared out, renewed or extended, the dedications made by the worshippers were buried in so-called votive-pits, located in the area around the shrine. The only exceptions were the fire-festivals.

Rituals involving the throwing/destruction of objects in a pyre are relatively rare in modern Greek and European tradition. The breakage of objects in general is limited, mostly to clay vessels, and as an act, it is directly associated with the purification from the *miasma* caused by death, of both men and gods (Megas 2004, 161, 200, 203–204; Psilakis 2005, 183–184) and by extension with the aversion of death, for human beings and agricultural produce alike. Politis (1921, 268–283) mentions the antiquity of

the custom and suggests that the destruction of funerary offerings prevents their further use and ensures their dedication to the gods. The ritual “killing” of objects, however, is not attested in peak sanctuaries.

The uncertainty concerning the deliberate, ritual or non-ritual, breakage of objects in the acknowledged peak sanctuaries is mostly related to two “facts”: *firstly*, the fragmentary state of the vast majority of the material, and *secondly*, the fact that, according to the excavators, in most cases the majority of the finds was discovered in fissures and hollows of the bedrock.

As regards the fragmentary state of the material, although the number of the intact specimens varies from sanctuary to sanctuary, the absence of analytical publications makes it practically impossible to calculate the exact percentages involved. At Juktas for example, although the initial reports state that none of the pottery vessels discovered at the site were found intact, further along in the same text it is implied that intact conical cups, allegedly used for libations, and tumblers, were discovered lying “upside down on the rocks” (Karetsou 1974, 238). Later on it is specified that “the intact or restored vessels are few, compared to the mass of sherds from the various deposits” (Karetsou 1978, 252, 258), mostly hundreds of conical cups and a considerable number of juglets. The references to clay and stone votive offerings from the sanctuary in the preliminary reports are selective and the overall picture remains unclear. A similar case can be made for Vrysinas, which has yielded very few restored vessels (Tzachili 2003, 327), while the extant evidence for Traostalos and Petsofas is meager. At Atsipades, the pottery material is described as extremely fragmentary and the only intact vessels mentioned in the preliminary reports are two upside down cups in the Lower Terrace (Peatfield 1992, 71; Morris and Peatfield 1995, 644). None of the figurines or the other objects is reported as intact, while the absence of large fragments of vases/votive offerings from the Upper Terrace is attributed by the excavator to the periodical cleaning of the site and to small scale looting in later periods (Peatfield 1992, 75).

At Hagios Georgios sto Vouno the overall picture seems to agree with that from the other metropolitan sanctuaries. The percentage of the intact vessels does not exceed 0.50% of the pottery material; there are only 994 intact vessels or vessels with a complete profile, out of a total of 196,010 specimens, mostly conical cups (903), but also discs (56), juglets (29), braziers (2), miniature bird’s-nest bowls (2), rhyta (1), and hemispherical cups (1). Among the clay votives the percentage is higher (28/244 – 11.47% of the total) (see Banou 2012). At the same time, the comparatively large percentage of intact specimens among the stone and bronze votive offerings (20/41 – 48.78%), mostly bronze figurines, stone beads (15), ladles (2),

and tools (2), is impressive. The fragmentary vessels comprise 99.49% of the material (195,016/196,010 specimens) (see Tournavitou 2014).

The critical question of the deliberate or accidental breakage of objects found in peak sanctuaries, is extremely difficult to answer, based on the objects themselves, and none of those who support the theory of deliberate breakage has until now set out specific criteria that may answer the question in a systematic way, based on sound archaeological data.

As regards the material from Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, the evidence for deliberate breakage is rather negative, at least for the vast majority of the finds. Joins or non joining fragments have been identified in only very few cases, especially in the pottery material; although it is obvious that in those cases the exposed edges were worn, an indication that breakage had occurred elsewhere in the sanctuary, the distance between fragments, in the vast majority of the cases (93.75%), was very small or almost none. These observations lead to the conclusion that at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, the breakage of the pottery, let alone of clay and stone votive offerings, did not take place in the “primary deposition” areas. The deliberate or accidental aspect of the breakage cannot be ascertained on the basis of the surviving evidence.

The distribution of specific categories of objects in space is another parameter that needs to be explored. Despite the excavators’ claims that the vast majority of the material in peak sanctuaries was discovered in fissures or hollows of the bedrock, it should be understood that every case is different, depending, to a great extent, on the morphology of the ground and the later use of each site. Once more, the absence of detailed studies is apparently decisive in the formation of “views”.

At Hagios Georgios sto Vouno for example, only 11.52% of the pottery material was located in “primary deposition” areas (22,595/196,010 of the vessels/sherds or 12.41% (22.595/182.059) of the recognizable shapes). The material consists mostly of conical cups (44.73%) and tripod cooking pots (43.98%), while the remaining 25 shapes comprise only 11.29% of the total. Three types of vessels, conical cups, tripod cooking pots and straight-sided cups, are attested in all the “primary deposition” areas, followed by the juglets (in 81.48% of the “primary deposition” areas), the bridge-spouted jars (70.37%), hemispherical cups (66.66%), jugs/amphorae (52.95%), pithoid jars (55.55%) and pithoi (51.85%). The remaining shapes are encountered in less than 45% of the “primary deposition” areas. It is worth noting that the majority of the latter (17/27-62.96%) have yielded combinations of 10 to 21 different shapes, especially stor-

age/pouring vessels and libation vessels or vessels with a specialized use (Tournavitou 2014, 137–140). The presence of a considerable number of large and medium-sized storage vessels in most “primary deposition” areas seems to corroborate the theory that the pottery had been originally broken elsewhere in the sanctuary (see above).

The percentage of stone votive offerings in “primary deposition” areas is also relatively low (26.82%), as opposed to the category of clay votive offerings, which is encountered in 46.31% of the “primary deposition” areas. The vast majority of the archaeological material in this particular sanctuary (88.47% of the pottery material; 73.17% of the stone objects, and 53.68% of the clay offerings), was found, not in “primary deposition” areas, but in various locations at the top of the hill and on the north slope, in more or less disturbed deposits, where it had ended up, obviously after successive collapses of building debris that might have destroyed or broken the Minoan vessels in later periods (Sakellarakis 2011, 147–336). The distribution pattern of fragments in this particular sanctuary is therefore dense, both as regards the pottery material and the clay and stone votive offerings. The only exceptions to the rule are the clay scorpion figurines (three out of the four specimens Π99-Π101, while the fourth was discovered a little to the east; Banou 2012, 308–322), and a number of architectural models (Π160-Π165 and possibly Π134-Π136; Banou 2012, 364–365, 374), which were found in the same “primary deposition” area on Terrace 5. Their contexts imply that similar types of objects were apparently dedicated in the same area of the sanctuary or at least that these particular specimens had been dedicated in this particular area by different individuals, at the same time. The bronze figurines were found in groups, scattered over all the terraces, on the south and north slopes of the mountain (Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2012, 4).

It is quite possible that at least in some cases the existence of archaeological material in crevices or hollows of the rock represents the second or third stage of one or more than one ritual practices (Rutkowski 1986, 91; 1991, 53; Peatfield 1992, 69), the first stages of which are still enigmatic. An initial differentiation should perhaps be made between the pottery that was clearly meant for everyday use and the objects identified as votive offerings (miniature and other votive pottery, clay, stone, bronze objects). In the first case, part of the material might have been subjected to deliberate breakage after it was withdrawn from use, or might have been abandoned at the site, from where it was later collected and placed in the “primary deposition” areas. In the second case, it is very likely that the objects involved included offerings placed at various distances from areas with concentrations of pottery vessels meant for everyday use.

It has been already noted that the practice of the ritual throwing of objects into pyres, followed by periodical cleaning of the remains of the last festival and the placement of this material in crevices and hollows of the bedrock, was very restricted in range (see pyres, Traostalos, Korakomouri Sphakas, and Hagios Georgios sto Vouno). If however we accept the feasibility of ritual breakage, even for a number of votive offerings, in at least some of the cases, we should consider the possibility that they had been broken, deliberately or accidentally, in a specific area of the sanctuary.

The male figure on the fragment of the stone relief rhyton from Gypsades, near Knossos, is, interestingly enough, placing an unspecified type of offering in a vessel, pot or basket, lying in a rock crevice outside the building, and not on a built structure. This scene illustrates the placing of offerings in rock crevices, and therefore provides a positive answer to the literary debate concerning the ritual breakage of votive offerings. It also suggests that not all the broken objects were necessarily connected to pyres and that not all the fragments in peak sanctuaries are always associated with ritual breakage, as was believed in the past.

In most cases, the objects had not been put through fire. It is very likely that the purely votive objects (clay, stone, metal objects), were first placed or possibly suspended from a fixture, in a central or even peripheral area of the sanctuary, on some kind of built structure (altar, bench, or even a more makeshift, possibly wooden construction, etc.) (for types of altars, see Sakellarakis 1970a, 157), possibly just in front of the locus of their eventual deposition (Rutkowski 1986, 91; 1991, 53). The votives remained there or were periodically removed after a specific period of time by the priests; the latter would have placed the most precious offerings in storage, while the more common offerings were thrown in votive pits, occasionally together with ashes, during the periodical cleaning of the sacred area. The good condition of the bronze figurines indicates that they had not been damaged in any way through contact with fire and must have been kept in some kind of a protected environment.

Some of the offerings had been perhaps suspended from a tree, a bush or some kind of pole. In the absence of some kind of fixed installation (wooden constructions) at the sites, the only evidence alluding to this practise are the suspension holes on the surviving votive offerings, only a limited number of which has been attested. Suspension holes at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno have been encountered in a relatively small number of votive objects (of clay, bronze and stone) and more specifically, on the ear of a bovid figurine of clay (II27), nine loom-weights and spindle whorls (II185-II193), a clay net-weight (II198), a clay model of a snail

(Π207), a clay bead, a bronze cut-out in the shape of a male figure (X5), bronze cut-outs in shape of legs (X6-X7), a bronze cut-out in the shape of two legs (X9), and a bronze leaf-shaped knife or model of a knife (X157) (Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2012, 3–208; Banou 2012, 273, 330–332, 333, 336–337; Sakellarakis 2012, 215–218). Suspension holes are attested at Traostalos, on models of human body parts (Chryssoulaki 1999, 315–316) and on a model of a human leg from Atsipades (Peatfield 1992, 74).

h. The worshippers

It would be quite interesting to be able to examine some of the characteristic features of the pilgrims visiting Minoan peak sanctuaries. These features can be deduced from the location of the sanctuary itself, from the iconographic tradition pertaining to peak sanctuaries and from the images of the pilgrims, as they emerge from the bronze, and even more so, the clay figurines they left at the site. As far as the location is concerned, the establishment of most peak sanctuaries in out of the way places, at a distance from the major palaces, leaves no doubt that they served the religious needs of the surrounding area, which was continuously occupied by farmers and animal breeders.

The critical role of shepherds in Minoan peak sanctuary cult was effectively emphasized by Peatfield, with reference to his excavation at Atsipades, and also by Morgan, with reference to the peak sanctuary scene on the Theran wall painting (Morgan 1988, 157–158). Morgan actually refers to Platon's description of Traostalos as a pen for billy-goats (Platon 1974, 155). The pilgrimage of shepherds and farmers to peak sanctuaries is a known fact, not only in connection with the provincial sanctuaries, but also in connection with the central Minoan peak sanctuaries. Nevertheless, recourse to divine help was never, not even then, restricted to peasants; the need was also felt by the urban population and certainly by the upper classes too.

Among the votive offerings in Minoan peak sanctuaries, the discovery of coarsely made clay figurines alongside figurines made of bronze, as well as a variety of other objects, seals, jewelry made of semiprecious stones, or even gold, i.e. objects that simple farmers and shepherds could not have possibly afforded, is indisputable proof of the wide range of worshippers involved in peak sanctuary cult, i.e. worshippers from all social classes. The social class of some of the worshippers is also reflected in the considerable number of stone offering tables and ladles with Linear A inscriptions that have been discovered in peak sanctuaries. It is certainly worth noting that most of these votive offerings have come to light in the more central peak

sanctuaries, i.e. those closest to the palatial centers. The location of the different peak sanctuaries was therefore a primary factor, which also determined the character of the pilgrims attending the sanctuary. In the case of the peak sanctuary at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, the pilgrims were not only Minoan colonists, but active residents of a Minoan outpost closely associated with the Minoan thalassocracy, i.e. officials, sailors, and merchants. This of course is not an attempt to dispute the popular nature of the cult in Minoan peak sanctuaries, but an attempt to emphasize that it was certainly not exclusively popular in character.

It is not really possible to determine the private status of even a small number of individuals out of the mass of pilgrims visiting the different peak sanctuaries. Nevertheless, judging by the iconographic tradition, including the bronze and clay figurines, one can obtain some additional evidence for the appearance of the pilgrims, men and women, and therefore perhaps their status. The study of the clothing of male figures in Minoan art by Sapouna-Sakellarakis, has shown that the different types of garments and their variations, as depicted in figurines and other iconographic contexts, corresponded to the status of the figures involved (Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1971, 92, 97, 100, 110, 115, 121, 123; Pilali-Papasteriou 1992, 167). She has also suggested that some elements, like jewelry, were insignia of authority (Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1971, 98, 110, 123).

The observation that only a small number of male figurines in the peak sanctuaries are wearing shoes, jewelry or daggers, corroborates, according to Pilali-Papasteriou (1992, 168–169): “the hypothesis that they were used as symbols of social differentiation, although we are of course unable to determine precisely the nature of the latter, except in the case of daggers. What we could perhaps note”, she continues, “is that the lack of uniformity in the distribution of these accessories is a reflection of personal identity, which could indicate competitive tendencies and wider social differentiations”. Concerning the daggers, Pilali-Papasteriou adopts Whitelaw’s opinion that they are symbols of display, in this case, a display of wealth and authority, and she goes on to claim that they probably indicate the existence of a warrior class (Whitelaw 1983, 343, n. 16; Pilali-Papasteriou 1992, 168). The latter is in my opinion unacceptable, involving, as it does the use of a rather common weapon, used diachronically by hunters and shepherds alike. Finally, although it is perhaps possible that the few seated figurines, both male and female (Pilali-Papasteriou 1992, 64–65), one of which is depicted on a seat with a high back, could represent individuals of a higher class, it is conceivable that they depict pilgrims with mobility problems, similarly to the well known figurine with the swollen leg.

It is obvious that the motives behind a pilgrimage to a Minoan peak sanctuary were numerous, as numerous as the insecurities of the worshippers, and the personal appeals for help from above, for the avoidance of various kinds of danger and for the achievement of various objectives. It is certain that some motives were shared by all concerned, depending on the location of the peak sanctuary and the main occupations of its pilgrims, as for example the concern of the shepherds for their flocks, the concern of the farmers for a good crop, and the concern of sailors for a safe voyage; above all these concerns, would be the concern for the recovery of the sick. The latter happens to be the most identifiable of all motives, judging by the votives attested in most peak sanctuaries. The thought that health is the most precious possession of all is common among the sick, as are appeals to the supernatural, divine or even magical powers, also attested nowadays and much more so in the prehistoric period. Evidence for the belief in magical powers in Minoan times is in any case provided by the various, well known Minoan amulets, some of which have come to light in peak sanctuaries (gold pendant from Juktas), and by the so-called talismanic seals (Kenna 1969; Onassoglou 1985).

Although the low average life-span and the high mortality rate during the Minoan period have been established beyond doubt (McGeorge 1980, 196–197), the relatively few studies of anthropological material have revealed very little about the illnesses of the Minoans. We do know about sickle-cell anemia, which was identified with reference to one of the skeletons at the shrine with the Human Sacrifice in Anemospilia (Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1997, 298; McGeorge 1980), while a number of other illnesses are known from Egyptian sources. We also know about the herbs carried to Egypt by the Keftiu (Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1984, 197–203), and about the role of magic.

Our information about the various diseases in the Minoan period is enriched by the finds in peak sanctuaries. The model of a figure with a swollen left leg is typical of these finds (Davaras 1976, fig. 138). Of particular interest are the votive offerings of human body parts. A number of votive offerings have come to light at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno. They include two bronze cut-outs of a leg and a hand (Sakellarakis 2012, 216, 236, pl. 2γ; 237, pl. 3γ), with clay parallels from other peak sanctuaries, as well as two bronze phalluses (Sakellarakis 2012, 216), one clay phallus (Banou 2012, 269, II22, fig. 22, pl. 3:15) and another unique bronze cut-out in the shape of the lower body (torso and legs) of a human figure (Sakellarakis 2012, 216, 236, pl. 2δ). Petsofas also yielded cut-outs of human figures, depicting half of the body, heads, busts, torsos, hands and legs, as well as genital organs (Rutkowski 1991, 91–96). Although the de-

piction of internal organs is unknown in Minoan Crete, Rutkowski mentions the existence of a clay model of a liver or uterus at Petsofas, which he does not illustrate (Rutkowski 1991, 116), while Nilsson (1950, 66, 75) mentions dismembering rituals. Scholars believe that these objects are votive offerings dedicated by sick worshippers, an appeal for recovery or an act of thanksgiving for their cure (Davaras 1967, 102; 1976, 247; Rutkowski 1972, 173; Gesell 1985, 44, 54, 65; Morgan 1988, 158; Peatfield 1990; Burkert 1993, 78; Jones 1999, 33). Similar dedications are attested in the later Greek sanctuaries of Asclepios. The finds from Hagios Georgios sto Vouno demonstrate that these votive human body parts do not belong only to the Old Palace period, as Jones thought, but also to the Neopalatial period.

It is certain that most figurines, both male and female, depict worshippers (Peatfield 1990, 121–122). In the Thera wall painting the worshippers walking towards the sanctuary are men, wearing type ΣΤ cloaks (Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1971, 105–110), a type of garment that alludes to mountain folk, perhaps shepherds. It seems that peak sanctuaries were therefore attended both by humble worshippers and by officials, the latter represented by the male figures with elaborate hairstyles and kilts, and female figures wearing sophisticated dresses, as attested in the Kythera sanctuary.

At the Kythera sanctuary were discovered ten bronze female figurines and 48 male figurines, all intact, in addition to the fragmentary examples. It is the largest number of bronze figurines in the Minoan world, possibly because most of the peak sanctuaries in Crete had been looted. More specifically: Traostalos yielded three female figurines, Kophinas five, of which two are female, Juktas ten, of which only one is female, and Vrysinas two, of which one is female. Out of the 119 intact clay figurines from Petsofas, 71 are male. In the Kythera peak sanctuary were found 16 male figurines and many fragmentary examples. Although it is impossible to calculate the relative percentages of male and female pilgrims on the present evidence alone, it is fair to say that both sexes attended the sanctuary and made dedications.

Prayer and other rituals

Prayer is a basic feature of all religious activity (Burkert 1993, 170). Prayer, nevertheless, includes a number of individual elements that are often difficult to articulate. Every sacrifice or libation is accompanied by an entreaty, an appeal. The commonest word used in prayer is “I wish” (Muellner 1976), also attested in Linear B (eu-ko-me-no = εὐχόμενος) from Pylos (Jn 725.23).

Prayer is also associated with the so-called “sacred silence”. Nevertheless, many times prayer is a sound that accompanies processions, while sacrifice is indicated through the shrill “lamentations” of the women (Burkert 1993, 171).

The motives behind a pilgrimage to a Minoan peak sanctuary were numerous. They were possibly associated with the location of the sanctuary and the occupations of the population living in the area, here mostly sailors or shepherds, but also with the recuperation of ailing body parts, hence the large number of models of the latter.

Although gestures often help with the interpretation of the various stages of prayer, their interpretation should be approached with care.

Matz (1958, 142), was the first to attempt the interpretation of gestures; he identified two basic gestures, one for epiphany and the other for exorcism; the matter was later taken up by Rutkowski (1991, 54–56).

Sapouna-Sakellarakis in her study of Aegean bronze sculpture (Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1995, 106), and in her study of the numerous bronze figurines from the Kytherian sanctuary (Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2012, 140–154), attempted an interpretation of the gestures of the figurines, based on our knowledge of the East (Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2012, 149–154), and on the different stages of prayer, as defined by Mollard-Besques (1966, 234), and other scholars, later classified by Bowra (1957), into three separate elements, i.e. Invocation, Sanction, during which the worshipper relates his actions to the divinity, and Entreaty.

The dance

Apart from processions, sacrifices and ritual meals, peak sanctuary cult perhaps also included other, ritual or secular, practices.

Burkert (1993, 92) points out the importance of dancing and alludes to the dance of Ariadne in Homer. The iconographic representations of dances in Minoan Crete are well known, as for example the scene on the fragment of a stone rhyton from Knossos (Evans 1901, 101), the dancing scene on vessels from Phaistos (Zervos 1956, 275, fig. 393), dancing scenes on wall paintings, etc.

Judging mostly by the bronze figurines, especially the female figurines with the flounced skirts, but also some male figurines with characteristic gestures, it seems perfectly possible that dancing was an acknowledged ritual practice. In Crete we know of the circular dance, danced by men, from Kamilari. L. Lawler (1951, 23–51) believes that Greek dances can be traced

back to the Homeric period (*Iliad* O 508; *Od.* Σ 194; *Athenaeus*, *Δειννοσοφισταί* XIV, 630). Willetts (1962, 189), also believes that the dance of the “crane” and the ecstatic dances, have a Cretan ancestry. Lucian, in fact, maintained that the first dances ever were the dances of the Kouretes (Lucian, *Περὶ ὀρχήσεως* 8: *Πρωτόν δέ φασι Πέαν ἠσθεῖσαν τῇ τέχνῃ ... ἐν Κρήτῃ δὲ τοὺς Κουρῆτας ὀρχεῖσθαι κελεῦσαι*). Apart from the war dances, there were of course magical and apotropaic dances. The existence of athletic activities is not at all certain, considering the dearth of evidence on the matter.

i. Priesthood

All major ritual events required a certain degree of organization and a person in charge, who would recite the prayer (Burkert 1993, 215). Most scholars mention some kind of priesthood. Rutkowski (1971, 18) maintains that from the MM III period onwards there were permanent guards in the peak sanctuaries, serving as representatives of the royal authority. Jones (1999, 35), mentions a priesthood and female priestesses, while Peatfield (1987, 90; 1990, 125), suggests the existence of a priesthood from the MM IA period onwards, with which Dietrich apparently disagrees (1971, 519). According to Press (1968, 162): “It can be concluded from the Linear B



Fig. 44: Bronze figurine of a figure wearing feminine garments.



Fig. 45: Male figure of a leader on a stone rhyton from Hagia Triada (Marinatos and Hirmer 1959, pl. 103).



Fig. 46: Heads of bronze figurines.

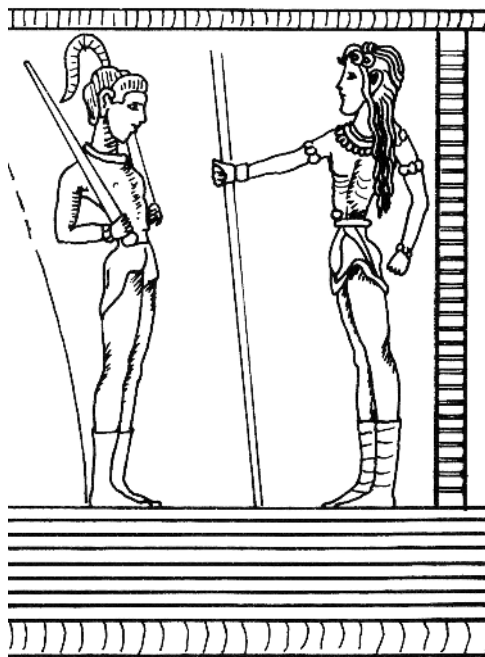


Fig. 47: The chieftain cup from Hagia Triada (Marinatos 1993, 217, fig. 224).

texts that even in the Bronze Age the gods had their own slaves and their own property". The Linear B documents also refer to a "Priestess of the winds" (Ventris and Chadwick 1956, 127, 304).

The priests, which were obviously enlightened, must have belonged to powerful families, as was the case later in Athens, Eleusis and Crete, and the office would be hereditary. The priest was consecrated. He would also be managing the wealth of the sanctuary, probably understood as a business concern. Judging by the large number of bronze figurines, the inscribed stone ladle, the stone offering tables, i.e. objects also attested in other, more central peak sanctuaries, closer to the major palaces, it seems that the Kythera sanctuary was probably very wealthy. However, the continuous use of the site has resulted in a great deal of destruction and it is certain that a large number of precious objects must have been looted from the sanctuary.

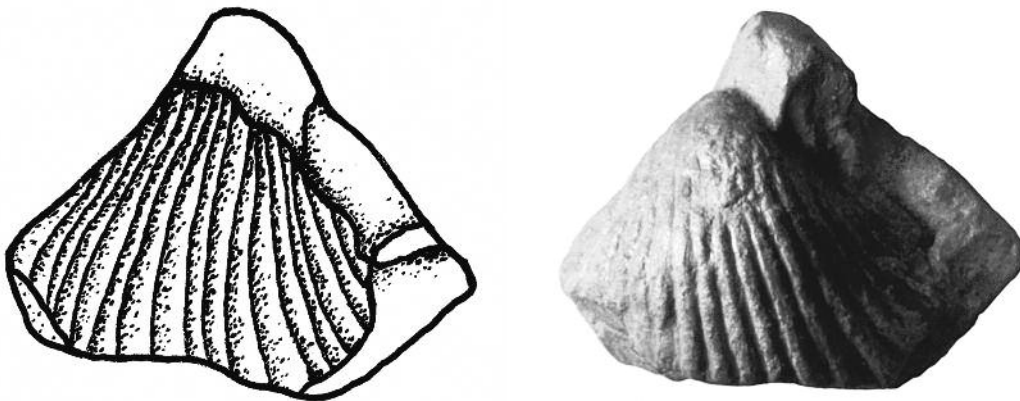


Fig. 48: Clay vase decorated with a sea-shell.



Fig. 49: Fragment of a triton (clay).

As regards the depiction of priests at the Kythera sanctuary, two bronze figurines (E70 and E71; Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2012, 60–66, figs 64–65), are of particular interest, mostly on account of their feminine attire (Fig. 44), commonly associated with male priests (for feminine attire on priests, see Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2012, 122–123). It is possible that this particular type of clothing might also indicate a figure of authority, as that depicted on the Hagia Triada rhyton (Fig. 45).

The two heads (E68 and E69), with interesting head-gear (Fig. 46), must have also represented important figures. One of the heads (E68) is wearing the type of head-gear identified on figures of authority (Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2012, 56, fig. 68, 139), while the head-gear on the other head (E69; Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2012, 57, fig. 63), can be compared to that of a Minoan official (Fig. 47). It should be noted that both hairstyles and head-gear reflect not only personal taste, but also social class and display considerable variety (Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1968, 274).

The sanctuary of Hagios Georgios sto Vouno was therefore not a simple rural sanctuary, but a sanctuary attended by important people.



Fig. 50: Triton from tholos tomb A, at Archanes.

j. Pebbles and sea-shells

The preponderance of male figurines in this sanctuary, if it is not coincidental, is perhaps associated with the status of the pilgrims and the occupations of the local populace, i.e. sailing and trade, and of course the relation of the local population with the mountains (shepherds, woodcutters) and the sea, as exemplified by the pebbles and the sea-shells.

Pebbles and other objects decorated with marine-related subjects, including part of the rim of a clay vessel decorated with a plastic attachment in the shape of a sea-shell (Fig. 48), were found in various locations in the Kythera sanctuary (see also Watrous 2001, 194–195). There were also sporadic finds of sea-shells, possibly remains of meals and clay models, possibly of tritons (Π114, Π115) (Fig. 49), obviously votive offerings (Banou 2012, 299, 397, figs 114, 115, pls 9:51, 9:52a–β).

The concentration of pebbles in peak sanctuaries was first noticed by Peatfield, and was later identified by Nowicki as an indispensable element of

Minoan peak sanctuaries, usually associated with the highest part of the sanctuary, and found among pottery and figurine deposits. Nowicki (1994, 35), notices the existence of pebbles in other peak sanctuaries, including Karphi (Nowicki 1994, 35–36, fig. 1), Prinias (Nowicki 1994, 36, fig. 2), Traostalos (Nowicki 1994, 36), Kopida, Hagios Mamas (Nowicki 1994, 37, fig. 3), Petsofas (Nowicki 1994, 35), Rizoviglo (Nowicki 1994, 37) and Spili (Nowicki 1994, fig. 6). Modi has apparently not yielded any pebbles (Nowicki 1994, 37–39). One figurine from a peak sanctuary depicting a fish is mentioned by Davaras (1976, fig. 55). It should also be noted that sea-shells were also found in the shrine with the Human Sacrifice at Anemospilia (Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1997, 255, fig. 197). Apart from pebbles, other marine life is attested in tombs, as for example the triton-shell in tholos tomb A at Archanes (Fig. 50) (Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1997, 262–263) and in palatial shrines, as exemplified by the fish that was found along with a group of ivory figures, possibly from some kind of bench-platform, at the palace of Archanes (Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1997, 715, fig. 831), and of course by the better known examples from the Temple Repositories at Knossos (Evans 1921–1935, I, 517–521). They all signify the marine aspect of the deity worshipped at the sanctuary, alongside perhaps a heavenly aspect, signified by the presence of birds. At the Kythera sanctuary, closely associated with sailors and the sea, the discovery of pebbles, sea-shells and marine life, like the *sparidae*, *coryphenidae*, *zeide*, *mugilidae* species (Trantalidou 2013, 489–490), is to be expected.

k. Peak sanctuaries, settlements and palatial centers

Peak sanctuaries are usually located close to settlements. A typical example is Archanes and Juktas. Nowicki (1994, 41–46), has studied the relationship between peak sanctuaries and settlements and Peatfield (1990, 120), believes that peak sanctuaries were located close to the settlements, so that they would be easily accessible to the worshippers.

The peak sanctuary in the Thera wall painting provides evidence to this effect. With the exception of Kophinas, it has been observed that most peak sanctuaries were located in low altitudes, between 400–800m (Rutkowski 1986, 155, ns. 5–7, 181; bibliographical references in the 1972 edition), near the settlements, and the activities taking place on the peak sanctuaries were apparently visible from the settlements and closely associated with the local communities. This is why the peak sanctuary in the Thera wall painting is associated with local shepherds; the latter are holding their sticks in a peculiar manner, as if they were standing at the edge of the rit-

ual. The relationship between shepherds and peak sanctuaries has also been noted by Warren (1979, 118), who moreover associates the peak sanctuary with the figures on the roof of the neighboring building. Morgan (1988, 157) concludes that the shepherds are participating in the ritual. The animals are following a footpath. A coastal settlement was close to the peak sanctuary. The Kythera sanctuary is directly related to the settlement at Kastri.

Finally, one should also comment on the relationship between peak sanctuaries and palatial centers. A general conclusion deduced from the votive offerings dedicated by the worshippers who visited the sanctuary at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, is that they are palatial products, “prestige artifacts” (see Peatfield 1990, 127), prime examples being the bronze figurines, the ladles, the jewelry, the rock-crystal handle, etc. which would have certainly been much more numerous if the site had not been occupied for centuries and repeatedly looted.

The objects found at the sanctuary were votive offerings dedicated by an elite group. On the other hand, there are very few dedications made by shepherds, like for example animal figurines. Rutkowski (1971, 18), talks about the authority of the kings (as the successors/representatives of god), when he discusses Minoan peak sanctuaries, many of which were also provided with important buildings, as we know from iconographic sources, especially rings. He compares the building activity on peak sanctuaries to that of Solomon, a view that was not shared by Dietrich (1971, 519). It is certain that the Kythera sanctuary was related to palatial centers, both in central and western Crete, as well as to centers in the southern Peloponnese, as exemplified by the related finds of various types.

5. THE DEITY WORSHIPPED

The matter of the deity worshipped in Minoan peak sanctuaries is the most difficult part of the research, as is the study of Minoan religion in general, and it is a matter that cannot be solved before the decipherment of the Linear A script. Despite the discovery of the inscribed stone ladle on Hagios Georgios sto Vouno (Λ5), which, on the analogy of the Linear B script, possibly bore the word DA-MA-TE(R), alluding to Demeter (Sakellarakis and Olivier 1994, 343–351), the problem remains. We will therefore have to limit ourselves to the presentation and the critical examination of the various theoretical views that have been expressed so far (for a summary presentation of some of these theories, see Watrous 1996, 25–26), always

taking into consideration the iconographic tradition and the finds from the excavated sanctuaries (Rutkowski 1986, 87). One should bear in mind, that despite the discovery of large idols (Myres 1902–1903, 375, pl. XII:34; Platon 1951, 121; Rutkowski 1991, 80, pl. XXII:2–3), there is no evidence concerning the identification of some of the figurines as deities (Peatfield 1990, 127). The same can be said about the existence of wooden idols, which have left no traces. The existence of large wooden idols has been confirmed beyond doubt by the xoanon discovered at the shrine with the Human Sacrifice at Anemospilia (Sakellarakis and Sakellaraki 1997, 530–539).

Myres (1902–1903, 374), was the first archaeologist to investigate a peak sanctuary. Judging by the discovery of votive human body parts at Petsofas, he naturally spoke of a healing cult. As we shall see, this view was later shared by many other scholars. After the discovery of the Knossos sealing, with the imposing presence of a female deity standing on the top of the mountain (Fig. 19), the meaning of the image being worshipped in peak sanctuaries became more specific. Evans (1921–1935, I, 159–160) spoke of the Minoan mother-goddess, which he called “Minoan Rhea” (Evans 1921–1935, III, 463, fig. 323), but also of a male god, not yet connected with peak sanctuaries, floating in the air on the Knossos, Oxford ring. It should be noted that Evans believed in the existence of only one deity, which, along with her male consort, was worshipped in many different sites, in the whole of Crete. This view was later adopted by many other scholars. Nilsson on the other hand, believed that there was a large number of deities worshipped in many different places in Crete. This will be discussed further below.

Nilsson (1950, 72–73), based on the extant evidence concerning the peak sanctuaries at Petsofas and Juktas, believed that in the Minoan period, deities or daemonic creatures associated with nature were worshipped on the mountains and noted the analogy with the later worship of Pan, Rhea, Hermes and the Nymphs. According to Nilsson (1950, 352–353), the female figure on the Knossos sealing, a figure associated with lions and holding a spear, should be identified as a hunting deity, similar to the Potnia Theron. The male deities floating in the air, the counterparts of the Potnios Theron, he also identified as hunting deities. The “Mountain Mother”, as Nilsson named the deity on the Knossos sealing, he associated with the so-called *Magna Mater*, the Great Goddess, the Mother of the Mountains as attested in Asia Minor (Nilsson 1950, 389–390; 1955, I, 264). Platon (1951, 96, 103 n.1, 114–119, 147–160), who produced a systematic study of all the then known peak sanctuaries, adopted Nilsson’s view about the *Magna Mater*, the Great Goddess, in which he also identified elements associated with the Potnia Theron. Guthrie (1959, 35–46), also adopted Nils-

son's view about the "Mother of the Mountains", while Schachermeyr (1964, 141, 149) proposed the worship of a chthonic deity in the Minoan peak sanctuaries. In two successive articles (the second of which was the response to a critique by Rutkowski), Dietrich spoke out in favor of a female deity associated with animals and nature (Dietrich 1969, 267–269, 270, 272). He went on to say: "Regarding the divinity or divinities I have argued for the view which associates with these sites the cult of one goddess, possibly in conjunction with animals and a male figure. There is not sufficient evidence to identify this figure exclusively with a Potnia Theron or the Great Nature Goddess or with a Mountain Mother" (Dietrich 1971, 516). While Dietrich opposed Nilsson's theory about the Potnia Theron (Dietrich 1969, 268) and Platon's theory about the Great Mother goddess and her healing properties (Dietrich 1969, 271), he identified the worshipper on the Knossos sealing as a consort of the female deity (Dietrich 1969, 270). It is worth noting that although Dietrich ignores or does not mention the fact that the Oxford ring from Knossos probably depicts a peak sanctuary, with the epiphany of a male god, he does discuss the worship of a male god in peak sanctuaries, influenced perhaps by Evan's theory. As regards the peak sanctuary cult, Levi (1981, 39), based on the offerings found at the sanctuaries themselves, adopted the idea of a Cretan deity of nature, being worshipped as the Lady of Heaven and Earth, and as a chthonic deity ensuring health and fertility. According to Levi (1981, 39): "The divinity of the mountain peaks was, undoubtedly, the great Cretan goddess of nature. She was worshipped in a dual aspect, a celestial one as Mistress of the sky and a chthonic one as a goddess of earth, harvest, health and fertility (hence the presence, among the offerings, both of doves, and, on the other, of pregnant women and ithyphallic men, as well as of single human limbs, offerings to the healing goddess)".

With the dramatic increase in the number of Minoan peak sanctuaries from the 1960ies onward, younger scholars became involved in more intensive discussions of various aspects of the peak sanctuary cult, always with reference to the Knossos sealing and the iconographic scenes on stone relief vases that were known to them, and perhaps for this reason less successful on the whole. Of course most of them took into consideration the published archaeological evidence and the few finds published here and there, but again most of them did so selectively. The excavators of the peak sanctuaries, on the other hand, were mostly aware of their own finds. Rutkowski's religious study of the peak sanctuary cult stands out. He proposed (1971, 87–88), like Levi, that the deity worshipped in the peak sanctuaries protected the life and the health of humans and animals alike, and that she also had apotropaic properties. According to Rutkowski (1971, 8–9):

“The goddess had... in the peak sanctuaries, where traces of the old cruel cults were still to be found, apotropaic properties”, although he never explained where and how he identified the elements of these “cruel cults”. To this deity Rutkowski attributed characteristics of the Lady of the Heavens, mistress of all the atmospheric phenomena, she who sent the rain and the winds. This is the most important contribution made by Rutkowski to the study of peak sanctuary cult; equally important is the fact that, like Dietrich, he accepted the worship of both a male and a female deity (Rutkowski 1971, 11). Although he seemed to ignore the fact that the Knossos Oxford ring, featuring the epiphany of a male deity, was probably depicting a peak sanctuary, on the matter of the dual character of Minoan cult, he was, like Dietrich, probably influenced by Evans’ theory. Rutkowski (1971, 11) also suggested, without citing any evidence, that the so called flag-masts were associated with the male god.

The interest in the deity worshipped in peak sanctuaries was only peripheral, in most of the recent studies. Burkert (1993, 69) recognized the presence of the deity on the Knossos sealing, because of the lions. Even though he was the only one to identify the representation of a peak sanctuary on the ring from tomb Δ at Pylos, and even though he accepted the worship of a male deity on mountain tops (Burkert 1993, 78), he still insisted on the worship of a female deity, as far as the Minoan peak sanctuaries were concerned (Burkert 1993, 89, n. 36, 107).

The iconography of peak sanctuary scenes, discussed above, places the matter of the worshipped deity on surer footing. As noted already, the iconographic tradition confirms the presence of a female figure, standing between two lions at the top of the mountain on the Knossos sealing, of a male figure floating in the air, on the Pylos ring, of another male figure, also floating in the air between two dogs on the Laonikou St. ring from Poros, near Herakleion, and of a figure floating in the air on the Knossos Oxford ring. All scholars agree that these figures represent the epiphany of a male deity. The frequency of the rendering of this deity, on four out of the eight known rings depicting peak sanctuaries, is also worth noting. Dietrich (1969, 270), as mentioned above, identifies the worshipper on the Knossos sealing as a consort of the female deity. The same deity was also possibly depicted on two other examples, the two very fragmentary relief stone vases from Gypsades and Knossos, where the representation of the deity would be placed at the highest point of the scene. Another possible example is furnished by the most complete representation of a Minoan peak sanctuary, on the relief stone rhyton from Zakros; the deity was in this case perhaps represented by the empty throne, rendered symbolically with a characteristically curved back, right at the center of the

roof, at the highest point of the tripartite shrine, and was flanked by the wild goats (Sakellarakis 2006). With the exception of the miniature wall painting from Thera, the presence of the deity or the indirect allusion to its presence is therefore common in peak sanctuary iconography.

The iconographic rendering of the deities in the four acknowledged representations of peak sanctuaries, i.e. the clothing, the gestures, the associated objects, and the accompanying animals, is particularly interesting. As regards the clothing, the female deity on the Knossos sealing is richly attired, and has long locks of hair (see, on the other hand, Furumark's observation-1965, 96-that divine figures can not be identified by clothing). It has been noted that her hair is flowing behind her and not falling on her shoulders, as in other scenes, especially those of female dancing figures (Sakellariou 1964, nos 17, 118, 125, 126, 191, 200, 219 [CMS I]; Platon and Pini 1984, 51, 326 [CMS II.3]; Sakellarakis and Sakellaraki 1997, II, figs 718-719, 722-723). It should be also emphasized that although she is the central figure in the scene, she is noticeably smaller in scale than the worshipper depicted below. The scale of this figure, taken together with another observation made by Pini (Gill, Müller, and Pini 2002, no. 256 [CMS II.8.1]), namely that because of the state of preservation of the sealing there is no real evidence confirming that she is standing on the top of the mountain, suggests that this is another divine epiphany (see the floating hair of the male figure in an epiphany scene on the Elateia ring-Dakoronia 2003, 347, fig. 3).

No elements of clothing can be discerned on the three male figures depicted in epiphany scenes on the ring from the Laonikou St. tomb at Poros, on the Pylos ring and on the Oxford ring (Fig. 12). Nevertheless, the gestures of the one female deity and the three male gods are worthy of note. On both the Oxford and the Poros rings, the female figure has both hands on her head; based on what we know about the figurines, this is a gesture associated with prayer, invocation or entreaty (Sapouna-Sakellaraki 2012, 149). On the Knossos sealing, the female figure, like the male figure on the Oxford Knossos ring, extends one arm, holding a long vertical staff, and lowers the other, bent, arm to her waist. The same gesture is repeated by the male figure on the ring from the Laonikou St. tomb at Poros. Although this figure is not holding anything, one arm is stretched out and the other is lowered towards the waist. The gesture of the female figure on the Knossos sealing has been interpreted by Furumark (1965, 94), as a "commanding gesture". Matz (1958, 394), on the other hand, believes that the gesture depicted on the Knossos sealing and the Knossos ring, now in the Ashmolean museum, is identical to the gesture of the male figure on the "Chieftain cup from Hagia Triada" (Fig. 47) (Marinatos and

Hirmer 1959, fig. 100). The female figures, on the Oxford, Knossos ring and on the Poros ring, illustrate the invocation gesture, with two hands raised to the face.

As regards the sex of the divine figures worshipped in peak sanctuaries, it should be noted that, with the exception of those who have accepted the identification of a peak sanctuary on the Pylos ring, most scholars complied with the idea of the worship of a female deity, based of course on the well known sealing from Knossos, and most of them, including Evans, Nilsson and Platon, have therefore proposed the worship of a female deity in Minoan peak sanctuaries, too. At the same time, however, they have also suggested the worship of a male figure as well (Dietrich 1971, 516). The presence of a male deity in Minoan peak sanctuaries should be considered certain, not only on account of the scenes on the Pylos and the Knossos, Oxford rings, but also on account of the scene on the new ring from the Laonikou St. tomb at Poros. The epiphany of male deities, as attested in these three scenes is similar to the female one from the Knossos sealing noted above and seems to be of some significance in peak sanctuary cult.

It should be also noted that in three out of four known representations of peak sanctuaries, the deity is male and only on the Knossos sealing it is female. This could of course be a coincidence, since, as noted by Furumark (1965, 98), most names of deities, both in the Linear A and the Linear B script, are female. The word *da-ma-te* inscribed on the stone ladle from Hagios Georgios sto Vouno (Λ5) is also a female name, as will be seen below in the discussion about the names of the deity worshipped in peak sanctuaries.

It should be also pointed out that both the female and the male deities in peak sanctuaries are accompanied by animals. This is not about the wild goats depicted on the Zakros rhyton, albeit in a heraldic pose, on the roof of the central part of a tripartite shrine, but about the two lions flanking the epiphany of the female deity on the Knossos sealing, and the two dogs flanking the epiphany of the male deity on the ring from the Laonikou St. tomb at Poros, again in a heraldic pose (for heraldic iconographic formulas on rings and the various cross-cultural influences between Crete and Mycenaean Greece, see Furumark 1965, 89). The mere presence of the lions on the Knossos sealing, signifies, according to Burkert (1993, 69) and Furumark (1965, 94), the deity. According to Furumark (1965, 94): “the animals indicate the holiness of the figure, the animals function as guards of the sacred”.

The Knossos sealing, especially the image of the female deity, incorporates other interesting iconographic elements as well. The imposing presence of

the female deity and her gesture, a gesture repeated by the male deity on the ring from the Laonikou St. tomb at Poros, has been mentioned above. The key for the interpretation of the identity of the female figure on the Knossos sealing and her relationship to the male figure depicted below and to her right, lies in the object she is holding, a long vertically held shaft, interpreted as a spear or as a scepter (Rutkowski 1971, 10; 1986, 88). The state of preservation of the sealing does not allow the precise identification of the object, whatever its interpretation, since its end is obscure. Furumark (1965, 94) prefers its interpretation as a scepter; Nilsson (1950, 353), on the other hand, interprets it as a spear. It seems that interpretation depends on the view point of the scholar involved, who also takes into consideration other iconographic evidence; Nilsson for example, associated the spear with the hunting aspect of the divine figure, which he identified as a Potnia Theron (Nilsson 1950, 354, for deities with animals). Heraldic scenes involving male or female figures with animals, mostly lions, but also dogs, are not rare in Creto-Mycenaean glyptic art and it is widely believed that they represent the Potnia or the Potnios Theron (Nilsson 1950). The rock-crystal pommel of a sword or scepter found at the Kythera sanctuary, also alludes to a scepter, a symbol of power, according to Rutkowski (1986, 88), who interprets the Knossos sealing as a “transfer of power to the king” (Rutkowski 1986, 10). Furumark (1965, 94) also believes that in the Knossos sealing the female figure is “holding a stave or sceptre”.

a. Number of deities - *one or many deities?*

The question: one or many deities, is directly related, according to Burkert (1993, 78), to the needs of the worshippers. He maintains that the Minoan iconographic corpus does not include any explicitly identifiable scenes featuring a large number of deities (Burkert 1993, 106). Nevertheless, the Linear B documents include the names of many deities (see below).

Furumark (1965, 96) discusses Evans’ view about the existence of only one female deity and her consort, and Nilsson’s and Sp. Marinatos’ view about the existence of many deities and concludes that: “Both methods of reasoning suffer from the same fault: they are in fact building upon identifications with later Greek, and with Near Eastern divinities, using what one knows of the latter as a starting point for the interpretation of Minoan divine figures. And above all the question is posed in a false way, in as much as one is demanding of the material something which by its own nature it cannot possibly show”.

Hutchinson (1962, 207) mentions a letter by Evans, addressed to Nilsson, where he refers to one Minoan deity with many names: “I have always in mind the possibility that the goddess who appears in so many relations in Minoan scenes and impersonations may cover what was really regarded as separate deities with separate names equivalent to Artemis, Rhea, Athena, Aphrodite, etc. But as a provisional procedure it is convenient, in default of more definite knowledge, to treat the goddess as essentially the same great Nature Goddess under various aspects—celestial with the dove, chthonic with the snake, etc. etc.”.

According to Furumark (1965, 96): “If we try to identify individual gods and goddesses with the help of such criteria as dress, attributes, area of influence, cult forms and so on, a host of difficulties await us. It proves indeed to be impossible to pin down definite divine figures by such methods. Everything overlaps. The only clearly apparent difference is that certain of the figures, most of them in fact, are female, while others are male”, and concludes: “Consequently this material tells us nothing of the number of gods. One could equally well put forward the hypothesis that there were many, as that there were only two or even one” (Furumark 1965, 97).

Worship in the peak sanctuary at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno starts in the Old Palatial period and continues in the Neopalatial period, until LM IB, as exemplified by the sherds decorated with the “marine” style (Tournavitou 2014, 4, 21, 125–126). The continuous use of the sanctuary suggests that new cultic elements from nearby Mycenaean Greece were gradually introduced into the Minoan cult.

b. Names

It is only to be expected that scholars should wonder, from the very start, about the names of Minoan deities, whether it was a case of one female goddess or more. For a long time research focused on the names of figures which, for various reasons, seemed to have an explicitly pre-Hellenic religious ancestry, like Brytomartis, Diktyнна (Nilsson 1950, 510–511), Ariadne, Eleni, Eileithia (Nilsson 1950, 518–532), Aphaia (Nilsson 1950, 512), Felhanos, etc. After the decipherment of the Linear B script, the addition of the names of deities from the Greek Pantheon, as well as other divine figures, was to be expected. The so-called names of divine origin (theophoric) include Hera (E-ra), Artemis (A-te-mi-to), Athena (A-ta-na), Poseidon (Po-se-da-o), Zeus (Di-we), Dionysos (Di-wo-nu-so-jo), Hermes (E-ma-a2), Ares (A-re), Hephaistos (A-pa-i-ti-jo), Erinys (E-ri-nu), Enyalios

(E-nu-wa-ri-jo), a deity called Peleia, goddess of doves (Pe-re-*82), Paiaon (Pa-ja-wo), Eileithia (E-re-u-ti-ja), a goddess of the winds, especially considering the entry referring to a “priestess of the winds” (Ventris and Chadwick 1956, 125-129; Palmer 1963, 103), a deity named Pade (Pa-de), the goddesses Pasagia (Pa-sa-ja), and Pipitouna (Pi-pi-tu-na) (Furumark 1965, 97) and, finally, a “Lady of the Labyrinth” (Palmer 1963, 103). This is the general direction followed by some of the scholars studying the Minoan peak sanctuaries, in their attempt to investigate the Minoan deities worshipped therein (Dietrich 1969, 271).

This is of course a complicated problem. As noted above, we have not yet ascertained the existence of a single Minoan deity with many different aspects, and possibly invoked with more than one names, as opposed to a pantheon of Minoan deities (Furumark 1965, 98). It is possible that some of the names mentioned in the Linear A and B scripts could be cult names or adjectives referring to a single deity. At the same time, we cannot even be certain that the same deity was worshipped in all the Minoan peak sanctuaries. So far, none of the few theories that were actually proposed managed to gain widespread acceptance. The general allusion to Asclepius as a healing deity, with reference to the Minoan peak sanctuaries, because of the discovery of votive offerings in the shape of human body parts, similar to the votive offerings in the later Asclepius sanctuaries, was not taken seriously. This was not only because this type of votive offering has not been attested in all the extant peak sanctuaries, but also because other votive offerings at peak sanctuaries were not related to the Asclepius cult, and because the name of the god was not attested in the Linear B tablets. Hutchinson (1962, 207), associated the deity worshipped in peak sanctuaries with Britomartis, on account of the lions flanking the goddess on the Knossos sealing. Although Apollo was not worshipped in Crete, he was mentioned in this context by Dietrich (1969, 268, n. 72), and Willetts (1962, 290–291). Dietrich (1971, 516) also proposed that there was only one deity worshipped in all the peak sanctuaries, with many different



Fig. 51: Inscription in the Linear A script on the stone ladle from Kythera.

names, such as “Lady”, “Mistress”, or “Queen”. As expected, these isolated proposals, were also not discussed extensively.

What was discussed was the reference to a Minoan deity with the name Ja-sa-sa-ra (Palmer 1961, 233–236; Furumark 1965, 97; Rehak and Younger 2001, 423). The name of this deity, transliterated from the Linear A script, was attested on various objects, some of which have also been found in peak sanctuaries (Furumark 1965, 98; for other possible names of Minoan deities, see A-ta-no, No-pi-na, and Ku-ba-na-tu-na). This piece of evidence and the antiquity of the Linear A tablets, being indisputably Minoan in origin, are strong indications in favor of the theory that this was the name of a deity worshipped in Minoan peak sanctuaries. The word Ja-sa-sa-ra-me might have meant “my queen”, or “my mistress”, i.e. it is closely related to the Potnia (Po-ti-ni-ja) and the *Ἥρα*. It has also been suggested that Potnia (Po-ti-ni-ja) and the Pylian *Ἥρα* should be identified with Demeter (Furumark 1965, 98). It is very interesting that these old literary affinities can be associated with an inscription discovered in the peak sanctuary at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno.

As mentioned above, a stone ladle (Λ5), with the inscription da-ma-te in the Linear A script (Fig. 51) has come to light in the peak sanctuary at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno (Sakellarakis and Olivier 1994). This find is important, not only for the dissemination of the Linear A script in the Aegean, and especially at Kythera, but also for the sake of the inscribed word itself. The word da-ma-te in this inscription, like words in other inscriptions in the Linear A script, and that of Ja-sa-sa-ra on stone ritual vessels, alludes to a deity and more specifically, to Demeter. Ja-sa-sa-ra was associated with the East, the Hittites, and especially the Luvians (Palmer 1961, 232–236; Furumark 1965, 97). The word da-ma-te does not occur in the Linear A script. In the Linear B script it is attested in tablet En 02 from Pylos, but the way it was used indicates that it was not the name of a deity (Ventris and Chadwick 1956, 127, 242; Palmer 1963, 190). The absence of Demeter from the list of Mycenaean deities is nevertheless significant, considering her importance in the Olympic pantheon. On the gold axe from Arkalochori it occurs as I-da-ma-te, which has been associated with Mt Ida and has been interpreted as “mother of the mountains” and as “mother of Ida” (Pugliese-Caratelli 1957, 166, 171; Burkert 1993, 342, n. 8). Although it is possible that I-da-ma-te is related to the Kytherian da-ma-te, the philological proof of this hypothesis is beyond the scope of this study. As noted above, Erinyes (E-ri-nu), who was associated with Demeter Erinya of Arcadia (Burkert 1993, 114, 296), was mentioned in the Linear B script (Ventris and Chadwick 1956, 127, 306; Palmer 1963, 218, 235). Concerning Demeter, the Greek origins of the name (Kakridis 1986, II, 130), which would

have meant “mother earth”, are not widely accepted (Burkert 1993, 130), even though the pre-Hellenic roots of the cult have been already acknowledged (Nilsson 1950, 339; 1955; Simon 1969, 91; Kakridis 1986 vol.2, 130; Burkert 1993, 130), as well as is its relationship with Crete (Nilsson 1950, 403; Willetts 1955, 24, 36, 71, 73, 76, 80, 93, 95; 1962, 148) and its cult on the island (Willetts 1962, 148–152). In any case, the cult of the Greek Demeter did include elements of the pre-Hellenic Potnia Theron (Nilsson 1950, 504). The worship of a deity, associated with the fertility of the earth, and the fertility of men and beasts, is certain in Minoan Crete. What should not be considered certain, nevertheless, unless of course other evidence comes to light, is the fact that this deity was invoked with the name of Demeter, as indicated by the Kytherian inscription.

B. MINOAN RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE
IN THE AEGEAN
The Case of Kythera

Kastri on Kythera has been regarded for some time as the site of one of the most important Minoan colonies in the Aegean (see also Sakellarakis 1996). It all began with the first identification of Minoan antiquities on the island by Sylvia Benton (1931–1932, 245–246), followed by the 1957–1958 survey, undertaken by Helen Waterhouse and Richard Hope Simpson (1961, 148–160), and most importantly by the excavations conducted between 1963–1965 by Nicolas Coldstream and George Huxley (Coldstream and Huxley 1972). At a conference held in Athens in 1982 (Hägg and Marinatos 1984), despite the continuing debate concerning the existence of a Minoan thalassocracy in the Aegean, the identification of the settlement at Kastri as a Minoan colony was not disputed (Wiener 1984, 25; Hood 1984, 33; Branigan 1984, 54; Stos-Gale and Gale 1984, 61; Platon 1984, 66; Rutter and Zerner 1984, 75–80; Poursat 1984, 85; Benzi 1984, 96–100; Hägg 1984, 119–120; Strøm 1984, 193 n. 9; Niemeier 1984, 205–206, 211). The identification of the settlement at Kastri as a Minoan colony was accepted, despite the lack of finds testifying to Minoan cult activity on the island, with the sole exception of a few rhyta (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 102, nos. 65–68, 111, no. 85, fig. 39, 197, nos. 244–245, fig. 57; 1984, 108).

Hägg (1984) mentions more, albeit doubtful, evidence to this effect from the settlement of Kastri: the existence of incense-burners, pottery with religious symbols, and loom-weights; he even mentions the discovery of a skull, along with various cult objects, in room 2 of the so-called South House, which he suspects may have been the remains of human sacrifice. This evidence, however, does not corroborate Hägg's claim (1984, 120) that: "there were objects, cult practices and probably beliefs of purely Minoan character in the settlement at Kastri". The excavators of the Minoan settlement at Kastri were correct not to over-estimate those finds. As regards the so-called human sacrifice at Kythera, it should be noted that although both Hägg and N. Marinatos opposed the interpretation of the unique find at Anemospilia, near Archanes, as a human sacrifice (Sakellarakis and

Sakellaraki 1979, 347–392; 1981, 205–222; 1991, 137–156; 1997, I, 209–311), Hägg readily accepted the practice of human sacrifice at Kythera, which was in fact based on non-existent evidence. He thus joined the long list of scholars, including Tsountas, Wace, Blegen, Volgraff, Persson, Prototariou-Deilaki, Warren, Schweitzer, Andronikos, Ventrìs and Chadwick, Sampson, and Stampolidis (Geometric Greece), who have also accepted the practice of human sacrifice in prehistoric Greece.

At the same time, the long discussions concerning the theoretical definition of what constitutes a Minoan colony had led to a widely accepted conclusion, i.e. that cult practice is one of the most essential characteristics of any new settlement. Branigan (1981, 24–33), went so far as to consider Kythera a unique example of a Minoan “settlement colony”. This gap in our knowledge was filled in a rather unexpected manner, thanks to a chance find that came to light at Kythera in 1991, as noted in the first volume of the Kythera series (Sakellarakis 2011).

On arriving at Kythera, Efi Sapouna-Sakellaraki and I visited the site of Hagios Georgios sto Vouno and we immediately became convinced that here, on a mountain-top, at an altitude of 355.62 m, was located the peak sanctuary of the Minoan settlement of Kastri, lying some 4 km away. As a site, Hagios Georgios sto Vouno answers all the specific criteria associated with peak sanctuaries and their relationship with nearby settlements, i.e. accessibility, proximity, prominence of location, and visibility (Peatfield 1983, 275; Rutkowski 1986, 92–93). All these features, identifying a site as a Minoan peak sanctuary, evolved during the 1950s and the 1960s (Nilsson 1950, 68–76; Platon 1951, 96–160; Faure 1962, 36–56; 1963, 493–508; 1965, 27–63; 1967, 114–150; 1969, 174–213; 1972, 389–425), which is why the excavators of the Minoan colony at Kythera never thought of investigating Hagios Georgios sto Vouno in the 1960s, even though they were working nearby. The published account of the excavation, however, does mention that certain members of the team had visited the site (Herrin 1972, 43, pl. 54; see maps in Waterhouse and Hope Simpson 1961, fig. 23; Coldstream and Huxley 1972, fig. 1).

The identification of the first Minoan peak sanctuary outside Crete constituted a real archaeological challenge, intensified by the intriguing surface finds collected at the site. The archaeological investigation of the peak sanctuary and the variety of the finds discovered at the site, have been comprehensively discussed in the other volumes of the Kythera series (see Sakellarakis 2011; Sapouna-Sakellaraki 2012; Sakellarakis 2012; Varoufakis 2012; Banou 2012; Trantalidou 2013; Tournavitou 2014). The finds reflect, not only the religious fervor of the Minoan colony, but also the Minoan

religious influence outside Crete. Furthermore, the geographical location of the island, and of Hagios Georgios sto Vouno in particular, not only within the Aegean, but also in relation to the Peloponnese, or, to be more precise, to Laconia (Fig. 52), suggests that Kythera might have served as a main staging post for the dissemination of Minoan religious influence in general and more specifically, for the dissemination of the Minoan religious influence that reached the Peloponnese during the early Mycenaean period. Judging by the character of the finds at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, this influence also served as a means of propaganda. It is very possible, as will be noted below, that Hagios Georgios sto Vouno was not the only peak sanctuary in the Aegean. Before elaborating on these thoughts though, it is important to summarize the finds of religious importance at the site.

Although various religious buildings at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno are still in use today, structural remains from the second millennium B.C. did not come to light during the excavation of the site, since they were probably obliterated by later building activities. Despite the lack of architectural finds, many pieces of plaster, discovered in the single undisturbed LM I layer at the site, may be either associated with fragments of wall plaster, similar to those found in other Minoan peak sanctuaries (Rutkowski 1986,

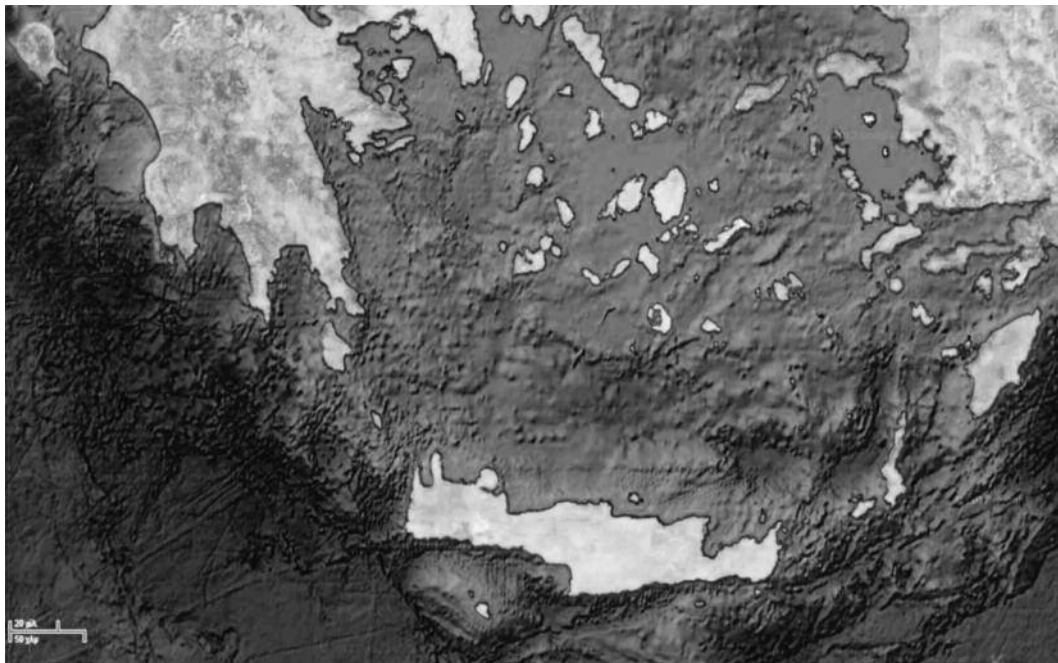


Fig. 52: The island of Kythera in the Aegean (Google maps).

79-80; Karetsou 1974, 234; 1976, 411; 1978, 238, 242; 1979, 281), or with the remains of offering tables made of stucco (Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1997, II, 504, fig. 494). The portable finds are numerous, especially votive offerings typical of Minoan peak sanctuaries. The numbers in the text correspond to the catalogue numbers of individual finds.

Of all the objects that came to light at the sanctuary, perhaps the most important is an intact stone ladle (Λ5) (Figs 22, 23, 51) (Banou 2012, 349, fig. 246, pl. 26:106), identical to those found in Cretan peak sanctuaries, especially Juktas (Evans 1921-1935, I, 159, 624, fig. 461; Warren 1969, 49, type 23B, MM III-LM I; Karetsou 1974, 236, pl. 179a; 1975, 337, fig. 4, pl. 265b; 1976, 415; Rutkowski 1986, 85; see also Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1997, II, 576-577, figs 581, 583, 584; for the import of Minoan stone vessels into Kythera, see Coldstream and Huxley 1972, pls 62, 69, 82-83; 1984, 109). Another example from Troullos at Archanes (Fig. 53) bears an incised Linear A inscription on the rim (Xanthoudidis 1909, 179-196; Evans 1921, vol.1, 625, fig. 462; Brice 1961, 14-15, nos. 1, 16, pl. 20; Warren 1969, 49, type 23b; Godart and Olivier 1982, 58-59; Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1991, 52, fig. 30). A similar inscription is attested on the Hagios Georgios sto Vouno specimen, the first Minoan inscription to come to light at Kythera. Furthermore, the inscribed word (da-ma-te) alludes to Demeter, a resemblance already discussed by the present author and J.-P. Olivier (Sakellarakis and Olivier 1994, 343-351, figs 1-6). Other finds bearing Hieroglyphic or Linear A inscriptions include the agate sealstone with hieroglyphs, of uncertain provenance (Kenna 1967, no. 36 [CMS VII];



Fig. 53: Marble ladle from Troullos at Archanes, with a Linear A inscription.

Coldstream and Huxley 1972, pl. 88; 1984, 109; Pini 1984, 123) and the clay weight from Kastri, with the inscribed Linear A L100 sign (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 205, no. 110, fig. 59, pl. 60; 1984, 109; Godart and Olivier 1982, 166). The stone objects that came to light at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno include rectangular stone offering tables, with a matching rim ($\Lambda 1$ - $\Lambda 2$, $\Lambda 4$; Banou 2012, 345–349), identical to the stone offering tables found in the metropolitan Minoan peak sanctuaries (Warren 1969, 63, type 26 IA, P326-329, D175-6; Rutkowski 1986, 85; Karetsou 1975, 335–337, inscribed; 1976, 415; 1978, 257, fig. 15, pl. 171 γ -8; 1979, 280, 281, pl. 162 β ; for Petsofas, see Davaras 1972, 652, pl. 60a; for Vrysinas,

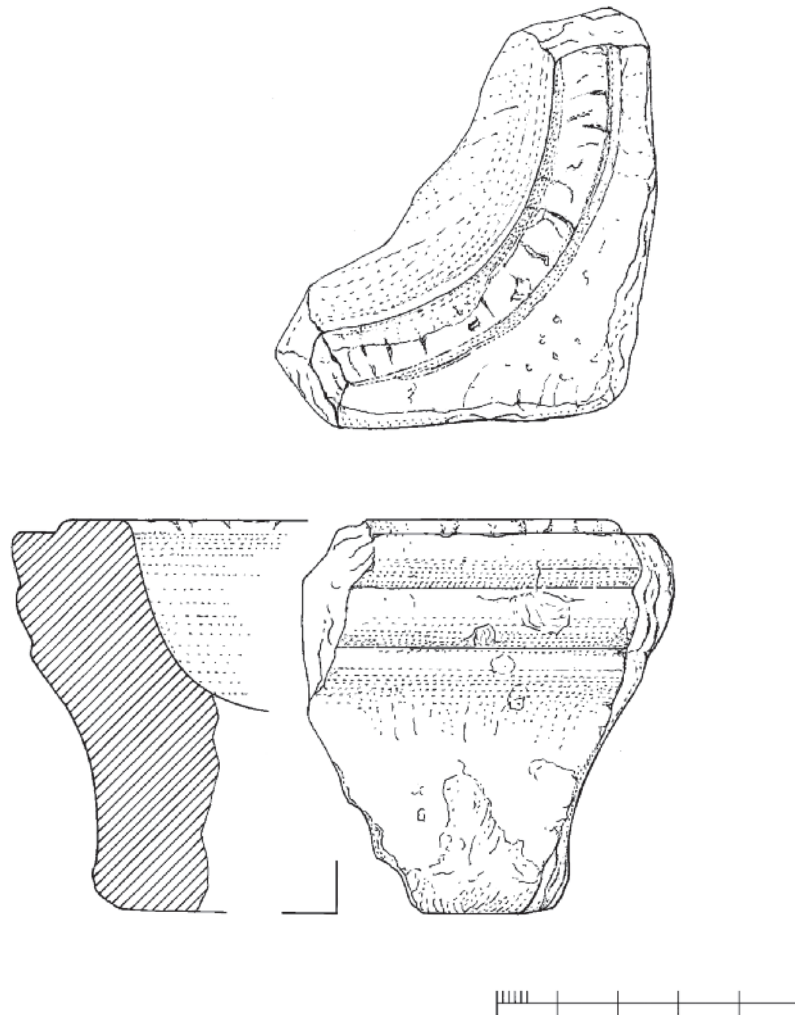


Fig. 54: Stone offering table.

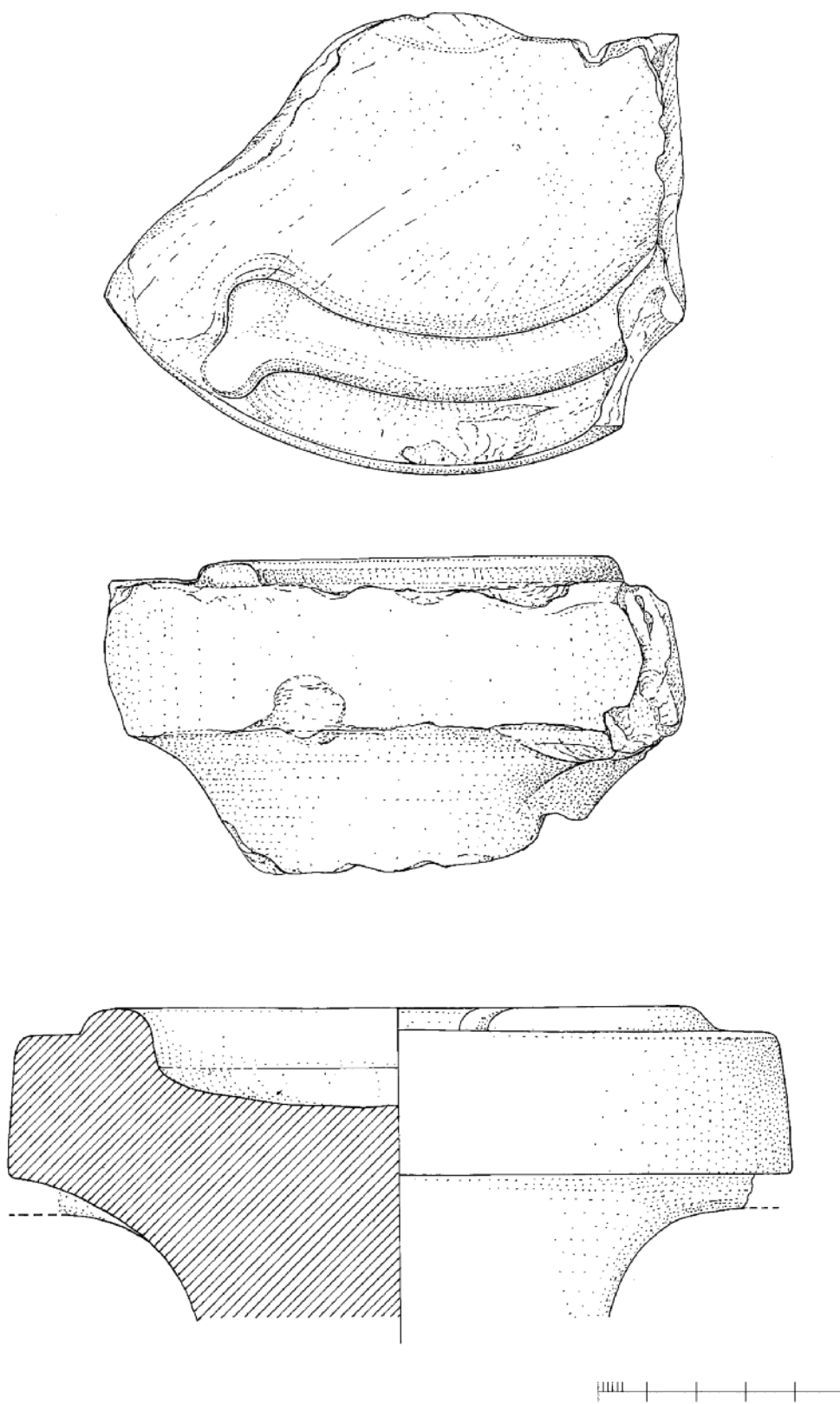


Fig. 55: Part of a stone lamp.

see Davaras 1974, 211–212), as well as six clay offering tables (Π172–Π177; Banou 2012, 323–327; see also Warren 1969, 67, type 26, 7b, 69; for clay offering tables in peak sanctuaries, see Peatfield 1992), a fragment of a round stone offering table (Λ3; Banou 2012, 345–347; Warren 1969, 67, type 26, 7b) (Fig. 54), again similar to specimens from other Minoan peak sanctuaries, and fragments of stone lamps (Λ11, Λ12; Banou 2012, 350–352) (Fig. 55).

Perhaps the most typical finds in Minoan peak sanctuaries are human and animal figurines, usually made of clay and more rarely of bronze. At Hagios Georgios sto Vouno on the other hand, only a few anthropomorphic clay figurines came to light: fragments of torsos (Π3–Π8), a head wearing a headband, like a Cretan head-scarf (Π1) (Fig. 33), and fragments of figurines of various sizes (Π9–Π22), all with parallels in Cretan peak sanctuaries (Banou 2012, 255, 258–269; for torsos of clay Minoan figurines, see Rutkowski 1991, pls. 3–10; for headbands, see Pilali-Papasteriou 1992, 107–109, ns. 29, 30, 32–34). There were also fragments of clay animal figurines (Π23–Π98; Banou 2012, 270–293; see quantities of animal figurines from Atsipades Korakias, in Peatfield 1992, 72–73), and bird figurines (Π104–Π113; Banou 2012, 296–299), likewise with parallels in Cretan peak sanctuaries (Rutkowski 1991, 110, pls. 47.5–11; Karetsou 1974, 237, pl. 176; 1976, 415, pl. 230e; 1978, 256, pls. 170β–γ; for Vrysinas, see Davaras 1974, 211; see also Peatfield 1992, 72, fig. 25). One of the most interesting finds from Hagios Georgios sto Vouno is the bronze figurine of a scorpion, the first ever to be discovered in a peak sanctuary (Pilali-Papasteriou 1985, 2–10; for bronze scorpion, see Sakellarakis 1997, 423–472; 2012, 218–229, 235, pl. 1). The discovery of the bronze specimen prompted the identification of other clay scorpion figurines at the site (Π99–Π102; Banou 2012, 293–295). The study of the many unpublished clay objects from the Juktas peak sanctuary may lead to the identification of more votive scorpion figurines. It is possible that the scorpion, the apotropaic use of which in Minoan Crete is substantiated by its presence on ivory seals (Sakellarakis 1997), on certain three-sided prisms (Sakellarakis 1997), on the so-called talismanic seals (Onassoglou 1985, 244–245; Sakellarakis 1997), on amulets (Paribeni 1904, 735–739, figs. 35–36; Karetsou 1977, 420, pl. 2228), and even on the stone handle of a dagger or staff, was a symbol of fertility, as it was in Egypt (Hippolyte-Boussac 1903, 467) and in the East (van Buren 1937–1939, figs. 1–27). In Cretan myth it is associated with Orion and Minos (Eitrem 1928, 58–82).

The 84 bronze figurines of worshippers, both male and female, discovered in the Kythera sanctuary (Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2012, 3–212), including the figurine handed in to the National Archaeological Museum at Athens,

are of special interest in the study of Minoan religion. Their number alone is exceptional, especially for a single Minoan peak sanctuary; it also reflects the intensity of the cult, and a tendency towards display, perhaps as propaganda. To date, only 18 bronze figurines have come to light at four of the most important Cretan peak sanctuaries: six at Juktas, five at Traostalos and Kophinas, and three at Vrysinas. It is possible that the two bronze figurines handed in to the National Archaeological Museum at Athens are also from Kophinas (Sapouna-Sakellaraki 1995, 11, 42, 44, 79), and the same perhaps applies to the seven figurines in the Mitsotakis collection (Marangou 1992, 254–256, ns. 310–316). Efi Sapouna-Sakellaraki's recent monograph on bronze anthropomorphic figurines in Crete and the Aegean lists a total of 170 known specimens (those discovered by the last decades of the 20th century A.D.); most of these are now kept in the Archaeological Museum at Herakleion, while others belong to other museums and private collections outside Greece. Although the number of figurines has increased somewhat during the last years, with the discovery of isolated specimens in some areas of the Aegean, like Rhodes, the 84 bronze figurines discovered in the Kytherian sanctuary are still very important as a group.

The main religious significance of the bronze figurines is not associated so much with their clothing, as with their gestures. The latter have been distinguished in five distinct groups, including the so-called "aposkopēin" gesture, a gesture showing respect, the gesture encountered in mourners/ the "epistasia" gesture, the gesture indicating entreaty or thanksgiving, the gesture implying invocation and the gesture indicating blessing. The single bronze cut-out depicting the lower part of a human body (Sakellarakis 2012, 216, 236, pl. 28), with popular clay parallels from other Minoan peak sanctuaries (Sapouna-Sakellariaki 2012, 38; see also Rutkowski 1991, 92, nos. 6, 7, 11; 93, no. 12, pl. 43.5-9, Her. Museum nos. Π3440, Π3444 and Π3443), the bronze votive offerings in the shape of human legs (Platon 1951, 109–110, pls. E1, 2, 9; Rutkowski 1991, nos. 1–25, pl. 24, no. 13, 41, nos. 15–17, 44, no. 11, 45, nos. 9–12, 16–17, 49, no. 14, Her. Museum nos. Π3434, Π3452, Π3456, Π3457–3459, Π3461, Π4831), and the model of a hand (Rutkowski 1991, 101–102, nos. 1–12, pl. 45, nos. 1, 7, 8, 13–15, 46, nos. 1–5, 12, Her. Museum nos. Π3443, Π3450–3451, Π3453, Π3460), all indicate the human need to appeal to the deity in the face of illness.

A relatively large group of minute bronze votive daggers, also with parallels in Cretan peak sanctuaries (Sakellarakis 2012, 231, 237, pl. 3E; see also Rutkowski 1986, 85; Karetsou 1977, 420; 1988, 162; for Kophinas, see Davaras 1961–1962, 288; for Petsofas, see Davaras 1992, 652; for Vrysinas, see Davaras 1974, 211), and a small clay sphere (Π197; Banou 2012, 333;

see also Rutkowski 1986, 116–118, pl. 51; 1991, 85, 88, n. 90; Karetsou 1974, 230, 236; 1978, 236, 247, 249, 256; 1980, 324), are also perhaps related to peak sanctuary cult. The bronze double axe (Sakellarakis 2012, 216, 237, pl. 38; see also Rutkowski 1986, 79, 84, 96–98; Karetsou 1974, 232, pls 172–173a) and the clay horns of consecration (Π116–Π139; Banou 2012, 300–308; see also Rutkowski 1986, 72; for Vrysinas, see Davaras 1974, 211), are certainly of cultic significance.

The large quantity of pottery at the sanctuary, also studied in detail (Tournavitou 2014), is also compatible with the evidence from the Cretan peak sanctuaries. In this sanctuary, too, there are specimens of excellent quality, like the rim fragment of a cup, with a plastic attachment in the shape of a sea-shell (K270; Tournavitou 2014, 115; see also chapter on cult) (Fig. 48). It is possible that the clay models of a nautilus and a fish, only the tail of which is preserved (Tournavitou 2014, 113), are also part of the same vessel. The significance of this cup, manufactured in the “ornate barnacle style” (Evans 1921–1935, IV, 101; Poursat 1980, 120–122, nos. 172–174, figs. 170–174; Foster 1982), lies in its use of marine motifs, similarly to the “marine” style in pottery, examples of which have been attested at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno and in the Cretan peak sanctuaries (for a model of a fish from a peak sanctuary, see Davaras 1976, fig. 55; for models of sea-shells in various materials from peak sanctuaries, see Platon 1951, 149; Karetsou 1976, fig. 55; 1978, 247, 256). The existence of “marine style” pottery in Minoan sanctuaries is quite significant in itself.

It is possible that many of the vessels that came to light at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno and at other metropolitan peak sanctuaries, were not simply used for the everyday needs of the worshippers, but also for ritual purposes (for conical cups, see Davaras 1974, 210; Karetsou 1974, 238; 1975, 334; 1976, 415; 1978, 238, 241, 252–253, figs 4:3–5, pl. 167a; 1979, 281; 1980, 340, 351; Peatfield 1992, 70; Rutkowski 1986, 79; for conical cups at Kastri, see Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 96, 99, 107, 108, 130, 136, 187; for jugs, see Karetsou 1974, 238; 1978, 255, figs 13:6–7, pl. 167β; 1980, 340, 349; Peatfield 1992, 71, fig. 15; for small jugs at Kastri, see Coldstream and Huxley 1972, pl. 51; for pithoi, see Karetsou 1974, 238; 1975, 334; 1978, 235, 236, 249; Rutkowski 1986, 94; for conical cups in general, see Gillis 1990). Braziers, in particular, a large number of which has come to light at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno (see Tournavitou 2014, 97–100; see also Davaras 1974, 210; Peatfield 1992, 70; for braziers at Kastri, see Coldstream and Huxley 1972, pl. 24), were also probably used for ritual purposes. The tripod cooking pots, that were also discovered in large numbers (Tournavitou 2014, 76–81; for tripod cooking pots at Kastri, see Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 103, 114, 134, 144, 148, 187, 200, fig. 43), were

possibly used for ritual meals or for the preparation of edible offerings to the deity (see Anemospilia, Sakellarakis and Sakellaraki 1979; 1997, I, 274, fig. 219). Nevertheless, the single Minoan vessel-type most closely associated with ritual practices, even in Minoan peak sanctuaries, was the rhyton (Rutkowski 1986, 85). At Hagios Georgios sto Vouno a single intact miniature specimen was discovered, decorated with lilies (K803; Tournavitou 2014, 81, 422, fig. 69) (Fig. 30), as well as fragments of many other rhyta of various types (Tournavitou 2014, 81–92).

The quantity of MM III-LM I/LM IB pottery at the site, which is chronologically compatible with the occupation of the settlement at Kastri (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 280–303), suggests that cult activity at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno was at its peak during this period. Nevertheless, religious activities at the site did not cease altogether; century old Christian rituals still take place today at the same Kytherian site.

The character of the Minoan pottery at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno leaves no doubt that this was the site of the peak sanctuary of the Minoan colony at Kastri. The wealth and the variety of the finds, which, with the exception of the pottery, are not encountered at Kastri, are strong indications that, as noted above, the colony was much more important than has been supposed up until now, on the strength of the few excavation trenches dug during the 1960s (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 309); even more importantly, it illustrates the practice of a purely Minoan cult outside the confines of Crete. There is no doubt that the Kythera sanctuary is a Minoan peak sanctuary. Its location, the votive offerings discovered therein and the contextual distribution of the latter, many of which were found along with animal bones, lead to the conclusion that the site was the locus of Minoan cult practice, with rituals, identical to those attested in Minoan Crete, possibly with some idiosyncrasies.

It should be noted that every Cretan peak sanctuary displays a number of idiosyncratic features (Dickinson 1994, 269; Watrous 1994, 734; 1995, 400). The architectural structures at Juktas are unique and are not comparable to the humble structures (Rutkowski 1986, 81) discovered at other peak sanctuaries; most peak sanctuaries did not have any buildings at all (Peatfield 1983, 277). At Petsofas, the insect *copris hispanus* (Rutkowski 1986, 89–90; 1991, 112, pls. 50.6–14) (Fig. 56), common among the clay votive offerings at the site, is extremely rare in other peak sanctuaries (for Piskokephalo, see Platon 1951, 126, pl. 2:1, 136–139; for Prophetis Elias at Malia, see Platon 1951, 140), and characteristically absent from Juktas (Dickinson 1994, 269). The more recently excavated peak sanctuary at Atsipades is unique for the clay phalluses discovered there (Fig. 34) (Peat-

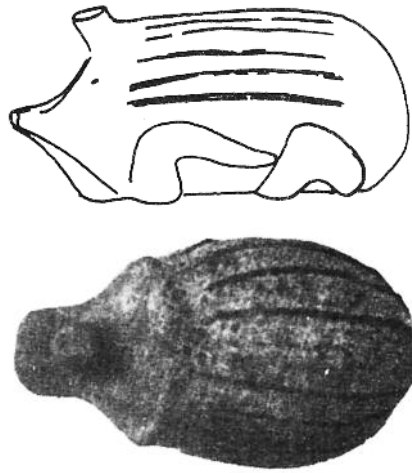


Fig. 56: Clay figurine of a beetle from Petsotas (Rutkowski 1986, 88, fig. 115).

field 1992, 74, 75, fig. 23; see also Dickinson 1994, 269; Watrous 1994, fig. 24). Although phalluses have been discovered at the Kythera peak sanctuary, they are rare, not only in peak sanctuaries, but also in Minoan Crete as a whole.

At the peak sanctuary of Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, the unique wealth of the bronze finds constitutes a peculiarity not encountered in any of the metropolitan Minoan peak sanctuaries, not even Juktas, Kophinas or Traostalos, the peak sanctuaries associated with centers such as Knossos, Archanes, Phaistos or Zakros. On the other hand, the absence of large numbers of clay figurines, a common feature of all the other peak sanctuaries, is a feature worth noting. It appears that at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno the proportion of bronze to clay votive offerings is reversed. The bronze votive offerings found in the metropolitan peak sanctuaries are as rare as the clay ones at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno. Even more interesting is the scarcity of certain votive offerings that are commonly found in Minoan peak sanctuaries in Crete, such as large numbers of animal figurines (Rutkowski 1986, 85, 87; 1991, pls. 47.1-3, 6-7, 48.4; Platon 1951, 109-112, pl. E2; Karetsou 1974, 236, very large number; 1975, 339; 1976, 414; 1977, 420; 1978, 236, 247, 249, 256; for Vrysinas, see Davaras 1973, 584; 1974, 210-211) or models of fruits attested in some of the other sanctuaries (Rutkowski 1991, pls. 51.20, 21, 34-35; Karetsou 1974, 237; 1975, pl. 264γ).

The nature of the peak sanctuary at Kythera will undoubtedly become clearer upon closer examination of these idiosyncracies. The presence of a large number of animal figurines in Minoan peak sanctuaries in Crete,

including cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, dogs, and even weasels, insects and models of fruits, has been correctly interpreted as a cultic idiosyncrasy of an economy based on agriculture and animal husbandry (Rutkowski 1968, 163; Bintliff 1977a, 77, 99, 102; 1977b, 146-147, 150; Peatfield 1983, 274-275; 1992, 72; Morgan 1983, 90-91; 1988, 157; Rutkowski 1986, 93-94; Dickinson 1994, 271). Furthermore, the popular nature of cult practice in the Cretan peak sanctuaries (Peatfield 1990, 117, 122; see also Dickinson 1994, 267) becomes evident by the inexpensive quality of the raw materials (i.e. clay) used for the manufacture of the vast majority of the votive offerings discovered therein.

The Minoan colonists on Kythera had evidently no need of more land for cultivation or for the grazing of animals. The few loom-weights (Fig. 38), found at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, paralleled in other Minoan sanctuaries (for Atsipades, see Peatfield 1992, 79; see also Marinatos 1983, 16; 1984, 158), naturally suggest weaving activities, but not necessarily only the weaving of wool (Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1971, 147-148, 151). The small number of similar loom-weights that have come to light at Kastri (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 207, 209, 217, figs 59, 60; for similar loom-weights from Hagia Irene on Kea, see Davis 1984, 161, fig. 2; for a loom-weight from Ialysos, see Marketou 1988, 27-28), is not enough to corroborate intensive textile production in the colony, beyond the absolute minimum that would perhaps cover basic needs. Animal breeding was apparently not very popular at Kythera, even in later periods, as suggested by written sources. The older inhabitants today cannot remember practicing large scale animal breeding on the island, beyond what was necessary to cover the basic needs of each family. During the 17th century AD, travellers reported that the sheep they wanted to buy at Kythera were too expensive (Petrocheilos 1979, 9, 11-12, 16-17). Between 1728 and 1733 the well-to-do families on Kythera, an island with a population of ca. five thousand, owned 16,540 sheep (Maltezou 1980b).

One should therefore seek other economic parameters that would explain the prosperity and the wealth of the Minoan colony at Kastri, as reflected in the votive offerings at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno. The worshippers at the peak sanctuary were not simple shepherds. The offerings depicting the worshippers themselves or even their ailing limbs, are, for the first time at a peak sanctuary, made of bronze (for the meaning of votive limbs, see Platon 1951, 120-121, 153; Rutkowski 1986, 88; Peatfield 1983, 276; for a different opinion, see Nilsson 1950, 74-75). They would be better suited to a wealthier social group, traders or perhaps sailors, too, as indicated by the finds discussed below. According to the excavators of Kastri: "The silver cups would seem to belong rather to Minoan palatial society, than to

colonials engaged in agriculture, fishing and the murex industry" (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 309; see also Huxley 1988, 65–71).

It is certainly possible that the sea-shells modeled out of clay (Fig. 49), known at Kythera as "the combs of Aphrodite", after which the island was named (Porphyrussa) (Aristotle, *Fragmenta* 521), prompted the Minoan colonists to exploit murex-shells for the production of purple dye. The evidence from the finds at Kastri is corroborated by the murex-shells and other sea-shells discovered at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 36–37, pl. 3c; 1984, 108; see also Morris in discussion in Coldstream and Huxley 1984, 111; Rutter and Zerner 1984, 76; Huxley 1988, 67; for murex-shell in neighboring Pavlopetri, see Harding, Cadogan and Howell 1969, 139; for murex-shells in general, see Stieglitz 1994, 46–54; see also Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1997, I, 262–263, for murex-shell from tholos tomb A at Archanes). Hope-Simpson and Dickinson (1979, 121), maintain that: "Its prosperity may well have been founded on the extraction of purple dye from the murex shell". It may, however, be that murex-shells alone do not fully explain the prosperity of the Minoan colony. More significant, perhaps, is the exploitation of the wealth of neighboring Laconia and, of course, of a strategy involving the control of the sea routes.

It has already been suggested that the Minoan colony on Kythera owed its prosperity to the exploitation of what may be the most important metal deposits on mainland Greece, the Laconian ores, for the production of copper, lead, silver and even gold (Stos-Gale and Gale 1984, 61, fig. 5, 63; Rutter and Zerner 1984, 79; Rutter 1984, 113, in discussion; see also Morris in discussion in Coldstream and Huxley 1984, 111; For the opposite view, see Philippson 1984, 112, in discussion; see also Kiskyras 1957, 121, 123, 127; 1988, 117–132; Skarpelis 1982, 43–44, 122–123, 132; Bassiakos 1988, 55–56). According to Huxley (1988, 67): "That the Minoans of Kythera possessed substantial and costly objects of bronze is to be inferred from the local imitations of bronze vessels", while Dickinson (1992, 111), added that: "It remains to be seen whether the reported metal sources were exploited". Despite the absence of metal objects of significance among the finds from Kythera (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 206, 123*1*, pls 59–60), it had already been suggested, during the period before the excavations at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, that "the people of Kastri were not unacquainted with metal luxuries" (for clay vessels imitating metal prototypes, see Coldstream and Huxley 1984, 109; for the possible existence at Kythera of metal prototypes of the Keftiu cup, widely attested in Peloponnesian pottery, see Schachermeyr 1976, 222–228; Coldstream and Huxley 1984, 109; see also Banou 2012, 243–246). Although this adds to

the significance of the numerous bronze objects at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, let alone a number of gold specimens, they should be submitted for further chemical analysis, so that we may find out if the metals did in fact come from Laconia. In any case, it is interesting that unworked pieces of bronze, i.e. fragments of metal ingots, have been discovered at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno (for the metallurgical analysis see Varoufakis 2012, 241–247).

The proximity of Kythera to the Laconian quarries should also be noted. The importation of Spartan basalt to Crete is certified by finds from Knossos, while unused pieces of Spartan basalt have also come to light at Hagios Georgios (Banou 2012, 449, pl. 19; for the Knossos material, see Evans 1921–1930, III, 269, fig. 181; Warren 1992, 290–292, fig. 79; Huxley 1988, 66). According to Dickinson (1992, 111): “Lapis lacedaemonius may not yet have been in demand in Crete and was never extensively used”. Another Laconian stone, porphyry, was also used in Minoan Crete (Waterhouse and Hope-Simpson 1961, 119–121; Warren 1969, 126; Stos-Gale and Gale 1984, 61; Morris and Warren in discussion in Coldstream and Huxley 1984, 111; see also Cooper 1981, 190–191). Many unworked fragments of this stone have also come to light at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno. It has also been suggested that some other activity, like fishing, may explain the existence of the Minoan colony at Kythera (Rutter and Zerner 1984, 76; also see Rutter, Hägg and Morris in discussion in Coldstream and Huxley 1984, 111).

The discovery at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno of so many unworked pieces of Spartan basalt and porphyry, as well as fragments of bronze ingots and bronze slag, may indicate that both the figurines and other objects had been manufactured in local workshops. The association of workshops with sanctuaries is quite well known and can certainly not be ruled out *a priori*. Similar small finds may have also come to light in the other, unfortunately looted, metropolitan peak sanctuaries in Crete, that have yet to be published. Juktas, which has yielded hundreds of unpublished clay objects, now stored in the Herakleion Museum, is a prime example. Indeed, it may very well be the case that these raw materials were meant as votive offerings. At Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, however, no other evidence was found, except for the fragments of raw materials mentioned above, to suggest on-site production of various votive offerings. According to Dickinson (1994, 269): “Homogeneity may partly reflect what excavators chose to report”.

The Minoan colony of Kastri at Kythera also had a wider strategic role in the control of the commercial sea routes. For this reason the research as-

sociated with this aspect of the Kytherian economy, was not confined to the mainland of Greece, but was undertaken in co-operation with the Institute of Underwater Archaeology, in an attempt to locate Minoan shipwrecks along the coast of the island.

At my request, the Institute of Underwater Archaeology undertook an archaeological investigation of the east coast of Kythera, and more specifically of the area between cape Mothonaios and cape Souroumi further north, including the rocky islets of Dragonera and Antidragonera. It is unfortunate that the local Archaeological Service objected to investigations being extended to the gulf of Avlemon, an area where one would naturally expect to find Minoan shipwrecks. The team was headed by D. Kourkoumelis (archaeologist and diver), and N. Tsouhlos (photographer and diver). The discovery of nine pyramidal anchors, just off Antidragonera, is quite interesting. They were located in a small bay to the north, near the north-east promontory, and were all found together, at a distance of ca. 50-70 m from the coast (Kourkoumelis 1992, 6-11; 2011, 75-112). In 1995, a Hellenistic shipwreck, carrying pottery and lamps, was also located in this area (Sakellarakis 2011, 12-13). Other shipwrecks dated to the historical period have also been located off the Kytherian coast.

The fact that the peak sanctuary at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno overlooks the sea-routes in all directions (Branigan and Warren in discussion in Coldstream and Huxley 1984, 111), is also very significant. On a clear day one can see Kavo-Malias and Mt Taygetos, as well as a large part of the south-west Aegean, down to Crete. On a clear day, one can see from Hagios Georgios, not only Antikythera, but also the *Lephka Ori* (White mountains) of Crete and Psiloreitis, as noted above.

The view of the sea from a peak sanctuary cannot be a mere coincidence in the cult practices of a primarily nautical people, like the Minoans. After all, Juktas, the most important peak sanctuary of Crete, at the centre of the north Aegean side of the island, also provides substantial visual contact with the sea. This was noted by the first excavator of the site, Sir Arthur Evans (1921-1935, I, 4; "Juktas presents a good landmark for many miles out to sea"). It is also perfectly obvious today to anyone travelling by sea to Herakleion. Independent observations of this sort have been made by those investigating the remaining Cretan peak sanctuaries, which, like Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, are close to coastal settlements, as for example Petsofas and Traostalos in east Crete (Platon 1951, 140, n. 106, 141-142; Morgan 1988, 157). Naturally, the same applies to Kophinas, for anyone sailing along the south coast of Crete.

This visibility is also apparent in a unique depiction of an Aegean peak sanctuary discussed above, the famous miniature wall painting from Thera (Fig. 21), but also in another Aegean peak sanctuary, the excavator of which identified it as a lookout post (Caskey 1971, 392, 395), as will be noted below.



Fig. 57: Inscribed stone cup from the time of Pharaoh Userkaf.

The importance of the geographical location of Kythera may help us understand why the island was included in the famous inscription of Amenhotep III (1408-1372 B.C.) (Helck 1992, 12, 16, fig. 1), and may also explain the presence on the island of the inscribed stone cup (Fig. 57), dated to the reign of the founder of the 5th Dynasty, Pharaoh Userkaf (ca. 2487–2478 B.C.) (see Tsountas and Manatt 1897, 277; Evans 1897, 349–350; Sethe 1917, 55–80, fig. 1; Mylonas 1948, 211, fig. 1c; Stevenson-Smith 1965, 8–9, fig. 10; Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 266, pl. 86; 1984, 107), and of the lost Babylonian inscription dated to the time of Narâm-Sin, between 1830 and 1813 B.C. (Fig. 104), a text which has been often discussed over the years (Leake 1853, 258; see also Winckler 1897, 262–265; Thomas 1938, 256; Weidner and Thomas 1939, 137–138; Unger 1939, 313, fig. 58, Abb. E; Jacobsen 1940, 139; Weidner 1952, 131–132; Nougayrol 1962, 190; Yakar 1971–1972, 135; Butz 1983, 119–120; Potts 1990, 225).

Kythera's strategic location (for the strategic importance of Kythera in later periods, see N.A. Oikonomidis 1967, 272), and especially the location

of the peak sanctuary at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, raises yet another question, mostly as regards the most flourishing period of the sanctuary, between MM III and LM I, also true for the metropolitan Minoan peak sanctuaries, Juktas in particular. Some scholars have rightly suggested that the building activity and the rich finds at Juktas, dated to this period, indicate that public cult at peak sanctuaries had by now become palatial in character, and was run under the auspices of the central authority (see Rutkowski 1968, 167–168; 1986, 95; Peatfield 1987, 89–93; Rutkowski and Peatfield 1984, 166; Peatfield 1992, 61; Dickinson 1994, 126, 127). This suggestion appears to be corroborated by the well-known sealing from Knossos, discussed above (Evans 1921–1935, III, 463, fig. 323).

The same theory can be also corroborated by the finds from Hagios Georgios sto Vouno and perhaps also by the existence of other peak sanctuaries in the Aegean, to be discussed below. The unique quantity of bronze figurines found on Kythera cannot be dismissed just as a sign of popular cult activity. One begins therefore to suspect not only a relationship between the palaces and the peak sanctuaries, but also, in the case of Kythera, the practice of propaganda. If this is correct, cult activity in the Kythera peak sanctuary did not depend on west Crete, but on central Crete, i.e. Knossos itself.

It may be significant that peak sanctuaries are mostly attested in east and central Crete, the only sanctuary in west Crete to date being the sanctuary at Vrysinas. The excavation of this sanctuary has yielded only a few bronze

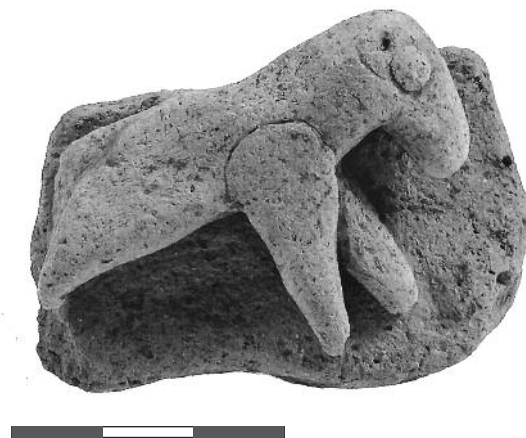


*Fig. 58: Fragment of a vase decorated with plastic decoration (animal)
(Tzachili 2011, 85, fig. 60).*

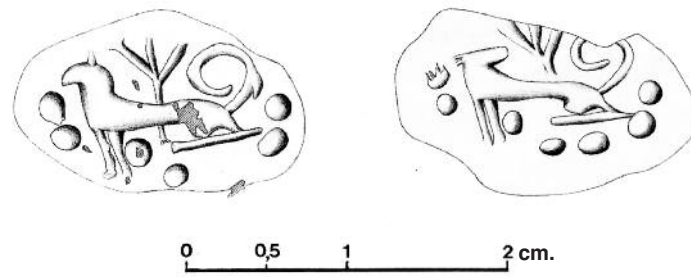


Fig. 59: Minoan sealing from Samothrace (D. Matsas 1995, pl. XXXIV).

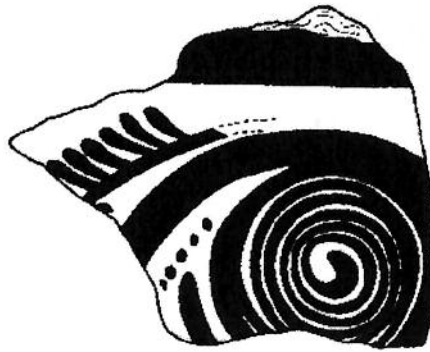


Fig. 60: Minoan sherd from Koukonisi, on Lemnos (Boulotis 2009, 190, fig. 12).

figurines and various other votive offerings (Papadopoulou-Tzachili 2010, 452, 463, fig. 12, with a reference to the Davaras excavations; see also Tzachili 2011) (Fig. 58). Although in the early years of the Kytherian colony the evidence betrays a relationship with the pottery of western Crete (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 308), it must not be forgotten that “the vast majority of the imported Minoan material appears to have come from central Crete” (Zerner 1978; Rutter and Zerner 1984, 79; Tournavitou 2014, 11–12).

Once again, the question of the Minoan thalassocracy is raised. Now though, after the 1982 conference in Athens (Hägg and Marinatos 1984), there is, in addition to Kythera, other important information from the excavations in Samothrace (Matsas 1991, 159–179; 1995, 235–247; Pini 1993, nos. 320–328 [CMS V.1B]) (Fig. 59) and Lemnos (Boulotis 2009, 175–209) (Fig. 60) in the north Aegean, the chersonese of Erythraia (Laviosa 1984, 183) and Miletus (Niemeier 1999, 543–554), and of course we should not forget the

Staphylos myth at Skopelos and the Minoan ingots at Euboean Kyme (Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1984, 158, fig. 2a; for tomb in the area of Staphylos, in Skopelos and the Minoan colonization of Peparithos, see Platon 1949, 534) (Fig. 61). I do not intent to discuss this matter any further (see Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1984, 197–203), nor do I want to answer the question posed by N. Coldstream and G. Huxley (1984, 108): “were there new colonists from Crete, ambassadors of the Minoan thalassocracy?”. I shall confine myself to religious matters, keeping in mind that Hagios Georgios sto Vouno on Kythera is not the only peak sanctuary in the Aegean. At least one other island, the island of Kea, profoundly influenced by the Minoans in the second millennium B.C., had a Minoan type peak sanctuary.

I am referring to the Troullos hill on Kea, overlooking the settlement of Hagia Irini (Caskey 1971, 392–394). According to Caskey (1966, 376): “It commands a free view of the whole channel from Sounion to Southern Euboea and it is in clear sight and signaling distance from Hagia Irini”. The same observations could apply to Hagios Georgios sto Vouno on

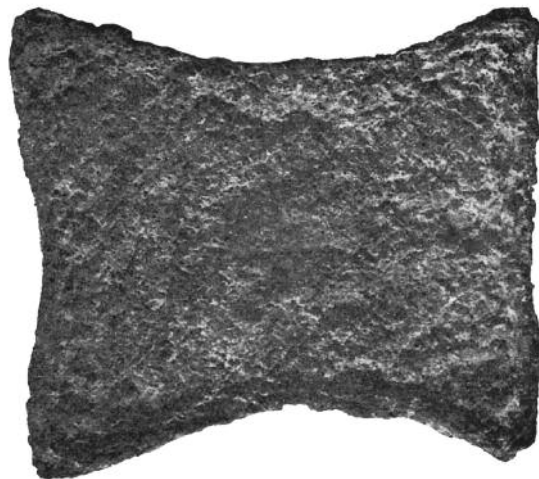


Fig. 61: Bronze ingot from Kyme, on Euboea.

Kythera. That a peak sanctuary existed on Troullos is not a new suggestion (see Hood 1984, 34). Peatfield (1983, 273, n. 1) associates Troullos with the Maleatas sanctuary at Epidaurus, which he describes as a “sanctuary on a hill”, and he further maintains that: “they don’t reflect the same cult system as the Minoan peak sanctuaries” (see though Morgan 1983, 89, n. 1; 1988, 156, n. 5, on the possibility of the existence of a peak sanctuary on Troullos; see also the discussion of Davis 1984, 164–166 and the sus-

pictions expressed there by Davis, Hägg, and Cadogan concerning the existence of a peak sanctuary at Troullos; see also Dickinson 1994, 282). Rutkowski (1986) identified Troullos as a “sacred enclosure at high altitude”. Peatfield’s explicit objection, as mentioned by Davis (1984, 164, n. 23), concerning the extreme proximity of the site to the settlement of Hagia Irini, does not seem to be a problem. The fact that a peak sanctuary existed on Troullos is obvious, not only on account of its location and on account of the structures that came to light there (Caskey 1971, fig. 13), similar to structures in Cretan peak sanctuaries, but also on account of the portable finds discovered at the site. The pottery from the site consists of 149 plain conical cups and 12 tripod vessels (Caskey 1971, 394; for conical cups, see Wiener 1984, 19, n. 20). The stone vessels include one ladle (Caskey 1971, 394, pl. 84:a-c; Warren 1969, 49) and offering tables (Caskey 1971, pl. 84:d, drawn by Popham). Bronze votive dagger cut-outs were also found (Caskey 1971, 394, pl. 84:e), all typical finds in Minoan peak sanctuaries. One of the bronze votive cut-outs from Troullos is, in fact, similar to a votive in the shape of a leg from Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, at Kythera. The Troullos site has not been excavated since 1972, when a chance find, a bronze figurine of a male worshipper (Fig. 62) (Caskey 1981, 323, pls. 78i, j; Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1995, 86–87, pl. 18, 148), another typical find in Minoan peak sanctuaries, found its way to the hands of A. Bikaki. Future excavations may well reveal new and important evidence.

Another Minoan peak sanctuary in the Aegean is located at the Minoan site of Trianda, at Ialysos, on Rhodes (Monaco 1941, 41, 183; Furumark 1950, 150–271; Papazoglou-Manioudaki 1982, 181; see also Marketou 2009, 73–96). The Italian excavations on the acropolis of Ialysos, in 1925, above the site of Trianda, on the mountain of Philerimos (altitude: 267 m), where an ancient temple of Athena once stood, uncovered a few MM clay and stone vessels (Fig. 63), published by Benzi (1984, 93–104; see also Coldstream 1969, 1, n. 6). Benzi (1984, 100), along with Hope-Simpson and Lazenby (1973, 137), rightly noted that the choice of such a large area, at such high altitude on the mountain Philerimos, was unusual for the location of a settlement. According to Hope-Simpson and Lazenby (1973, 137): “On account of its height and its extent, the hill would perhaps be an unusual choice for a normal habitation site”. Papazoglou-Manioudaki (1982, 182), believes that the Minoans occupied the site of Philerimos for “safety reasons”. The archaeological context of individual finds is unclear and the clay objects are intact, quite unusual for finds from Cretan peak sanctuaries, where they are usually attested in a very fragmentary condition. Nevertheless, the presence of a brazier (Benzi 1984, 96,



Fig. 62: Bronze figurine from Troullos, on Kea.



Fig. 63: Minoan stone vase from Rhodes (Benzi 1984, 101, fig. 20).

97, 102, no. 2, figs. 4, 5, 8), and a loom-weight (Benzi 1984, 96, 97, 103, no. 12, fig. 15), as well as many stone vessels, including an offering table (Benzi 1984, 100, 104, no. 16, figs 17-19), indicate that this could be the site of a peak sanctuary. The two sword-handles (Benzi 1984, 100, 104, nos. 1-2, figs 31-32) could be votive offerings, similarly to other votive weapons in Minoan peak sanctuaries. The bronze mirror (Benzi 1984, 100, 104, no. 23, fig. 33) might be a “chance find”, as Benzi himself believed, because of its later date.

This theory is also corroborated by the location of the site of Philerimos (for other Minoan finds, including conical cups, from the site of Philerimos at Prophetes Elias, see Marketou 1988, 27-28). Not only is it compatible with Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, commanding, as it does, an extensive

view of the sea, in this case of the central-eastern Aegean, but it also incorporates all the typical features associated with Minoan peak sanctuaries, i.e. general prominence of location, visual contact with other sites, accessibility, and proximity to a settlement (Papazoglou-Manioudaki 1982, pl. 49a). Benzi suggested that later Greek and medieval buildings on Philerimos may have destroyed earlier remains (Hope-Simpson and Lazenby 1973; Benzi 1984, 100). Recent excavations at the site of Trianda and Kalamon, have nevertheless unearthed four bronze figurines representing worshippers. The existence of a Minoan peak sanctuary on Philerimos in Rhodes must therefore remain open for the time being (for the close chronological association of the sites Philerimos and Trianda, see Benzi 1984, 100).

Prof. Benzi wrote to me on February 5th, 1995:

“As to the MM settlement on the Acropolis at Ialysos, when writing my paper I took into account the possibility that this was the site of a peak sanctuary, yet later I discarded it for two main reasons. The first is the lack of cultic (admittedly with the exception of the stone offering table) and votive objects, commonly found at such sites, and the domestic, undistinguished character of the pottery. The second is that further traces of MM occupation have been found on the nearby hill of Prophitis Ilias (T. Marketou’s paper in *Archaeology in the Dodekanese*) and at other sites in the Ialysos area. That led me to the conclusion (however not clearly stated in my paper) that the MBA occupation in this area was *kata komas* and that the settlement on the Philerimos was just a small village or a farmstead (yet, perhaps, the stone vessels don’t fit this explanation). The choice of such an elevated site for a Minoan settlement is no doubt an unusual one. It could be explained by security reasons (admittedly the explanation facillior, but not an implausible one at such an early stage) or by the fact that in MM times the Trianda plain was marshy and unhealthy (but a layer predating LM IA has been found by T. Marketou at Trianda) and that environmental conditions improved later (to my knowledge the paleogeology of the area has not yet been investigated). None of my arguments is conclusive especially in view of the fact that the site has been so much spoiled by later occupation”.

There is yet another Minoan sanctuary at Naxos, on the hill of Mikre Vigla, in the west of the island, where a surface survey, undertaken by the British School at Athens and the local Archaeological Service (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 63–162), brought to light a total of 140 clay figurines (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 114–132, figs 25–32, pls 25–29), in addition to a considerable quantity of MM and LM pottery (Barber and

Hadjianastasiou 1989, 107–108), among other finds, dating from the Early Cycladic period to the Frankish occupation.

In a discussion of this site, Barber and Hadjianastasiou note the uniqueness of the clay figurines discovered in the Cyclades (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 114, 129, 141), with the exception of a few Neolithic examples from Kephala on Kea (Coleman 1977, 105–106, pls. 26, 71, 73; Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 129). On the other hand, while Barber and Hadjianastasiou have emphasized the parallels between these figurines and certain-albeit very few-Early Cycladic marble figurines (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 115, 125, 129; Dickinson 1994, 262), they have virtually ignored the numerous clay parallels from Minoan peak sanctuaries on Crete (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 129–130). This may be part of a current trend among scholars studying the Cyclades, propagating a view of the latter as an independent and “democratic” cultural entity, which resisted the tide of “the times” (Schachermeyr 1978, 423–428; Doumas 1984, 139: “Thera was independent”), an entity unreasonably pitted against Evans’ Victorian imperialistic concept of a thalassocracy.

According to Hood (1992, 135):

“Some of those who have attacked the views of Evans about Cretan domination over parts of the Greek mainland during the Bronze Age have dismissed them as reflecting British imperialist sentiment of the Victorian era. There may be an element of truth in this claim, but such critics often tend to forget that their own views must similarly reflect the atmosphere of their time. Evans and his contemporaries, were probably in fact rather better placed to make reasonably objective judgements about what happened in early times, since they were in general well grounded in a knowledge of the Old Testament and of ancient Greek and Roman history, which gave them some basis for looking at the past in depth and from viewpoints that differed from those of their own age. At the moment, and in the more relaxed political atmosphere of the present, the whole question of Cretan expansion during the Bronze Age into the islands of the Aegean and to the coasts of the mainland bounding it on the west and east in modern Greece and Turkey is under review”.

Crete’s close presence, however, should never be ignored (Warren 2000, 12–13; Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1981; for opposite view, see Doumas 1992, who avoids even the mention of Crete in his text).

The similarities between the figurines found at Mikre Vigla on Naxos and the many hundreds of Minoan figurines, mostly unpublished, that have been unearthed in Cretan peak sanctuaries, now on display in various Cre-

tan museums, cannot be underestimated. Apart from the Petsofas figurines (Rutkowski 1991, pls. 3–46), very few have been published (Pilali-Papasteriou 1992; Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1995). The large number of figurines from the excavation at Juktas and the numerous examples from the peak sanctuaries excavated by Davaras (Vrysinas, Traostalos, Kophinas, etc.) remain unpublished, although they could provide material for a considerable number of new PhD theses. All the features of the Naxian figurines, the plasticity of the form (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 114–115), the pose, the existence of some standing and some seated examples (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 121, figs 26, 28; see also Rutkowski 1991, 91, pls. 33, 42; Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1971, pl. 12a), the clothing, and the gestures (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 116, 130), have many Minoan parallels, despite the fact that the Naxian figurines are poorly preserved surface finds. A clay head (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 115, 125, no. 552, fig. 31, pl. 27), should not be compared with the marble Cycladic figurines, since the backward tilting of the head, along with the various modeling techniques used, can be paralleled in many Minoan figurines (for published examples, see Rutkowski 1991, pls. 3:5, 4:3, 14:3, 18:9; Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1971, pl. 10γ; Pilali-Papasteriou 1992, nos. 18, 47). It is likewise unnecessary to associate some of the Naxian clay figurines (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 116, nos. 510, 512, 514–516, figs 25–26, pl. 25), with the well-known Early Cycladic marble figurine of the “hunter-warrior” type (Getz-Preziosi 1979, 87–96), since the Naxian specimens are wearing the Minoan kilt, just like the Minoan clay figurines (Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1971, 15, no. 22, fig. 2, pl. 11, 19, no. 38, fig. 3, 23, no. 48, fig. 4; Rutkowski 1991, pl. 16:3–4). This could be the reason why the dagger is not attested in the Naxian clay figurines (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 116). Neither is it necessarily true that the long neck of the Naxian figurines represents a non-Minoan feature (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 129). On the contrary, a particularly long neck is often encountered among the numerous Minoan figurines (Pilali-Papasteriou 1992, nos. 21, 27–28, 34, 37, 41–42, 46, 48).

The Naxian figurines have, however, other Minoan parallels. The loincloth (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 119, no. 517, fig. 26, pl. 25) is not a Cycladic (Getz-Preziosi 1979, 89, fig. 1a–b), but a typically Minoan trait (Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1971, 123–125) as is the belt (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 116, no. 518; see Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1971, 131). Also significant is the fact that the best-preserved Naxian figurine (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 116, no. 510, fig. 25, pl. 25 and nos. 510–511, 130) is wearing a headband rendered in high relief (Fig. 64), just like the headbands on the Hagios Georgios sto Vouno specimens (Fig. 33). Also note-

worthy is the presence of votive human limbs among the Naxos figurines (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 128, nos. 571–576, fig. 32, pl. 29). Although they are compatible with many Minoan examples, they were not necessarily provided with suspension holes, like their bronze counterparts from Hagios Georgios sto Vouno. Furthermore, the small size of the Naxian figurines (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 115) is reminiscent of a large number of miniature Minoan figurines.

The clay figurines from Mikre Vigla on Naxos, which were locally manufactured (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 115, 129), are therefore typical of Cretan peak sanctuaries and should be associated with the abundant Minoan pottery from the same site. A small “kourotrophos” figurine (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 115–116, no. 520, fig. 27, pl. 25), not included here, because of its bad state of preservation, could be anything. It is also interesting that the imported Minoan pottery from Mikre Vigla (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 107–109; for fragments of a “fenestrated stand” of Minoan type, not clearly comparable to Minoan examples, see Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 106, nos. 380–382, fig. 21, pl. 21b; Evans 1928, vol.2, figs. 67, 70bis), i.e. plain conical cups (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 92, nos. 214–223, fig. 14), braziers (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 103, nos. 367–368, fig. 20, pl. 20c-d), tripod cooking pots



*Fig. 64: Minoan clay figurine from Mikre Vigla, on Naxos
(Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, fig. 25).*

(Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 106, nos. 393–397, pl. 22a-b), and pithoi (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 102, nos. 355–359, 19), have parallels both at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno and in the Cretan peak sanctuaries. The same holds true for the loom-weights (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 134–135, nos. 593–598, pl. 30d-e).

The finds from Mikre Vigla on Naxos are thus typical of peak sanctuaries. The site, furthermore, has a view (Morrison 1989, 146) and lies in a prominent location, features considered typical of peak sanctuaries in general.

The name itself (which translates “small observation post”) reflects this aspect of the site, as does the name Troullos for the peak sanctuary on Kea. Remains of structures of some sort were discovered on the surface, in the same area as the figurines. They may be the remains of buildings associated with the peak sanctuary (see Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 131, 140, “shrine”; Morrison 1989, 146, 149), which apparently operated under a “strong Minoan influence” (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 140). Barber and Hadjianastasiou have also mentioned in passing the association between figurines and peak sanctuaries (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 132). The existence of a peak sanctuary at this location, is not however certain. There are earlier, Early Cycladic installations at the site (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 71, 140), which is moreover located at an altitude of only 60 m, perhaps a little higher during the Bronze Age (I.A. Morrison 1989, 141, 143–144). It should be however noted at this point that the peak sanctuary of Prophetes Elias at Malia, is located at a height of only 99 m (Rutkowski 1986, 73, 98). Even less clear-cut is the association of Mikre Vigla on Naxos with a settlement (for the absence of a settlement lower down, see Morrison 1989, 146), to which it would belong, as for example Grotta, the most important Middle to Late Cycladic site on the island. Only further investigation and excavation at the site can confirm or refute this hypothesis, especially now that Minoan pottery has appeared in other islands, such as Kato Kouphonisi (Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 205–215). Although the site of Mikre Vigla does not fulfill all of Peatfield’s topographical criteria for a peak sanctuary (1990, 120), the criteria as regards the finds, especially the votive limbs, do.

There may very well be more peak sanctuaries in the Aegean. Morgan (1988, 156), mentions the Mavro Rahidi peak in her discussion of the peak sanctuary depicted in the miniature wall-painting from Thera. Traces of the Late Bronze Age occupation have been attested at Mavro Rahidi, also known as Kokkino Vouno, which rises above Akrotiri (see Sp. Marinatos, 1969, vol.2, 35; Sperling 1973, 24, no. 75; Barber 1981, 20, no. 50; Dumas 1983, 55–56, fig. 2, where the landscape is compared to that in the miniature wall painting and is interpreted as a lookout post; Caskey 1966, 376). Dumas does not preclude the existence of a peak sanctuary at Mavro Rahidi (pers. communication 7.2.1994).

On the other hand, I do not share Bintliff’s opinion that Minoan peak sanctuaries can be identified on the mainland of Greece (Bintliff 1977, 151–154; for the sanctuary at the top of Mount Parnes, see Mastrokostas 1983, 339–344). Perhaps there they have a different character. I do not believe that the sanctuary of Apollo Maleatas on Mt Kynortion at Epidaurus (Papadimitriou 1948, 90–111; 1949, 91–99; 1950, 194–202; 1951, 204–212;

Lambrinoudakis 1974, 96; 1975, 167–171; 1976, 202–207; 1977, 187–191; 1978, 119; 1981a, 158–160; 1981b, 59–65; 1983, 152–156; 1987, 53–58; 1988, 21–22), can be identified as a Minoan peak sanctuary, as the excavator believes (Lambrinoudakis 1981b, 59 n. 5, 62 n. 17), a view also shared by other scholars (Rutkowski 1986, 260, n. 2; Bintliff 1977, 152; Kilian 1992, 11). Peatfield (1983, 273), considers it unlikely, although he believes that it was a “sanctuary on a hill” and maintains, that, as on Troullos, on the island of Kea, the remains: “do not reflect the same cult system as the Minoan peak sanctuaries”. Warren (1981, 63), does not see any difference between the Maleatas sanctuary and the Minoan peak sanctuaries, which he describes as “astonishingly similar”. These scholars have perhaps not visited the site, and because of the inaccuracies in the published excavation reports, they have overlooked the fact that the Maleatas sanctuary was not built on the top of a hill, but on a slope. Even during 1977–1978, before the site was associated with a Minoan peak sanctuary, remains of prehistoric occupation were uncovered at the top of the hill, above the sanctuary (Lambrinoudakis 1977, 193–194; 1978, 111–113, fig. 1); they were recorded ten years later in 1987 (Lambrinoudakis 1987, 56, fig. 2). See also Dickinson’s objections (1994, 282–283), who notes that: “characteristics of peak sanctuaries are lacking”. All attempts to assign the Maleatas sanctuary to the well established type of Cretan peak sanctuaries, should therefore be rejected. Hägg (1984, 120–121), has demonstrated, clearly, I believe, that the Maleatas sanctuary is a Mycenaean sanctuary, judging by the absence of the typical features associated with Minoan peak sanctuaries. Even the finds identified as Minoan by Hägg, i.e. the seals, are not all really Minoan; some are Mycenaean (Sakellarakis 1976, 292, nos. 30–31, figs. 31–33; Sakellariou 1964, no. 32 [CMS I]; Pini 1975, nos. 221–222 [CMS 5.1]; Pini 1992, nos. 336–339 [CMS 5.1A]; see also Pini 1984, 123–130, who considers these seals, and even the talismanic seal from the sanctuary of Maleatas, Mycenaean). Perhaps one should await the publication of the sanctuary, in order to see: “some sherds of Minoan pottery” (Hägg 1984, 21), as well as the simple conical cups that have been mentioned (Wiener 1984, 21, no. 40). Nevertheless, the existence of so many bronze votive double axes at the sanctuary leaves no doubt as regards the Minoan influence at the site (Hägg 1984, 121).

The excavations at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, however, should provide the impetus for further investigation of the hills next to various sites on other islands where Minoan influence has been ascertained, such as Karpathos (E.M. Melas 1985), especially the sites of Leftoporos, in southwest Karpathos (Melas 1985, 36–37, E35) and Vouno (Melas 1985, 31–32, D18), in the southeast part of the island; both sites have excellent views

and lie in prominent locations, while many simple conical cups have been found in the area. Other islands include Telos (A. Sampson 1980, 68–73), Melos (Barber 1984, 179–182), or even islands located along communication routes (Niemeier 1984, 206), i.e. Kythnos and Aigina, and even Miletos (W. Schiering 1984, 187–189; Niemeier 1999, 543–544) and Iasos (C. Laviosa 1984, 183–185), along the east coast of Asia Minor. The same can be said for Lemnos, Samothrace and Erythraia, etc. According to Morgan (1983, 89): “Hill top ceremonies may have occurred outside Crete without the use of permanent, or indeed, any, cultic accouterments” and later (1988, 156): “There is indeed no reason why high places should not have been revered and sanctified by the inhabitants of the smaller islands or of the mainland in the period under review, particularly at those sites which felt Minoan influence. It may be that their identification has proved elusive because the nature of the cultic remains differed from those of Crete and were perhaps impermanent or even that the place was considered sacred without the need for cultic paraphernalia ... It may be that in time more conclusive evidence will appear for the use of hill tops as cult places within the Cyclades”.

This theory is supported by the mural representation of a peak sanctuary in the Cyclades, the so-called “Meeting on the Hill”, which indicates that this type of Minoan sanctuary was widely disseminated in the Aegean and that it was recognizable by residents and visitors alike (for iconography and content of Thera wall paintings, see N. Marinatos 1984, 158). It is part of the miniature wall-painting on the north wall of room 5 of the West House at Thera. Many scholars believe, with good reason, that it depicts a ritual in a Minoan peak sanctuary (Rutkowski 1976, 233, fig. 2; Warren 1979, 125; Gesell 1980–1981, 198–199; Sp. Iakovidis 1981, 57–58; Morgan 1983, 88; 1988, 156, pl. 1; Platon 1984, 67; S.A. Immerwahr 1990, 71; see also Dumas 1983, 85, 47, pls. 26–27, where he avoids all commentary and repeats the earlier view of Sp. Marinatos; also see Televantou 1994, 63–64, figs. 25–27, pls. 26–27). Immerwahr has also identified a peak sanctuary in another wall-painting from Thera, discovered in room 6 of Building B, which depicts monkeys and wild goats (Immerwahr 1990, 209, n. 12; see also Dumas 1992, pls. 85–91; for reconstruction, see N. Marinatos 1984, fig. 83; see also Minoan wall paintings from Hagia Triada and the House of Frescoes, at Knossos, in N. Marinatos 1984, figs. 49, 61, 180).

Minoan religious influence in the Aegean is not limited to the purely Minoan type of peak sanctuary. This influence was obviously not uniform; it varied according to the degree of contact that each area maintained with Minoan Crete (Dickinson 1994, 282). This may explain why the peak sanctuaries, discussed above, have yielded different types of votive offerings,

which display neither the variety nor the quality of those found at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno. Minoan religious influence in the Aegean has been discussed by many scholars and should be taken for granted, if only in the light of two important postwar finds, the clay figures from Kea and the wall-paintings from Thera. I will not say anything further on this subject. What remains to be considered is the influence exerted by Kythera on the Peloponnese, and Laconia in particular (see above with reference to the double axes from Maleatas; see also Dickinson 1984, 116). According to Catling (1976–1977, 28): “The new evidence from Laconia suggests that the development of the region at the beginning of the Late Bronze Age cannot be separated from the expansionist moves from Crete, seen most easily in Kythera, which find expression, too, in events at Nichoria and Ayios Stephanos” (see also Huxley 1988, 69–70; Hood 1984, 135–139; Rutter and Zerner 1984, 77).

Certain elements that have been considered Minoan in later Laconian cult should be perhaps re-examined. Scholars studying religion have already stressed the Minoan roots of a predominantly Laconian cult, that of Hyakinthos (Nilsson 1950, 455–458, 470; Mellink 1943, 142–144; Willetts 1962, 222–223), with a pre-Hellenic name of a flower. Hyakinthos is also associated with Cretan Zeus and perhaps even with the cult of Helen (Nilsson 1950, 528–532), possibly a Minoan deity, possibly Ariadne, not only on account of her association with tree worship, but also because of her attributes.

In a study undertaken by Efi Sapouna-Sakellarakis (1993, 137–143), she emphasizes the absence of Mycenaean bronze figurines on mainland Greece (Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1993, 142) and the significance of the four lead figurines from Laconia and Messenia; she also discusses the important bronze statue of the horned god from Enkomi (Dikaios 1962, 1–40; 1969, pls. 140–141; Marinatos 1963, 95–98; Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1993, 142). The two figurines from Kambos (Tsountas 1891, 189–191; Marinatos and Hirmer 1959, figs. 224–225; Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1993, 138, figs 6–7; see also Coldstream and Huxley 1984, 110), and one from Pavlopetri in Laconia (Harding, Cadogan and Howell 1969, 138, no. 7, pl. 33m; Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1995, 85, no. 146, pl. 1:146), along with another from Peristeria in Messenia (Vermeule 1961, 119; Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1993, 138), should be also associated with the numerous Minoan bronze figurines recently discovered in neighboring Kythera.

A more intensive investigation of the sites on the island of Kythera will throw more light on the Minoan influence on the Peloponnese during the Mycenaean period, and not only in the field of religion. Just as Kastri, ac-

according to its excavators, “may have played a vital part in a Minoan *diaspora*, shortly before its abandonment in the face of Mycenaean expansion” (Coldstream and Huxley 1984, 110), Hagios Georgios sto Vouno may have played an important role in the dissemination of Minoan religion.

As regards religion on the island itself, the close relationship of the latter with Crete in later times, is well documented. Between 1313 and 1450, for example, the law prohibiting the ordination of orthodox priests in Crete increased the importance of the bishopry of Kythera for the Cretans, since most deacons used to go to Kythera for their ordination. The *Cheilas Chronicle* mentions that during the first half of the 15th century A.D., the monastery of Hagioi Theodoroi on Kythera was administered by a head-priest (protopapas), named Notaras. The title of head-priest is very important, because it is the highest ecclesiastical rank in the Ionian islands and in Crete, where the episcopal ambitions of the orthodox population had been crushed and church authority had passed into the hands of the head-priests; the jurisdiction of the latter was identical to that of bishops, except for the right of ordination. The presence of a head-priest at Kythera, who, judging by his title must have been of Cretan origin, attests to the degree and frequency of church relations between Crete and Kythera (Hopf 1878, 346–347; Maltezou 1989, 16, ns. 2–3, 23–25). Even today, the priest at Hagios Georgios on Vouno hails from Crete (Father Georgios Adikimenakis from Listaros in Messara).

C. ARCHEOLOGICAL ACTIVITY AT KYTHERA

Archaeological investigations at Kythera have unfortunately not done justice to the historical importance of the island (for the period between 1875–1966, see Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 1–20; for the period between 1966–1984, see Petrocheilos 1984, 23–29). According to Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos (1982, 1): “Kythera remained for a long time an unexplored and unexploited archaeological region, despite positive indications that a systematic archaeological investigation could possibly reveal important finds that would shed light on many unknown aspects of the history of the island”. As we shall see below, beyond the initial flow of information concerning Kytherian antiquities between the 15th and the 18th century, and despite the burst of activity as regards the illegal search for antiquities at Kythera during the 19th century, a phenomenon precipitated by the “Mentor” ship wreck at Avlaimon, carrying some of the so-called “Elgin marbles”, and by the implication of the Kaloutsi family, and other local families in this search for antiquities on behalf of the British sovereigns of the island, and various museums, the systematic investigation of Kythera during the 20th century was rather limited. The change of the geopolitical circumstances of the island, leading to the decline of Kythera, also influenced archaeological investigations; the island became increasingly difficult to reach, even after the opening of the Isthmus of Corinth in 1893 and even after the rapid developments in seafaring, the island of Kythera found itself out of the way of the age-old and once frequented sea routes.

a. The first information about Kytherian antiquities

For all those travelling by sea, an unavoidable choice after the subjugation of mainland Greece to the Turks (Vin 1980, 310), Kythera was, because of its location, on the route of every religious, commercial or military ac-

tivity between the west and the east part of the Mediterranean (for Kythera and the routes followed by Dutch travelers, see Koster 1993, 8, 9, 25). According to van der Vin (1980, 220): “(Kythera was) a port of call for countless ships”. Of course the main religious destination was the pilgrimage to the Holy Land. According to Saint Jerome, two female pilgrims to the Holy Land had already passed from Kythera, as early as 385 A.D. (Maraval 1996, 147; see also Simopoulos 1973–1976, A, 186; Malamut 2003, 40). As early as the 13th century A.D., i.e. before the Venetian conquest of Kythera in 1363, all the ships sailing from Venice to Jaffa (ancient *Iónnn*), carrying pilgrims to the Holy Land, passed through Kythera (Vin 1980, 17).

Many travellers rightly considered Kythera as an entry point to the Archipelago (see Mirone 1731, I, 43; Malamut 2003, 36). Bartolomeo delli Sonetti begins his “Periplus Nilsson” from Kythera as early as the 2nd half of the 15th century (Tolias 2001, 79–80). As was the case for other islands in the Archipelago, the first, scanty archaeological information derives from pilgrims (Vin 1980), travellers and cartographers. The role of travellers (for travellers at Kythera, see Petrocheilos 1979; Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 80–142) and pilgrims (see Vin 1980), as a source of information for various matters, but especially as a source of information concerning antiquities, is well known; this is also partly true of Kythera (Petrocheilos 1984, 23–24).

Nevertheless, the historical information provided by the nautical portolan-maps (Avramea 1972, 180; 1985, 25; Tolias 1999, 58–59; for narrative portolans, see Tolias 1999, 71; 2001, 81) and the isolaria (maps of islands) (Avramea 1972, 182; 1985, 27; Tolias 1999, 58–59; 2001), has not been yet fully exploited, although their value was noted a long time ago (Stergiopoulos 1948–1949, 33–34). Specialists on cartography have recently emphasized the close relationship between classical studies, historical geography and topography (Avramea 1972, 490, n. 12), rightly treating the nautical portolan maps as historical sources. According to Avramea (1972, 181): “Their texts (the texts included in the isolaria), include a wealth of historical information about the Greek islands and a systematic study of all these documents would lead to very important conclusions, both about the historical geography of the islands during the times of foreign occupation, and about public opinion for this area of the world, in the West” (see also Tolias 2001, 22). The special significance of some of the references on these nautical maps for Kythera, and especially for the area of Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, has been already discussed.

In contrast to the cartographers, who refer to antiquities on the island of Kythera only once (see below), many pilgrims and travellers reminisce,

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during their visit, about the antiquity of the island, muse over the myth of Aphrodite's birth (for the myth, see Aroni-Tsihli 1997), seek her temple and debate about the various myths concerning the relationship of Helen of Troy, of Paris and Menelaos with the island of Kythera; the relationship of Aphrodite with Kythera is already attested in Petrarch. The myth relating the abduction of Helen by Paris, to a temple of Aphrodite on Kythera, already recorded by Daris the Phrygian in his history of the capture of Troy (Giatromanolakis 1996, (ed.) 211, ch. 10), pervades the narratives of all the medieval visitors of Kythera. According to J.P.A. van der Vin (1980, 222, 317), the local myth of Helen and Paris at Kythera, is based, due to the isolation of both Kythera and Laconia, on a strong regional tradition, since it is mentioned with increasing intensity by various groups of people (for other areas mentioned with reference to the mythical abduction of Helen, Propontis and Dalmatia, see Vin 1980, 222). Vin (1980, 222), relates the Kytherian tradition to the cult of Helen in Laconia, in a rather superficial manner. According to the same scholar (Vin 1980, 220–222, 322), the Venieri family, the first Venetian conquerors of Kythera, toyed with the myth of the Kytherian Aphrodite, as it appeared to be related to their family name (for the Venieri, see recently Koumanoudi-Maltezou 2003, 87–106). It is of course possible, as mentioned by van der Vin, that the earliest pilgrims to the Holy Land would have also visited the antiquities of Kythera during their brief stay on the island, even if they don't refer to them explicitly.

What follows is a discussion of the information provided by the writings of a number of well known pilgrims to the Holy Land, who visited Kythera, as well as of some travellers and cartographers who mention the island.

The island of Kythera is recorded in a portolan from Pisa as early as the 12th century (Gautier Dalché 1995; see also Malamut 2003, 36). The earliest known pilgrim to visit Kythera, in October 1323, on his journey to Jerusalem, through Crete, is Symon Simeonis, an Irishman, member of a monastic order (Esposito (ed.) 1960; Vin 1980, 221). Kythera is also mentioned in 1355 by Jacopo da Verona (U. Monneret de Villard 1950, 174; Malamut 2003, 36). The next pilgrim to visit Kythera, who referred to the island as *Citrini*, is the Italian notary Niccolò da Martoni (Vin 1980, 37–52, 221), who visited Kythera in 1394–1395; he was the first of all the pilgrims and the travelers alike, to mention, as we shall see, the myth of Helen and Paris. It is worth noting though, that Niccolò da Martoni did see the temple of Aphrodite. In his own words: “ad insulam Citrini, in qua erat et nun est quodam templum”. In 1403 Kythera is visited by three Spaniards, the nobles Ruy Gonzales de Clavijo and Gómez de Salazar, as well as the theologian Paez de Santa Maria, ambassadors to the court of king Timur of the Tatars (Tamerlane). Clavijo, who recorded the itinerary, also mentions the

myth of Helen and Paris in connection to Kythera, which he refers to as *Cetul* (Vin 1980, 99, 222, 373, n. 14, 623).

The first traveler to mention portable antiquities on Kythera, is the Florentine priest Christoforo Buondelmonti, who visited the island around 1413–1416. Buondelmonti, who also mentions the myth of the abduction of Helen by Paris (Buondelmonti 1897, 16–19; Petrocheilos 1979, 75–77; for Chr. Buondelmonti, see Buondelmonti 1981, 33–46), makes note of a piece of sculpture depicting Aphrodite and the three Graces that he saw on the island (Vin 1980, 146, 392). It is also worth noting that according to Buondelmonti, the temple of Aphrodite at Kythera was still visible. On the 27th of February 1418, Nompars II, Seigneur de Caumont, the French pilgrim to the Holy Land, visited Kythera, which he refers to as *Sitarée* (Seigneur de Caumont 1858; Vin 1980, 222). In 1437, Pero Tafur, the Spanish noble from Cordoba, another pilgrim to the Holy Land, also visited Kythera. He also mentions the abduction of Helen by Paris. It is worth noting that Pero Tafur, who refers to Kythera as *Cetrit*, also mentions the existence of a cave, 200 *orgies*/1200 feet/400 yards high, and more than 200 *orgies*/1200 feet/400 yards deep (Tafur 1926; Vin 1980, 52–64, 222, 692).

Cyriako de Pizicolli, also known as Cyriako of Ankona (1391–1452) (Bodnar 1960, 47; see also Vin, 1980, 222; Simopoulos 1973–1976, A, 301–315; for the influence of Cyriako of Ankona in the West, see Bergstein 2002), an admirer of Greece, merchant, poet, diplomat and archaeologist, provides important information about the antiquities on Kythera. Cyriako of Ankona, who visited Kythera in 1437, mentions fortification walls and ruins of a sanctuary of Aphrodite; he also describes and draws the walls at Kastri (Reisch 1889, 226). A travel guide published in 1448, mentions the remains of a temple of Apollo at Kythera, as well as the myth of Helen of Troy and Paris (Duff 1893; Simopoulos 1973–1976, A, 39). The same myth is also mentioned in 1461 by Luis de Rochechouart, a French pilgrim to the Holy Land (Couderc 1893, 233; see also Malamut 2003, 33). It has also been reported that Nicolas III, marquis of Este, also passed through Kythera in the 15th century, during his journey to the Holy Land (Petrocheilos 1940, 84). In 1490 a map of Kythera, appears in the isolarium created by the German Henricus Martellus Germanus (Tolias 2001, 54) (Fig. 66), a miniaturist who worked in Florence; ca. 1480–1490 Kythera also appears on a map of the Balkan peninsula created by the same cartographer (Tolias 2001, 48–49).

As we shall see below, various cartographers mention Kythera as a critical location for seafaring between the West to the East. So Kythera is mentioned by cartographers, not only on the isolaria (maps of islands), but

also in the nautical maps, the portolani, which also include the name of the island, that appears in a number of variations. Cartographers and travellers refer to Kythera as *Cerigo*, *Cérigo*, *Serigo*, *Kythera*, *Citri*, *Citrin*, *Citrini*, *Cetul*, *Scotera*, *Porphyris*, *Sitarée*, *Citérée*, *Cytharée* (Thenaud 1884, 263), *Insula Cederici* and *Isola di vebere*. And although they do not provide any direct information about the antiquities on the island, since this was not their ultimate aim, they nevertheless preserve the age-old name of Kythera, and are therefore mentioned below.

Many pilgrims to the Holy Land go through Kythera during the 16th century; one of these pilgrims is the Englishman, Sir Richard Guylford, who visits the island in July 1506, and mentions, yet again, the myth of Helen of Troy (Guylford 1851, 12–13). In 1511, two geographers, Cour Chamberlain and Nic. Daulfinois, also pass through Kythera (Marsellos 1974, 32). In 1512, Domenico Trevisan, an ambassador of Venice to Egypt (Thenaud 1884, 140, 163, 222) and the French monk Thenaud (Thenaud 1884, 18, 139–140; Petrocheilos 1940, 84), sail past Kythera. Both mention the story of Helen's abduction. In 1525 Kythera appears on the isolarium (map of islands) created by Benedetto Bordone (Bordone 1528a; 1528b; according to Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 84, the name is recorded as Bordoni). In 1525/1526, Kythera is mentioned in a book on seafaring by the Ottoman Piri-Reis (Loupis 1999, 301–302), where a map of the island also appears. His name is better known nowadays because of the Turkish ship involved in the dispute over the rights of Turkey to extract oil in the Aegean sea, which bears his name. In the first half of the 16th century, the Belgian Jean le Maire (1473–1525), a lyric poet of the end of the Middle Ages (Petrocheilos 1940, 84; Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 85), visited Kythera; like Nicolas de Nicolay, he also mentions the existence of a statue which was carried to Venice by a *Proveditore*, a political/military official appointed by Venice, as we shall see below. According to P. Karolidis, the prince Em. Christophorou travels in 1530 from Kythera to Meliti, while Denis Possot, a French pilgrim to the Holy Land, describes, in 1532, the forts of Kythera (Schefer 1971, 127–128; see also Malamut 2003, 35–36).

Kythera are marked on the portolan map drawn by B. Agnese in 1536 (for Agnese and Homen, see Tolias 1999, 57, 66). In 1537, the Cretan ship captain, Georgios Sideris (Kalapodas) (Tolias 1999, 88, 179–180, figs 8–9), also known in connection with an episode concerning some lost drawings of Domenico Theotokopoulos (Constandoudaki 1975, 292–308; Tolias 1999, 39–40), places Kythera on a nautical atlas and on a map of the Central Mediterranean. The fact that Kythera, the island closest to Crete, is also placed on a nautical map, a portolan of the Mediterranean, drawn by

the same Georgios Sideris (Kalapodas), in 1541 (Fig. 67) (Tolias 1999, 90, 180–181, fig. 10), as well as on two other nautical maps of the Mediterranean, in 1541 and 1560 (Tolias 1999, 94, 96, 182–184, figs 12–13), is indicative of the close relationship of the Cretan seafarer with the island. On the 26th of July 1544, at five in the morning, the French J. Maurand sails through the Kythera straits and repeats the stories of previous travellers (for travelers, often repeating each other, see Philopoulou-Desylla 1984, 24–25; see also Dorez 1901, 55: “On y voit encore les ruines d’un très beau temple de Diane et Apollon ou Hélène”; see also Petrocheilos 1940, 84; for J. Maurand, see Philopoulou-Desylla 1984, 42). Eight years after the first map drawn by Georgios Sideris (Kalapodas), in 1545, Kythera appears twice on the international nautical isolarium (map of islands), drawn by Alonso de Santa Cruz, the first Spanish cosmographer, attached to the Spanish throne (Tolias 2001, 106–107). Alonso de Santa Cruz also records other place names on Kythera and illustrates, in a conventional manner, four building complexes in various parts of the island (Figs 68–69). It is of course worth noting that the Kythera coastline is not the same on the two maps. In the same year, in 1545, Sebastian Münster, a German cosmographer and author of the “Cosmography”, publishes a map of Greece, where Kythera is also depicted in a wood engraving (Avramea 1985, 62–63, fig. 29) (Fig. 70).

More information about the antiquities on Kythera and the only substantial information dating from the 16th century, is provided by Nicolas de Nicolay (1517–1583), the official geographer of the king of France, Henry the Second (1547–1559), who visited Kythera in 1551 (Silvius 1577; Petrocheilos 1979, 43–44; Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 82–87; for Nicolas de Nicolay, see Philopoulou-Desylla 1984, 42). As noted above, this is the first traveler we know of that visited the site of Hagios Georgios sto Vouno. Nicolas de Nicolay also mentions rock-cut structures at Palaipolis, which he describes as baths, as well as architectural remains and remains of fortification walls.

As will be noted below, Nicolas de Nicolay, like Jean le Maire before him, and like other travellers after him, mentions the theft of a marble head from Palaiokastros, by a Venetian *Proveditore*, in the first half of the 16th century. This is perhaps not a unique incident if one considers similar incidents in Crete during the Venetian occupation of the island (L. Beschi 1975; Tsiknakis 1989–1990; 1991). New information has been recently published about the activities, excavations and illicit collection of antiquities, perpetrated by Francesco Grimani (1688–1701) and Antonio Nani (1703–1705), two Venetian *Proveditori* in the Peloponnese, and more specifically in the Isthmus of Corinth, at Epidaurus, and at Tsakonia (Malliaris 1998), which is

close to Kythera; there is also information about the transport of statues, inscriptions, coins, and even architectural members, to Venice. These illicit activities can be viewed as part of the prevailing trend for the creation of collections of antiquities, typical of Renaissance Italy and especially Venice (Tsiknakis 1989–1990, 179, 197, n. 3; Franzoni 1981; for search of lost antiquities as early as the 16th century, at the time of Suleiman the Magnificent, see Philopoulou-Desylla 1984, 33–34). It is therefore possible, that the island of Aphrodite, which for some antiquity-struck Venetians had the added charm of the myth of Helen of Troy, did not escape the attention of illicit dealers in antiquities and its sovereigns at the time, and perhaps further research in the Venetian archives would yield more results.

Kythera is also mentioned in 1573 by the Frenchman Phillipe du Fresne-Canaye (Hauser 1897, 173; see also Malamut 2003, 32). As noted above, the cartographers of the second half of the 16th century, mention Kythera quite frequently. Kythera is mentioned in 1580–1590 by Antonio of Melos (Millo) (Livieratos and Beriatos 2001, 157; for Antonio of Melos, see Tolias 1999, 38, 40, 58; 2001, 19). In 1572, Tomaso Porcacchi da Castiglione publishes “L’Isole più famose del mondo” (The Book of the Famous Isles) (Porcacchi 1572), which contains a map of Peloponnese, including Kythera, and a copper plate engraving of a map of Kythera executed by Girolamo Porro (Avramea 1985, 70–71, 73, figs. 34, 36; Tolias 2001, 69) (Fig. 71). The map of Kythera by Porcacchi/Porro is interesting, because it is the first time that antiquities are marked on a map of the island (despite what Tolias says – 2001, 23 that the emphasis on the depiction of antiquities on the isolaria (maps of islands), does not apply to Kythera). “Il Tempio dove fu Rapita Helena da Paride”, is roughly identified with the site of Palaio-kastro. Some other references on the Porcacchi/Porro map have been also discussed above. In 1573, the engraver Simon Pinargenti (Pinargenti 1573), also published a map of Kythera, and in 1574, Kythera is depicted on a map by G.F. Camocio (Camocio 1574), illustrating the land route from Venice to Constantinople. At exactly this time, Petro Soriano was serving as *Proveditore* at Kythera. Also in 1574, the island of Kythera appears on a map drawn by Donato Bertelli (Bertelli 1574; Livieratos and Beriatos 2001, 156).

In 1575, Kythera is depicted on a map of Greece, published by Jacopo Gastaldi, a cartographer and cosmographer working for the Democracy of Venice (Avramea 1985, 90–91, fig. 57). In 1579–1580, captain Francesco Ferretti, a knight of the order of St. Stephen, publishes an isolarium, with engravings by Michel Angelo Marrelli, including a colored copper plate engraving of Kythera (Avramea 1985, 80, fig. 43b; Tolias 2001, 115) (Fig.



Fig. 66: Kythera, on the portolan drawn by Henricus Martellus Germanus in 1490 (Tolias 2001, 54).

72). In 1579, the Frenchman Carlier de Pinon, along with J.J. Breuning, from Germany (de Pinon 1920, 53), sail through the Kythera straits. The maps of Abraham Ortelius, from Germany, an antiquary, a cartographer and scholar of ancient Greece (Tolias 1999, 95), are published between 1579 and 1584, with painted copper plate engravings, including a map of Greece illustrating Kythera, and a map of Crete, along with maps of various islands, also including Kythera (Avramea 1985, 106, 108, figs 70–71) (Fig. 73). The last map, labeled “Hellas Graecia Sophiani”, is based on the work of



Fig. 67: Nautical map-portolan of the Mediterranean, drawn by Georgios Sideris (Kalapodas) in 1541 (Tolias 1999, 91, fig. 10).



Fig. 68: Detail from the international nautical isolarium (map of the islands), drawn by Alonso de Santa Cruz in 1545 (Tolias 2001, 106).



Fig. 69: Kythera on the international nautical isolarium (map of the islands), drawn by Alonso de Santa Cruz in 1545 (Tolias 2001, 107).



Fig. 70: Map of Greece, wood engraving by Sebastian Münster in 1545
(Avramea 1985, 62-63, fig. 29).

the Corcyrean scholar Nikolaos Sophianos, who had already published maps of ancient Greece. As noted by G. Tolias (1999, 19–20), the, from then on, famous maps of Nikolaos Sophianos, amounted to the “oldest illustration of the historical continuity of the Greek civilization”. In 1588, Reinhold Lubenau, from Germany, passes through Kythera (Sahm 1930, 192; see also Malamut 2003, 35), as does, in 1589 the French aristocrat L.S. de Villamont, who sails by Kythera, during his journey from Venice to the Holy Land through Crete and Cyprus, and mentions a temple of Aphrodite (Villamont 1627, II, 19).

In 1598-1599 the Dutch Van Kootwyck, a doctor of Law at the University of Utrecht, another pilgrim to the Holy Land, also visited Kythera. Van Kootwyck, relatively more cultivated and more observant than others, mentions the temple of Aphrodite and illustrates a map of the Peloponnese, on which Kythera is also depicted (Cotovicius 1619, 56, 61; Petrocheilos 1979, 87).



Fig. 71: Map of Kythera, by Tomaso Porcacchi da Castiglione, on a copper plate engraving by Girolamo Porro, of 1572 (Avramea 1985, 73, fig. 36).

In the 17th century, and while the island of Kythera is still under Venetian rule, the visits of pilgrims multiply; the latter often copy each other (see Mavroeidis 1978). The same often applies to the cartographers. The German Gerhard Mercator is an exception to the rule; because of his knowledge as a geographer, cartographer and mathematician, he re-drew all the maps from scratch, also suggesting a number of projection systems (Tolias 2001, 37; for Gerhard Mercator, see the relevant exhibition catalogue, Athens 1991). In 1606, G. Mercator publishes a copper plate engraving of a map of Greece, in which Kythera is also depicted, and another painted copper plate engraving with a map of Cyprus, together with six other islands, including Kythera (Avramea 1985, 98–99, 101–102, figs 65a, 67) (Fig. 74). As noted above, it is a mosaic map, which illustrates a selected number of islands, compiled from various *isolaria* (Tolias 2001, 21). The fact that Kythera was selected among tens of islands in the Archipelago, together with much larger islands like Rhodes or Euboea, indicates the importance of the island in seafaring. The same year (1606), Giuseppe Rosaccio, also publishes a map of Kythera, on his journey from Venice to Constantinople (Livieratos and Beriatos 2001, 161).



Fig. 72: Map of the islands by Francesco Ferretti, with a painted copper plate engraving, by Michel Angello Marrelli, of 1579-1580 (Tolias 2001, 115).

In the beginning of the 17th century, on his journey from Venice to Jerusalem through Crete, I. Zuallart stops at Kythera, and visits, as it seems, Palaiokastros, because he mentions a temple of Aphrodite “où s’ en voient encore quelques colonnes” (Zuallart 1608, 145). Although Pietro della Valle, an Italian pilgrim to the Holy Land, during his journey from Venice to Constantinople, mentions Kythera (della Valle 1745, I, 11), he does not stop at the island. In 1610, the Scottish William Lithgow, as he sailed by Kythera on his journey from Italy and the Peloponnese towards Crete, he happened upon pirates (Lithgow 1814; Warren 1972, 70–71). In 1615,



Fig. 73: Map by Abraham Ortelius in 1579-1584 (Avramea 1985, 108, fig. 71).

Salvator Oliva draws up a portolan map of the Aegean sea, on which Kythera is also depicted (Avramea 1985, 26, 54). Again in the beginning of the 17th century, five Englishmen, one of which was William Biddulph, who records his impression of Constantinople, are journeying from Venice to the East, through Crete. It seems that their ship stopped at Kythera, because W. Biddulph mentions a temple of Aphrodite in relation to the harbor of Hagios Nikolaos, as well as a fort of Menelaos (Biddulph 1612, 9). Ellis Veryard, another English traveler, in his journey from Kythnos to Kavos Maleas, mentions Kythera and Palaio polis, which he confuses with Palaio kastro, where he places a temple of Aphrodite and a church of Archangel Michael. In his own words: “Temple of Venus at a place called at present Paropolis or the old city, on the ruins whereof the Greeks have erected a church and dedicated it to the Archangel S. Michael” (Veryard 1701, 356).

In 1638 the island of Kythera is depicted on the painted copper plate engraving of a map of Greece, by the German Johannes Wilhelm Laurenberg (Avramea 1985, 116–117, fig. 76). It is well known that Johannes Wilhelm



Fig. 74: Painted copper plate engraving of Kythera, on a map by G. Mercator, of 1606 (Avramea 1985, 103, fig. 67).

Laurenberg, a writer, mathematician and historian, never visited Greece. In 1639, Du Loir, the escort of the French ambassador, Jean de la Haye, to Constantinople, stopped at Kythera. He mentions a cave, where, according to the monks, John wrote the Revelation (Du Loir 1654, 4-5; Petrocheilos 1940, 84). Francesco Lupazzolo, a Franco-Levantine from Chios, who became the consul of Venice at Smyrna in 1667 (Phassoulakis 1994, 499–513), gives a brief description of Kythera. On the 8th of November 1655, the French traveller Jean de Thevenot, on his way to Jerusalem, at the time of Louis XIV, stays at Kythera for a day (de Thevenot 1665: “On lui-là, auprès de la mer, dont les ruines à ce qu’on dit, se voient encore aujourd’hui”; 1727, 39-40; Tolia 2001, 38; Petrocheilos 1940, 84). Thevenot mentions the myth of Aphrodite and the temple at Palaiokastro, which he did not visit. In the middle of the 17th century, the French aristocrat and traveler Francois le Gouz de la Boullaye passes from Kythera during his journey from Venice to Smyrna, but did not visit the island (Le Gouz de la Boullaye 1653; Petrocheilos 1940, 84). In 1658, Marco Boschini, a painter, engraver, cartographer and merchant of precious objects and works of art, publishes a copper plate engraving of a map of the Archipelago, on

which he also depicts Kythera (Avramea 1985, 121, fig. 79; Tolia 2001, fig. on p. 150–151). In 1664, Francesco Maria Levanto, a cartographer from Genova, publishes a copper plate engraving of a nautical map of the Aegean, where again Kythera is depicted (Avramea 1985, 126, fig. 82; for the conditions at Kythera at that time, see Psaras 1987, 67–81) (Fig. 75).

In 1669, the island is visited by a capuchin priest, named Robert de Dreux, the confessor of Vantelet, the French ambassador at the Ottoman Porte, on his way back from Constantinople (Pernot 1925). Some time between 1671 and 1679, Bernard Randolph also traveled to Greece, and visited Kythera (Randolph 1686; Avramea 1972, 182, 490, n. 32). In 1676, the French doctor J. Spon and the English adventurer G. Wheeler, arrive at Kythera. They visit Avlaimon, then called Hagios Nikolaos, and the area to the west of the town, and discuss the baths, and the palace of Helen, also mentioning some antiquities (Spon and Wheeler 1678, I, 162–165; Wheeler 1723, I, 86; see also Vin 1980, 222). Also in 1676, P.S. Valck publishes for the first time two inventories of the harbors of Kythera, one of which includes Avlaimon (Valck 1676). In 1679, Francesco-Maria Levanto (Levanto 1664; Livieratos and Beriatos 2001, 164–165), publishes an isolarium, including the island of Kythera. In 1680, the Dutch Johannes van Keulen, the forefather of a large family of cartographers and publishers, published a map of the Archipelago, including Kythera, as well as a portolan of the harbor of Avlaimon (Porto S. Nicolo in I. Serigo) (Avramea 1985, 132–133, figs 86–87) (Fig. 76).

In 1680, Kythera is illustrated on a painted copper plate engraving depicting a map of Crete, drawn by the Dutch cartographer and publisher Frederik de Wit (Avramea 1985, 134–135, fig. 88; see also Simopoulos 1973–1976, A, 689–698). In 1682, the Dutch Nicolaes Visscher, another member of a well known family of engravers and map publishers, published a painted copper plate engraving of a map of Greece, in which Kythera is also depicted (Avramea 1985, 132–133, figs. 86–87). The French cartographer Guillaume de l'Isle or Delisle, published in 1683 another painted copper plate engraving of a map of Greece, in which Kythera is also depicted (Avramea 1985, 142–143, fig. 95). The same year, the Dutch hydrographer, painter and publisher Jacobus Robinj, who worked for Van Keulen, mentioned above, published a painted copper plate engraving of a map of the Archipelago, where Kythera is also depicted (Avramea 1985, 148–149, fig. 99).

Jacobus Robinj, also published in 1694 a portolan of the Archipelago islands, including the Avlaimon harbor (Port St. Nickolo in Serigo) (Avramea 1985, 147, fig. 98) (Fig. 77). Between 1684 and 1685, Vincenzo-Maria Coro-



Fig. 75: Copper plate engraving of a nautical map of the Aegean sea, by Francesco Maria Levanto, of 1664 (Avramea 1985, 126, fig. 82).

nelli, the cosmographer working for the Venetian state, also visited Kythera (Coronelli 1687, 82–83; Petrocheilos 1979, 78–81). He repeats Buondelmonti's information about the statue of Aphrodite with the Graces and mentions the cave of John the Evangelist. V.-M. Coronelli published in 1696 a map of the southern Aegean, in which Kythera is also depicted (Avramea 1985, 168–169, fig. 122) (Fig. 78). In 1685, Giacomo Cantelli da Vignela published a copper plate engraving of a map of the Aegean sea, in which Kythera is also depicted (Avramea 1985, 144–145, fig. 96). I was

not able to find any further information about Aulenotti, mentioned by Petrocheilos (1979, 45). Kythera appears on another copper plate engraving of a map of the Aegean sea, drawn by an unknown cartographer, and published by the German publisher Jacob Enderling (Avramea 1985, 150, fig. 100) (Fig. 79). Also in 1685, J. Peeters publishes a map of Kythera, illustrating various features discussed below, as well as a view of the harbor at Kapsali and Kastro (Peeters 1685, pls. 50–51; Livieratos and Beriatos 2001, 159–160).

It is believed that the Flemish geographer Olfert Dapper visited Kythera at the end of the 16th century (Dapper 1703, 375–379, 553–556; Petrocheilos 1979, 13–26). Dapper, who never traveled to the Holy Land, which he describes (Phlavouras 1971), writes about Kapsali, Avlaimon, Kastri and Palaiokastros, again referring to the usual information about the baths and the palace of Helen; he is nevertheless, the first to mention coins in connection to Kythera (for Kytherian coins, see Head 1911, 436). Dapper also publishes in 1686 a copper plate engraving of a map of the south Aegean, on which Kythera is also depicted (Avramea 1985, 161, fig. 116). There was no further information about the geographer A.F. Pusching, mentioned by Petrocheilos (1979, 87). In 1688, the Neapolitan lawyer and geographer Francesco Piacenza publishes, in one of his books (Piacenza 1688; Petrocheilos 1979, 45), a copper plate engraving of a map of the Aegean, on which Kythera is also depicted (Avramea 1985, 153, fig. 105) (Fig. 80).

A copper plate engraving of a map of the Aegean and Crete is published between 1700 and 1738, by the English mathematician, geographer and theologian Edward Wells (Avramea 1985, 170–171, fig. 124). In 1703, the Florentine doctor and philosopher Alessandro Pini, mentioned above in connection to Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, serving the Venetian authorities in his official capacity as a doctor in the Nauplion hospital, mentions the discovery of ancient coins at Kythera (Malliaris 1998). Between 1716 and 1737, J.B. Homann publishes a map of the Peloponnese, including Kythera (Livieratos and Beriatos 2001, 166). In 1719, the French traveler Pierre Lambert de Saumery, using the pseudonym M. De Mirone, during his journey from Marseille to Constantinople, makes a note of a fort, probably on Hagios Georgios sto Vouno (Mirone 1731, I, 44). Between 1715 and 1726, the Frenchmen Henri Michelot and Laurent Bremond, serving as a captain of the royal navy and as an hydrographer to the king, respectively, publish a copper plate engraving of a map of the Archipelago, on which Kythera is also depicted (Avramea 1985, 174, fig. 126) (Fig. 81).

A book entitled "English Pilot", including a painted copper plate engraving of a map of the Archipelago, on which Kythera is also depicted, circulates



Fig. 76: Harbor map of Avlaimon, by Johannes de Keulen, of 1680 (Avramea 1985, 132, fig. 86).



Fig. 77: Harbor map of Avlaimon, by Jacobus Robinj, of 1694 (Avramea 1985, 147, fig. 98).

between 1706 and 1803; it is the work of John Seller, an hydrographer working for king Charles II of England, supplemented by his successor, Jeremiah (Avramea 1985, 176, fig. 127). In 1729 the Dutch Pieter Van der Aa, publisher and bookseller, produces a painted copper plate engraving of a map of the Archipelago, on which Kythera is also depicted (Avramea 1985, 182–183, fig. 132). The count of Sandwich visits Kythera in 1738–1739; he mentions antiquities at Palaiopolis and Palaiokastro, as well as the existence of coins in foreign collections (Sandwich 1799, 30): “There are now no remains to be found of the city or temple, and nothing in the whole island that can give one any trace of the ancient habitations, except some rubbish near the harbor now called St Nicholas, which shows that there anciently was some town in that place. There are also some vaults, which the inhabitants call the baths of Helen; and about four miles distant, two columns standing, of the Doric order”. In 1745, F. Grogard, publishes a copper plate engraving of a map of the Archipelago, on which Kythera is again depicted (Avramea 1985, 177, fig. 128).

J. Aegidius van Egmond, acting delegate of the Netherlands to the Kingdom of Naples, along with John Heyman, a professor of eastern languages at the University of Leyden, visits Kythera before the middle of the 18th century. These two travelers simply mention Palaiopolis (Van Egmond and Heyman 1759, 65–66; Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 88). In 1756, J.B.B. d’Anville, a French geographer and cartographer, published a copper plate engraving of a map of Greece and the Archipelago, on which Kythera is also depicted (Avramea 1985, 186–187, fig. 134) (Fig. 82). In 1764, Joseph Roux, the French hydrographer serving the French king,



Fig. 78: Map of the south Aegean sea, by V.-M. Coronelli, of 1696
 (Avramea 1985, 168, fig. 122).

published a copper plate engraving of a map of the south Aegean sea, on which Kythera is also depicted (Avramea 1985, 189, fig. 136) (Fig. 83). In 1782, M.G.F.A. Comte de Choiseul Gouffier, an ambassador of France to Constantinople, also publishes a copper plate engraving of a map of Greece, also depicting Kythera (Avramea 1985, 208–209, fig. 150). In 1785–1786, J.B. Lechevalier, during his journey from Zakynthos to Athens, along with Zuliani, the ambassador of Venice to Constantinople, stops at Kythera. His narrative about the archaeology of Kythera is nevertheless imaginary, except for his reference to the cave of Hagia Sophia (Lechevalier 1802, 107). In the summer of 1788, the Englishman Th. Watkins, traveling from Zakynthos to Melos, mentions a temple of Aphrodite at Kythera (Watkins 1792, II, 173: “...some slight remains of which may be traced”).

In 1789, at the end of the Venetian occupation of the island, André Grasset Saint-Sauveur, the general consul of France to the Ionian Islands, visits Kythera. He mentions Kapsali, Panagia Myrtydiotissa, the cave of Hagia



Fig. 79: Map of the Aegean sea, by Jacob Enderling, of 1685 (Avramea 1985, 150, fig. 100).

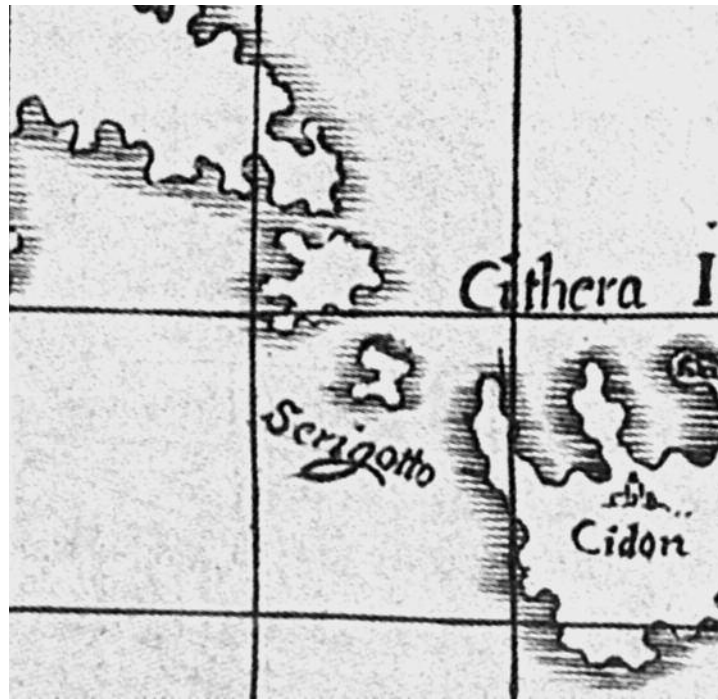


Fig. 80: Map of the Aegean sea, by Francesco Piacenza, of 1688 (Avramea 1985, 153, fig. 105).

Sophia, Avlaimon, Kastri and Palaiokastro, again repeating the information about the baths of Helen, and the palace of Menelaos. It is worth noting, as we shall see below, that André Grasset Saint-Sauveur also mentions a collection of 36 coins (Grasset Saint-Sauveur 1800, 330–377; Petrocheilos 1979, 81–102; see also Simopoulos 1973–1976, B, 504).

In 1791, the cartographer and engraver L.S. de la Rochette, together with the geographer W. Faden, publishes a painted copper plate engraving of a map of Greece, of the Archipelago and Asia Minor (Avramea 1985, 198–199, fig. 145). The same year, Jean Denis Barbié du Bocage, the French Hellenist, geographer and cosmographer, publishes a copper plate engraving of a map of Greece (Avramea 1985, 200–201, fig. 146). In 1792, the Englishman W. Hunter, during his journey from Malta to Smyrna, stayed at Kythera for one day (Hunter 1798, 153), but did not visit the antiquities on the island (Petrocheilos 1979, 9, 84, 103, mentions also Rulhiere, Henri Belle, and Giacomo Kasanova). In 1796, as noted above, Kythera is visited by the draughtsman A.L. Castellan (Castellan 1808; Simopoulos 1973–1976, B, 658; Petrocheilos 1979, 46–49). A.L. Castellan mentions the quarry

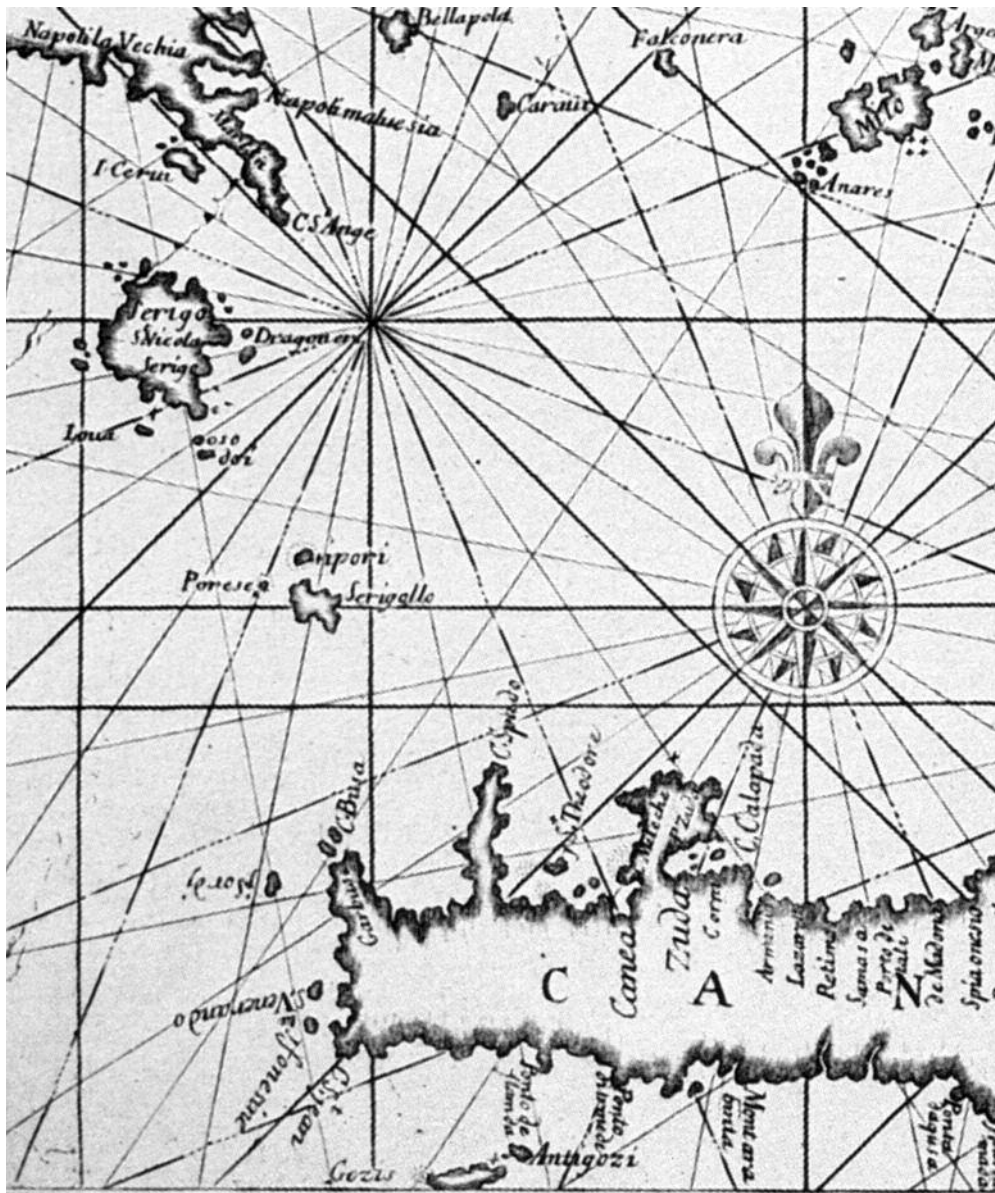


Fig. 81: Map of the Archipelago, by Henri Michelot and Laurent Bremond, of 1715-1726 (Avramea 1985, 174, fig. 126).

at Avlaimon, as well as Palaiopolis and Kastri, where he draws an ancient necropolis. An anonymous draughtsman, draws, in the 18th century, the topographical plan of Kastri on Kythera and of the harbor at Kapsali, along with the island Avgo (Livieratos and Beriatos 2001, 162-163). Kythera of course appears on the famous Map of Rigas Feraios, published in 1797 (Livieratos and Beriatos 2001, 167) (Fig. 84).

During the French occupation of Kythera, in 1797-1798, the island is visited by the Corsican botanist and naturalist, Dima Stephanopoli, originally from the area of Mani, and his nephew, Nicolo, who publish a book (Stephanopoli 1801), full of imaginary descriptions of the island. The unreliability of Stephanopoli is also noted by I. Mikelis in 1824-1825 (Andriatsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 179). Nevertheless, it is worth noting that they mention a Kytherian, who possessed “a catalogue of the known and unknown monuments on the island of Kythera, and especially the ruins of the old town, buried inside the bowels of the earth”. They also mention that the Kytherians would hide ancient objects to rescue them from the envy of foreigners. The burial of antiquities by the Kytherians, mentioned by Stephanopoli, brings to mind a similar incident, noted only

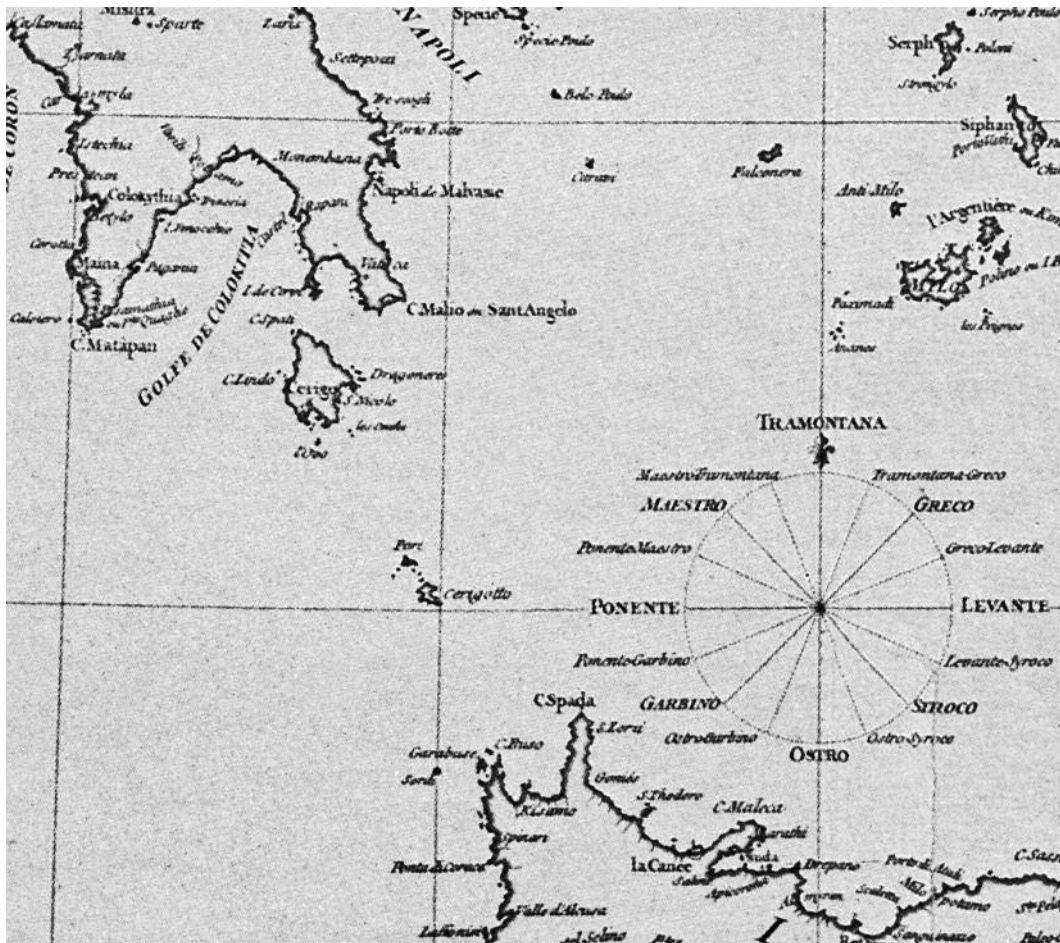


Fig. 82: Map of Greece and the Archipelago by J.B.B. d'Anville, of 1756 (Avramea 1985, 186, fig. 134).

poet (Keats 1971, poem entitled: “On seeing the Elgin Marbles”), and on Lord Byron, another aristocrat, one of Elgin’s peers and a poet (for Lord Byron and Lord Elgin, see Kephallenaïou 1979–1980, 205–240 [2003], who mentioned it in his famous poem “Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage” (Canto II.XI, ls. 7–9).

“The free born men should spare what was free;
Yet they could violate each saddening shrine
And bear these altars o’ er the long-reluctant brine.”

Less well known, however, is the reaction to this intellectual atrocity, the “civilized” mutilation of the Parthenon, of another great poet, Konstantinos Kavafis, who, 90 years later, in 1891, wrote in his usual prophetic and sententious prose: “The death of political or international issues is forgetfulness. Thankfully, the matter of the return of the Elgin marbles to Greece is not yet doomed to oblivion” (Kavafis 2003, 37). Kavafis wrote three pieces of prose about the Elgin Marbles entitled: “Give back the Elgin Marbles”, “Τα Ελγίνεια Μάρμαρα” and “Νεώτερα περί των Ελγινείων Μαρμάρων” (Kavafis 2003, 31–40).

At the time of the “Mentor” ship wreck, the political situation at Kythera was complicated, since, after the dissolution of the Venetian democracy, the Ionian islands, to which Kythera belonged, were first occupied by the French (1797–1798) and then by the Russian-Turkish coalition (1798–1800), until they later became part of the first free Greek state, the “Ionian State”, under the protection of Russia and Turkey. In the mean time, the British occupation, which finally became official in 1809, was still in the making. In those troubled times for the Kytherian people, the discords between the “republicans” (popolo) (Leontsinis 1987, 25) and the “townspeople” (civili) (Cittadini and Leontsinis 1987, 23), had reached such heights, that even the wreck of a ship at Kythera was considered an important event. It is characteristically mentioned by M. Petrocheilos, who wrote the history of Kythera, that the wreck of a ship in October 1800 “containing rich merchandise, contributed to the re-establishment of some kind of reconciliation and peace on the island, since the Kytherians engaged in the plunder of the merchandise carried by the ship and therefore what was left of the property of the aristocrats stayed more or less intact, safe from destructions caused until then by the revolutionaries” (Petrocheilos 1940, 60). This episode is also mentioned in the chronicle written by the priest Gr. Logothetis (Stathis 1923b, 356, n. 3).

It is not surprising that the “Mentor” ship wreck at Avlaimon in 1802, just below Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, as well as the operations for the raising of the most precious cargo of the ship, with the help of divers from Spetses,

Kalymnos and Malta, which lasted until 1804 (Miliarakis 1888, 730; Petrocheilos 1940, 60–61), made a huge impression at Kythera. The incident is characteristically recorded by a Kytherian priest, Gr. Logothetis: “5th of September 1802. An English ship, sailing from Athens, and loaded with various remarkable marble statues placed in wooden trunks, was apparently planning to drop anchor at Avlaimon. Because the passengers and crew were asleep, the ship hit a reef and was shattered; the marbles, along with the chests, all sank to the depths of the sea and only the people survived, without their clothes” (Miliarakis 1888, 713; Stathis 1923b, 357). The chronicle of the priest Gr. Logothetis is also included in the chronicle of a later Kytherian priest, Daniil Varipatis-Chryseas (Kalligeros 1998, 9). During the first, immediate and successful operation undertaken for the rescue of the bulk of the important cargo carried by “Mentor”, which was followed by four other investigations of the ship wreck, a second one in the 19th century and three other attempts during the 20th century, as we shall see below, the protagonist, was, according to the extant sources, Em. Kaloutsis, a Kytherian, who was serving at the time as the vice-consul of England at Kythera. The involvement of Em. Kaloutsis in the “Mentor” ship wreck, and his relationship, as well as that of his descendants, for three generations, i.e. of his son, Ioannis Kaloutsis and his grandson, N.S. Kaloutsis, with W.R. Hamilton, secretary to Lord Elgin himself (Fig. 85), and with W.M. Leake, another passenger of “Mentor” at the time of the ship wreck, has, as we shall see, a direct bearing on the investigation of the archaeology of Kythera in the 19th century. This is mostly because of the involvement of the Kaloutsi family, W.R. Hamilton and W.M. Leake, in the discovery of an exceptionally important find, a Babylonian cuneiform inscription of the time of Narâm-Sin, to be discussed below. It is obvious therefore that the intensity of illicit dealing in antiquities during the 19th century, which was prompted by the British, as we shall see below, began with the “Mentor” ship wreck at Avlaimon, a major archaeological incident for Kythera.

The Kaloutsi family – sometimes cited as Kaloutzis – was the “oldest noble family on the island” (see the hymn in honor of the Kaloutsi family in a local newspaper - *Κυθηραϊκὴ Ἐνετηρίς*, A, 1909, 80–82). The family tree of the Kaloutsi family (Stathis 1923a, 335–336; Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 21–44) goes back to the year 1503. According to the so-called *Chronicle of Cheilas*, relating the life of Saint Theodore of Kythera, dated to the middle of the 15th century: “The father of master Pavlos Kaloutzis” was “a good craftsman” who came to Kythera from Monemvasia (Oikonomidis 1967; see also Orlandos 1958; Maltezou 1991, II, 4). It seems that the Kaloutsi family had been included in the Libro d’ Oro,

at an early date. According to Maltezou (1991, II, 4) “The Kaloutsis family mentioned in the Chronicle were at the top of the social stratification of Kythera and established themselves as *potenti* (powerful figures) on the island”. Out of the 157 first names of male members of the family recorded in the family tree, seven had their biographies written by the 19th century (Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 26–44; see also the biographies of seven members of the Kaloutsis family by Chiotis in Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 22). Various members of the Kaloutsis family are mentioned in the written sources, including Ioulios Kaloutsis, a fiscal ephor/official, in 1705 (Maltezou 1991, I, 270), a Jouanes Kaloutzis, in a notary document of 1717 (Maltezou 1991, Γ, 30), Giorgio Caluci (1814–1853), a notary (Maltezou 1991, Γ, 61) and a Georgis Kaloutsis Manolaras (Maltezou 1991, I, 275). Ioannis Kaloutsis, served as sub-prefect, a member of parliament and a senator of the Ionian Islands (Petrocheilos 1966). Ioannis and Georgios Kaloutsis donated books to the Literary Club of Kythera (Cerigo, Literary Institution), which was established in 1823 (Choremi-Thomopoulou and Andritsaki-Photiadi 1980, 3). Three priests of the Kaloutsis family are known, one of which, Neophytos Kaloutsis, was a bishop of Kythera (Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 22–23; Kalligeros 1998, 32), and one Neophytos Kaloutsis (1734–1771), a monk and a sacristan (Charou-Koronaïou – newspaper *Κυθηραϊκά*, Jan. 2007). In 1889, Ioannis Kaloutsis, serves as a sub-prefect of Kythera (Kalligeros 1998, 27). Indicative of the prominence of the Kaloutsis family is that it possessed two privately owned churches, San Salvatore Caluci in Borgo Serrato and San Zorzi Caluci in Borgo Serrato (Lazaridis 1965, 184–185; Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 27), which appear in the records of the years 1724, 1733, 1753, 1772, 1773, 1784, 1788 and 1814 (Maltezou 1991, Θ, 163). The existence of a coat of arms is also mentioned in connection with one of these



Fig. 85: Thomas Bruce, 7th Earl of Elgin.

churches (Maltezou 1997, 313; for the Kaloutsis family in Venice, see Petrocheilos 1955, 30-31; for the Kaloutsis family, see also recent bibliography in Leontsinis 2002, 219, n. 8).

At the time of the “Mentor” ship wreck, head of the Kaloutsis family was Emanuil Kaloutsis (1755-1803) (for his biography written by the grandson of N.-S. Kaloutsis, see Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 28–41), a dramatic figure, the life and adventures of which should be recorded at some point. Emanuil Kaloutsis is indirectly referred to by the English traveler John Galt around 1810. He describes him as a prudent, informed man, hospitable and much superior in social position and manners to the British representatives he met at the Archipelagos (Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 98–99).

Emanuil Kaloutsis is already referred to as a young man in the chronicle of the priest Gr. Logothetis, written in 1780 (Stathis 1923b, 339), and he is mentioned two more times, in 1798 and in 1799 (Stathis 1923b, 348, 351), for his strange behavior in the events of the time (Leontsinis 1980, 220, 223, 226, 233). According to the chronicle of the priest Daniil Varypatis-Chryseas, Emanuil Kaloutsis served in 1798 as churchwarden of the Myrtidia Monastery (Kalligeros 1998, 15).

Emanuil Kaloutsis seems to have served all the sovereigns of Kythera, one after the other. Although he was accused of conspiracy and was even jailed in Venice, he was found innocent, and then went on to study law at Padua; he also served as a judge during the French occupation, and later became a vice-consul of England at Kythera (Miliarakis 1888, 798; Stathis 1975, 11, 15; Petrocheilos 1940, 57, 80). His grandson, N.-S. Kaloutsis, characteristically says about Emanuil Kaloutsis that: “during the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century, he had personal experience of eight different political systems in his own country and an equal number of dynasts to whom his country submitted” (Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 40). It has been recorded that the ship-wrecked W.R. Hamilton, secretary of Lord Elgin, who accompanied the “Elgin marbles” in their unfortunate journey, stayed at the house of Emanuil Kaloutsis, who is referred to as a democrat (Petrocheilos 1940, 57, 61). According to the priest Gr. Logothetis: “The secretary of the Bailos of Constantinople (Lord Elgin), who was received and attended to by master Emanuil Kaloutsis, was in possession of the marbles” (*Κυθηραϊκή Επετηρίς* A, 1909, 109; Stathis 1923b, 357).

The services rendered by Emanuil Kaloutsis to W.R. Hamilton and of course to Lord Elgin himself, as regards the raising of the “Elgin marbles” from the bottom of the sea, certainly exceeded his official obligations as

vice-consul of England at Kythera. The speed, with which Emanuil Kaloutsis dealt with the incident of the 5th/17th of September 1802, is typical of his abilities. The day after the ship wreck, on the 6th/18th of September 1802, Emanuil Kaloutsis took a written deposition from William Eglon, the captain of “Mentor”, probably at Chora; he also went on a daytrip to Avlaimon and received the deposition of Ioannis Komis Viskoukia, the captain of an Austrian ship, and of Peter Macphernal and Manolis Konstantinos Malis, secretary and pilot of “Mentor”, respectively; after his return to Chora, on the same day, he sent a circular to the elders of the island (the depositions were written in Italian and the circular in Greek (Miliarakis 1888, 713–716; Smith 1916, 241).

This was the most important action taken by Em. Kaloutsis, an action which demonstrated, to both the British and the Kytherians, that he was the absolute sovereign on Kythera. The “Constitutional map of the political administration of Kythera”, also determined the privileges of the vice-consuls. The original text, which was published by G.N. Leontsinis, is as follows:

“Τοὺς Κοινοὺς, ὅπου εἶναι βασιλικοὶ ἄνθρωποι νὰ σέβωνται καὶ νὰ τιμοῦν κατ’ ἐξοχὴν, νὰ μὴν αὐθαδιάσῃ τις νὰ εἰπῇ τὸν παραμικρὸν λόγον κατ’ αὐτῶν, νὰ δώσῃ ἐνόχλησιν, ἢ τῶν ιδίων, ἢ φαμελίας των, ἢ νὰ τολμήσῃ νὰ βλάψῃ τὰ ὀσπῆιά των, καὶ πράγματά των ὅπου λογοῦνται ὅλα βασιλικά, ἀλλέως θέλει λάβῃ σκληραῖς παιδεύσεις, καὶ θέλει ὑστερηθῇ καὶ τῆς ιδίας ζωῆς, διὰ νὰ μὴν πέσῃ ὁ τόπος ὅλος εἰς ὀργὴν βασιλέων” (Leontsinis 1980, 222, 235–236).

“To the consuls, people of the crown, to be respected and honored above all, may nobody be insolent, or say anything against them, annoy them or their families, or dare to harm their homes and their possessions, which are all considered royal, otherwise he will be harshly treated and may even lose his life, so that the entire place may not submit to the rage of the kings” (translation of the Greek).

Taking advantage of his two-fold capacity, as vice-consul of England and as a member of the Kytherian council of elders (Leontsinis 1980, 223, 226, 233), in this circular he sent out to the elders of Kythera, written “in a language and style worth publishing”, according to A. Miliarakis (1888, 716), he concludes:

“I remain certain that you intend to take every necessary measure, which we in any case owe to the glorious Kingdom I have the honor to serve, and to its wonderful nation, for the help it gave and still gives to the most excellent Republic of the Ionian islands, of which this island too is a member; I therefore write to you with all due respect, and I await your response”.

Of course, the noble Kytherian elders assisted Em. Kaloutsis, from that point onwards, in all his endeavors.

According to Leontsinis (1980, 219-220), these were described as “the invisible, but very substantial acts of leadership undertaken on the initiative of Em. Kaloutsis and a few progressive nobles, who practice an ambiguous policy, albeit in a diplomatic manner”. See also the comment of a virtuous chronicler, the priest Gr. Logothetis, about the dance of the aristocrats (“August 10, 1797”), around “the Freedom tree..., Mr. Emanuil Kaloutzis leading the dance” (Stathis 1923b, 343-344; Leontsinis 1980, 226). The circular sent out by “Mr. Em. Kaloutsis” is also published by Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos (1982, 35-36).

We are not going to present a detailed account of the various services rendered by Em. Kaloutsis to W.R. Hamilton and Lord Elgin himself, for the rescue of the precious cargo of “Mentor” and especially for the preservation of Lord Elgin’s rights, as recorded in the written sources. N.-S. Kaloutsis, Em. Kaloutsis’s grandson, donated his grandfather’s archive to the Historical and Ethnological Society. According to Stathis (1923a, 335), it consisted of 164 manuscripts. Miliarakis (1888, 700) mentions “documents, letters and contracts”, which he made use of. Smith (1916), on the other hand, drew upon the rich archive of Lord Elgin himself. In both archives, the protagonist in the tragic episode involving “Mentor”, was Em. Kaloutsis, especially from the end of December 1802, before the raising of the cargo of the ship from the bottom of the sea, when W.R. Hamilton, the secretary of Lord Elgin, departed from Kythera, the so-called “wretched island” (Smith 1916, 249), leaving him with power of attorney. It is worth noting that Em. Kaloutsis did not keep his personal “Letterbook” for himself, in his own archive, since this too was passed on to Lord Elgin. It is certain that in this “Letterbook”, beyond Kaloutsis’ comments recorded by A.H Smith (Smith 1916, 254), was also included other, unknown, interesting perhaps information.

Judging by the published evidence, it seems that Em. Kaloutsis was involved in a multitude of activities. He constantly exchanges letters with a number of mostly political figures in Mani, Corfu, Zakynthos, Nauplion, Athens, Smyrna, Constantinople, and Malta, he is searching for divers, signs contracts, arranges for payments to be made, makes payments, and generally acts as a person of Lord Elgin’s absolute confidence, at least as close to him as his own secretary, W.R. Hamilton, or Don Tita Lusieri, his Athens representative, a notorious vandal of terrible repute.

Em. Kaloutsis meets personally with Lord Elgin, during his brief stay at Kythera, on his way back from Constantinople, after the end of his unfor-

fortunate, for the Greek antiquities, meddling diplomatic term there, and before his arrest and his two year incarceration by the French. The published information concerning the meeting between Lord Elgin and Em. Kaloutsis at Kythera, is meager. Only one letter of Lord Elgin addressed to Em. Kaloutsis is published, dated 23rd of January/4th of February 1803; it was written on “Diana”, Lord Elgin’s ship, moored at Avlaimon; the letter contained only general admonitions and instructions (Miliarakis 1888, 717; Smith 1916, 254). In Em. Kaloutsis’ “Letterbook”, which, as noted above, was found in Lord Elgin’s possession, on the 23rd of January/4th of February, Em. Kaloutsis writes that “on board the Diana at Avlaimona”, Lord Elgin “expressed his sense of that officer’s zeal and hospitable aid to the shipwrecked company” (Smith 1916, 254). The Kytherian priest Gr. Logothetis, a contemporary, who, perhaps instinctively, does not mention the infamous Elgin by name, but he instead uses his title (Bailos), is of course more revealing in his expression of the popular feeling at Kythera: “The Bailos himself came here and then went to Malta. He thanked Kaloutsis greatly for taking good care of his secretary and gave him worthy gifts” (Miliarakis 1888, 713; *Kyθnpaϊkὴ Ἐπετηρίς*, A, 1909, 109; Stathis 1923b, 357).

Although the published sources are silent as far as the “gifts” of Lord Elgin to Em. Kaloutsis are concerned, they are most eloquent as regards the gratitude expressed by W.R. Hamilton to Em. Kaloutsis himself. According to Em. Kaloutsis’ “Letterbook”, W.R. Hamilton writes the following heart-rending words in the power of attorney document he left before departing from Kythera: “My heart will be ever penetrated for the many benevolent and friendly attentions received from your amiable Family and nearest Relations. I shall esteem it in a happiness to dye with such sentiments, and glory in declaring them to the World”, words that even the Englishman A.H. Smith, who usually mentions the many achievements of Lord Elgin without comments, finds “unwontedly oriental in style” (Smith 1916, 252).

Finally, in the letter sent by W.R. Hamilton to Em. Kaloutsis after the end of the operations associated with the raising of the cargo of “Mentor” concludes with the following phrases: “I would like to congratulate you for the brilliant success of the work you have performed. I also hasten to add that I do not hesitate to include your name among those that deserve to be immortalized on account of the superior protection they have provided to the arts; a distinguished and honorable mention should be made in your name. Even if you did not bring the marbles to life, you nevertheless contributed to their continued survival, rescuing them from certain loss and total destruction that threatened them” (Miliarakis 1888, 732; Andri-tsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 38; Petrocheilos 1965, 405).

An episode related to the brief stay of the “Elgin marbles” at Kythera, is indicative of the political activities of Em. Kaloutsis, who served, as before, the foreign sovereigns of Kythera, Venetians, French, and now the British, and certainly not the Kytherians and the island of Kythera itself. Immediately after the “Mentor” ship wreck, Lord Elgin, in a letter to Em. Kaloutsis, lets him know that the boxes on “Mentor”: “contain stones of no great value in themselves, but it is of great consequence to me to save them” (Miliarakis 1888, 717; Smith 1916, 245). Judging by the published documents, although Em. Kaloutsis was apparently not interested in the artistic or historical value of the “Elgin marbles”, he was certainly aware of their material value, and this is why he defended with such zeal the selfish interests of their “owner”, Lord Elgin.

Em. Kaloutsis, the vice-consul of England on Kythera, was well aware of the insecurity prevailing on the island, because of various piratical raids. In the published documents concerning the “Mentor” ship wreck, the fear of pirates is often mentioned (Miliarakis 1888, 731). Miliarakis (1888, 717) is therefore right in describing a letter sent by D. Grigorakis from Mani, an agent of the British, to Em. Kaloutsis, dated 20th of September/2nd of October 1802, which has survived in the Kaloutsis archive, as “strange”; this is not only because its contents make it obvious that Em. Kaloutsis was notified that D. Grigorakis was in the lookout for antiquities on behalf of Lord Elgin, but also because Em. Kaloutsis is informed of the intentions of the “thief Alexandris”, a pirate from Mani, to plunder the “Mentor” ship wreck.

This letter also confirms the existence of a network of English agents, with which Em. Kaloutsis was in touch, as we shall see below. This, combined with other evidence in the extant documents, suggests, that not only was the Kytherian populace oppressed by the noble Kaloutsi family, but also that Em. Kaloutsis’s authority was imposed on the other Kytherian noble elders. Taking advantage, that is, of his title as vice-consul, with “a forceful and threatening document”, as Miliarakis describes it, addressed to the elders of Kythera, Em. Kaloutsis accuses a Kytherian priest, Th. Karydis, who returned from Mani bringing the news about the “thief Alexandris”, news that Em. Kaloutsis already knew from D. Grigorakis, for spreading false information and for implicating the name of Spyr. Forestis, the consul of England in Corfu (Miliarakis 1888, 745; the adjectives are also repeated by Em. Kaloutsis’s grandson, N.-S. Kaloutsis, see Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 36). Th. Karydis was the priest, mentioned in 1797 in the chronicle of the other priest, Gr. Logothetis (Stathis 1923b, 344; see also Leontsinis 1980, 241). The unfortunate priest is forced, on the 8th/20th of November 1802 to make a sworn deposition in Mani about his source of information (Miliarakis 1888, 745–746). A few days later, though, on

the 29th of November/11th of December 1802, the “thief Alexandris” made an appearance, according to the sources, at Hagia Pelagia of Kythera (Miliarakis 1888, 746).

As regards the security measures concerning the “Elgin marbles”, both in the bottom of the sea at Avlaimon and on dry land, after they had been retrieved, the sources provide ample information, at the same time emphasizing Em. Kaloutsis’s zeal, which occasionally made him act in a brutal manner. The Kytherian chronicler/priest Gr. Logothetis, writes: “He (Kaloutzis), had chartered a slave boat, to store the marbles, aside from other caiques and feloukas. When a peasant from the village of Aloizianika went there to steal a barrel during the night, he was killed by the sailors” (Miliarakis 1888, 713; Stathis 1923b, 357). They even considered using the rescued canons of “Mentor” for the safeguarding of the marbles (Miliarakis 1888, 746). The sources mention the names of Stathis Giannakakis, working as a guard of the rescued antiquities, and of Ant. Kontoleon, an overseer (Miliarakis 1888, 730).

It seems that as soon as the boxes with the “Elgin marbles” were raised from the sea, they were placed on the beach at Avlaimon. Smaller objects raised from the sea had to be placed in “the shop of master Stathis” (Miliarakis 1888, 730), according to the agreement between Em. Kaloutsis and the Kalymnian divers, dated 20th of September/2nd of October 1803, which was sanctioned by Giovanni Mormori, the chancellor of Kythera, vice-consul of Russia at Kythera, and a progeny of a noble Kytherian family, one member of which, as we shall see, is once more involved with Kytherian antiquities.

Concerning the security of the boxes containing the “Elgin marbles”, Miliarakis writes the following: “After the completion of all the work, Kaloutsis took every care to safeguard the marbles from pirates, from which the island was constantly being threatened. The boxes were covered with seaweed and bushes, on which large stones were placed, so that they would be protected, in the best possible manner, from the weather during the winter, and from the heat of the sun during the summer. And there they remained, on the beach at Avlaimon, until they were sent off. But some peasants, working nearby for the erection of a garden wall, removed the stones from the boxes. When Kaloutsis was informed of that, he denounced them to the local authorities with a document, and the *Prytanis* (this was how the governor of island was called then), with a document addressed to the health-official and the police officer at Avlaimon, dated 2nd of November 1804, expressed his indignation at this infringement of the property of His Excellency Lord Elgin, ‘who is a member of the great

British nation'; he ordered the placement of other large stones on the boxes, at the expense of the authorities at Avlaimon, so that the letters and the numbers of the forwarding address would not be obliterated by the rain water" (Miliarakis 1888, 730–731).

Miliarakis also publishes the receipt given by Giorgio Parry, captain of "Lady Shaw Stewart", the No. 99 Royal British cargo boat, which took the "Elgin marbles" on board at Kythera; five copies of this receipt were retained by Em. Kaloutsis (Miliarakis 1888, 730–731). The precise wording of the receipt was as follows:

"No 12. Twelve well fitted boxes, sealed with nails, containing ancient marbles from Athens, perfectly arranged, with the forwarding address written on each box: The Earl of Elgin His Majesty's Ambassador Extraordinary at the Ottoman Port, Downing Street, London, also marked with additional information (numbers 1 to 12 and letters A to M)".

N.-S. Kaloutsis, mentions in his diary that in a visit to W.R. Hamilton in England, he was "shown a bust of Wellington, a work of the sculptor Piztruci, on a fragment of Parthenon marble" (Petrocheilos 1965, 412). What kind of comment is a Greek archaeologist expected to make, when, in the process of going back in history, he sinks into the darkness of so many impious acts, committed, not only by the official British state, but also by their decidedly less famous Greek agents? Perhaps Byron, another English lord and poet, could add a verse to "Childe Harold's pilgrimage", next to the other famous verses mentioned above, if of course he could have ever imagined that parts of the Parthenon frieze were lying for months under stones and sea-weed, on a beach, on the island of Aphrodite; it is even possible that the exquisite sculpture depicting the peaceful Olympian gods gazing at human affairs, perhaps the face of the Kytherian, Heavenly Aphrodite herself, born out of the sea, might have been among them (Brommer 1979, 119, pl. 179, East side, slab VI, no. 41; Mantis 1997, 23). If only our poet knew that all this was happening at a distance of only 2-3 kms from a most ancient Minoan sanctuary, below the silent icon of a mounted, spear-bearing saint, Hagios Georgios sto Vouno. According to the extant sources, numerous boxes with antiquities were carried to England on 33 different ships, between 1800 and 1827. A.H. Smith has a detailed record of the contents of the 13 numbered boxes on "Mentor", which included parts of the Parthenon frieze (Smith 1916, 231).

«Sept 14, 1802.

LIST OF CASES EMBARKED ON THE MENTOR, Capt. Eglen for Malta.

33. Two reliefs, Temple of Victory.
35. Part of Parthenon frieze.
36. Two other reliefs, Temple of Victory.
43. Part of statue, and piece of a column.
44. Part of Parthenon frieze.
45. » » » »
46. » » » » and fragment of Persistino column.
47. » » » » » » and of porphyry column.
48. » » » » and 3 small inscriptions.
49. » » » » and part of a small male torso found in Parthenon.
50. » » » » and part of an arm found in digging beneath the Parthenon pediment.
51. » » » » and 2 other pieces of frieze.
52. Angle piece of frieze, 2 inscriptions, part of a shoulder belonging to one of the pediment groups.
53. Part of Parthenon frieze.
54. Part of great relief taken from the modern wall of the Acropolis.
55. The other part of ditto.
56. Box with marble chair taken from the Archbishop's palace, and belongs Mr. Nisbet».

Nevertheless, the zeal shown by Em. Kaloutsis, the vice-consul of England at Kythera, as regards the smuggling of Greek antiquities, did not cease after the boxes carried by "Mentor" were sent off to Downing Street, in London. Em. Kaloutsis also sees to it that the possessions of W.R. Hamilton, the secretary of Lord Elgin, and his "companions", increase.

Almost a year after the raising of the "Elgin marbles" from the bottom of the sea, on the 9th/22nd of January 1806, Em. Kaloutsis writes to W.R. Hamilton:

"As a small boat with divers happened to be passing by the island, I thought it would be good to use them in a new investigation of the "Mentor" ship wreck, so that I might rescue the encasing bronze; but the divers were not able to accomplish anything; they found only a small marble statue, with the head, the arms and the legs broken off, at the bottom of the sea, which exemplifies nevertheless, the finest modeling of ancient Greek sculpture. This statue is of course not part of Lord Elgin's collection, since all the boxes were found sealed. It is possible that it belongs to you or your

companions. Having rewarded the divers, I took the small statue and I look forward to sending it to you with the first opportunity” (Miliarakis 1888, 746).

As we shall see below, this was not the last attempt to retrieve antiquities from the “Mentor” ship wreck. Another attempt was made in 1875, by the Archaeological Society at Athens. Em. Kaloutsis, who was knowledgeable on the subject of ancient coins, also collected for his superiors various ancient objects from Kythera, including coins, statues and fossils.

In a letter dated 6th/18th of July 1806, addressed to W.R. Hamilton, Em. Kaloutsis writes:

“I have recently happened upon three ancient silver coins, one from Athens, the other from Phocis, the third from Rhodes, a piece of worked porphyrite, found in a field near the village of Friligianika, and a most beautiful marble statue, brought here from Argos, by one of my fellow countrymen, over 30 years ago, which was found buried by one of his heirs, who is a relative of mine. I look forward to sending you these objects. Since Mr. Leak let on that the two of you started a collection of antiquities some time ago, I handed the porphyrite and the coins to him; since the ancient statue was too big to carry along, he asked me to place it in a box together with the fossilized bones, and to send it, in his name, to Mr. Robert Sargent, your agent on Zakynthos; to him he also wrote to send it on to Mr. N. Stranis, at Patras, with whom he had also left other antiquities” (Miliarakis 1888, 746–747).

It is obvious that the “piece of worked porphyrite, found in a field near the village of Friligianika”, is a Minoan stone vessel, which will be discussed below. It should be also noted that “Mr. N. Stranis, at Patras” mentioned by Kaloutsis, is the English general consul, Strane, who sent inscriptions from Orchomenos, and ancient vases, from Patras to England, aboard the ship “Sprightly of Scarboro”, on the 21st of November 1802 (Smith 1916, 293).

Miliarakis’s conclusions (Miliarakis 1888, 747), are logical: “From all the above, it is obvious that the British government, employed agents in all the Greek towns, both English and Greeks, working together and in league of some sort; apart from their political activities, these agents were also assigned the task of procuring material for ancient collections. We saw before, in the Grigorakis letters, that the same task had been assigned to private citizens, too. For all those acquainted, even a little, with the history of Greek antiquities and the history of the establishment of the archaeological Museums in Europe, it would not be an exaggeration to declare that the conversion of the Parthenon to a mosque and the temple of The-

seus to a Christian church, dedicated to St. George, actually contributed to their survival; this way they would at least not be carried away by the invaders/archaeologists, who sought, like sanctimonious monomaniacs, to propagate their love of archaeology and art to their fellow countrymen, by the transport of ancient monuments, to their own countries”.

c. The archaeological interest of the British during the British occupation of the island and the consequences of this interest in the 19th century

It is obvious that the “Mentor” ship wreck and the ostentatious exchange of so much money on behalf of the British, for the acquisition of antiquities, which followed, inflamed popular feeling on the island of Kythera. According to the chronicle written by the priest Gr. Logothetis (Stathis 1923b, 357), “Mylord (Lord Elgin) sent for divers, who retrieved some chests from the sea and he paid 500 *grossia* for each chest. He was willing to pay forty thousand *grossia* for all of it to be retrieved”.

It is therefore natural that during the British occupation of the island (1809–1864), the number of illicit investigations for antiquities increased; this phenomenon was directly related, as we shall see below, to attempts for the acquisition of portable antiquities. As expected, because of the British occupation of Kythera, which ensured easier and also safer access to the island for foreigners, the information about antiquities on Kythera in the 19th century also multiplies.

The Englishman W.M. Leake (1777–1860) makes a return visit to the island in 1806, an island he already knew from the time of the “Mentor” ship wreck, on which he was travelling, as we saw (Miliarakis 1888, 714–715; see also obituary for W.M. Leake in Frearitis 1861, 445–447). Aside from his other activities, W.M. Leake, a sergeant of the British army and secret agent, also collected antiquities. The information provided by Miliarakis, that out of the 16 boxes with antiquities that had sunk at Avlaimon, “the four contained marbles belonging to Leake”, is worthy of note; “they were among the first to be raised, along with the boxes containing his books and clothes and were sent, in November 1802, by Hamilton to Verry, the English consul at Smyrna, who sent them off to London, as suggested by the letter dated 25th of April 1805, written by Em. Kaloutsis to Wright, the consul of England at Zakynthos” (Miliarakis 1888, 717). As noted above, during his second stay at Kythera in 1806, W.M. Leake receives from Em. Kaloutsis three silver coins and a Minoan stone vessel, both of which he is to hand over to W.R. Hamilton (Miliarakis 1888, 746).

The reason for W.M. Leake's second visit to Kythera, between the 30th of September/12th of October, and the 4th/16th of October 1806 (Leake 1835, 69–76; Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 91–97), was apparently political, since he mentions that he had visited Palaio polis during his stay in 1802 (Leake 1835, 69).

“Oct. 1. - Remain at the port at my tent, and receive our vice-consul Calucci, to whose kindness on that occasion we were extremely indebted. In the evening we walk up to the town together and attend a baptism at the house of Mr. Mormori, the Russian vice-consul, the Prytano George Arvanitaki, of Zante, standing as godfather”.

W.M. Leake's bond with Kythera and the Kaloutsis family however, remains strong until 1856, when N.-S. Kaloutsis visits him in England.

“On the 18th I went by train to the town called Junbridgswells, to visit colonel Leake, well known for his learned writings on Greek archaeology. He received me, together with his wife, and invited me to lunch. He mentioned to me that he was engaged in the repair of a page from a geographical manuscript, which he was planning to publish, concerning the location of two ancient towns on Kythera; in an attempt to reconcile the passage from Xenophon with that from Pausanias, he repeated the same arguments he had voiced another time in the Royal Society of Literature (vol. IV, pp. 260-280), and in his other work *Travels in Northern Greece* (vol. III). He showed me photographs of his collection of ancient Greek coins. On the 6th of September I visited him again. I offered him two pamphlets of *Pandora* (8/1856), including my published views about the painter Antonios Vasilakis and some archaeological information about Thera. When he invited me for breakfast, we spoke in English about various literary matters. While we were riding in a carriage to the photographer's shop, his wife gave me a photograph of her husband as a gift and asked me to leave her one of mine; then, we went along and reached a rocky hill, covered with plants. When we returned to his house in the evening he showed me his manuscript, which he dedicates to his wife, an educated woman, who has worked with him in a number of his writings” (Petrocheilos 1965, 412–413).

This is why W.M. Leake, rescues, in 1849, a most important piece of information about the prehistory of Kythera, in connection with the now lost Babylonian cuneiform inscription, on an object dated to the time of Narâm-Sin (1830–1813 BC), which we will discuss below.

Because of the British occupation, most of the visitors that mention Kytherian antiquities were British. Immediately after W.M. Leake, John Galt, the Scottish writer, friend and biographer of Lord Byron, visits Kythera, where he meets Em. Kaloutsis, and mentions the “Mentor” ship wreck (Galt 1812, 138–139; Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 97–106). Simopoulos is right when he says that J. Galt “is not interested in antiquities, despite the fact that he had received a literary education” (Simopoulos 1973–1976, Γ1, 521). J. Galt is the first to make a note of the marble lion at Kapsali (Galt 1812, 142; Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 101), while at the same time he barely mentions the ruins at Palaiopolis and Palaiokastro. In 1814, Palaiokastro is also visited by J. Bramsen (Bramsen 1820; Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 114–116).

On the 15th of May 1816, an anonymous traveler from Italy passes Kythera, but does not stop there (*Notes d'un voyage fait dans le Levant en 1816 et 1817*, Paris, typographie de Firmin Didot, 24). Between 1813 and 1817, the English officer T.C. Kendrick, during his journey to the Ionian islands, arrives at Kythera, where he visits Palaiokastro and the cave of Hagia Sophia. In his own words: “There is still to be seen a bath, which by the people is said to have been that of Helen, whose slippery trick caused such dreadful warfare amongst the Grecian chiefs. These remnants are incontestible evidence of the island’s former consequence. Several broken bits of columns of the Doric order are to be seen on and about this site, probably forming part of a temple or palace” (Kendrick 1822, 82, 85; Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 107). T.C. Kendrick is apparently seeking coins, because he claims that they are only found “in cabinets belonging to Venitians” (Kendrick 1822, 89). In 1823 the Frenchman Antoine-Virgile Schneider publishes a book about the Ionian islands, where Kythera is also mentioned (Schneider 1823; see also, Leonhard 1899, 4). In 1830, the Frenchman G.P. Depping publishes a general, topographical book about Central Greece, the Peloponnese, and the Aegean islands. In the few pages mentioning Kythera, G.P. Depping, after repeating the information provided by Nicolas de Nicolay, Spon and Castellan, mentions the well known ruins at Palaiopolis and the quarry at Avlaimon (Depping 1830, III, 15–21, 18: “Aujourd’hui ces constructions antiques sont tellement délabrées, qu’il est difficile de reconnaître la destination qu’elles ont eue, et elles ne méritent l’attention que par leur haute antiquité”).

The first extensive “Natural and political history of the island of Kythera, commonly known as Tsirigon, composed by Mister Ioannis Mikelis, from Kydonia in Crete” was composed between 1824–1825. It was a handwritten manuscript, produced in a number of copies, and remained so, until its publication in 1982 by M.K. Petrocheilos (Andritsaki-Photiadi and

Petrocheilos 1982, 153–225). I. Mikelis, the Cretan scholar and naturalist, a close friend of Adam. Korais (Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 145–146), who lived for some time in Kythera, apparently as a fugitive during those difficult years, mentions Palaiokastro, and is the first to provide information about the construction of the fortification walls, about Kastri, where he notes a number of tombs, as well as about the quarry at Avlaimon, at the site of “Spiaggia”; he also discusses the coins of Kythera (Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 188–190). I. Mikelis also mentions the cave of Hagia Sophia; what is quite interesting, is that the same cave is also mentioned in the writings of Konstantinos Oikonomou, of the Oikonomoi family (M.K. Petrocheilos, newspaper *Tò Bñμα*, 21st of April 1953). M.K. Petrocheilos makes reference in his article, to Xyngopoulos (1955), and reminds us of the relationship between I. Mikelis and the brother and son of Konstantinos Oikonomou. Xyngopoulos (1955) however does not make any mention of Konstantinos Oikonomou. It is worth noting that although I. Mikelis is writing only a few years after the “Mentor” ship wreck, he avoids even mentioning the subject. Perhaps, during the time that he was writing his book, quite difficult times for Greece, I. Mikelis tried to avoid any mention of anything that would offend the British sovereigns of the island (Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 152). See also the dedication of the “work” of I. Mikelis to Fr. Adam, the British Commissioner of the Ionian islands (Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 151–152).

The French philhellene F. Marcet, in his journey to Kythera in 1826, mentions the remains at Palaiokastro, which he nevertheless did not visit (Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 116–121). The next year, in 1827, the English officer J. Davy, who visits Kythera, and is especially interested in the geology and fossils on the island, mentions the ancient quarry at Avlaimon, with an additional interesting piece of information: “Major Mc Phail showed me an ancient bronze chisel that had been found at the quarry and had been probably used there” (Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 125).

Two American missionaries, George W. Leybourn and Samuel R. Houston, who visit Kythera in 1838, from Laconia, remain on the island for two years. G.W. Leybourn mentions in his diary a visit to the tombs at Kastri. As we shall see below, it seems that G.W. Leybourn also climbed up to Hagios Georgios sto Vouno (Papageorgiou 1975, 251; Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 131–136; about the proselytizing role of American missionaries in Greece during the 18th and the 19th centuries, see Simopoulos 1973–1976, I2, 498–500). In 1842, a book is published by Davy in London, about the British dominions in the Mediterranean, the Ionian Is-

lands and Malta (Davy 1842; see also Leonhard 1899, 4; I was not able to find the book and the article written by the English medical doctor, R. Jameson, *Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal* XXI (1836), 273; see also Weil 1880, 225, n. 1).

In 1843, Gérard de Nerval travels from France to the East. His book “*Le Voyage en Orient*” (see Michel Jeanneret 1980; Petrocheilos 1979, 104–119), which starts with Kythera, was described by its author as a literary fictionalized account of his travels. Although Gérard de Nerval (2000, 32–58), impregnated with the liberal loathing of the French for the contemporary British occupation of the island, devotes many pages to Kythera, he never actually set foot on the island and his main sources are well known earlier writers, like A.L. Castellan, and D. and N. Stephanopoli. Gérard de Nerval mentions Avlaimon, Kastri, Palaiopoli, Palaiokastro, Potamos, and Spathi and in his narrative, in a constant medley of reality and fantasy, he is repeatedly referring to antiquities, to the extent that he even publishes nonexistent inscriptions. Nevertheless, although his information is unreliable, he faithfully transmits the climate of the times as regards the search for portable, occasionally excavated antiquities, as we shall see below.

Nevertheless, the romantic writings of Gérard de Nerval, which became quite famous in France, were intimately connected with the island of Kythera; the latter influenced the French intellectuals of the 19th century and their relationship with the island, described as the magical isle of mythical, Heavenly Aphrodite. Because of the sensation caused by this book, one could say that Gérard de Nerval did actually made this dream-like “*Journey to Kythera*” (Petrocheilos 1955, 63–74, mostly about his considerable contribution to French literature and art; Vasileiadis 1969, 690–697; Marsellos 1974, 92–97; see also Aroni-Tsili 1997).

The concept of Kythera, as an allegorical place of love (eros), has its roots in Virgil. In Italian literature it is already attested in Petrarch and Foscolo. Apart from the medieval novel “*Hypnerotomachia*”, composed by the Dominican monk Francesco Colonna (1433–1527), printed in Venice in 1499, and re-published during the 19th century by Charles Nodier, Kythera, as the island of ideal love, is also mentioned in the work of Voltaire and Charles-Paul de Kock. Gérard de Nerval’s work inspired a whole series of French writers, like Charles Baudelaire, who wrote the famous poem entitled “*Un Voyage à Cythère*”, which, according to K. Palamas, who translated it, was one of the “most agonizing confessions of his satanism” and “a drip of hedonism with a heavy fragrance”. There is also Victor Hugo, who wrote two poems about Kythera, Théophile Gautier, Banville (Théo-

dore de), Stendhal (Marle-Henri Beyle), Pierre Loti, Victorien Sardou, Jules Verne, Ernest Renan, Paul Verlaine, as well as Albert Samain and Fortunato Strovski, in 1923. The myth of idealized, erotic Kythera was undoubtedly reinforced by the two paintings by Antoine Watteau, one entitled “Embarquement à Cythère” (1717), now exhibited at the Louvre, while the other was commissioned by Frederic of Prussia. Also worthy of mention is an opera-ballet with the same theme by Gluck, based on a comic play by Favart and Fagou, as well as a composition by Couperin. It should be also noted that Tahiti was re-named “New Kythera”. The influence of the myth on German literature was minimal, the only exception being Gessner. Among Greek writers and artists, one ought to mention K. Palamas’s poem, “*A journey to Kythera*”, K. Ouranis’s poem “Kythera”, N. Karydis’s poem also entitled “*A journey to Kythera*” (1998, 24), M. Karagatsis’s short story, “*A lonely journey to Kythera*” (from the “Litany of the impious”, Athens 1940), Elytis’s verses, “Greetings from Kythera” (1995), and Angelopoulos’s film “*A journey to Kythera*”.

During the first half of the 19th century, the marble lion of Kythera is mentioned in a manuscript by Dionysios Pyrros, the Thessalian (1777–1853), that will be discussed below (E.G. Protopsaltis 1967, 12). In 1847, still during the English occupation, the book of the Kytherian Nicolò Stai, who mentions Palaiopolis and Palaiokastro, is published at Pisa (1847, 24–25, 33); (Petrocheilos 1955, 36–37, where he praises Stai’s work as opposed to the work of I. Mikelis; 1979, 51). Palaiopolis, Palaiokastro, Palaiochora, and various portable finds are mentioned in 1849, by the well known I. Kaloutsis, in a “memoir” he sent to W.R. Hamilton, published in 1853, by W.M. Leake (Leake 1853, 257), as we shall see below.

In 1852–1853, N.-S. Kaloutsis, published the first article about the archaeology of Kythera (Kaloutsis 1852–1853; see also Leontsinis 2002, 167–230). N.-S. Kaloutsis refers, in some detail, to the fortification walls of Palaiokastro and offers for the first time details about the architectural members incorporated into the walls of the church of Hagios Kosmas. At this time Kythera is going through the last years of foreign rule, i.e. the British occupation, and interest in archaeological matters becomes more evident in some publications, not only by foreigners, but also by Greek scholars. A prime example is E. Curtius, who mentions the ruins at Palaiopolis and Palaiokastro, in 1852 (301). But we should linger on N.-S. Kaloutsis (1825–1896), a little longer. He was the grandson of the well known Em. Kaloutsis, the vice-consul of England at Kythera, whose activity, in relation to the “Mentor” ship wreck, we traced earlier. The reason for this special interest in N.-S. Kaloutsis, is his diary, part of which was published

in 1965 (Petrocheilos 1965), and which included interesting information, not only about the relations between the well known Kaloutsis family and the British, but mostly about the Kytherian antiquities. Considering the patriarchal social structures of those times, it becomes evident, as we shall see presently, that the strong personality of Em. Kaloutsis, the founder of the family, was catalytic for his descendants. The English themselves recognize the existence and the importance of the family, since they refer to the “Family” and the “Relations” of the Kaloutsis, with capital letters (Smith 1916, 252).

The bonds between the Kaloutsis family and the British, forged by Em. Kaloutsis at the time of the “Mentor” ship wreck were not only bonds of friendship, but also political bonds, as is surmised by the elevated posts his descendants held during the British occupation of the island. What is of interest here of course is the involvement of the Kaloutsis family during the 19th century, with Kytherian antiquities. Ioannis Kaloutsis (1786–1857), the son of Em. Kaloutsis (for biography of I. Kaloutsis, by his son, N.-S. Kaloutsis, see Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 41–43), assistant sub-prefect and then sub-prefect of Kythera, member of the parliament and senator of the State of the Ionian Islands (Petrocheilos 1966; see also Leontsinis 2002, 167–230), also serving as vice-consul of Spain, corresponds, as mentioned above with W.R. Hamilton, the secretary of Lord Elgin, about the Babylonian cuneiform inscription unearthed at Kythera, which has been dated in Narâm-Sin’s time; the same inscription is discussed by W.M. Leake, who gave “a number of” antiquities as a gift to Lord Nugent, commissioner of the Ionian Islands (Petrocheilos 1965, 413). At the same time he also gave a Minoan stone vase as a gift to the Archaeological Society at Athens (Wolters 1891, 53, fig. 54); the stone vase is now housed in the Prehistoric Collection of the National Archaeological Museum at Athens. About the bond between I. Kaloutsis and the British, especially with W.R. Hamilton, Lord Elgin’s secretary, his son, N.-S. Kaloutsis, says: “And when the wise archaeologist, William Hamilton, was at Kythera, after he was shipwrecked along with the cargo of the Elgin marbles carried on ‘Mentor’, and was receiving the hospitality of my father, the vice-consul, as a close friend of the family, he requested to take young Ioannis to England and educate him at his own expense, but his parents could not bear to be parted from their only and most beloved male child” (Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 41).

The bond between the W.R. Hamilton and the Kaloutsis family must have remained strong, since the son of I. Kaloutsis, N.-S. Kaloutsis, was proud of his father that “having been invited by W. Hamilton himself, then serv-

ing as ambassador of England to Naples, he went to that capital and stayed at the ambassadorial mansion, enjoying many honors and a splendid reception” (Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 41). Nikolaos-Sophocles Kaloutsis, the son of I. Kaloutsis, and grandson of Em. Kaloutsis, also a commissioner of Kythera, a member of parliament and a senator of the State of the Ionian Islands, visits, according to his diary, years later, in 1856, Lady John Sastop, the ex-wife of major Longley, governor of Kythera (1830), at the house of lord Nugent in England (Petrocheilos 1940, 81; 1955, 36; Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 21–24; about Laurentios Kaloutsis, the brother of N.-S. Kaloutsis, see also Petrocheilos 1955, 35–36).

“...On the 11th of September, I visited Sastop at her house in London... We reached Aylesburg, 43 miles from London, by carriage; I went up to the Lilie mansion, which originally belonged to Lord Nugent, ex-governor of the Ionian Islands, where he died, and is now owned by the wife of doctor Connall’s brother; Dr Connall is a military doctor, who had served at the Ionian Islands. Mrs Sastop, whose former name was Longley, was also staying there at the time, together with her son, whom I first met there. Dr. Connall invited me to breakfast and we drank Zakynthian verdea wine, which had been sent to Nugent 15 years ago, by his friend George Rosis. This house is still preserved, along with the furniture, as it was when the Lord was still alive. In the house are kept many ancient Greek weapons, helmets, reliefs, many clay vases, some of which had been sent as gifts to the Lord Governor by my own father. There are also two pistols, gifts presented to Lord Byron by the poet Dion. Solomos. There is also a splendid, flourishing garden, with plants brought from Greece, and with climbing vines of Corinthian raisins, fig trees and other fruit-bearing trees. Lord Nugent had apparently acquired estates at Daphni (in Attica), which he left to the wife of Mr. Connall’s brother.” (Petrocheilos 1965, 413).

During the same trip N.-S. Kaloutsis also visits W.R. Hamilton, “an old friend of his family”, complaining of his “polite, but rather cold” British manner”.

“...On the 11th of August I went to visit W.R. Hamilton, an old friend of my family; I handed over to him my father’s letters. A respected old man, he was seated before his desk and had the fire on, so as to keep the damp out, although it was well into the month of August. He received me courteously, but in the rather cold British manner. We spoke for many hours, sometimes in English, sometimes in Italian. He showed me the recently published manuscript on Coinage by colonel Leake, as

well as various antiquities, the pictures of his grandfather and his father and various modern sculptures. Then we went together in a carriage to the British Museum, and entered a splendid hall, where we met the Italian Antonio Panizzi, who had served for many years as a librarian and to whom I was introduced. In other halls they keep the Parthenon marbles, the Panathenaic metopes, the pediment statues, the marbles from Phigaleia and other innumerable remains of Greek art... I went to Hamilton's house for a second time and I gave him various ancient Greek coins, as well as an arrow and a brooch, as gifts. Our talk revolved around archaeological matters. He showed me a splendid collection of ancient coins, two bronze obelisks, which were given to him as a gift by Pope Leo XI, as a reward for his collaboration with Canova for the return of the works of art and icons stolen by Napoleon the Great, from Paris to Italy. He showed me a bust of Wellington, the work of the sculptor Piztruci, on a piece of Parthenon marble and he offered me three of his books" (Petrocheilos 1965, 412).

It is worth noting that N.-S. Kaloutsis gave to W.R. Hamilton "various ancient Greek coins, an arrow and a brooch", as a gift. It is of course curious that the scholar N.-S. Kaloutsis, who, according to Petrocheilos (1965, 405), "published works of historical content", in his visit to W.R. Hamilton in 1856, does not mention the inscribed Babylonian object, details of which had been sent by his father, I. Kaloutsis, seven years earlier, to W.R. Hamilton, and which had been published only two years before by W.M. Leake, as we shall see below. It is nevertheless obvious that the behavior of his grandfather, Em. Kaloutsis, during the "Mentor" ship wreck in 1802, marked both his descendants and the Kytherian antiquities as a whole.

Of course, Kythera appears on numerous maps in the first half of the 19th century, including the maps drawn by Nikolas Kephala in 1818 (Avramea 1985, 213, fig. 153), G.A. Olivier (Avramea 1985, 218–219, fig. 158), Benoist (Avramea 1985, 222–223, fig. 160) and Lapie, in 1827 (Avramea 1985, 228–229, fig. 163), by the French Mission in 1833 (Avramea 1985, 224–225, fig. 161), again by Lapie (Avramea 1985, 226–227, fig. 162) and by W. Smith in 1843 (Avramea 1985, 231, fig. 165). In 1863, Eduard Lear (Murray 1845), and D.Th. Ansted (Ansted 1863, 436–437), travel around Kythera, but do not make any reference to antiquities: "Cerigo is full of historic and mythological interest. More than either does it belong to the realms of romantic poetry. It is indeed the ancient Kythera". In 1864, the four volumes of the book written by Viscount Kirkwall are published in London; he had stayed at the Ionian Islands for four years. Kirkwall is quite impassive in his narrative, does not mention any antiquities and limits himself to statistics. In his own words: "What imagination must those

Greek poets have had in order to have given deathless reknown to this desolate wind-bound, treeless, unfrequented island!” (Kirkwall 1864, II, 301–302). A little before the end of the British occupation, Greek scholars also begin to take an interest in Kythera. The first is A.S. Rousopoulos, in 1862, who publishes six inscribed lead sling weights from the island (Rousopoulos 1862, 314–315, no. 397, pl. MB'.7; Polyzoidis 1859, Γ', 107; Marsellos 1974, 33). Before 1868, M. Roumano, a resident of the island, according to F. Lenormant, gives a bronze figurine to the British Museum as a gift (Lenormant 1868, 124–125). Soon after the liberation of Kythera, A. Postolakas publishes coins from Kythera (Postolakas 1868, 19–110, nos. 1044–1051, pl. ΣΤ), while C. Bursian mentions the ruins of Palaiopolis and Palaiokastro (Bursian 1868–1872, 141).

d. Underwater investigations of the Archaeological Society at Kythera after the liberation of the island and archaeological activities at the end of the 19th century

A few years after the end of the British rule at Kythera and after the incorporation of the island to Greece, a new investigation is undertaken at Avlaimon concerning the “Elgin marbles”; this was the first re-opening of the investigation after the initial attempt by Em. Kaloutsis in 1805/1806, discussed above. The new protagonist in this operation, which takes place between May and November 1875, is the Archaeological Society. The following information is based on the proceedings of the council meetings of the Archaeological Society and on a series of documents preserved in the Archaeological Society archive, which are published here for the first time.

The instigation for the underwater archaeological investigation at Avlaimon in 1875, the first underwater investigation to be undertaken after the liberation of Greece, was apparently provided by “a letter sent by a treasurer, named Moukakos, residing at Kythera”, to the Archaeological Society, “announcing that some of the Elgin marbles, which had sunk with the ship and were never retrieved in their entirety, are still lying in the depths of the Avlaimon bay; he offered to oversee their retrieval, at a small cost, with the help of divers who happen to be on the island at this time of the year”. After a long discussion, which was recorded in the proceedings of the council meeting of the Archaeological Society on the 6th of May 1875, and which was based on written evidence implying that, despite Lord Elgin’s claims, the cargo of the ship had not been raised in its entirety, “it was finally decided that we should write to the Ministry of Education asking

for a government naval vessel, with divers on board, to be sent to Kythera, and that the captain of the ship, together with the general ephor or a representative of the Society, could undertake the necessary investigations”.

Session/KA: “...Then a letter sent by a treasurer, named Moukakos, residing at Kythera, was read out, announcing that pieces of the Elgin marbles, which had sunk with the ship and were never retrieved in their entirety, are still lying in the depths of the Avlaimon bay, and that he is in a position to oversee their retrieval, at a small cost, with the help of divers who happen to be on the island at this time of the year. The matter was debated, since Elgin’s report, as recorded by Michaelis in his book entitled “*Der Parthenon*”, claims that all the marbles were raised from the bottom of the sea, while two encyclopedic lexicons, a German, by Meyer, and a French lexicon by Treuffell and Wüzz, both claim that not all the marbles had been raised and various opinions were voiced in favor of a renewed attempt. It was finally decided that we should write to the Ministry of Education asking for a government naval vessel, with divers on board, to be sent to Kythera, and that the captain of the ship, together with the general ephor or a representative of the Society, could undertake the necessary investigations. It was also decided that we should write to Moukakos, thanking him and telling him that the representatives of the Society, on their arrival at Kythera, would speak with him about the undertaking, etc. The secretary of the Society, however, was more of the opinion that the divers mentioned by Moukakos at Kythera should retrieve at least one piece of marble first”.

It seems that, what was then called the “Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education”, did not reply to this request of the Society and the matter is again brought before the council meeting of the Archaeological Society, a month later, on the 6th of June 1875.

Session KΓ’: “Since the government has not responded to the reports concerning Kythera, thus making it clear that it finds it difficult to send a government naval vessel to the island, the secretary of the Society, Steph. Koumanoudis, proposed that our Society should send Stamatakis out, as soon as possible, while divers are still on the island, so that he may raise, at least a piece of marble from the bottom of the sea, so that we may then make a final decision on the matter. Nevertheless, the majority thought this was unfeasible and decided that we do not have the means to proceed, while the government has, as we have found out, both divers, at Chalkis, and winches for the raising of the marbles”.

As expected, the ministry did not respond to this second letter, if of course it had ever been informed of this request. Not only is there no reply by the government in the archive of the Archaeological Society, but, more importantly, the first relevant document sent by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education to the Archaeological Society, dates from the 14th of June, one week after the last council meeting of the Archaeological Society; moreover, the said document was not in reply to the request of the majority of the council on the 6th of May and on the 6th of June, concerning the dispatch of a ship to Kythera, with divers on board. According to the document dated 14th of June 1875, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education, deems “right at present” that the “Ephor of Peloponnesian antiquities”, should be sent to the island “so that the bottom of the sea at Kythera, where Elgin’s ship was sunk, may be investigated as soon as possible” (Fig. 86).

Prot. No: 3276, Prot. (of the Arch.Society) No. 244:

Kingdom of Greece. Athens, 14th of June 1875. Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education. To the President of the Archaeological Society. Since the Council of the Archaeological Society, as indicated by the report sent to the Ministry, considers that it is necessary to investigate, as soon as possible, the seabed at Kythera, where Elgin’s ship was sunk, we deem it right at present that the Ephor of Peloponnesian antiquities should be sent to Kythera, so as to investigate the seabed, with the help of Kalymnian divers, now residing at Kythera, or with the help of divers sponge fishing in the gulf of Boiae, where local rumors have it that pieces of marbles are still visible, and find out what the truth is. The Minister (illegible signature).

It is worth noting that the ministry adopted the view, expressed twice in the council of the Archaeological Society, by Steph. Koumanoudis, the Secretary of the Society.

There was, however, activity behind the scenes, mostly initiated by the ever present foreign powers. A text was written in pencil on the document of the ministry dated 14th of June 1875; the text, entitled “Academy, June 12 1875. Murray”, was written on the back pages of the document, mostly in English, only part of it being in Greek (Fig. 87). The document sent by the ministry is two pages long; the first page features the decision of the ministry. The English-Greek text is written on the third page and since it apparently went on for longer than was expected, it seems to continue on the second page, where the Greek section of the text had been also written.

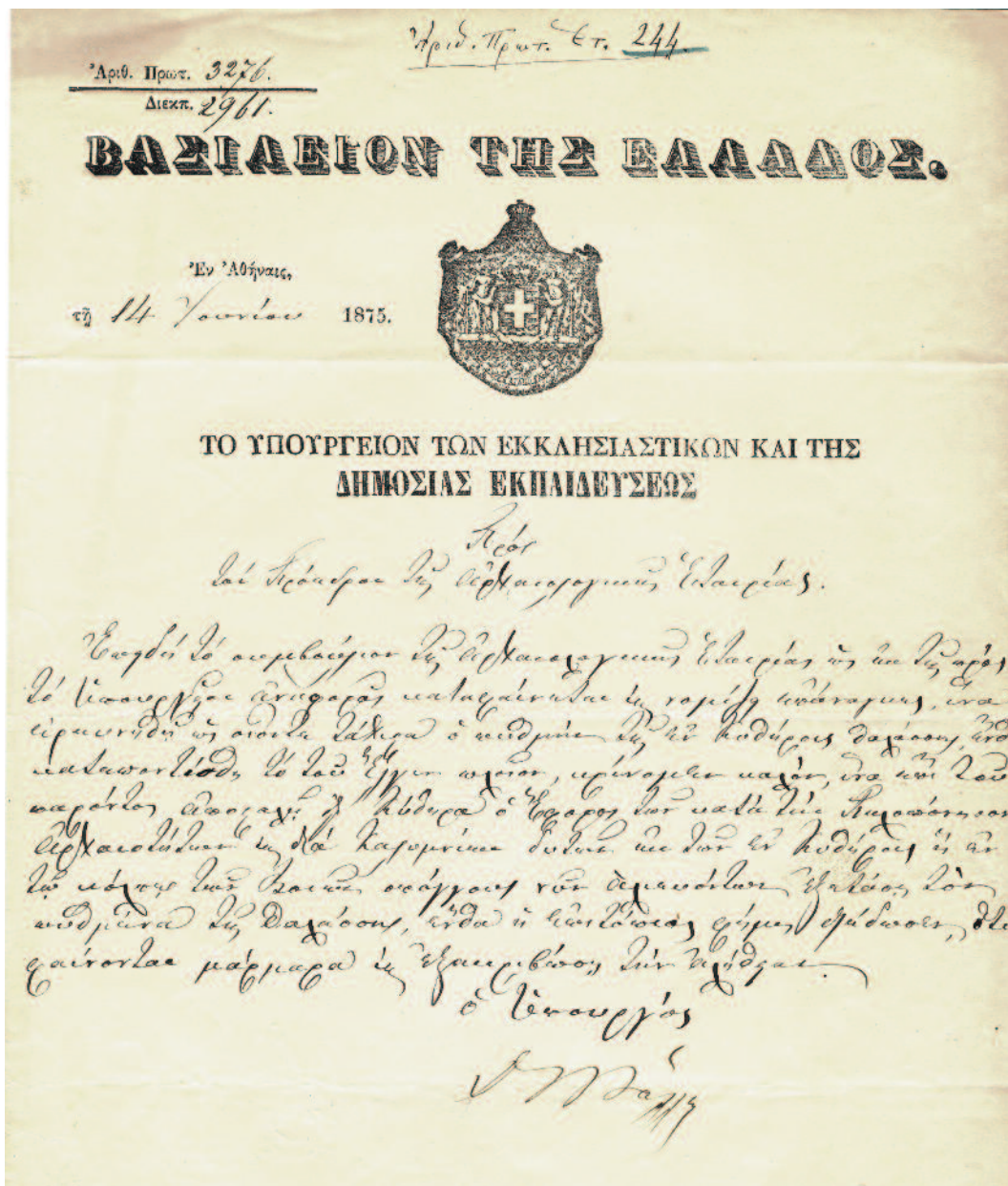


Fig. 86: Document by the Minister of Education to the President of the Archaeological Society at Athens, dated 14th of June 1875, concerning the dispatch of a mission for underwater exploration at Kythera (Archive of the Archaeological Society at Athens).

“Murray. Such is the story and already the legitimate ownership of the marbles is under discussion. Meanwhile, it may be good to bear in mind that this is not the first occasion on which wonderful treasures have been seen at the bottom of the sea; and further, that in an appendix to the Report of the Commission appointed by the Parliament which [the h

had been erased] reference to the acquisition of the Elgin marbles in 1815, it is expressly stated that ‘all the cases were finally recovered and none of the contents in any way damaged’. The work of recovering them did not end till the third year after the shipwreck, and it is not likely that a laborious and expensive task of this kind carried so far would have been left so incomplete as the statement of the *Levant Herald* implies. It is, of course allways possible to suppose that Lord Elgin had been deceived by those whom he employed at Cerigo, the more so since the work of removing the sculptures from Athens had been done not under his personal superintendence, but by Lusieri, a paid agent, from whom he may not have received such a list of the objects embarked at Athens would enable him tocketh them on their arrival here. Should the report prove correct it will, apart [sic] from the value of the objects, add annother [sic] incident to an already remarkable story... Lord Elgin having as yet never been in Athens and being led in the matter solely by the idea that everything which an artist of high character like Lusieri might select, would, when once in England, be of national importance. There was difficult to get the objects to England with French ships [the c is erased] in the Mediterranean. Besides, one ship, as has been said, had gone down at Cerico... It was not until 1812 that Lusieri was able, after many difficulties, to send to London eighty cases containing the results of his labours”.

It is obvious that the person who composed this text is Greek, because there are mistakes in the spelling of some of the English words, possibly copied it from some English text.

The document of the Ministry, dated 14th of June 1875, was brought before the council of the Archaeological Society, on the 24th of June, where, of course “there was some discussion, because the council, through three letters that have already been sent to the Ministry of Education and to the Council of the Ministers, mostly concerning the Kythera mission, had asked the government for a state-ship, with divers on board and a winch for raising the marbles”. Although the majority of the members of the council were in a difficult position, they had no real choice, but to “approve of the dispatch of Stamatakis to Kythera, according to the stipulations of the letter from the Ministry”. It is strange, however, that in this discussion, the secretary, Steph. Koumanoudis, who had until then been the minority voice in the council meetings, as regards the idea of sending Stamatakis on a mission to Kythera, as mentioned above, was now suddenly opposed to the whole concept, because “he is not hopeful that this mission will bear any fruit”.

Session ΚΑ', 24th of June 1875: "...the president {Philippos Ioannou}... presented the letter sent by the Ministry of Education, through which the Society was asked to send Stamatakis to Kythera, so that he may investigate, with the help of the Kalymnian divers on the island and those at Boiaë, the existence of any sculptures in the bottom of the sea. There was a debate concerning this matter, because, in three letters already sent to the Ministry of Culture and especially to the Council of Ministers, concerning the Kythera mission, the Council had asked the government for a government naval vessel, with divers on board and a winch to raise the marbles. And although Mr. Fintiklis abstained from expressing an opinion, the remaining council members agreed to the dispatch of Stamatakis to Kythera, according to the stipulations of the letter from the Ministry, while the secretary stated that he entertains no hopes that this mission would bear any fruit, because the winches necessary for the task, are not available, from what we hear, if of course (illegible word) an archaeologist is to believe that there are indeed sculptures at the bottom of the sea, by simply taking the word of divers (illegible word). This kind of endeavor, with the help of such divers, would succeed, he said, only if they had claimed that what they had seen at the bottom of the sea, were not carved pieces of marble, but rocks, and he admits that other methods of testing this claim would be difficult and expensive".

Although P. Stamatakis is already at Kythera, as indicated by his report of the 6th of August 1875, published by the Society (Fig. 88), on the 6th of July 1875, the minister replies with a letter addressed to the president of the Archaeological Society, where he expresses his wish "that the dispatch of the Ephor Mr. Stamatakis to Kythera should not be delayed any longer".

Prot. No 5057, Prot. (of the Arch.Society) No 255:

Kingdom of Greece. 6th of July 1875. Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education. To the President of the Archaeological Society. It is our wish that the dispatch of the Ephor, Mr. Stamatakis, to Kythera, about which we have written to you at another time, should not be delayed any longer. The Society should advance the necessary travelling expenses and the expenses for the investigation of the seabed, and may in time claim a refund of these expenses from our Ministry. The Minister (Illegible signature).

On the 18th of July, the Minister again writes to the president of the Archaeological Society, asking him: "that you may advance to the ephor of the Peloponnesian antiquities the necessary travelling expenses and the cost of his initial investigations in the harbor of Avlaimon".

Academy June 12 1875. Murray:

Such is the story and already the question is being discussed as to the legitimate ownership of the marbles. Meanwhile, it may be well to bear in mind that this is not the first occasion on which wonderful treasures have been seen at the bottom of the sea; and further, that in an appendix to the Report of the Commission appointed by Parliament with reference to the acquisition of the Elgin marbles in 1815, it is expressly stated that "all the cases were finally recovered and none of the contents in any way damaged." The work of recovering them did not end till the third year after the shipwreck, and it is not likely that a laborious and expensive task of this kind carried so far would have been left so incomplete as the statement of the *Levant Herald* implies. It is, of course, always possible to suppose that Lord Elgin had been deceived by those whom he employed at Cerigo, the more so since the work of removing the sculpture from Athens had been done not under his personal superintendence, but by a paid agent, Lusieri, from whom he may not have received such a list of the objects embarked at Athens as would enable him to check them on their arrival here. Should the report prove correct, it will appear from the value of the objects,

+ Lord Elgin having as yet never been in Athens and being led in the matter solely by the idea that everything which an artist of high character like Lusieri might select would when once in England, be of national importance. The difficulty was to get the objects to England with French ships in the Mediterranean. Besides, one ship, as has been said, had gone down at Cerigo. --- It was not till 1812 that Lusieri was able, after many serious difficulties, to send to London eighty cases containing the results of his labours.

And another incident to an already remarkable story was, that the objects were sent to England in the *Medusa*. The *Medusa* was a French ship, and it was on her that the objects were sent to England. The *Medusa* was a French ship, and it was on her that the objects were sent to England. The *Medusa* was a French ship, and it was on her that the objects were sent to England.

him to check them on their arrival here. Should the report prove correct, it will appear from the value of the objects,

Fig. 87: Text written by Murray on the back of the document, 12th of June 1875 (Archive of the Archaeological Society at Athens).

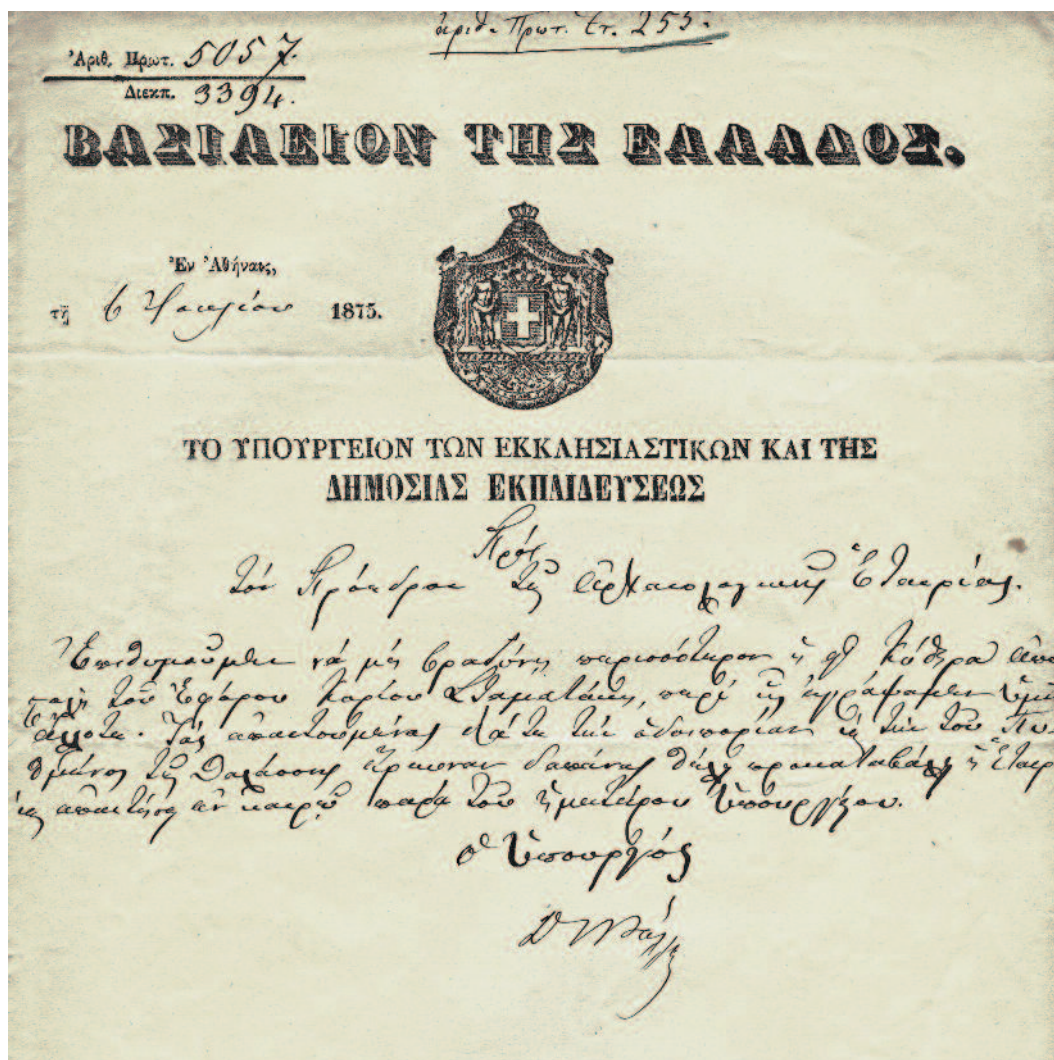


Fig. 88: Document by the Minister of Education to the President of the Archaeological Society at Athens, dated 6th of July 1875 (Archive of the Archaeological Society at Athens).

Prot. No 5057, Prot. (of the Arch.Society) No 266:

Athens, 18th of July 1875. Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education. To the President of the Archaeological Society. In our document (No 5057), we asked you to advance to the ephor of the Peloponnesian antiquities the necessary travelling expenses and the cost of the initial investigations he will be conducting in the harbor of Avlaimon. According to a telegram sent today by the ephor, to the General Ephorate of Antiquities, the work begins next Tuesday, and he needs an advance of one thousand drachmas. We are therefore asking you, Mr. President, to pay him this sum

of money in advance, which the ministry will repay to the Society at the appropriate time, along with the other sums already advanced. The Minister (Illegible signature).

But P. Stamatakis, according to his report of the 6th of August 1875, had already received, before the 6th of July, an advance “by the Treasurer of the Archaeological Society, amounting to 1.500 drachmas”. The two documents of the Ministry, dated 6th and 18th of July 1875, are presented to the council of the Archaeological Society on the 24th of July.

Session KE'. “Two documents were sent by the Ministry of Education, concerning the departure of Stamatakis to Kythera and about an advance to be paid by the Society for the expenses concerning the search for the Elgin marbles; two money orders were therefore issued, one for 500 and the other for a thousand drachmas and the amount was sent to Stamatakis who had in the mean time departed”.

According to the document sent by the Ministry on the 18th of July: “according to a telegram sent by the ephor to the General Ephorate of Antiquities, the work begins next Tuesday”, that is by the 22nd of July 1875.

No 128 (Prot. (of the Arch.Society) No 277:

Avlaimon, Kythera, 27th of July 1875. To the President of the Archaeological Society at Athens. The investigation of the part of the harbor of Avlaimon, where Lord Elgin's ship, carrying the Parthenon marbles to London, has sank, began last Thursday, on the 24th of this month, with the help of divers. The investigation, conducted with the help of three divers, finished yesterday, on the 26th of July, but, according to the divers and the captain of the ship carrying the divers, no marbles were discovered, apart from the remains of the sunken ship. At my request, the captain of the ship carrying the divers, dived himself down to the ship wreck twice, so that he might see for himself and thus guide the divers in their work. The remains of the ship lie in the southwestern part of the small promontory forming the right part of the entrance to the Avlaimon harbor, as one enters the bay, at a distance of 20 *orgies* (120 feet/40 yards), and at a depth of 16 *orgies* (96 feet/32 yards); they lie on the flat seabed, covered by sandy clay, ca. one *orgia* (6 feet/2 yards) thick. So, all the extant remains of the ship were investigated with pick-axes and other tools, for two days, while pieces of wood and the glass from a small door belonging to the ship were hauled from the sea. These pieces of wood that were hauled from the sea belong to the lower part of the ship, as the captain himself and other experts confirm; the third day, that is yesterday, we investigated a large area around the ship, ex-

tending to the cape on which Elgin's ship crashed and sank; nevertheless, no piece of marble was discovered here either, as the divers and the captain himself confirm. By the cape, at a depth of 15 *orgies* (90 feet/30 yards), lies the extremely worn anchor of the ship. Therefore, since no marbles have come to light, I considered it unnecessary to continue the work and the expenditure of large sums of money in vain. I look forward to presenting a detailed report concerning the investigation and the part of the harbor where Elgin's ship sank, at a later date. The commissioner and the harbor master of Kythera, as well as the assistant customs officer of Avlaimon were also present during the investigations. Your obedient servant, P. Stamatakis.

According to the handwritten report sent by P. Stamatakis, the "Ephor of Peloponnesian antiquities", which is preserved in the archive of the Archaeological Society (Fig. 89), and by another handwritten account of his travelling expenses, submitted on the 6th of August 1875, also preserved in the archive of the Archaeological Society, P. Stamatakis remained at Kythera for a month, from the 6th of July, until the 4th of August 1875.

No 130, Prot. (of the Arch.Society) No 280:

Athens, 6th of August 1875. Investigation in the little harbor of Avlaimon, at Kythera {sic}, in search of the sunken Parthenon statues, drachmas: 1.148,30. To the President of the Archaeological Society at Athens. I am submitting an enclosed list including ten expense receipts, for the sum of money spent during the investigation of the Lord Elgin marbles, which had sunk to the bottom of the sea in 1802, in the small harbor of Avlaimon at Kythera; the expenses for the investigation, which was undertaken between the 6th of July and the 4th of August 1875, amounted to the sum of one thousand and forty eight drachmas and thirty cents. By the Treasurer of the Archaeological Society I received 1.500 drachmas. I spent 1.148,30 drachmas. There are 351.70 drachmas left over. These I mean to return to the treasury of the Archaeological Society in a few days time, when I will also submit to you the bills for the months of May and June of this year, for the archaeological work conducted in Attica and Boeotia. Your obedient servant, P. Stamatakis.

The matter of the dispatch of Stamatakis to Kythera was discussed by the council of the Archaeological Society, in two more meetings. In the proceedings of the council meeting of the ΚΕΤ' Session, on the 1st of September 1875, the following was recorded:

"...the secretary {Steph. Koumanoudis} reported the following: "Stamatakis sent a report from Kythera and came here himself on the 5th of

at Kythera, as well as Stamatakis's reply to the Society, where it was stated that the sum of 351,70 drachmas that had not been spent at Kythera, he kept when he went to Tanagra, because he had at that time received another 400 drachmas by the Society; mention is also made of the account submitted by Stamatakis on the 6th of August, concerning the various sums of money he had received and the expenses he had incurred from the 1st of May to the 4th of August, according to which there were now 162 drachmas left over {illegible word}, which he intended to set-off against the recent expenses incurred at Tanagra, but if the council so wished, he could send the money back immediately. The council concurred with the view of the treasurer Mr. Giannopoulos, that in this way {illegible word}, the accounts of the work done by the Society and the Ministry, but since we have already sent Stamatakis money and we are going to send him more tomorrow, in accordance with his request for the work at Levadeia, it was decided that the money order should amount to the sum of 701,70 drachmas, instead of the sum of 350 drachmas he is requesting, and that the 351,70 drachmas will be retained in the Treasury, so that the accounts may be balanced. Four letters by Stamatakis were also submitted to the council, including a second list of the incoming antiquities in the Schematari collection of antiquities, between the 1st of June and the 20th of October".

According to the documents preserved in the archive of the Archaeological Society, published here for the first time, and a very small number of other published data that will be mentioned right after, it seems that P. Stamatakis was not only responsible for Kythera, but for the entire Peloponnese. P. Stamatakis had also undertaken in 1875, "archaeological work" in Attica and Boeotia, including Levadeia. It is obvious, that during his stay at Kythera, he managed to acquire "a bronze coin of the city of Kythera" and "two inscribed stones", two inscriptions now kept in the Epigraphical Museum, as we shall see below. It seems that P. Stamatakis remained at Kythera and collected archaeological information for a month, almost at the same time as R. Weil, and O. Riemann.

According to the report written by Stamatakis: "The commissioner and the harbor master of Kythera, as well as the assistant customs officer at Avlaimon, were also present during the investigations". Although the remains of "Mentor" were located with the help of three "divers", working for three days, between the 24th and the 26th of July 1875, and with the active participation of a "captain", who dived twice into the sea, "towards the southwestern part of the small promontory, forming the right part of the entrance to the Avlaimon harbor, as one enters the bay, at a distance of 20 *orgies* (120 feet/40 yards), and at a depth of 16 *orgies* (96 feet/32 yards), on

the flat seabed, covered by sandy clay, ca. one *orgia* (6 feet/2 yards) thick”, apart from the anchor of the ship, “no marbles were found”.

The only new information provided in the report was that “All the extant remains of the ship were investigated with pickaxes and other tools, for two days, while pieces of wood and the glass from a small door belonging to the ship were hauled from the bottom of the sea”; nothing is reported about whether these pieces of wood and glass were kept or not. It is noted, however, that “these pieces of wood that had been hauled from the sea belong to the lower part of the ship, as the captain himself and other experts confirm”. There is no detailed report by P. Stamatakis in the archive of the Archaeological Society “about the work done and the part of the harbor where Elgin’s ship sank”, which suggests that the report might have been delivered orally. It should also be taken into account that at the end of the 19th century the technical equipment available was inadequate for an underwater archaeological investigation, even for the discovery of small ancient objects that the shipwrecked passengers of “Mentor” may have been carrying with them.

Irrespective of the results, the first Greek underwater archaeological investigation, which took place at Kythera, on account of the famous ship wreck of “Mentor”, as was described in detail above, provided an opportunity for the collection of a number of antiquities from the island. Steph. Koumanoudis, the General Secretary of the Archaeological Society at the time, was an epigraphist. In 1875, he published the two inscriptions brought back by P. Stamatakis, as well as one more inscription, which remained at Kythera (Koumanoudis 1875, 48). In 1878, K.D. Mylonas mentions the acquisition of an inscribed votive relief depicting the Dioscouroi (1878, 365), which will be discussed below. So, while the Greek archaeologists tried, after the liberation of Kythera, to rescue all the portable antiquities that had remained on the island, other scholars, working on behalf of the other Great Powers of the time, aside from Britain, toured Kythera extensively. It is therefore important to mention two, almost simultaneous publications, one by R. Weil, a German scholar and one by O. Riemann, a Frenchman, which constitute in fact the first archaeological investigations at Kythera.

R. Weil travelled in 1875 over a large part of the island and apart from the identification of various portable antiquities, as we shall see below, he also visited many ancient sites (Weil 1880). R. Weil mentions the ancient quarry at Avlaimon, the tombs at Asproga, near Kastri, he notes the existence of antiquities at Kastri itself, describes the ancient remains at Palaiopolis, and Hagios Kosmas, and makes a note of tombs at Vergidounia, Hagios Theo-

doros and Livadia. Of special interest is, as we shall see below, his visit to Hagios Georgios sto Vouno. As a German, R. Weil is precise and careful in his reports concerning the then flourishing illicit trade in Kytherian antiquities, as will be noted below. On the contrary, the Frenchman O. Riemann, despite his visit to the island in 1876, and although he came into contact with many Kytherians, which he mentions by name, as we shall see in detail below, does not manage to present a coherent archaeological picture of the island (Riemann 1880, 17–45; Petrocheilos 1979, 39–74).

In 1881, N.I. Solomos visits Kythera on his way from Nauplion (Solomos 1881) and produces the first monograph that was ever written about the marble Archaic lion. In 1882, Fr. Printezis also writes about Kythera (Printezis 1882, 10–155). The geographer, A. Miliarakis, visits the island in 1884; at that time Kythera was in the jurisdiction of the Argolid and Corinthia prefecture, apparently because the island was more accessible from Nauplion (Miliarakis 1886, 259–282). As we shall see below, although A. Miliarakis was not interested in the antiquities of the island, he did visit Hagios Georgios sto Vouno. In 1884 and in 1887, N. Delakovias (Delakovias 1884, 226–227), also mentions Palaiopolis (Delakovias 1887, 10; for N. Delakovias, see Petrocheilos 1955, 42).

Of special interest is H. Schliemann's visit to Kythera in 1887 (see Korres 1974, 34–35); his aim was to locate the precise position of the temple of Heavenly Aphrodite, already famous in antiquity, and to discover the Phoenician remains on the island (Schliemann 1888, 20–23). According to Schliemann: "Ich hatte mir von der griechischen Regierung die Erlaubniss erbeten, die Insel Kythera zu erforschen, einestheils, um die Baustelle des Tempels festzustellen, andernteils, um Trümmer phönikischer Niederlassungen aufzudecken, in denen ich – wenigstens was Topfwaren betrifft – Anklänge an die tirythische und mykenische Technik zu finden hoffte. Es wurde mir von der Regierung der Ephoros, Dr. Valerios Stais, zugesellt ...". The investigation conducted by H. Schliemann, who excavated Palaiokastro and travelled over the whole of the island ("Ich habe die Insel in allen Richtungen durchsucht"), did not have any dramatic results. H. Schliemann mentions only the discovery of stone axes "von einer Kirche gekrönten Hügel neben dem jetzigen Hafen Kapsali" and the acquisition of a bronze figurine of a he-goat from Palaiokastro, which he donated to the National Archaeological Museum at Athens, as we shall see below. He also mentions the quarry at Avlaimon.

In 1891, P. Wolters publishes the first prehistoric vase that was found on Kythera, a stone Minoan jug, which I. Kaloutsis donated to the Archaeological Society at Athens (Wolters 1891, fig. 54), "a find that was discov-

ered at the site of Bothon, on the south beach of Skandeia”, which is now part of the prehistoric collection of the National Archaeological Museum. The same year, G. Lambakis, the first director of the Christian Archaeological Museum, and the first visitor of Kythera specializing in the Byzantine period, travels around “the attractive island of Kythera” (Lambakis 1892, 96) and visits the churches of Palaiochora and Mylopotamos (Lambakis 1892, 100–101). In 1892, A. Philippson (1959, 10), who publishes a geographical treatise about Greece, mentions only the fortification wall of Palaiokastro.

Between the 19th and the 24th of November 1896, the geographer R. Leonhard (1899), “durchkreuzte die Insel an alle Teilen, mit Ausnahme kleiner Strecke der Westküste”. R. Leonhard, also notes, amidst other information about Kythera, aside from Palaiokastro, the site of Vothonas, the necropolis of Asproga and the quarry at Avlaimon, as well as the existence of an ancient road from Mitata to Kastri. As we shall see below, R. Leonhard also visited Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, and depicts both the church and the altitude of the site (363 m) on his map (Fig. 65). Finally in 1897, A. Evans (1897, 349–350, fig. 23), published the stone vase with the hieroglyphic inscription referring to the temple of the sun, at the time of Pharaoh Userkaf, of the 5th Egyptian Dynasty. The same year the same vase is also mentioned by Chr. Tsountas (Tsountas and Manatt 1897, 279, 281, 284). The involvement of A. Evans and Chr. Tsountas with Kythera, two almost mythical figures among the great scholars of prehistoric archaeology, and the fruitless, but not at all superficial excavation of the third great scholar, H. Schliemann, indicates, not only the archaeological importance of the island, but also the intensity of the archaeological activity at Kythera during the 19th century. It is obvious that the archaeological interests of the British during the occupation of the island in the 19th century were substantial and the consequences were indeed grave; the next task, therefore, is to examine the various Kytherian excavations, the illicit trade in Kytherian antiquities, as well as the acquisitions of the various museums.

e. Various Kytherian excavations, the transport of Kytherian antiquities and acquisitions by various museums

The abundance of information concerning Kytherian antiquities during the 19th century raises a number of issues, already mentioned individually above, and more specifically, the illegal acquisition of portable Kytherian antiquities and what is even more important, the search for antiquities, occasionally through a number of excavations (Simopoulos 1993). Our main



Fig. 90: Archaeological Museum of Venice: female head (National Archaeological Museum).

sources of information are again the accounts of various travellers, who visited Kythera. Nicolas de Nicolay, who had already visited Kythera, including the site of Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, as noted above, in 1551, records the following: “une statue de femme vêtue à la grecque, de grandeur démesurée, et dont un provéiteur de l’île avait, quelques années auparavant, fait enlever et porter la tête à Venise, suivant le récit de mon guide (εικ. 90). Les insulaires affirment que cette statue représentait la belle Hélène...” (Silvius 1577; Riemann 1880, 21; see also Petrocheilos 1979, 43–44; Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 85). Delakovias (1884, 226–227), confuses the description of the statue discussed by Nicolas de Nicolay at Palaionpolis, with his visit to Hagios Georgios sto Vouno and claims that Nicolas de Nicolay states that the statue was found “on the top of a mountain, perhaps the mountain now called Hagios Georgios, above Avlaimon”. Perhaps this statue mentioned by Nicolas de Nicolay is the same as that referred to by Jean le Maire, A.L. Castellan and O. Riemann, the possible identification of which will be discussed below.

This was obviously not an isolated incident. Among other marbles that Giacomo Nani carried away from Kythera and then incorporated into his

palazzo in Venice (“Inscrizione tradotta da Giacomo Nani et unita ad altri orequeuolissimi marmi nel di lui palazzo in Venezia”), he also carried away an inscribed marble funerary urn of Roman date, decorated in relief with a number of scenes, as illustrated on a water color by J. Grevembroch (Grevembroch, n. 228, vol. 3, 108/1, 50), of the 18th century (I. Favaretto 1990, fig. 79).

In 1789, in the end of the 18th century, André Grasset Saint-Sauveur, the general consul of France in the Ionian Islands, records the following concerning his visit to Kythera:

“I know of a collection, the majority of the coins in which were minted during the time of the (Roman) Empire; they were collected on the island by an islander who served as the vice-consul of France. This collection had been sent to count Maurepas, the minister of nautical affairs. Although I did not manage to obtain his drawings at that time, I believed nevertheless, that the description of these coins would not be without interest for the reader”.

This is followed by a detailed catalogue of 36 coins (Grasset Saint-Sauveur 1800, 303-377; Petrocheilos 1979, 95-99). Count Maurepas was the minister under whose orders Bellin drew, in 1738, the map of the Archipelago (Avramea 1972, 185).

More details about the search for Kytherian antiquities and the illicit trade in Kytherian antiquities during the 18th century is provided by A. Castellan, who visited Kythera in 1796.

“Dans cet endroit on a fait de fouilles: notre conducteur nous a dit qu’on en avait retiré des objets curieux, et qu’on avait découvert des chambres construites en marbre. L’excavation était en ce moment remplie d’eau: à travers cett’ eau nous avons cru apercevoir les fragments d’une statue. En effet, nous sommes parvenus à retirer une figure d’un beau marbre blanc et d’une proportion plus forte que nature, mais malheureusement très mutilée: on n’en distinguait que les épaules couvertes d’une draperie; la tête, les bras et le reste du corps manquaient. Comme elle était d’ailleurs trop pesante pour que nous fussions tentés de l’enlever, nous l’avons laissée sur la place. Peut-être fera-t-elle naître à d’autres voyageurs, plus curieux, le désir de continuer des fouilles qui peuvent devenir intéressantes, ces tronçons de colonnes, cette statue indiquant l’existence d’un monument de quelque importance” (Castellan 1808, 35; see also Riemann 1880, 26; Petrocheilos 1979, 50).

The writings of A.L. Castellan, who had already mentioned an excavation at the site, were prophetic, for a few years later, during the British occupation of the island, there were quite a few “plus curieux”, burning “par le désir de continuer les fouilles”. Perhaps the headless and mutilated statue mentioned by A.L. Castellan, is the same as that mentioned by Nicolas de Nicolay, Jean le Maire and O. Riemann, the possible identification of which will be discussed below. A.L. Castellan though, also mentions antiquities that were being sold, of course mistaking the site involved. “... Palaiocora (c’est-à-dire, l’ancien lieu), où ils se trouvent des débris de mosaïque, des médailles, des pierres gravées, que les paysans vendent aux étrangers. Un Anglais qui nous avait précédés de peu de temps, avait recueilli un grand nombre de ces objets: nous n’avons trouvé qu’une médaille grecque, assez mal conservée et de peu d’intérêt” (Castellan 1808, 36–37). The anonymous Englishman mentioned by A.L. Castellan had preceded, not only A.L. Castellan himself, but also many of his famous countrymen, in the following, 19th century.

It is therefore obvious that both Kytherians and foreigners were collecting antiquities on Kythera as early as the 18th century. As we saw above, in 1797–1798, Dimo and Nicolo Stephanopoli mention the existence of a catalogue of antiquities and also the concealment of antiquities by the Kytherians. In the 19th century, however, after the “Mentor” ship wreck, that must have obviously excited the imagination of the Kytherians, a significant number of people were engaged in the search for portable antiquities, especially during the British rule, when the official state did in fact incite this type of activity. O. Riemann’s report, is typical of the times (Riemann 1880, 29; Petrocheilos 1979, 53): “the English administration in the year 1833 sent there {to Kastri} 8 men to conduct an excavation” and that “the administration had asked Em. Mormoris for information about the state of the architectural remains of the temple of Aphrodite” (Riemann 1880, 27–28; Petrocheilos 1979, 51).

The participation of the official English authorities, at least in the political exploitation of Kytherian antiquities, is also confirmed by R. Weil. According to Weil: “einem mehr als lebengrossen sitzenden Löwen aus weissem Marmor von dekorativer Arbeit, vielleicht ein Grabdenkmal, jetzt an der Stadtseite auf der Kastellmauer aufgestellt, haben die Engländer 1809 aus der Paläopolis hierhergebracht, um ihn als Wappenthier zu verwenden” (Weil 1880, 237). The official English participation in the illicit acquisition of antiquities is in any case confirmed by a second illegal “excavation” mentioned by R. Weil, at the site of Gonia Mitaton, that was apparently conducted by an Englishman, Captain Preston, in October 1850 (Weil 1880, 234; see Kaloutsis 1852–1853, 502, where he is called Breston),

which resulted in the acquisition of an inscribed vase by the British Museum, as we shall see below.

It appears therefore that the search for antiquities at Kythera intensified during the British occupation of the island. In 1824–1825, I. Mikelis writes: “I found here – at Kythera – a Laconian coin of Augustus” (Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 171). As noted above, although Gérard de Nerval, writing in 1843, is unreliable as regards many of the details mentioned in his narratives, he does manage to convey the climate of the times, by referring to excavations and to the plunder of portable antiquities (De Nerval 2000, 47, 50). In 1847, Nicolò Stai mentions that “at Palaiokastro, all who dig find vases, the same as at Kastri” (Stai 1847, 24–25, 33; Petrocheilos 1979, 51).

In 1849, I. Kaloutsis, in a “Memoir” he sent to W.R. Hamilton, which was published by W.M. Leake, mentions the excavation of tombs at Palaiopolis, that contain “bones, vases of glass and stone, clay vases of various shapes and sizes, some of which are covered with a black varnish and decorated with figures”, as well as the discovery of “fragments of spears, armor and tools, and a multitude of Greek and Roman coins”, including Kytherian coins. In his own words: “The antiquities of Cerigo are chiefly confined to the two localities of Paleokastro and Paleopolis, where however, despite a considerable expenditure in excavations, nothing of any importance has hitherto been discovered. At Paleopolis, of which the modern town of Cerigo appears to have been the acropolis, ancient tombs have been laid open, containing bones, vases of glass and stone, – vessels of clay, of various forms and sizes, some of which are covered with a black varnish and decorated with figures. Various fragments also of spears, armour, and utensils have been found, and numerous Greek and Roman coins, but the greater part so much worn as to render the impressions on them unintelligible. Some however bear a head on one side, and on the other a dove, below which are the letters KYΘ (Cythera). Many Roman and mediaeval coins have also been found in another site known by the name of Paleokhóra” (Leake 1853, 257).

Another important Kytherian find, mentioned by I. Kaloutsis, an inscribed Babylonian object, will be discussed below.

The more scholarly N.-S. Kaloutsis, son of I. Kaloutsis, who, following the family tradition, as mentioned above, kept an eye on excavations and the illicit trade in antiquities, mostly perpetrated by the British sovereigns of the island, is of course more detailed in his account in 1852–1853:

“This opinion {about the fortification wall}, is based on the information provided by numerous farmers, who, while digging in its south side {of Palaiokastro}, found a long line of rectangular stones set one upon the other, in the isodomic masonry style... Ancient tombs, lined with slabs all around and on the interior of the tomb, and containing vessels made of clay and glass, are often excavated all over this mountain. These tombs are placed close to each other, in a long row, and there are occasionally successive layers of tombs. One of the tombs, dug three years ago, was covered with a poros slab bearing an inscription with modern-style lettering, but was most difficult to read, since it had been worn by time; it seems that it was a decree, since a number of men’s names can be identified in the text. It is obvious that this was not a funerary inscription, because it was facing inwards. Ancient coins of different dates, vases, fragments of sculpted marble capitals, doorjambs, fragments of statues, heads, altars, and other such finds are often excavated in the area. At another site, called Gonia, on the north side of the island, various tombs were excavated in September 1850. In one of these tombs a black clay vase was discovered, the capacity of which was half an English pint; it bore an inscription in archaic lettering near the rim (FEMIKOTVLION) (Fig. 91). This is now in the possession of an English officer named Breston, who, after sending a description and a drawing of this vase to the British Museum, received the reply that is a very important find, because it will shed a lot of light on the ancient measuring system...”. The inscribed vase from Gonia will be discussed below. As we have seen, Weil (1880, 234), mentions Preston as the owner of this vase. N.-S. Kaloutsis continues: “...Kytherian coins are quite rare; only two are preserved in the collection of Woodhouse, an Englishman living in Corfu (about the Woodhouse collection, see Newton 1866, 260). A white, translucent sealstone, bearing the inscription ΘΕΩΤ ΑΡΒΕ, was recently found on the island” (Kaloutsis 1852–1853, 501–502).

The search for antiquities and the transportation of Kytherian antiquities continued after the liberation of the island, with the same intensity as during the time of the British occupation. Our main source on this subject is O. Riemann, who visited Kythera in 1876 and supplies a wealth of relevant information: “Remains of the fortification walls and of other buildings are visible at Palaiokastron, and all those who excavate, find vases, as they did once at Kastri” (Riemann 1880, 27–28; Petrocheilos 1979); a wealth of information is also provided about architectural members in specific locations, “at Kolones” and in specific fields “the field belonging to Dimitrios Viaros Malakos”. O. Riemann also mentions portable antiquities. “Mr. Em. Mormoris assured me that he had once seen in the vicinity the



Fig. 91: British Museum: inscribed clay cup (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, pl. 88.5).

shoulder of a statue, which he supposes would be part of the statue described by N. de Nicolay, Jean le Maire and Castellan” (Riemann 1880, 28, n. 2; Petrocheilos 1979, 52–53, n. 2). Perhaps the head of this statue may still be identified.

The field owned by Dimitrios Viaros Malakos at Kolones is particularly productive.

“Ancient artifacts were discovered in this field during various farming activities. These include two gold coins of Phillip and Alexander and a well, also lying in the same field, which at first glance looks ancient. In the surrounding area, a few years before my stay at Tsirigo, was found a beautiful bronze head of a young girl, about which many people have spoken to me on the island. It had been sold in Peiraeus for 2.000 drachmas. I also heard the story that in the field “at kolones”, another farmer had discovered marble statues, which he hid in a well. In addition to that, at Palaiokastro were found various ancient objects, including, according to Mr. Kavalinis, many glass vessels” (Riemann 1880, 36; Petrocheilos 1979, 63–64).

The “une belle tête de jeune fille en bronze”, mentioned by O. Riemann, can be of course identified with the head of a Kouros, in Berlin.

Apart from the information concerning the search for antiquities at Palaiokastro, O. Riemann also refers to Palaiopolis:

“At Palaiopolis, Mr. Mormoris saw the remains of small buildings, with tombs around them, mostly opened. Many of the tombs that Castellan describes do not exist any more. The rock, on which they lay, sunk into

the sea during the big earthquake of the 18th/30th of June 1798. The remaining tombs were investigated in 1861 by a local man, who composed a special report; I met him at the house of Mr Mormoris. This report is vague and is lacking in clarity and I have therefore left it out. He believed that he had identified the letters IEMIN on the face of the rock, and he had also brought to Mr Mormoris a piece of the internal plastering of one of the chambers. On the plaster can be clearly seen a face painted with red color” (Riemann 1880, 29; Petrocheilos 1979, 53).

O. Riemann provides a detailed description of the necropolis at Asprogia, which A.L. Castellan had also visited:

“Inside the tombs had been apparently discovered vessels, coins, and clay statues. (Mr Kavalinis had in his possession at one point, a small satyr holding his head with his hands, a child’s toy, found at Asprogias). I have also been told about two peasants who had found two gold lions of very small size at Asprogias” (original text, Riemann 1880, 34; Greek translation by Petrocheilos, 1979, 61).

O. Riemann constantly mentions a large number of portable antiquities:

“One usually finds ancient objects at Palaiopolis or in the surrounding area. In this town I had the opportunity to see a small bronze statue of Isis, from Palaiopolis. It seems that a peasant found a small bronze horse there, while another peasant found a bronze statuette, depicting a young man placing his hand on his lips. At Kastri, Mr Kavalinis has found a fragment of a marble relief, depicting a hanging grape above three small figures, a man with two women, carved on all three sides. At Kastri, another man has also found the foot of a marble lion. In the plain of Palaiopolis, a little to the northwest of the baths, an ancient marble pavement was discovered during the day of my arrival” (Riemann 1880, 32; Petrocheilos 1979, 58, n. 1).

According to O. Riemann, ancient objects were found in many different parts of Kythera, at Livadi, Karavas, Diakofti, and at Chalkos, in the area of Kapsali:

“At Livadi, small ancient objects were found in various locations. Mr Georgios Mormoris remembers that in his field, near the bridge of Kattouni, was discovered a tomb, containing vessels. Near Karavas, at the so-called site of “Ioutro” (bath), in the estate of Mr Karydis, were apparently found the remains of baths and various small objects. At Diakofti were found tombs. Mr Romanos at Corfu, also spoke to me about Gothic coins, which had been found at Diakofti. Finally on the south

side of the island, east of Kapsali, there is a rocky headland called Chalkos. The story has it that an Englishman found there a tomb, containing jewellery, which had been carved into the opposite side of this headland or inside the rock, at the height of three one-foot-high letters, near the ground. I went to the site of Chalkos, but I did not notice anything” (Riemann 1880, 39, 40; Petrocheilos 1979, 67–68).

B. Mormoris, born in 1918, the grandson of G. Mormoris (1804–1888), confirms the existence of a family estate with olive trees and fig trees near the bridge at Katouni, a farm that was owned by his sister Louitzina, until the 1930ies; he claims that he was never aware of the existence of any antiquities on this estate. The farm, which was next to the river, and had to be protected from the overflowing river by a wall, was sold to a certain Fatseas (Vlitos). G. Mormoris, O. Riemann’s informer, was, always according to B. Mormoris, a radical, and during the time of the British occupation had had to flee to France; he also knew French, English and Italian well. According to B. Mormoris, the chief informer of O. Riemann and a collector of antiquities, E. Mormoris, was no relation to G. Mormoris.

O. Riemann mentions five Kytherians by name in 1880; some of them were actively engaged in the illegal search for antiquities and had also formed collections of antiquities. O. Riemann’s main informer was Em. Mormoris, as he is often mentioned in his writings (Riemann 1880, 27, n. 2, 28–30, 40–41; Petrocheilos 1979, 45, n. 2, 51–55, 68–69; another of his informants was a certain Karydis); it was in his house that he met, another, unknown Kytherian, who had composed, in 1861, during the time of the British occupation, a specialised report about the antiquities at Kastri (Riemann 1880, 29; Petrocheilos 1979, 53). Em. Mormoris himself, who, as we saw, had in his possession “official evidence” about the “Mentor” ship wreck (Riemann 1880, 29, n. 1; Petrocheilos 1979, 54, n. 1), had also composed, in 1844, “hand-written memoirs” (Riemann 1880, 27; Petrocheilos 1979, 51), which Riemann uses (Riemann 1880, 27–30; Petrocheilos 1979, 51, 55). He can be probably identified with “Em. Mormoris, resident of Kythera”, who, according to Steph. Koumanoudis (Koumanoudis 1875, 466), donated an inscription to the Archaeological Society at Athens; he also donated, according to the proceedings of the council meeting of the Archaeological Society, on the 1st of September 1875, to be discussed below, “a bronze coin of Kythera and fragments of an inscribed stone and a square, hollowed inscribed stone”.

“The collection of Mr. Emmanuel Mormoris includes: A small black lekythos found at Voukolio (see AA 1864, 283). At the rim and on the side of the vessel are identified the following inscriptions (possibly

wrong), au graffito: *δακρύων ποή* – this inscription is read from right to left; after the word *ποή*, there is one more letter which looks like an O or a Θ – and *ἴλεον θεῖον* – this inscription is read from left to right. Also a piece of clay found at Livadi. The head of a warrior. A small black vessel from Palaiokastron. A small unguentarium in multi-colored glass from Palaiokastron. A fragment of a stone found at Palaio polis, inscribed with the word *ΙΕΡΟΣ*. A piece of mudbrick, inscribed with the ending of a word in *ΩΝ*. Two lamps of clay, a clay cone with two holes, 5 sling stones of lead from Tserigotto; out of the three extant inscriptions on these stones - *έπαι*, *-(ε) παις* (= *έπαισα*), I could not read the third one. A pierced stone ball. A small iron tool, probably serving as a key (used to open a lock). A small pair of forceps, a few cms long, supporting, at one end, a piece decorated at its four corners with two rows. Incised stones: Paris and Helen (depicted in relief with white colour against a blue background), Bachus and Backhannals, the three Graces dancing (this incised stone comes from Athens and was discussed in an article in *Pandora* of the 15th of January 1875). Imprints of many incised stones from Tsirigo. Hermes – Head of a man wearing a helmet – the famous one. Various coins found at Tsirigo, two Kytherian coins among others. One of them is the No. 1045 coin in the Postolakas catalogue (Postolakas 1868). The other bears the head of Aphrodite, turned to the right and on the other face, a dove flying forwards. A small column, part of a mutilated statue, with a capital provided with small spirals, from Palaiokastron (in the past Mr. Mormoris owned many paintings on clay with kothoroi and golden lines around the feet, which had been found inside tombs at Palaio polis)” (Riemann 1880, 40–41; Petrocheilos 1979, 51, 67–69).

O. Riemann mentions 24 ancient objects from the Em. Mormoris collection, some of which come specifically from Voukolio, Livadi, Palaiokastro, Palaio poli, and Antikythera. It should be of course noted that Em. Mormoris, the collector of Kytherian antiquities, was a descendant of the noble Mormori family (for the coat of arms of the originally Cretan, Mormori family, see Gerola 1928, no. 106, 108, 110; Maltezou 1991, ΣΤ, 268), the members of which, similarly to the members of the Kaloutsis family, were also involved with antiquities, as noted above. The sources mention many members of the Mormori family, as for example Nikiphoros Mormoris, archbishop of Philadelphia, who wrote the chronicle of the building of the Hagia Moni (Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 63–64; Maltezou 1991, A7, B, 250; Kalligeros 1998, 32; also Prokopios Mormoris, the father superior of the Hagia Moni, who was among the first to play a leading part in the opening of the road to Hagios Georgios sto Vouno). In the begin-

ning of the 15th century the names of Georgios and Em. Mormoris, are also mentioned (Delakovias, *Κυθηραϊκὴ Ἀγύη*, no. 4, 22nd of January 1898, 4). An Em. Mormoris is the churchwarden of the Myrtidia monastery in 1798 (Kalligeros 1998, 15). Other known names, include Giulio Mormori, a notary (1702-1749) (Maltezou 1991, Γ, 47), a Zuanne Mormori (Maltezou 1991, ΣΤ, 290), as well as Georgios Mormoris (1720-1790) (Evangelatos 1969, 173-182; 2004, 13-27) and an Em. Mormoris (Maltezou 1991, ΙΑ, 35). Em. Mormoris, the vice-consul of Russia, is mentioned by Leontsinis (1980, 222, 235). In the Archivio dello Stato in Venice there is an Atlante Mormori (Maltezou 1991, Θ, 169). There is also the general Em. Mormori, who served the state of Venice, and his brother “cavaliere” Zorzi Mormori (see Bernicolas-Hatzopoulos 1982, 90-101 and Hatzopoulos 1991, 358-367, with bibliography). In the 19th century, when the “Elgin marbles” were being raised from the sea and sent to London, a Giovanni Mormori serves as chancellor of Kythera.

Apart from the collection of Em. Mormoris, O. Riemann mentions in 1880, four other collections of antiquities at Kythera. The most important one, second only to the Mormoris collection, belongs to another of O. Riemann’s informers, Em. Kavalinis, at Kapsali; it included vases, lamps, arrows, sealstones and coins from Palaiokastros, Piatsa and Antikythera (Riemann 1880, 40-41; Petrocheilos 1979, 69-70). It is obvious that this collection too was intended for sale.

According to O. Riemann, a variety of antiquities was owned by a number of Kytherians, all over the island.

A certain Kontoleon, “residing in the town with the fortress”, owned an object from Palaiokastros; according to Riemann (1880, 42), it was a small column, 0.47m in height. Em. Leontarakis, the primary school teacher at Mitata, owned sealstones and more specifically, two bezels found at Kastri, one of which featured an undecorated stone, while the other, which was part of a silver ring, is decorated with a star and a sickle moon (Riemann 1880, 42). Ap. Theodorakis at Potamos, who has obviously copied I. Mikellis’s manuscript (Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 146, 225), serving, most conveniently, as it seems, “for twenty years” as “a customs officer in the Avlaimon harbor” (Delakovias 1887, 10-11), owned “numerous antiquities” even outside Kythera (Riemann 1880, 42-43; Petrocheilos 1979, 70-71). According to N. Delakovias (1884, 226), “the pensioner Mr. Apostolos Theodorakis, an educated, virtuous man, now residing at Kythera, owned many antiquities found {sic} in this area”.

“Collection owned by Mr. Apostolos Theodorakis at Potamos. It includes various objects that had not been found at Tsirigo. A lamp inscribed with the word IIIIOYKIOY, written in retrograde, another, inscribed with the letter A, also in retrograde, another featuring a he-goat, yet another featuring a bovid, and another featuring a cross and finally, another lamp depicting a child on one face and a kind of a monogram, which I was not able to read, on the other. It also included various small containers, one of which, found at Tsirigo, bears the letter A, incised on a straight line. It also included a clay cone, pierced by two holes. It bears the letter O and above it, a hollowed imprint. Finally, it also includes a piece of marble of rectangular shape, with a handle, identical to the weights owned by many museums, especially the ones found at Varvakeion, in Athens”.

According to O. Riemann “on a voulu me vendre à Cérigo une petite pierre gravée, représentant le char de l’Aurore” (Riemann 1880, 42; Petrocheilos 1979, 71).

The illicit trade in antiquities at Kythera during the 19th century is also mentioned by other of Riemann’s contemporaries. Steph. Koumanoudis mentions that, in 1875, an inscription was lying in the office of the merchant I.G. Ntzanis, in the town of Kythera (Koumanoudis 1875, 466). N.I. Solomos, who happened to be at Kythera in 1881, mentions the discovery of “tombs, containing most ancient vases”, at Palaiopolis (Solomos 1881, 1101). R. Weil, who travelled, as we saw, around Kythera in 1875, describes a considerable number of antiquities of minor importance, owned by various Kytherians. It seems that R. Weil was well acquainted with the trade in Kytherian antiquities of the time, since he mentions their precise provenance; he also names James Woodhouse, the general treasurer of the government of the State of the Ionian islands, at Corfu, as the owner of an important Kytherian askos in the shape of a siren (Weil 1880, 234; Soueref 1988, 451–452) (Fig. 92). This vase passed eventually from private hands to the ownership of the British Museum, as we shall see below.

There is no doubt that the extensive trade in Kytherian antiquities, continued into the 20th century, only a little less intensely. The main reason for this change is not of course related to any official measures taken by the government against the illegal trade in antiquities; the only consequence of the measures taken by the government was the ingenious concealment of information, that would have been useful in the investigation of this illicit trade, as for example the information collected above for the 19th century. The main reason for the change in the intensity with which the illicit trade in antiquities was pursued during the 20th century, was the



Fig. 92: British Museum: clay, siren-shaped askos (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, pl. 88.2).

isolation of Kythera, due to the change in the geopolitical circumstances of the island. Kythera was, during the 20th century, far removed from the various dark centers of the illicit trade in antiquities, farther removed than the Cyclades or even Crete, a rather good thing for archaeological investigations. Yet, the fact that until the middle of the 20th century, there were still incidents of official plundering, even of important Kytherian antiquities, is confirmed by the last, as far as we know, adventure of the Archaic marble lion of Kythera, which passed from the hands of the British occupation forces in the beginning of the 19th century, to the hands of the Germans, the last foreign occupation force, on the island, in the middle of the 20th century. For almost 175 years, an important historical heirloom of the island was moved around Europe, without any consideration for its educational or aesthetic value, as was the case with other, similar objects. This

famous Kytherian example makes it therefore obvious, that all the foreign occupation forces on the island, were, apart from their other concerns, intent on usurping and exploiting the Greek cultural heritage.

The Archaic marble lion of Kythera, already placed “on a pedestal inside the castle”, is first mentioned by the Englishman J. Galt, in 1812.

“About the time of the taking of Santa Maura, a marble lion was found. In commemoration of the event it has been placed on a pedestal in the castle, and it is regarded by the Serigots as a very worshipful thing” (Galt 1812, 142; see also Andritsaki-Photiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 101). Harou-Koronaïou (1998), who notes the destruction of the Venetian lion in the Kythera castle by the French commissary Vincenzo Renon on the 10th of August 1797 (see chronicle by the priest Greg. Logothetis, in Stathis 1923b, 343; Leontsinis 1980, 226), mentions that “right above the destroyed Lion, there is evidence suggesting that an Archaic marble lion was placed, on the ramparts of the castle during the Venetian rule”.

According to I. Mikelis, a few years later, in 1824–1825, during the British occupation, the lion had been raised onto a rampart of the castle. “The most noteworthy discovery until now is a lion, quite large in size, which was found at Palaïokastro, and was restored on the walls of the castle” (Andritsaki-Potiadi and Petrocheilos 1982, 181). As regards the intentions of the foreign military occupation forces on Kythera, it should be noted that the Venetian lion of St. Mark (Rizzi 1992, 97–126; 1994, 294–319) was, at the expense of the Archaic Hellenic civilization, replaced in the 19th century, in the military fort of Kythera, by a funerary monument. This thought is not really nationalistic (the same thoughts are expressed by Haroula Koronaïou in 1998), since it has already been expressed, as noted above, by a foreigner, R. Weil, in 1880: “a seated, life-size lion of white marble, a work of art, now placed on the walls of the castle on this side of town, was brought by the English in 1809 from Palaïopolis, so that they may use it as an emblem (Wappenthier)” (Weil 1880, 237). The Venetian lion in the castle of Chora is depicted on an icon of the first half of the 18th century, in the Myrtidiotissa church or church of Panagia Kastrini (Gini-Tsofopoulou 1991b). According to M. Patramani (1998, 596–598, pl. 4), the icon, that was commissioned for the great plague in 1690, is dated to 1691. In the first half of the 19th century, the archaic lion is mentioned in the handwritten chronicle entitled: “*Travels of Greece*”, by Dionyssios Pyrros, the Thessalian (1777–1853) (Protopsaltis 1967, 11, B², 593); according to Pyrros: “On the acropolis of the Kytherians there is a stone lion of considerable size, lying on its walls. This lion was recently found at Palaïopolis”.

R. Weil, who also mentions, like Dionysios Pyrros the Thessalian, that the lion was found at Palaiopolis and not at Palaiokastro, as was stated by I. Mikelis, is the first to identify the sculpture as a funerary monument.

When N.I. Solomos, on a visit to Kythera, identifies the sculpture, which had been placed on the battlements of the fort at Kapsali, as ancient Greek, he devotes to it a whole monograph, which also includes a drawing of the lion (Solomos 1881). He relates the following about the fate of the sculpture, even at the hands of Greeks:

“The ears are broken, as well as parts of the body, while traces of lead on the sculpture, suggest that rifle bullets had been fired at it. I was surprised to find out that it is used for target practice by the policemen, who amuse themselves by firing shots. I hastened to complain to the sub-Prefect for this sacrilege and he assured me that he will take the appropriate measures to safeguard it in the future” (Solomos 1881, 1101–1102).

The matter of the destruction of antiquities by the Greeks during the 19th century has been extensively discussed by foreigners, who speak ironically about the low cultural level of modern Greeks, and have of course used it as a justification for the plundering of antiquities by foreign parties (Simopoulos 1973–1976).

Between 1881 and 1931–1932, the marble lion in the Kythera castle remained unnoticed by the archaeologists. D. Komis (8/5/2002) remembered that it was placed in the castle, to the left of the entrance, facing the Chora (see photograph by Harou-Koronaïou 1998). It is fortunate that S. Benton, the pioneering English scholar at Kythera, noted its existence “on the battlements of the capital” and published the first photograph of the sculpture (Benton 1931–1932, 245, pl. 24b). In her own words: “While convinced that it is Greek work, I prefer not to hazard a date without further study”. During the German occupation of Kythera, and more specifically on the 6th of June 1941, the German colonel Brunz, commander of Kythera at the time, placed the sculpture in a box (“in einer Kiste verpackt”, according to Langlotz 1948–1949, 265), and transported to Germany (Langlotz 1948–1949, 265–266). It is worth noting that the German theft of the lion is mentioned, amongst hundreds of other “thefts perpetrated by Germans, Italians and Bulgarians”, in the volume entitled *Ζημίες τῶν Ἀρχαιοτήτων ἐκ τοῦ πολέμου καὶ τῶν σιρατῶν Κατοχῆς* (Damages to Antiquities during the War and by the Occupation forces), published in Athens, in 1946, by the Directorship of Antiquities and Historical Monuments of the Greek Ministry of Religion and National Education. The suggestion that the theft of the lion occurred “possibly at the suggestion of

an archaeologist”, perhaps on the basis of information provided at the time, is of course reasonable, because very few people knew of the value of the sculpture.

After the defeat of the Germans on the 15th of May 1948 (for the liberation of Kythera from the Germans, see Vounelakis-Thalassinos 1997, 40-46), the Greek ambassador at Frankfurt appealed to the director of Fine Arts of the French Occupation Forces (Administrateur de la Récupération Artistique), in what was then West Berlin, asking for the return of the sculpture to Greece, based on the only published photograph taken by S. Benton. The request was forwarded to the German Archaeological Institute, which published, in 1948-1949, in the *Archäologischer Anzeiger*, the official periodical of the Institute, “wanted adds” (“*Suchanzeigen*”), not only for the marble Kythera lion, but also for other ancient objects that had been lost during the war (Langlotz 1948-1949). A few years later, in the summer of 1952, the sculpture was finally located at a pottery workshop (*Ziegelei*) in Westhavelland and was transported to the Central Berlin Museum (Blümmel 1953, 13), where it stayed, until it was returned to Greece (for the affairs at Freiburg, the decision for the return of the lion and its placement in the Kythera Museum, see *Φωνή των Κυθέρων*, March 1984, no. 135, 3 and *Παγκυθνηπαϊκή*, March-April 1984, no. 135; see also Harou-Koronaïou 1998). According to Harou-Koronaïou (1998): “during the 1950ies the president of the municipality of Kythera, the late Dimitrios Stais, had often appealed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the return of the Lion to Greece”. The same was requested by M.K. Petrocheilos, in his letter to the newspaper *Kathimerini* (5/5/1953). El. Harou-Koronaïou (1998) published the story told by G. Kassimatis, about his visit to Freiburg, in Germany, in 1962, together with Greg. Kassimatis, where he apparently met a “German historian”. When he heard that he was from Kythera, he (the historian) “remembered that he had seen the statue of a lion with the inscription “the Lion of Kythera”, in some storeroom, together with other old metal objects and that he had thought that it might be of some value”. Then, G. and Greg. Kassimatis called the General Consul of Greece in Munich and asked him to start the procedure for the repatriation of the lion.

Concerning the return of the marble lion to Kythera, El. Harou-Koronaïou publishes a story narrated by G. Kassimatis (and recently confirmed by him - 9/5/2002): “When I served as legal council to the prime minister {A. Papandreou}, Melina Merkouri, the then Minister of Culture, informed me that a statue with the inscription “The Lion of Kythera” was received in the collection by the National Archaeological Museum. I then related to her the story of its discovery in Germany and requested that the statue be returned to Kythera and be exhibited in the Kythera

Museum. Melina was moved, not only by the story of its discovery, but also on account of her memories from her father's time of exile at Kythera, and gave instructions that the Lion of Kythera should be immediately sent to the Kythera Museum – which is what happened. She had told me, of her own accord, that she also wished to go to Kythera and be present in the official ceremony upon the arrival of the lion at our Museum, but she was not able to make it". Harou-Koronaïou (1998), records the date of the return of the sculpture to Kythera, on a ship of the Greek Navy, in 1983.

The decision concerning the return of the lion to Kythera "on the initiative of Mr. Greg. Kassimatis, the Gen. Secretary of the Ministry of National Economy", as is announced in the local press, as well as its arrival in the Kythera Museum, is accompanied by a variety of journalistic commentary, both historical and archaeological: "...the lion, accompanied by a group of workmen, was placed in a car, fitted with a special crane, with the help of which it was unloaded from the car and placed on a special base inside the Museum. Many of our fellow citizens visit the Museum and view the lion with joy and considerable emotion, like an old acquaintance that returned to his homeland after an unpleasant adventure, and don't be surprised ... they stroke it with affection".

Upon its return to Greece, the marble lion acquires an inventory number (No 5255) and is exhibited in the Sculpture Collection of the National Archaeological Museum at Athens, until its final return to Kythera. In the archive of the B' Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities is preserved a document, dated 3/12/82, which had been sent by B. Daponte, the President of the Kythera municipality, concerning the return of the marble lion to Kythera and its exhibition in the Chora Museum (YIIIE/APX/A2/Φ42/16067/472/19.6.84).

The brief period of time that the lion remained in Berlin facilitated in fact its overall archaeological evaluation. Already in 1953, Blümmel, in one of his publications, which included many photographs of the Kythera lion, discussed it comprehensively, with reference to many other objects of ancient Greek art that had been stolen during the war (Blümmel 1953, 13–15, no. 7, fig. 6). The marble lion of Kythera has since then appeared in a large number of publications (Willemsen 1959, 41, 130; Dörig 1961, 68; Gabelmann 1965, 77–78, 80, 118; see also Musée du Louvre, *Mer Égée, Grèce des îles*. 1979, 26 avr. – 3 sept. 1979, Paris 1979, 207; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Greek Art and the Aegean Islands*, New York 1979, 211, fig. 170; Petrocheilos 1984, 73–74, pl. 26a), the most important of which are those by G. Kokkorou-Alevras (1975, 83; 1993, 93, 94, 97, 98, pl. 23:2; 1997, 595, fig. 7). She identifies the lion as a significant example

of funerary sculpture of the last quarter of the 6th century B.C., the work of a Peloponnesian, or perhaps even a Laconian workshop (E. Kokkorou-Alevras 1993, 97-98), of the same artistic refinement as other extant lion sculptures, like the lion of Corfu, Komotini, Delos, etc. (see recently Kourinou 2002–2003, 17-32; Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2009).

The adventures of the marble lion of Kythera between 1809 and 1984, are typical of the adventures of numerous other works of ancient Greek art, that were not only expatriated, but were in fact wrenched from the land that gave birth to them, and remained without identity in the world of art (see magazine *Culture without Context*, The Newsletter of the Illicit Antiquities Research Centre, The Mc Donald Institute for Archeological Research, Oxford). Their association with our world or what is usually described as the animate world of men, without any identity whatsoever, is obvious. This is the reason why the crime of illicit dealing in antiquities is so serious, not only because of the violent expatriation of these antiquities. The willing immigrant might even become a man of consequence in whatever foreign land he may end up, if of course he knows who he is. The lion of Kythera, even though it was lying in a pottery workshop somewhere in north Germany, in conditions not very different, so to speak, from those experienced at the same time by many prisoners of war, might, who knows, have been suffering by the cold, under a dark sky, so far away from the Aegean sea; nevertheless it remained a lion of Kythera, and whatsmore, although it was in a foreign land, it demonstrated not only its artistic value, but also its historical value, as a product of the struggle between two 6th century cities, Argos and Sparta, over the sovereignty of an island, the island of Kythera. Blümmel phrased it very elegantly, when he wrote: “Die Ereignisse der letzten Vergangenheit führten zu einer Umschichtung des Kunstbesitzes in Deutschland. Bedeutende Werke wurden im Handel angeboten und wechselten die Besitzer. Manches Wertvolle konnte von Museen erworben werden, anderes wurde den öffentlichen Sammlungen nur zur vorläufigen Aufbewahrung überwiesen, viel kam auch nur zur Prüfung, zur Restaurierung oder zum Photographieren in die Berliner Museen” (Blümmel 1953, 5).

The thoughts that come to mind concerning the comings and goings of a Kytherian piece of sculpture during the 18th or the beginning of the 19th century, apply to numerous other finds, mentioned above. Who knows where most of them are now. At least for some of them it is now known that they have become part of the collections of archaeological museums in the countries the Great Powers of those times represented, Germany, Britain, even perhaps Italy, and some, a few, in Greek Museums, as we shall see below. The French rule at Kythera was very brief, while the history of

Kytherian antiquities acquired by the American museums in the second half of the 20th century can be recorded by another researcher of the 21st, or even of the 22nd century.

Even though the marble lion was returned by the Berlin authorities to Greece and to Kythera, it is, however, well known that two German museums still own antiquities from Kythera: the Antikenmuseum in Berlin and the Leibighaus at Frankfurt. In Berlin is now housed a bronze kouros head (Riemann 1880, 36; Buschor 1950, 94, figs 107, 59; Greifenhagen 1966, 8, pls. 12–13; Gehrig, Greifenhagen and Kunisch 1968, 142, pl. 18; Croissant 1983, 216; Petrocheilos 1984, 72–73, pl. 26b), and in Frankfurt a bronze inscribed figurine (Petrocheilos 1984, pl. 24γ). About the bronze kouros head in Berlin, I.P. Kassimatis, supplied the following information (*Κυθηραϊκὴ Δραχμή* 28.2.57, 198, 2): “Around 1900, a farmer from Mitata, going by the name of Prineas or Haranis, while he was coupling at Palaio-kastro, unearthed with the plough the bronze head of a statue, which was sold to illicit dealers of antiquities and is now in a Berlin Museum”. More ancient objects from Kythera, five in all, are now in the British Museum: a prismatic seal with hieroglyphic signs (Fig. 93) (Evans 1897, 349; Coldstream and Huxley 1972, pl. 88:1), a bronze figurine (Fig. 94) (Lenormant 1868, 124–125; Coldstream and Huxley 1972, pl. 88:4; Petrocheilos 1984, pl. 24b), a siren-shaped askos (Fig. 92) (Weil 1880, 234; Coldstream and Huxley 1972, pl. 88:2; Petrocheilos 1984, pl. 25a), an inscribed vase from Gonia (Fig. 91) (Kaloutsis 1852–1853, 502; Guarducci 1967–1978, II, 466; Coldstream and Huxley 1972, pl. 88:5; Petrocheilos 1984, 60, pl. 24a) and an inscription (Petrocheilos 1984, 70–71, pl. 30 [IG VI, 935]).

It is very possible that Kytherian antiquities were also looted by the Venetians, the first foreign conquerors of Kythera. A marble female head of extraordinary size in the Museum of Venice is perhaps from Palaio-kastro, as well as the mutilated statue at Kythera, mentioned by Castellan in 1796 (Castellan 1808; Simopoulos 1973–1976, B, 658; Petrocheilos 1979, 46–49), by Gérard de Nerval in 1843 (De Nerval 2000, 51), and finally by O. Riemann, in 1876, who also notes that Em. Mormoris had seen the statue in question (Riemann 1880, 28, n. 2; Petrocheilos 1979, 52–53, n. 2). A marble female head of extraordinary size now exhibited in the Archaeological Museum in Venice (Fig. 90), also mentioned by Nicolas de Nicolay, is also worthy of note. This is why I appealed to Luigi Beschi (25/4/2000), a friend and colleague, who had already successfully identified some years ago, a number of ancient Cretan sculptures in the same museum; the sculptures had been transported there during the Venetian occupation of Crete (Beschi 1975). In a few moments, Beschi’s thoughts were directed, from the marble head mentioned by Nicolas de Nicolay in 1551, to exhibit no.

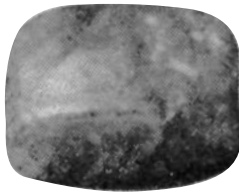


Fig. 93: British Museum: prismatic seal with hieroglyphic inscription (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, pl. 88.1).



162B, the only other over-life size female head of unknown provenance in the Archaeological Museum in Venice. It was acquired at the same period of time that cardinal Grimani, of the Grimani dai Servi family, a great admirer of ancient Greek art, was buying everything that arrived in Venice (L. Beschi 1975, 493, n. 7; K.G. Tsiknakis 1989–1990, 202, n. 49).

In his will, in 1593, cardinal Grimani bequeathed to the city of Venice an over life-size female head made of Greek marble, 0.37m in height, of unknown provenance (G. Traversari 1973, 136–137, no. 58). The head had been placed on the headless statue no. 162A of the Archaeological Museum of Venice, found at Ossero, near the town of Pola, in Slovenia. This statue too had been acquired by Grimani a little before 1587, and was also bequeathed to the Archaeological Museum of Venice in 1593 (R. Pollaco and



Fig. 94: British Museum: bronze figurine (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, pl. 88.4).

Traversari 1988, 19, no. 3). When it was realized that apart from the sex of the sculptured head (no. 162B) and its extraordinary size, the latter was completely unrelated to the statue no. 162A, to which it had been attached, it was removed from the latter (the head-less statue) and was replaced by a plaster cast of a head from another, also over life-size female statue, of similar date. The sculptured head no. 162B from the Archaeological Museum in Venice, although bodyless, did attract the interest of scholars, since it had been identified as a Hadrianic copy of a 4th century BC statue, in the Praxitelian style, which was, according to G. Traversari (1973, 136), “con molta probabilità un Afrodita”.

Quite apart from the discussion about the style of the head no. 162B in Venice, it is possible that this piece of sculpture, 0.37m in height, might be the head mentioned by Nicolas de Nicolay in 1551 (Sakellarakis 2003, 28). Its identification is not only based on the state of preservation and the sheer beauty of the head, that may have convinced the Kytherian peasants of the second half of the 16th century of its association with the well known myth of Helen of Troy, but also on the period that the head was taken to Venice, which, of course afforded cardinal Grimani the opportunity to acquire it. The identification of the Venice head, however, is still uncertain; the matter needs further research and additional confirmation from finds on Kythera, i.e. the discovery of fragments of a female statue of a similar size, made of the same kind of marble. Of course, the suggestion that the head in question depicts Aphrodite, does look attractive, especially if it is associated with a Kytherian provenance, an island, which, in antiquity was considered the island of the Aegean Aphrodite.

Antiquities from Kythera are also housed in Greek museums, i.e. in the Epigraphic Museum and the Numismatic Museum in Athens, in the National Archaeological Museum, in the Peiraeus Museum and in the Sparta Museum, apart from those that are now kept in the Kythera Museum, at Chora. In the Epigraphical Museum at Athens are housed the two inscriptions brought by P. Stamatakis from Kythera and published by Steph. Koumanoudis in 1875 (Koumanoudis 1875). In the Numismatic Museum there are five bronze coins, one of which was handed over by the Archaeological Society, in 1890, two by Kontoleon, a member of the parliament, and one by a doctor from Corfu.

In the National Archaeological Museum at Athens, Kytherian antiquities are included in the Sculpture Collection, in the Bronze Collection, and in the Prehistoric Collection. In the Sculpture Collection are included two Kytherian objects, an inscribed votive relief depicting the Dioscouroi, from Palaiokastros (sculpture no. 1437; Mylonas 1878, 365; Weil 1880, 231; Rie-

mann 1880, 43; Sybel 1881, 236, 3278; Svoronos 1903, 438, no. 136, pl. C11; Stais 1910, 249, no. 1437; Schwytzer 1923, 13, no. 42; Petrocheilos 1984, 75–76, pl. 27b) (Fig. 95), and another votive relief acquired in 1912 (no. 3278; Fuchs 1969, 514, fig. 602; Petrocheilos 1982, 45; 1984, pl. 27a) (Fig. 96). In the Bronze Collection of the National Archaeological Museum at Athens are included four objects from Kythera. A bronze figurine of a



Fig. 95: National Archaeological Museum: no. 1437-relief depicting the Dioskouroi (National Archaeological Museum).



Fig. 96: National Archaeological Museum: no. 3278-votive relief (National Archaeological Museum).

he-goat from Palaiokastro (Fig. 97) (bronze find no. 11388; donated in 1887), a bronze vase (Fig. 98) (bronze find no. 7947; Arch. Soc. Inv. no. 992; donated in 1883), and two lead sling stones (Fig. 99) (bronze find No 9278; Arch. Soc. old no. 2500; donated in 1886). The figurine was, according to the inventory of the museum (bronze find no. 11388), a “gift by Schliemann and was bought by him in 1887 at Kythera from a peasant, for the sum of 25 drachmas” (Schliemann 1888, 22–23, with drawing; 1888, 23; Petrocheilos 1984, 73).

A much greater number of Kytherian antiquities, mostly clay and stone vases, as well as various small finds, some made of gold, are now part of the Prehistoric Collection of the National Archaeological Museum at Athens, a fact that emphasizes the importance of Kythera in prehistoric times.

These Kytherian antiquities represent both acquisitions of the museum, i.e. purchases or donations, and excavation finds; they can be assigned into six groups, here mentioned in the order they were entered in the museum inventory. It is worth noting that all the Kytherian objects in the Prehistoric Collection of the National Archaeological Museum, with the single exception of an important bronze Minoan figurine from Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, discussed separately above, and of the last Kytherian acquisition of the Collection, a donation of 1950, are already known to scholars (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, see below).



Fig. 97: National Archaeological Museum: no. 11388-bronze figurine of a he-goat from Palaiopolis (National Archaeological Museum).

Fig. 98: National Archaeological Museum: no. 7947-bronze vase (National Archaeological Museum).



Fig. 99: National Archaeological Museum: no. 9278-sling weight (National Archaeological Museum).

The first group consists of two stone vases, a jug from Vothon (no. 3946; Wolters 1891, 53–54; Zervos 1956, pl. 29b; Waterhouse and Hope-Simpson 1961, 170, n. 4; Warren 1967, 41, L1, pl. 4; Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 265–266, pl. 86:1; Sakellarakis 1976, 176), a gift of I. Kaloutsis to the Archaeological Society (Wolters 1981, 53, fig. 54: “{found} at the site of Vothon, on the south beach, Scandia”, Arch.Soc.Inv. no.4067), and a phiale (no. 3947; Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 266, pl. 86:2). The next acquisition of the Prehistoric Collection of the National Archaeological Museum, labeled “from Kythera”, is extremely interesting; it is the first time that an Egyptian inscribed stone vase enters the collection of the Na-

tional Archaeological Museum at Athens, and is recorded in the inventory of the Prehistoric Collection (no. 4578), as a “gift of Spyridon Stais”. According to Evans (1897, 349), who seems to have known about this vase before it was donated to the museum, “thanks to the kindness of Dr. Stais and its proprietor”, the person who donated the vase was Spyr. Stais, a representative of Kythera in the Greek Parliament. The Egyptian inscribed stone vase was first published by Chr. Tsountas (Tsountas and Manatt 1897, 279, 281, 284) and then by A. Evans (Evans 1897, 349–350, fig. 23) and V. Stais (Stais 1915, 215–216), who had not managed to decipher the inscription; it was finally deciphered by K. Sethe in 1917 (Sethe 1917, 55–58, fig. 1, see ch. B, fig. 57). K. Sethe let it be known that the inscription refers to the temple of the Sun, of Pharaoh Userkaf (2494–2487 BC), of the 5th Dynasty of Egypt; his opinion was generally well received (Mylonas 1948, 211, fig. 1c; Gordon 1958, 245; Waterhouse and Hope-Simpson 1961, 157; Grumach 1963, 95; Ward 1963, 32; Stevenson-Smith 1965, 8–9, fig. 10; Edel 1966, 46; Muhly 1970, 60; Yakar 1971–1972, 135; Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 266, pl. 86:1, fig. 95; Smith Cambridge Ancient History, I, chapter XIV 38; Sakellarakis 1976, 175; 1996, 91; 2003, 21; Sergeant 1977, 139. Only W. Helck and Otto (1975, I, 69; Helck 1979, 15), expressed doubts about the arrival of the object in the Aegean at such an early date (25th century B.C.), since the temple of the Sun could not have been looted at that time, and suggested that the vase was brought over much later in antiquity, through the well known “trade in antiquities”.

In the ongoing discussion about the Egyptian inscribed stone vase, nobody has yet noted, that in the inventory of the Prehistoric Collection of the National Archaeological Museum, item no. 4710, is a small wooden cup (Fig. 100), also labeled “from Kythera, a gift of Spyr. Stais”, with the additional note: “it is said that it was found in a tomb together with the object no. 4578”, i.e. the Egyptian inscribed stone vase. The association of the two objects is nevertheless problematic as regards the generally accepted Kytherian provenance of the inscribed stone vase, since the material and the state of preservation of the wooden cup no. 4710, suggest that it was part of the contents of a grave, discovered in Egypt and not, of course, in the Aegean. The object is slightly broken at the rim. According to the description, it is “a wooden handleless, almost cylindrical cup, slightly splaying upwards; there is a deep groove around the base of the cup and an incised line a little above that (Ht: 0.076m)” (Sakellarakis 2003, 21).

The association of these two objects relies solely on speculation; since they are recorded separately, it is not known if they were really found together in a tomb at Kythera, or if they were simply donated to the National Archaeological Museum at the same time. In any case, the Kytherian archaeo-



Fig. 100: National Archaeological Museum: no. 4710-small wooden cup, “from Kythera, a donation by Spyr. Stais” (National Archaeological Museum).

logist V. Stais, who is clearly in favor of a Kytherian provenance for the Egyptian inscribed stone vase (Stais 1915), does not mention the wooden cup or the discovery of the stone vase in a tomb. The suspicion that the wooden cup was found in Egypt and was then presented to the National Archaeological Museum by Spyr. Stais, a member of parliament, as a find of Kytherian provenance, should be probably not taken very seriously, not only because V. Stais the archaeologist, who served in the Prehistoric Collection of the National Archaeological Museum, is of course aware of the entry of the object in the museum inventory, but also because of the personality of the donor, Spyr. Stais, a first cousin of V. Stais, and a member of parliament; the prestige of the public office held by Spyr. Stais is another contributing factor against this theory.

The mathematician Spyr. Stais (1858–1931), member of parliament between 1892 and 1926, also served as a Minister of Religious Affairs and Public Education and was an important and above all, an honorable figure (worth noting is the duel Spyr. Stais fought with Hatzipetros, another member of parliament, who insulted Stais in one of his speeches in the Parliament, a duel that ended with the death of Hatzipetros, in 1904). He certainly did not have any connections with Egypt or with Kytherians in Egypt, from which he could have acquired this cup. It is also worth noting that Spyr. Stais is the only Kytherian donor of the National Archaeological Museum, with the single exception of an unknown, perhaps Kytherian woman, mentioned above, and Dina Krithari, who will be mentioned below. As noted above, the Kytherian Em. Mor-

moris also donated to the Archaeological Society an inscription that ended up in the Epigraphical Museum. All this information about Spyr. Stais, was supplied by one of his descendants, the lawyer Gavr. Nikiphorakis, who gave a lecture, entitled “Spyr. Stais”, delivered at the Cultural Centre of Kythera on the 21st of January 1987, and submitted to the Society of Kytherian Studies in Athens.

In any case, one cannot exclude the possibility that the Egyptian wooden cup was indeed found at Kythera, especially considering that the island was known to the Egyptians, as is indicated by the reference to Kythera on the stele of Amenophis III (Fig. 101), mentioned above.

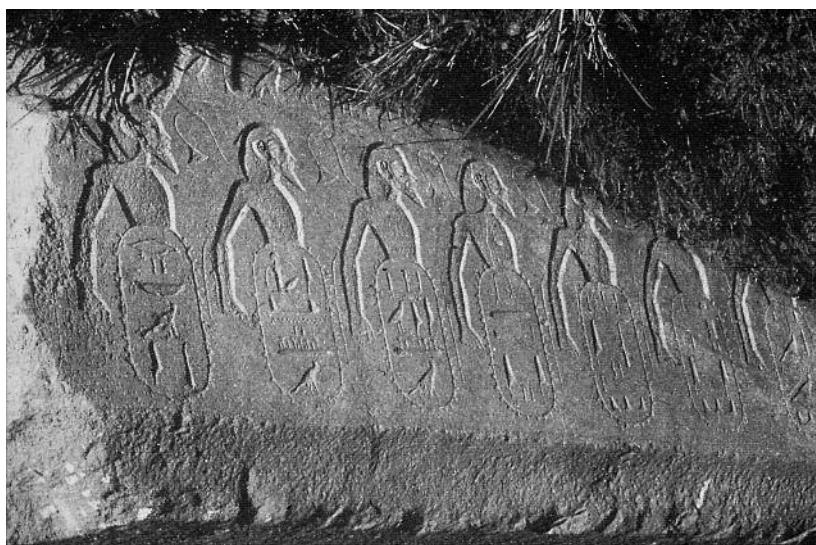


Fig. 101: Inscription of the time of Amenophis III, including the name of Kythera, among Cretan towns.

The third entry of Kytherian antiquities in the inventory of the Prehistoric Collection of the National Archaeological Museum, dates from 1901, when I.A. Kavalinis, perhaps a relative of Em. Kavalinis, also mentioned by O. Riemann in 1880, acquired, as we saw above, part of the contents of a tomb from Palaiopolis. The entry in the inventory of the National Archaeological Museum (Inv. nos. 5391–5395), is accompanied by the following comment: “See decision of Arch. Committee (Meeting of the 23rd of March 1901). They were apparently found at Palaiopolis”.

Six related documents are preserved in the archive of the Archaeological Society, and are published here for the first time:

The first document, dated May 24th 1901, addressed to the Ephorate of Antiquities of the Museum, submitted on the 26th of May 1901, com-

municated to the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education, by the General Ephor P. Kavvadias, and signed also by P. Kastriotis, the secretary of the Committee, mentions the following: "I submit herewith an extract of the Proceedings from the meeting of the Archaeological Committee, dated 23rd of May, 1901."

The second document: "Extract from the Proceedings of the meeting of the Archaeological Committee, dated 23rd of May, 1901", relates the following: "Then the Committee examined some pieces of gold jewellery of the Mycenaean period, found at Kythera, and belonging to I. Kavalinis. They include a gold chain with a small pendant, four identical calyx-shaped pendants, decorated with granules, two rosette-shaped beads, all of them weighing ca. 2 *drammia* {sic}. Also, a pierced steatite stone, with a seal and four other stones, without carvings (amethyst, jasper, rock crystal, etc.). The Committee feels that these objects should be purchased for the Museum and suggests that their avowed owner should be given the sum of one hundred drachmas as compensation. Exact copy, extracted from the original Proceedings of the meeting of the Archaeological Committee".

The third document, sent from Kythera by I.A Kavalinis, on the 30th of May 1901, to the General Ephorate of Antiquities, received on the 2nd of June 1901 (Prot. No 16291), relates the following: "Having been informed of the decision of the Archaeological Committee of the 23rd of May, according to which, it was felt that the ancient gold objects and beads found in my estate at Kythera should be owned by the Museum, and a conciliatory compensation was decided, in accordance with article 9 of the law, so that the matter may be resolved, and I may be given the sum of one hundred drachmas, I hereby state that I accept the decision of the archaeological committee and I request that all necessary actions may be taken for the issuing of the money order for my compensation".

The fourth document, a "ministerial decision" dated 2nd of June 1901, relates the following: "In accordance with articles 9-12 of the antiquities law and the decision of the Archaeological Committee of the 23rd of May, during which various gold objects and beads that were found in the Kytherian estate of I. Kavalinis, were examined, it was decided that they would be useful for the Museums, and it was ruled that, so as to resolve the matter of the compensation due, according to article 9, one hundred drachmas should be given to the above mentioned I. Kavalinis, also taking into account the report sent by the above mentioned I. Kavalinis, of the 30th of May, by which he declares that he accepts the compensation as ruled by the committee. The matter of the compensation, according to the stipulations of article 9, is therefore solved in a conciliatory manner".

The fifth document issued by the minister, dated June 11th 1901, addressed to the Ephor V. Stais, mentions the following: “We are sending you fragments of Mycenaean gold jewellery (11 items), and five stone items, the acquisition of which on behalf of the Museum has been approved by the Archaeological Committee, during the meeting of the 23rd of May, so that they may become part of the collection of the National Museum. With reference to this decision of the committee, we hereby (ruling No 9064), approve the sum of one hundred drachmas to be given as compensation to I. Kavalinis, the owner of the Kytherian estate in which they were found”.

According to the sixth and last document, dated 8th of November 1901, sent by the National Archaeological Museum, towards “the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education”, and signed by V. Stais: “We notify the Ministry that the antiquities sent by the Ministry on the 11th of June of this year (Prot. No 9064), were received and deposited in our own collection of antiquities”.

These are the pieces of jewellery that were eventually published by Coldstream and Huxley (1972, 261–262, pl. 84, fig. 95; Higgins 1979, 60, fig. 22). They include various elaborately worked golden beads, a gold chain, and various beads of rock crystal, red jasper and agate. Together with these objects from Kythera, the National Archaeological Museum also acquired a steatite seal (No 5394; Sakellariou 1964, no 413 [CMS I]; Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 262, no. 7, pl. 84:7) (Fig. 102), that was correctly considered of earlier date than the rest of the jewellery (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 261–262).



Fig. 102: National Archaeological Museum: no. 5394-steatite seal from a tomb at Palaio polis (National Archaeological Museum).

The fourth group of Kytherian antiquities to be entered in the Prehistoric Collection of the National Archaeological Museum is the group of finds from V. Stais's excavation at the site of Lionis (Stais 1915; Waterhouse and Hope-Simpson 1961, 149–150). They include an incised stone vase (no. 6231; Stais 1915, 192, fig. 1; Karo 1915, 196; Matz 1928, 135; Kantor 1947, 26, pl. 4d; Waterhouse and Hope-Simpson 1961, 157; Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 263, pl. 84:1) (Fig. 103), and 11 clay vases, only one of which was published by V. Stais (Stais 1915, 193, fig. 2; Furumark 1941, 45, shape 11A; 1950, 170–171, fig. 9, no. 137; Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 263, pl. 84:2); another was mentioned by E. French (French 1964, 241, n. 2; Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 264, pl. 85:4), and the remaining nine are first published by Coldstream and Huxley (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 263–265, fig. 95, pl. 85). According to V. Stais, in the excavation of the tomb at Lionis, to be discussed below, were also found 25 necklace beads, of light blue glass paste, a small bronze knife, a bronze needle, and an almond-shaped bronze bead (perhaps a seal, see Sakellarakis 1980, 1–5), that have not been identified yet (Stais 1915, 192; Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 265; in the catalogue of the prehistoric Collection, entry No 6234, reads: “some beads and a small knife blade”).

There was a fifth Kytherian entry of a prehistoric object, before 1915–1916, eventually inventoried in the Prehistoric Collection, on the 17th of November 1940. This object, like the following two, is the only prehistoric object from Kythera that is not known to Coldstream and Huxley. This object, however, a bronze male figurine from Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, has been mentioned above (see Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2012, 76, E84, pl. 38). Finally the sixth Kytherian entry in the inventory of the National Archaeological Museum, dates from 1950, when the Kytherian Dina Krithari donated two vases, a clay and a stone vase, which must have come, according to A. Tsaravopoulos (see lecture by A. Tsaravopoulos in the Kythera Society at Peiraeus on the 20th of May 2002), from a tomb at Karavas, at the site “Spilia tou Arapi”. The clay vase (no. 9874) and the stone vase one (no. 9875), inventoried on the 2nd of March 1973, are both labeled as follows: “Entry book 669, 25th of October 1950, donated by Miss Dina Krithari, see document of Ministry of Education, no. 85091/2600, dated 27th of September 1950”.

The clay vase (No 9874), is described as follows: “Cylindrical cup, missing part of the rim. Strongly flaring rim. The body of the vase narrows towards the base, where it ends in a flat ring base. In the upper part of the body there are three plastic ridges of various sizes. Coarse, yellowish clay. Thinner clay slip. The interior and the exterior of the vase painted with brownish-black color, fugitive in many places. Ht.: 0,10, diam. rim:

0,0086, diam. rim ext.: 0,008, max. diam.: 0,076, min. diam.: 0,058, diam. base: 0,06 m". As regards the stone vase (no. 9875), it is a: "Small phiale with small sections of the rim chipped off. Flattened rim. Biconical belly. Convex base. The vase is decorated with twelve bands of different sizes, forming decorative zones featuring the net motif and triangular motifs. Greenish-black stone".

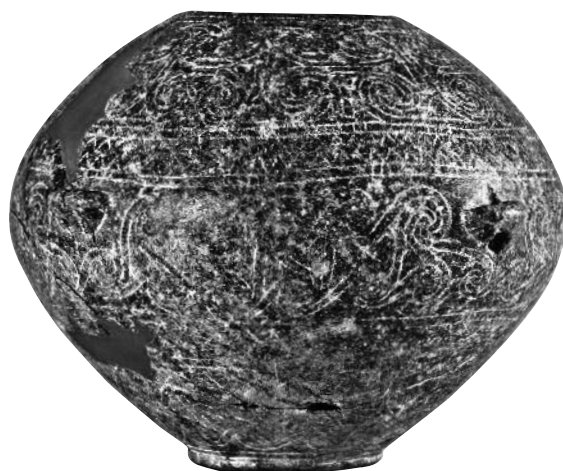


Fig. 103: National Archaeological Museum: no. 6231-stone vase with incised decoration (National Archaeological Museum).

As already mentioned, from the time when the B' Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities was given jurisdiction over the island, antiquities from Kythera were also kept at the Archaeological Museum of Peiraeus (for the Kytherian inscriptions whose whereabouts are unknown, see Petrocheilos 1984, 71-72). The important finds from the excavation at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno are also stored in the Archaeological Museum of Peiraeus, presumably for security reasons. Unfortunately, the so-called Kythera Museum is nothing more than an insecure storeroom, and however competent the only guard of the Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities may be, he is certainly not enough. It is obvious that the establishment of a new, *real* Kythera Museum, a museum for which the Kytherians have been fighting for many years, without avail, a museum big enough to house the so many, extremely important Kytherian antiquities, including of course the finds from the Byzantine period, is an absolute necessity.

As noted above, in contrast to the Kytherian antiquities housed in the Kythera Museum, or the Kytherian antiquities housed in various other museums all over Greece and abroad, the fortunes of the numerous ancient

Kytherian objects that were moved around the world during the 19th century, are unknown. Of course, it is possible that some of them, like the “two very small gold lions” from Asproga, noted, as mentioned above, by O. Riemann in 1880 (Riemann 1880, 34; Petrocheilos 1979, 61), and possibly a pair of earrings, of a well known type (Higgins 1961, 162, pl. 47c: “the commonest type”), clearly part of a funerary assemblage, have not been identified as Kytherian and lie unprovenanced in a museum, like the British Museum for example, or in some other private collection.

As discussed above, in the illicit trade in antiquities, if the objects concerned are unprovenanced, their highest value, i.e. their historical value, is also non-existent and their artistic value, whatever that may be, is unavoidably reduced. Of course it is possible that some of the numerous lost Kytherian antiquities may be identified in the future, although this requires wearisome archival research (see Sakellarakis 1998). It is certainly not our place or aim to conduct a search for all the lost Kytherian antiquities, not even the ones stolen by the Italians during the German and Italian occupation of the island, but mostly for objects of the prehistoric period, and more specifically for two of those objects. According to the records of the Greek government in 1946: “Kythera. On the 16th of July 1941, Italian officers removed four clay vases and 25 coins from the collection there”. This theft was noted a month after the looting of the marble lion of Kythera by the Germans and is typical of the Italian fascists, who imitated their German counterparts, illustrating the initiative of the former.

The first of the two objects mentioned above, is most probably a Minoan stone vase, known since 1806. As noted above, Em. Kaloutsis, the vice-consul of England at Kythera, in a letter he sent to W.R. Hamilton, the secretary of Lord Elgin, on the 6th/18th of July 1806, mentions the following as regards the acquisition of various antiquities: “I came upon ... a piece of worked porphyry, found in a field near the town of Friligianika ...” (Miliarakis 1888, 746–747). Because of the extensive use of porphyry at Kythera in prehistoric times, as noted above with reference to the finds made of porphyry from Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, a material that was obtained from the quarries of neighbouring Laconia (Waterhouse and Hope-Simpson 1961, 119–121; Warren 1969, 126; Sakellarakis 1976b, 261; for porphyry see also Warren 1969, 126; for the use of the same material in later years, see Petrocheilos 1984, 70–72), it is very possible that “the worked piece of porphyry” mentioned here, is a fragment of a Minoan stone vase. The existence of antiquities in the wider area of the Friligianika-Mitata, is widely known (Petrocheilos 1984, 60–63). All that is known about the fate of this Kytherian object is gleaned only from this letter sent by Em. Kaloutsis to W.R. Hamilton, where he mentions that he gave it to

W.M. Leake, who was there at the time, so that he would hand it over to W.R. Hamilton: "...To him (Leake) I handed over...the porphyry too". This object, then, if it has not been already sold to the British Museum or to some other English Museum, is perhaps somewhere in Britain, in the possession of one of W.R. Hamilton's descendants. An archival investigation headed by our specialist, so to speak, English colleagues, like P. Warren (1969) and C. Broodbank, the new English excavator of Kythera, which would hopefully lead to the location of the object in England, would of course be welcome.

The other prehistoric object from Kythera, an inscribed Babylonian object, and therefore much more significant than the first, is associated with more or less the same group of people, i.e. W.R. Hamilton, W.M. Leake, and I. Kaloutsis, the son of Em. Kaloutsis. On the 3rd of October 1849, I. Kaloutsis sends a "Memoir" about Kythera to W.R. Hamilton; the "Memoir" was translated by W.R. Hamilton and was read out, in January 1850, in the Royal Society of Literature in London; it was published three years later by W.M. Leake (Leake 1853). In the "Memoir" are included various data about the population, the clergy, the education, the import and export trade of Kythera, i.e. a variety of useful information for W.R. Hamilton, an old acquaintance of Kythera, and unfortunately of Greek antiquities in general. The information supplied by I. Kaloutsis to W.R. Hamilton about the antiquities of Kythera, has been discussed above. Since the "Memoir" sent by I. Kaloutsis to W.R. Hamilton included the drawing of a Babylonian cuneiform inscription on an amulet of the time of Narâm-Sin (1830–1813 B.C.) (Fig. 104), implying contacts between the two areas (Kythera and the Babylonian state) so distant from one another, as early as the beginning of the 2nd millennium B.C., it would be wise to investigate the matter of the discovery of this object in more detail.

The English translation of I. Kaloutsis's "Memoirs", by W.R. Hamilton, which were perhaps originally written in Greek, has been published by W.M. Leake (1835, 257): "Lately at Paleópolis was exhumed a small rectangular piece of hard white stone, one inch in length and ten lines thick; its lower surface has deep cuttings in it so as to form five half-cylinders. On the upper surface, which is highly polished, is the inscription in five lines, represented in the annexed drawing".

The Babylonian inscription that was rescued by W.M. Leake, naturally attracted considerable attention by various scholars. It is however worth noting that the inscription is discussed as early as the 19th century, mostly by scholars specializing in eastern civilizations (Weil 1880; Köhler 1897, 262; Lehmann and Haupt 1904, 388; Büchner and Maull 1924, 208; Weidner

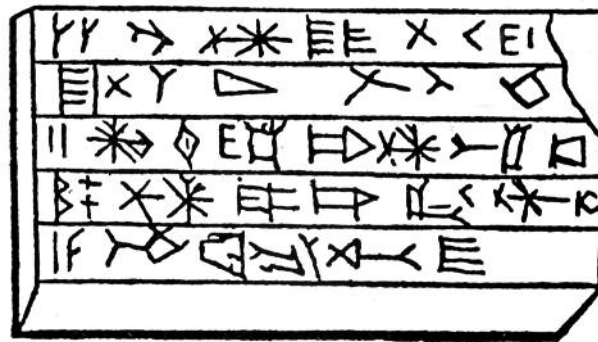


Fig. 104: Drawing of the inscription on an amulet of the time of Nâram-Sin.

and Thomas 1939; Luce et al. 1939, 482, 675; Jacobsen in Frankfort et al. 1940, 139; Weidner 1952, 131–132; Nougayrol 1962, 190; Stevenson-Smith 1965, 9; Kitchen 1966, 23; Astour 1966, 315; Yakar 1971–1972, 135; Sergent 1977, 139; Potts 1990, 225), and less so from 1938 onwards (Thomas 1938), by scholars studying Aegean prehistory (Schachermeyr 1942, 127; Gordon 1958, 245; Waterhouse and Hope-Simpson 1961, 157; Grumach 1963, 95; Muhly 1970, 60; Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 33; Petrocheilos 1984, 26; Sakellarakis 1996, 91; 2003, 22–23).

In view of the vague language used by I. Kaloutsis in his report about the type of inscribed object involved, various opinions were voiced at different times. C.F. Lehmann-Haupt (Lehmann-Haupt 1904, 388, n. 424) identifies it as “Steintäfelchen” and agrees with U. Köhler that it belongs to the Kassite period, but that it was later brought to Kythera by the Pheonicians. E.F. Weidner (Weidner and Thomas 1939, 138), after rejecting J.D.S. Pendlebury’s oral statement that the object was made of baked clay, adds: “In my opinion the five half cylinders on the under-side indicate that the discoverer of the tablet found only the upper half of a stone box, the lower half of which, with the corresponding five half cylinders, is lost. In the five hollow cylinders inside the box precious objects, perhaps seal-cylinders, would probably be kept”. J. Yakar (1971–1972, 135), believes that the inscribed object is “a stone tablet, probably the lid of a stone box, containing five cylinder seals of Mesopotamian origin, inscribed with an Old Babylonian inscription bearing the name of Narâm-Sin of Ešnunna”.

In contrast to the debate concerning the type of inscribed object involved, there was never any doubt about its authenticity, since in 1853, when it was first published, the cuneiform script had not been deciphered yet. In addition to that, the inscription, despite its comparatively fragmentary state, is quite clear as regards the eponymous dedication of the object to a deity.

The transcription of the inscription, according to Weidner and Thomas 1939, 137, is as follows:

1) a-na ^d[.....]	1) to the deity[....]
2)[.....]	2)[.....]
3) mr ^d na-ra-am- ^d sin [šar èš-nun-na ^{ki}]	3) Narâm-Sin [king of Ešnunna]
4) mâr ^d i-bi-ig- ^d ad-[ad šar èš-nun-na ^{ki}]	4) son of Ibig-Ad [Ad king of Ešnunna]
5) a-na ba-la-ti – šu [i-qi-iš]	5) for his life [dedicated (this)]

The Kytherian provenance of this inscribed Babylonian object at Kythera is a matter of speculation. E.F. Weidner believed that it had arrived at Kythera as a “souvenir or as a piece of booty” (Weidner and Thomas 1939, 138), an opinion that will, of course, not be discussed any further. J. Yakar, referring to another object of similar historical value, albeit from Egypt, the inscribed stone vase bearing the name of pharaoh Userkaf, discussed above, agrees that “their votive character indicates that they were not personal objects of sailors and merchants, like the cylinder seals, and therefore their presence in Cythera should not suggest that they remained in the island as souvenirs for the locals” (Yakar 1971–1972, 135). This is quite plausible, taking into account the special location of Kythera, particularly important for the seafarers of the second millennium B.C. The inscribed Babylonian object, although lost to us, is therefore a most important piece of evidence for the relations between the Aegean and the East, especially at this very early date.

Unfortunately, the Kaloutsis family, of which I. Kaloutsis was a member, the same man who sent the famous “Memoir” to W.R. Hamilton, the very same “Memoir” that fell into the hands of W.M. Leake, was not interested in the history of Kythera, but only in keeping the British informed about a variety of issues. This is the reason why a lot of information concerning the discovery of this object was kept secret. Even N.-S. Kaloutsis, the son of I. Kaloutsis, who wrote, as noted above, about the archaeology of Kythera at exactly the time when the inscription was published by W.M. Leake, does not refer to this object. It is still possible, however, that some evidence concerning this important object could be located in both Greek and English unpublished archives. The book by Ioannis Sophocles Kaloutsis, entitled “Book of General Affairs” is still unpublished (Leontsinis 2002, 220, n. 10).

Any information concerning this object would be most useful for future research. C.F. Weidner, suggested, as early as 1939, that “It would be worthwhile to trace its whereabouts”. It is therefore obvious that archaeological research, and in this case research concerning the island of Kythera,

cannot, and should not be limited to excavations. So, as far as this important, albeit lost monument of Kytherian history is concerned, an object that came to light as early as the 19th century, and perhaps also as far as other Kytherian antiquities that were traded during the time of the British occupation of the island are concerned, there is still hope that some evidence will come to light during the 21st century, in the context of the “Kythera Island Project”, which will be discussed below.

f. Archaeological research at Kythera during the 20th century

In contrast to the 19th century, during the following 20th century, archaeological activity on the island was more subdued, albeit with a modest intensity, without any obvious, at least, evidence of illicit archaeological excavations, mostly due to the isolation of Kythera from the main body of the Greek mainland. The first archaeologist to visit Kythera in the 20th century was A.D. Keramopoulos in 1906, who published (1931, 162–163) part of an inscription. By the second decade of the 20th century, in 1914, the Kytherian V. Stais excavates on his own island for the first and last time (Petrocheilos 1992). V. Stais’s excavation is important for the archaeological investigation of Kythera, not only because it was the first systematic excavation on the island, but also because it was the first time that prehistoric remains had come to light on Kythera. After the discovery of a chance find, Val. Stais excavated a chamber tomb at the site of Lionis (1915), which contained the objects mentioned above, which are now housed in the Prehistoric Collection of the National Archaeological Museum at Athens.

Both V. Stai’s contribution to the investigation of prehistoric Kythera, as well as the contribution of Georgios Sotiriou, an archaeologist who visited Kythera, including Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, in 1916 (Sotiriou 1923; magazine “*Néos Ellinonómion*”, vol. 13 (1916), 374), and focused on the remains of the Byzantine period, were not pursued any further. They were two of the most important contributions to Kytherian archaeology of the first half of the 20th century. Another isolated endeavor, concerning the work of Andreas Xyngopoulos in the beginning of the second half of the century, the first scholarly study of Kythera in the Byzantine period, concerning the paintings in the cave of Hagia Sophia, was also not pursued any further. (Xyngopoulos 1955).

Because Kythera was not easily accessible from the mainland, the island was a burden for the archaeological service, a burden that was at times transferred from the rural shoulders of Laconia to busy Peiraeus. It was

only to be expected therefore that the systematic investigation of the archaeology of Kythera would be undertaken by foreigners (see Bürchner and Maull 1924) and more specifically by the British. The relatively recent political interest of the British for Kythera is of course well known (Leontsinis 1987). The intense and continuous interest of British archaeologists in the archaeology and history of neighbouring Laconia (Dawkins 1929; Chrimes 1949; Huxley 1962; Cartledge 1979; 2001; see also leaflet “*Laconia, Sparta and the British School at Athens*, The BSA Sparta Study Centre, Athens 2002), and about the historical relations between Laconia and Kythera, is also well known. It was in this context and because of the particularly close relationship of the British with the investigation of Minoan Crete, that the British archaeological interest for Minoan Kythera, was first initiated by the pioneering scholar S. Benton (for H. Thomas’s interest in Kythera, after S. Benton, and a little before the Second World War, see Thomas 1938). According to the 3rd page of the leaflet published in 2002 by the British School at Athens: “For more than a hundred years the (British Archaeological) School has been actively involved in research throughout Greece, its primary projects being in Knossos and Sparta”.

Among her other archaeological forays in the Ionian Islands, which were still under British rule, including Ithaca, S. Benton did not fail to investigate Kythera, the furthestmost Ionian island (Fig. 105), where she had already noted evidence of Minoan occupation in 1931–1932 (Benton 1931–1932, 245–246). The single phrase she wrote about Kythera, i.e. “it was already a strong Minoan colony”, a view that is now considered self evident, is indicative of her archaeological insight. Perhaps S. Benton had taken note of the writings of the wise British archaeologist, Sir Arthur Evans, according to whom: “Ancient Kythera, may be regarded as a stepping-stone between Crete and the Peloponnesian mainland” (Evans 1897, 349); she nevertheless does not refer to him directly. Among the few things that she mentions about Kythera, is, as we saw, the large marble lion from Palaiokastros, that was still kept in the Chora Museum (Benton 1931–1932, 245, pl. 42b); she also published a Minoan stone lamp (Benton 1931–1932, 245, pl. 42c). What she was really interested in, though, and rightly so, was Kastri, where she noted the existence of pottery dating from the MM to the Roman period, and the Minoan tombs at Asproga (Benton 1931–1932, 246, pl. 42a). Concerning the Minoan stone lamp, the following unbelievable story was published in the Kytherian press: “A few years ago, an English archaeologist going around Palaioiopolis, saw an ancient stone lamp in the Pikoulis olive press, in which Pikoulis used to put the food for his dog; it was decorated and can be dated to the Mycenaean period. After actions were taken by the late school master Spyr. Stathis, it now

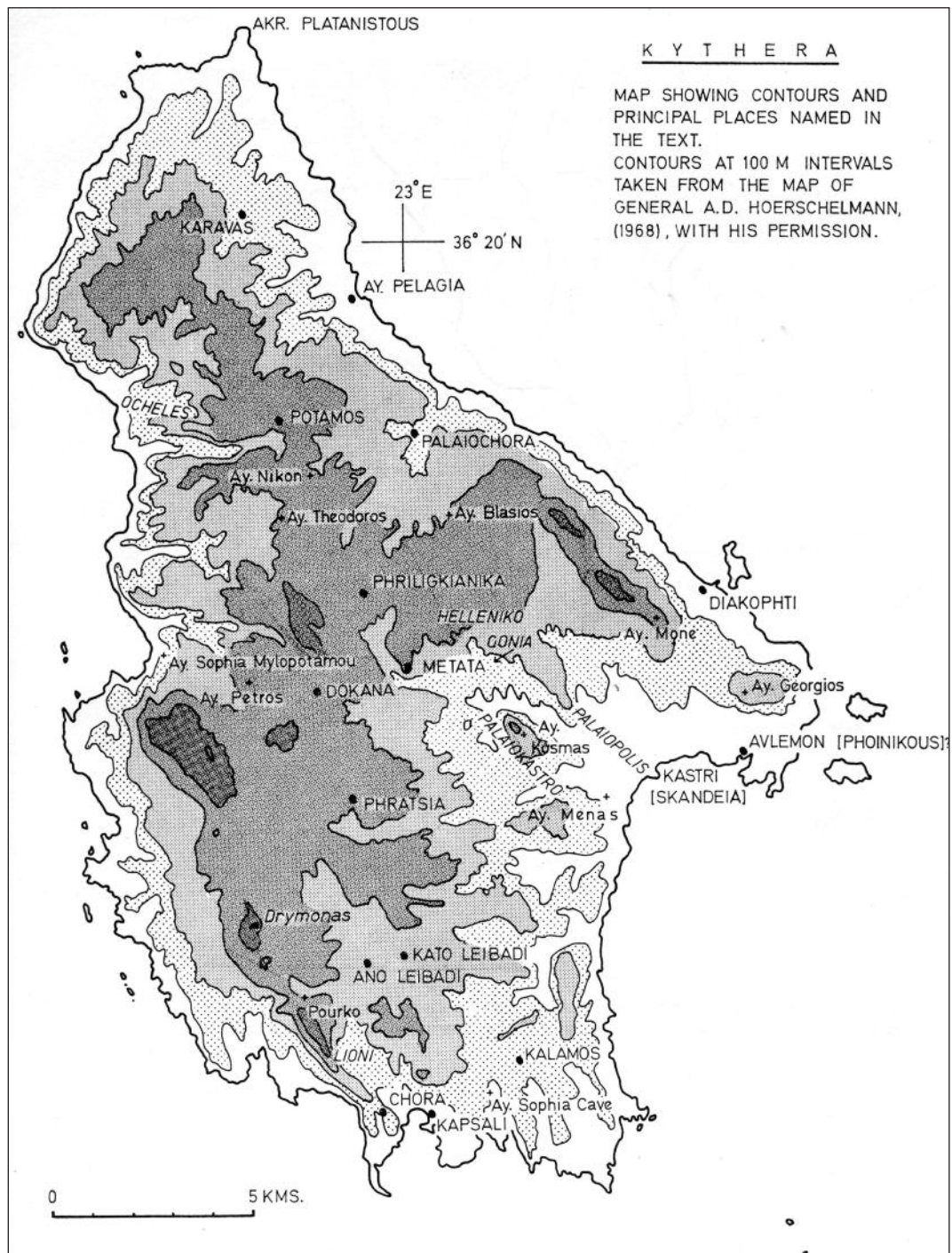


Fig. 105: Map of Kythera (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, fig. 1).

lies in the Kythera museum” (*Kyθnpaϊkὴ Δρᾱσις* 28.2.1957, 198, 2). It is important to note that S. Benton was already preparing to excavate at Kastri in the beginning of the 1930ies: “In Kastri a good deal of information can be obtained with very little cost, and I hope to be able to undertake this work before very long” (Benton 1931–1932, pl. 24b).

Although the Second World War thwarted the excavation that S. Benton was planning at Kastri, it simply postponed the archaeological interest of the British at Kythera. The British Archaeological School went on with its methodical plans for the investigation of the island, within the wider context of its archaeological interest in Laconia (Waterhouse and Hope-Simpson 1961, 148–160). In 1957–1958, R. Hope-Simpson travelled around Kythera (for R. Hope-Simpson’s superficial manner as regards the identification of the site, see his own admission above), visiting a few, mostly well known archaeological sites, the Pyreatides, Karavas, Vithoulas, Hagia Pelagia, Lionis, Elliniko, and Mitata. The main interest of the British was of course Kastri and Palaiopolis (Waterhouse and Hope-Simpson 1961, 152–157), where R. Hope-Simpson collected various pieces of information by the locals, of which he nevertheless, speaks quite ironically (Waterhouse and Hope-Simpson 1961, 152, n. 227). Although R. Hope-Simpson did not identify the Minoan peak sanctuary at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, which lies right next to Kastri, he does accept S. Benton’s view, that “there was undoubtedly a minoan colony at Kastri in the Middle Minoan period” (Waterhouse and Hope-Simpson 1961, 157).

The excavation that was being planned by the British at Kastri, only 3 km from Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, under the direction of J.N. Coldstream and G.L. Huxley, was finally undertaken between 1963 and 1965 (Fig. 106). Their aim was to investigate the Minoan settlement, identified 30 years earlier by S. Benton; in the mean time, some of the tombs that belonged to the settlement, had already been pointed out by the locals to H. Waterhouse and R. Hope-Simpson.

Three documents addressed to the B’ Ephorate of Antiquities of Attica, providing interesting information about the English excavation of 1963, were composed by Ath.N. Papadopoulos, who was appointed by the B’ Ephorate to supervise the British excavation. A.N. Papadopoulos informs the archaeological service, not only about the progress of the excavations, and about the emerging finds, but also about the “polite” as he describes it, attitude of the English excavators, who provided for his accommodation and food expenses, as well as for essential matters of security. In his document of the 18th of August 1963, he mentions the following: “As regards the conservation and safe storage of the finds, I am letting you know that

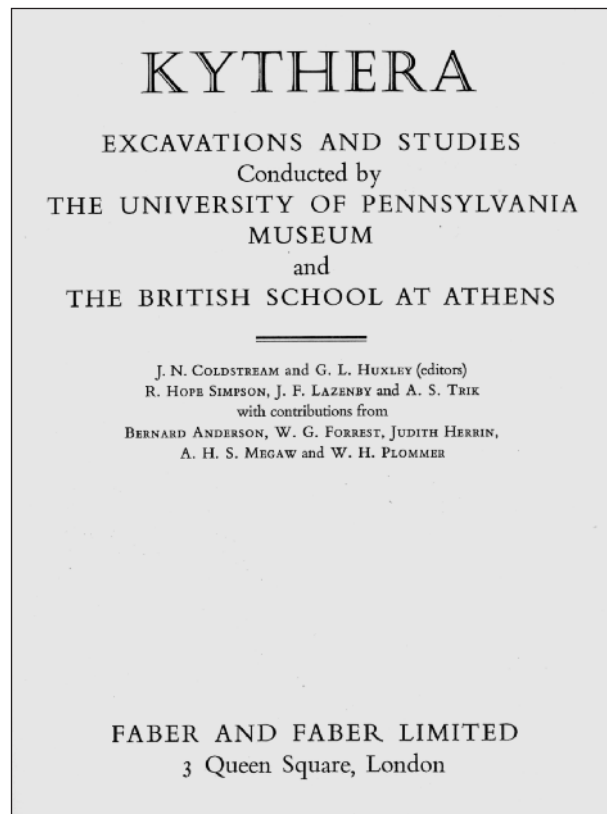


Fig. 106: Front cover of book on Kythera by J.N. Coldstream and G.L. Huxley (1972).

they are being kept in a storeroom in the house of Ant. Protosaltis, where we are staying, the keys to which are held by the British archaeologists, without me having full knowledge of what enters the storeroom; another reason for this is that I am so preoccupied with the excavation of Tomb I, that I am in no position to witness personally what is going on {sic} in the other areas of the excavation; the workmen and the peasants distrust the British archaeologists and are suspicious of them; the latter, according to information I have received, believe that there is a number of workmen who steal finds; a prime example is the workman Ath. Samios, who misappropriated, according to information provided by another workman, an intact lamp and a broken kylix from the first tomb; both of these objects, he handed over to me on the 1st of August, probably because he was frightened”.

Ath. N. Papadopoulos also provides interesting archaeological information. In the document he sent on the 11th of August 1963, he writes the following: “Many peasants point out to me locations where they have discovered antiquities in the past, as for example the peasant Mathios Vorakis, who had accidentally found, one and a half year ago, at the site of “Kamarelles”,

a number of coins, which he willingly handed over to me, to be stored safely away in the storeroom – the temporary Museum of Kythera at Chora”. In the document he sent on the 25th of August 1963, he mentions the following: “In addition to that, I am letting you know that three antiquities were reported and handed over to me. More specifically, the peasant Theod. Protopsaltis handed over to me a funerary stele, inscribed with an elegiac epigram, the upper part of which had been broken off; the stele probably belongs to the Roman period and more specifically to the years after Christ. Also the peasant St. Kontoleon notified me about the existence of an over-sized Ionic capital, with slightly broken volutes, which he also handed over to me. Finally, Th. Kassimatis, a workman in the excavations, notified me of a fine table of the Ionic order he had in his possession, which we transported to the storeroom of the excavation with a tractor, at the expense of the director of the excavations. All the above items will be transported, along with the rest of the finds from the excavations, to the Chora Museum”. In the archive of the B' Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities is also preserved the general report sent by G. Huxley from Kythera, dated 20th of August 1963, which also mentions the inscribed funerary stele that was handed over by Th. Kassimatis.

The considerable number of trenches excavated in a number of different locations brought to light the sought after Minoan settlement and revealed the Helladic influences in the prehistory of Kythera. The immediate publication of the first organized archaeological investigation at Kythera, by N. Coldstream and G. Huxley (Huxley 1964; Coldstream and Huxley 1972), soon became a basic tool for Aegean prehistory, a most important

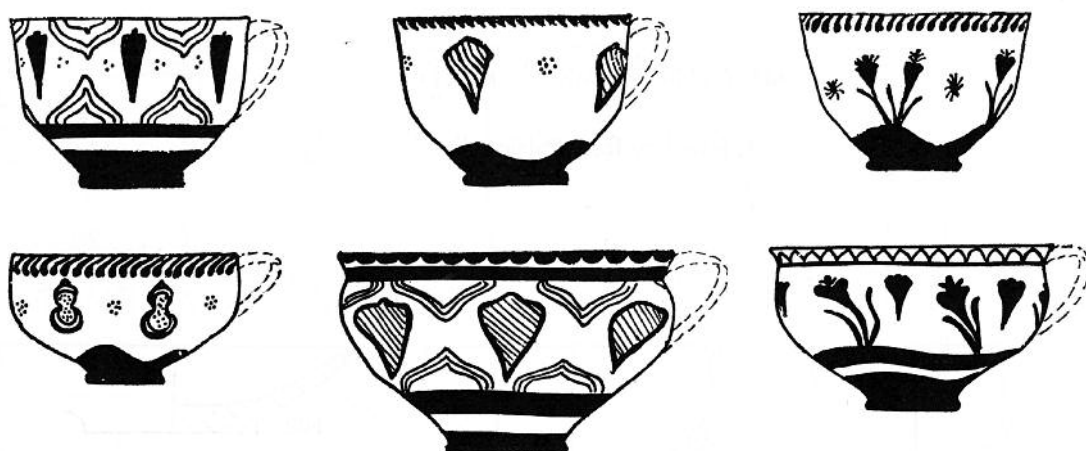


Fig. 107: LM IB pottery of the so called “alternating style” (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, fig. 96).

work, especially for matters concerning pottery, including the first ever definition of the so-called “alternating style” (Fig. 107). This important British excavation confirmed beyond doubt the identification of Kastri on Kythera, as a Minoan colony.

It is worth noting that the British researchers did not only concern themselves with the Prehistoric period at Kastri, nor did they limit their investigations in the area of the excavation trenches. Despite the prevailing trends in archaeological research, they also studied the later periods, even the late Byzantine period, in a most satisfactory manner (Herrin in Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 41–51; Megaw in Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 315–316); they also published architectural members of the Archaic period, which had been found lying in the church of Hagioi Kosmas and Damianos, at Palaiokastro (Plommer 1972 in Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 311–313, fig. 6, pl. 4), and in the church of Hagios Panteleimon at Palaio-polis (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, pls. 3a-d), an inscription from Palaiokastro (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, pl. 3d), and a verse inscription of the 2nd century AD, which was handed over by the locals (Forrest in Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 314, pl. 2g) (Fig. 108). According to A. Tsaravopoulos (20/5/2002), the worship of the Saints Kosmas and Damianos replaced the cult of the Dioscouroi, judging by the Palaiokastro relief in the Sculpture Collection of the National Archaeological Museum, mentioned above. Of the numerous earlier Kytherian finds mentioned above, they republished the well known acquisitions of the British Museum (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, pl. 88), and they published for the first time finds from various locations, stored in the Kythera Museum (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 266–270, pls. 86–87). Of course, the main interest of the British excavators was the prehistoric settlement of Kastri, and this is why they also published the finds of V. Stais from the site of Lionis, now in the National Archaeological Museum at Athens, together with some other Kytherian acquisitions in the same museum (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 263–266, pls. 85–86). It is therefore very strange that, despite the reference to the site of Hagios Georgios sto Vouno on their map (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, fig. 1), and the publication of three photographs of the mosaic at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, pl. 4c, f, 5f), the English archaeologists did not comprehend the importance of the site in Minoan times, i.e. a peak sanctuary lying on a hill top that was visible from Kastri, which was, after all, their main archaeological interest.

Despite the great success of the British excavation at Kastri and despite the wide acceptance the conclusions of the two excavators enjoyed, as regards the existence of a Minoan colony at Kythera (Benzi 1984, 96, 100; Bétancourt 1984, 112, 119, 120; Branigan 1984, 49; Cadogan 1984, 13-



Fig. 108: Metrical inscription from Kythera (private donation)
(Coldstream and Huxley 1972, pl. 2g).

14; Dickinson 1979, 121–122; Hägg 1984, 112; Hood 1984, 33, 35; Hope-Simpson and Wiener 1984, 17, 20, 23; Niemeier 1984, 205–207, 210, 212–213; Platon 1984, 66; Popham 1984, 220; Poursat 1984, 85; Rutter 1984, 219; Rutter and Zerner 1984, 75–80, 82–83; Stos-Gale and N.H. Gale 1984, 59, 61, 63; Tzavella-Evjén 1984, 71, 73; Warren 1984, 39, 54), archaeological investigations on Kythera, were unfortunately not pursued any further.

Coldstream and Huxley's epilogue was perhaps prophetic:

“Today the rapid decline of the population threatens a new dark age of emptiness, as emigration gains momentum. The process will be difficult to reverse, but the island has great powers of recuperation, as its pre-history and history show. To the archaeologist Kythera remains, not a wilderness, but an abundant source of evidence for many periods of Greek and pre-Hellenic history. It is certain that renewed excavation at Kastri, especially in the deep deposits of the Neck, would prove amply rewarding” (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 310).

Although after many years, N. Coldstream and G. Huxley (Coldstream and Huxley 1984) did return to the subject of Kythera, the British had already turned their attention elsewhere and there was no “renewed excavation” at Kastri. The English byzantinist A.H.S. Megaw (in Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 316), also mentions a future excavation at Palaiopolis.

It is also worth noting that the Kytherians did take an interest in the preservation of the cultural heritage of the island. As early as the 1950ies, the Kytherian press records numerous deliveries of ancient objects to the

“Museum of Kythera”. Kytherians living abroad send Australian pounds “for the construction of exhibition cases and furniture for the Museum”. “Mr. Athanasios Stathis, from Potamos donated to the Museum of Kythera a round clay vase and three small cups of the 3rd century BC. Also, Mr. Georgios Megalokonomos, from Kapsali, donated to the Museum a beautiful coin bearing the inscription “Ionannis Cornelius Duke”, Also Mr. Theod. Vaggis, from Karavas, offered to the Kythera Museum a small clay lamp, a small amphora of great art, a painted vase of the 5th century BC. Finally, Mr. Nikolaos Veneris, and Mr. Valerios Veneris, sent from Australia two and three pounds, respectively, for the construction of exhibition cases and furniture for the Museum; Mr. Antonios Argyris sent three pounds, Mr. Panagiotis Veneris, two pounds, Mr. Dionysios Veneris, two pounds, Mr. Konstantinos Kastrisios, one pound, and Mr. Theod. Kominos, one pound” (*Kyθnπαϊκὴ Δρασίς*, 1.5.1954, 4).

Th. Petrocheilos, the temporary curator of antiquities in Kythera, collected antiquities and notified the Ephorate of Antiquities of Attica, which was then responsible for the island, until 1963. In one of the documents he sent, dated 13th of November 1961, he relates the following:

“The merchant Georgios Kontoleon in the village of Avlaimon, has purchased and now has in his possession an unpainted amphora, 1.20m long. Through a document I sent to the Constabulary at Kythera I requested, on the 3rd of September, that the amphora should be handed over immediately and if not, it should be confiscated and he should be sued yet nothing has been done to date. Near the site of Vothonas in the area of Palaiopolis of Kythera and during the opening of a road, I found, at a depth of 2m, a human skeleton, together with a bronze knife. A necropolis has been located in this area. I mentioned the fact to the Ephor of Antiquities of Attica and requested the dispatch of an Archaeologist. Since tombs with clay vases and other objects are being discovered here every day, I once more submit the same request, that you order the immediate dispatch of an official to examine the site personally”.

An account of “expenses made by the temporary curator of antiquities at Kythera, Th. Petrocheilos, for the collection and transport of antiquities to the Kythera Museum”, dated 6th of August 1963, mentions the sites of Vothonas and Pasparo near Palaiopolis, and the site of Ammoutsas.

A document written by Th. Petrocheilos, on the 25th of November 1963, relates the following: “During the latest torrential rains in the area of Palaiopolis at Kythera and at a distance of two kms from the site of Kastri, near Palaiopolis, in the area of the last excavations, just below Palaiopolis,

kastro, the rain water that swept away part of a field, uncovered two graves, which contained twelve (12) vases and many fragments of vases, that I picked up with the car of Ioannis Daponte”.

Archaeologists did not visit Kythera very often. A document of the B' Ephorate of Antiquities of Attica, dated 6th of August 1963, mentions the approval of expenses for the collection and transport of antiquities to Kythera by the temporary curator of antiquities. Even rarer were the visits of archaeologists specializing in the prehistoric period (Aik. Demakopoulou, A. Onasoglou, K. Efstratiou). The reason was the transfer of the official archaeological supervision of Kythera, in 1963 from Athens to Sparta, and in 1977 from Sparta to Peiraeus. Sparta, however, was, for most archaeologists, considered a place of exile. At the time when the British School at Athens was excavating at Kythera, out of a total of seven known archaeologists who served in Sparta for eight years, between 1964 and 1971 (information provided by the *Chron.* of the *Arch.Delt*), only Aik. Demakopoulou had apparently visited Kythera, sporadically of course, as the official “supervisor” of the British excavation conducted by N. Coldstream and G. Huxley.

It is worth noting that, although there were no archaeological investigations at that time on Kythera, the island hosted one of the first underwater archaeological investigations in Greek waters in the second half of the 20th century. At the time when oil was being discovered in the Aegean, and more specifically in June 1976, one hundred and seventy four years after the “Mentor”, overloaded with the “Elgin marbles”, sank at Avlaimon, and a hundred years after the second and last investigation of the ship wreck by the Archaeological Society, under the supervision of P. Stamatakis, a renewed investigation of the Greek seas was conducted by the team of the famous J.I. Cousteau (Lianos 1983, 25; *Φωνή των Κυθέρων*, Jan. 1984, no. 135, 2: “...during the investigations of J.I. Cousteau in the Greek seas, three members of the Institute for Underwater Research that were on board the “Kalypso”, made the third recognizant visit at the site of the ship-wreck”). According to Ch. Kritzas, the investigations of the “Kalypso” at Avlaimon were supervised by N. Papadakis. The only investigation at the site of the “Mentor” ship wreck during the 20th century was conducted by the Institute for Underwater Archaeological Research, which thankfully rose to the challenge after Cousteau’s work in the area. Four years after J.I. Cousteau, on the 18th of July 1980, a team of ten members of the Institute for Underwater Archaeological Research, arrived at Avlaimon. M.K. Petrocheilos, the Kytherian antiquary, records the following, concerning these investigations (*Φωνή των Κυθέρων*, Jan. 1984, no. 135,1; see also Lianos 1983):

“A group of four people from the Institute for Underwater Archaeological Research, with the help of the appropriate suction pump, passing air to the lower part of a pipe of similar length, which absorbed the water, so that all obstacles would be swept away, managed to reveal part of the surface of the ship wreck and expose the curved pieces of wood (planks) from the left side of the ship’s hull. A number of metallic T-shaped sockets, metallic elements presumably joining the keel with the false keel, and with the rest of the ship, were then noticed at the bottom of the sea. The right hand side of the ship was in any case destroyed after it had crashed on the rocks or possibly by the 19th century divers, who, in those times, used stones to reach a depth of 22-24 m, thus destroying the ship in the process of extracting the cargo. The ship wreck yielded no finds during this investigation by the above mentioned Group of Specialists. It seems that all the finds had been already retrieved. Only some bullets from the riffles that they kept on the brig against pirates are still lying on the seabed. Of course all necessary photos were taken of the ship-wreck. The entire project lasted 15 days and cost 250.000 drachmas”.

This fourth recorded underwater investigation of the “Mentor” ship wreck, lasting 15 days after the location of the ship-wreck at a depth of 22-24 m, and implemented with small test trenches on the surface of the seabed, over an area of only 8.5 m, revealed only the left hand side of the vessel, buried ca. 0.40 m inside the seabed; the right hand side of the vessel had been already destroyed. Of course there were no traces of the “Elgin marbles”, which had been packed, as we know, in boxes, since they had all been raised from the sea during the first investigation in 1802. The only portable finds that came to light during this last investigation were “tens of small round iron pellets...possibly...bullets used at those times” (Lianos 1983, 23). It is obvious that, M.K. Petrocheilos, the only specialist eye-witness at Avlaimon, considers them “bullets” (*Φωνή των Κυθέρων*, Jan. 1984, no. 135:1). The ship wreck was located “at a distance of ca. 10m from the coastline, along the end of the rocks lying at the bottom of the sea, in a position almost parallel to the coast” (Lianos 1983, 27).

According to Tsouchlos (25/6/2002), the “technical expert” of the project, “apart from the bullets, various other interesting objects were also raised from the sea, including part of the coil of a rope, part of a pulley, a melted mass consisting of three coins, a Spanish silver coin of Alfonso, a gold Belgian and an iron Turkish coin, broken bottles and glasses, an English faience with a medallion of King George, and a gold pocket watch, with a broken glass and hands, excellently preserved; its white plate was rusted along the original position of the two hands, and along the position of the

numbers 1 and 2, which, interestingly enough, corresponds to the time of the day (morning) that the ship was actually wrecked, i.e. 01.05 or 02.10”.

Unfortunately, this investigation was never published properly and in the only published report written by the architect N. Lianos, it is noted that “the continuation of the excavation and the uncovering of the entire shipwreck, might possibly give us the opportunity to gather {sic} many small objects that had escaped the attention of the Kalymnian divers” (Lianos 1983, 28). N. Lianos appears both as the specialist in charge of the Institute for Underwater Archaeological Research and as the official supervisor on behalf of the Ministry of Culture (Lianos 1983, 24). It is therefore, quite possible that other ancient objects are still lying deep inside the seabed at Avlaimon. In any case, it shouldn’t be forgotten that after the successful hauling of the boxes with the “Elgin marbles”, despite the primitive means available at the time, Em. Kaloutsis, the vice-consul of Great Britain at Kythera, taking advantage of “a boat with divers on board”, which happened to pass from the island in 1806, managed to discover “a small marble statue” at the bottom of the sea (Miliarakis 1888, 746), which he of course sent to his patron, Lord Elgin. According to Ch. Kritzas, there was a fifth investigation of the “Mentor” shipwreck undertaken by the Central Athens Police Department, with the help of the diver Petros Nikolaïdis, at the time when G. Papathanasopoulos was the director of the Ephorate for Underwater Antiquities.

In 1977, Kythera came under the jurisdiction of the B’ Ephorate of Pre-historic and Classical Antiquities, which is still now based in Athens, and which is also responsible for the Archaeological Museum of Peiraeus (for the successive administrative assignments of Kythera to Zakynthos, then to Laconia, and then to the Argolid and Corinthia prefecture, then again to

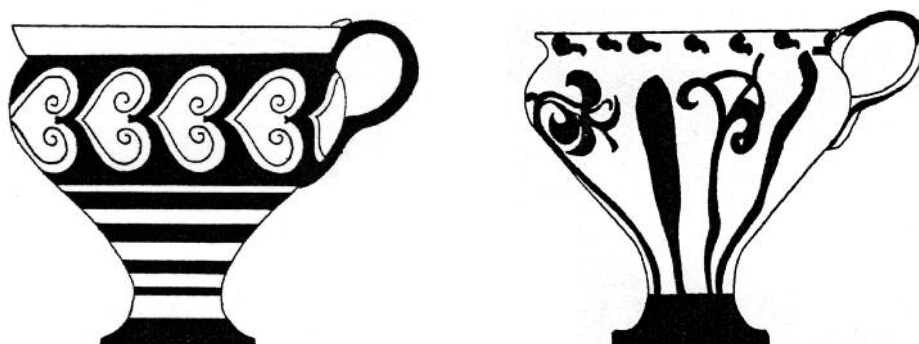


*Fig. 109: MM III-LM IA pottery from a tomb at Kastri
(Coldstream and Huxley 1972, fig. 87.3, 4).*

Laconia and finally to Attica and Boeotia, see Petrocheilos 1940, 86). According to the Papyrus-Larousse lexicon: “the assignment of Kythera to the Peiraeus prefecture was dictated by the presence of a large number of Kytherians in Peiraeus”. For fifteen years, between 1977 and 1991, when the Minoan peak sanctuary at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno was identified, the two curators assigned to the island, K. Eftstratiou and A. Onasoglou, produced only two published reports about the antiquities on Kythera. The first publication concerns the excavation of a MM III-LM IA chamber tomb at Kastri (Efstratiou 1977, 43) (Fig. 109). According to the document dated 29th of September 1981, written by the guard, A. Pissis, who is mentioned below, this was perhaps the tomb excavated by K. Efstratiou. The second piece of news, signed by A. Onasoglou (Onasoglou 1990), involves the excavation of a looted Minoan multi-chambered tomb at Asproga, in Palaiopolis, which was also used for burials in later Roman times (Fig. 110); it is similar to Tomb E, near Kastri. The tomb was located during the opening of a cess-pit, as was the case for similar multi-chambered tombs at Poros, near Herakleion (for the tomb at Kastri, see Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 222-223). A. Onasoglou, who was a specialist in Minoan seals (Onasoglou 1985), and who has also provided a plan and photographs of the excavation, did not however identify the neighbouring site of Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, rising over Palaiopolis, as the site of a Minoan peak sanctuary. The stone phiale in the National Archaeological Museum (no. 3947) (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 266, no. 2) (Fig. 111), is labeled as “possibly from Kythera”, while the provenance of the seal stone in the British Museum (Kenna 1967, no. 36 [CMS VII]) (Fig. 112), is simply labeled “Kythera”.

Due to the huge size of the area they were responsible for, frequent traveling was not possible for the archaeologists assigned to Kythera. According to the evidence from the archives of the B' Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities, N. Papadakis had also participated in the J.I. Cousteau investigation in 1976.

The Kytherian Ant. Pissis, served for many years as the guard of the classical and prehistoric antiquities at Kythera. A. Pissis, as indicated by a number of documents submitted between 1972-1973 and the 1990ies, and now preserved in the archive of the B' Ephorate, collected antiquities and notified the authorities about the discovery of tombs.

Document dated 21/3/1972: “During my rounds on the 10th of February, in the Archaeological area of Palaiopolis, I found and collected an intact stone vase”.

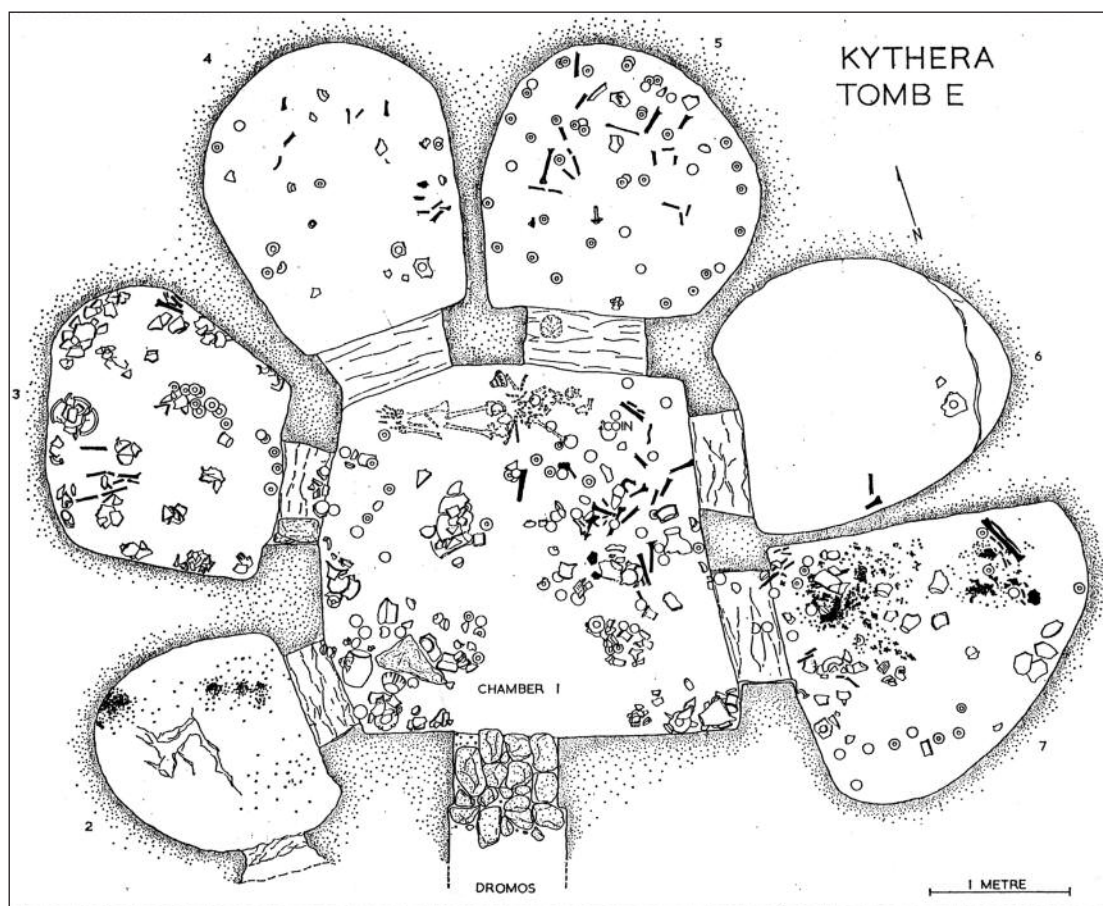


Fig. 110: The multi-chambered Tomb E at Kastro (Coldstream and Huxley 1972, fig. 73).



Fig. 111: National Archaeological Museum: no. 3947-stone phiale, possibly from Kythera (National Archaeological Museum).



Fig. 112: Seal in the British Museum, possibly from Kythera (Kenna 1967, no. 36 [CMS VII]).

Document by A. Pissis, dated 30/6/1973: “At Palaiopolis of Kythera (Ancient Scandia), in a privately owned field, and at a small distance from the excavations, were uncovered during ploughing, many sherds of clay vases, squared poros stones and a round stone column, 50x20, which I collected”.

Document dated 29/6/1981: “Concerning the examination of the Archaeological site of Palaiopolis, and Palaiokastro, in the month of June, 1981, I am notifying you that on the 9th of this month I came upon two finds, 1 black cup, and a piece of marble or porcelain of small size, {decorated} with the head of a girl in relief”.

Document dated 30/7/1984: “Concerning the examination of the Archaeological site of Palaiopolis and Palaiokastro, in the month of July, I found at Palaiokastro a pyramidal clay weight and a fragment of a decorated red stone with two letters on it”.

Document dated 29/8/1986: “Concerning the examination of the Archaeological site of Palaiopolis, and Palaiokastro, and in reply to your telegram (Prot. No 3222), I am notifying you of the following: “Owner of the field is Mr Vyron Georgiou Sklavos. The two tombs were old, empty of finds, one was completely destroyed, and the entrance to the other was blocked with debris”.

Document dated 15/6/1990: “On the 9th of June 1990, during the construction of a cess-pit at Palaiopolis, in the plot of land owned by Mr. Ioannis Georgiou Samios, was found a tomb at the depth of 1 m from the surface of the ground. When it was noticed, work stopped immediately and the cess-pit was constructed at another spot. I reported this immedia-

tely on Monday (11/6/1990) by telegram, which is now followed by this written report”.

This is the tomb excavated afterwards by A. Onasoglou, as mentioned above.

Document by A. Pissis, dated 29/9/1981: “The tomb that Miss Efstratiou excavated was turned into a stable, as I have also reported on the phone”. Perhaps this is the tomb mentioned above.

The Byzantinists were particularly active at Kythera; they even took good care of the classical antiquities.

With this document, dated 1st of October 1986 (no. 2411), the 1st Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities, informs the B' Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities that “during a brief archaeological investigation in the Byzantine church of Saint Peter, at Areoi, on Kythera, directed by the curator Mrs El. Tsofopoulou, was found part of a statue of the kore type, of extraordinary quality”.

In the delivery and receipt protocol, dated 2nd of October 1986, the following antiquities are mentioned from the above mentioned site: “1. Part of a female statue. Almost the entire left half of the torso is preserved, from the collar bone and the shoulder, to the beginning of the tibia. It is dressed with a chiton. Pres. Ht.: 0.73 m, wdth.: 0.24 m. It was found in a cess-pit, below the chancel of the church, along with other useless objects, fragments of wall paintings, etc. It is dated to the 4th century B.C. 2. Part of female statue. Dressed with a chiton, it is preserved from the thigh to the tibia – this is the relaxed limb. Pres. Ht.: 0.41 m, wdth.: 0.22 m. 3. Part of a small column with a projecting abacus or what might have been part of a statue base, with a projecting lower element. The circumference of the projecting element is destroyed and features an elliptical section, diam.: 0.32-0.26 m, diam. of cylindrical section: 0.155x0.165 m, pres. Ht: 0.26 m”.

The rescue of numerous Byzantine churches, in this case decorated with wall paintings, should be attributed to the work of two pioneering researchers, P. Lazaridis and M. Hatzidakis. Some of the information published in 1970 by P. Vokotopoulos, concerning 23 Kytherian churches, including the church of the Panagia and that of Hagios Georgios sto Vouno (Vokotopoulos 1970, 148), is, as noted above, mostly based on the work of P. Lazaridis and M. Hatzidakis.

The first to be commemorated is P. Lazaridis; not only is he the first Byzantinist to visit Kythera, after G. Sotiriou in 1916, but he is also the man who recorded, during his three tours of the island, between 1965 and 1969,

more than seventy, mostly unrecorded Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Kytherian churches (Lazaridis 1965, 183–199; 1967, 204–205; 1969, 166–168). As noted above, P. Lazaridis also visited Hagios Georgios sto Vouno. The conservation program undertaken in a large number of Kytherian churches, featuring remarkable wall paintings, is mostly the result of these tireless tours of P. Lazaridis made on the island. It is very fortunate that the conservation of the Kytherian wall paintings was then undertaken by the “Central Conservation Laboratory”, headed by M. Hatzidakis, the director of the “Byzantine and Christian Museum”, and of the Benaki Museum, who had, as is well known, aside from his other scholarly virtues, highly developed organizational skills (Hatzidakis 1967, 17–18; 1969, 14; 1972, 15; Lazaridis 1975, 10; Acheimastou-Potamianou 1976, 14–20; 1977, 8–14). Large teams of conservators, headed by D. Margaritof, Stam. Perrakis, St. Papageorgiou, S. Michalarias, and D. Spathoulas, worked therefore, for quite a few years on the island. Unfortunately for Kythera however, the program was interrupted by the newly imposed dictatorship. In 1974–1975, the conservation program of the Byzantine and the Post-Byzantine wall paintings of Kythera was resumed, under the supervision of M. Georgopoulou (Georgopoulou 1975, 56–58), who also published a small article about the church of Hagios Andreas at Livadi (Georgopoulou-Meladini 1975, 178–192), then, in 1979, under the supervision of E. Kounoupiotou-Manolessou (Kounoupiotou-Manolessou 1979, 118), together with N. and M. Vardas and K. and Al. Vrettos, and between 1980 and 1982, under the supervision of M. Lazari (Lazari 1980, 99–100; 1981, 77–78; 1982, 80), who expanded the program, to include secular buildings (the castles of Chora, Mylopotamos and Avlaimon), and portable icons.

In the 1980ies and the 1990ies, the 1st Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities, under the direction of E. Gini-Tsofopoulou, became more active at Kythera (Gini-Tsofopoulou 1983; 1984; 1985; 1986; 1987; 1988; 1990; 1991; 1994; 1995). In successive trips to the island, she managed to continue the conservation program concerning the Byzantine wall paintings, with the help of various teams of conservators, including N.M. and A. Vardas, Vr. and A. Kalligerou, E.Ch. Michalaria, Chr. Michalarias, G. Portalios, E. Kalligerou, F. Asimakou, St. Petropoulou, and B. Kassimatis; she also managed to include in the program many more Kytherian churches that had not been recorded by P. Lazaridis, and the conservation of portable icons. The various conservation projects were not limited to churches, but also included the forts of the island and other secular structures, such as bridges. A significant factor in the successful completion of this project, was the appointment of permanent guards for the Byzantine antiquities of Kythera (B. and N. Lourantos and P. Kassimatis), as well as the long periods spent by a large

number of conservators on the island; they apparently also trained quite a few of the local people. Many churches and other buildings were also included in the list of protected monuments.

It is also worth noting that E. Gini-Tsofopoulou, as mentioned above, made an effort to preserve the mosaic at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno. Nevertheless, the work of the 1st Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities was also very important for research in general. The discovery of a mosaic floor at Hagios Ioannis, at Potamos, was most significant for the archaeology of the island; E. Gini-Tsofopoulou also published important articles concerning portable Kytherian icons (Gini-Tsofopoulou 1989–1991; 1998). The acquisition of a storeroom at Livadi, by the 1st Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities, was crucial, not only for the collection of icons and church heirlooms, but also for the storage of parts or even of fragments of wall paintings, that had been successfully removed from the walls of the churches, for the creation of a Christian Museum at Kythera (Gini-Tsofopoulou 1989–1991, 179). Finally, another important project was the creation of a permanent exhibition, entitled “A Collection of Works of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art”, in the church of the Analipsis at Livadi (Gini-Tsofopoulou 1997, 50; see leaflet produced by the Ministry of Culture, and entitled: *Συλλογή Έργων Βυζαντινής και Μεταβυζαντινής Τέχνης Κυθήρων*).

The importance of the work of the 1st Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities at Kythera, became immediately apparent, when the “Inventory of Byzantine wall paintings of Kythera”, written by M. Hatzidakis and I. Bitha, was finally published, in 1997, after a very long wait. It was the first volume of the Inventory of Greek wall paintings (Hatzidakis and Bitha 1997). This important monograph, which was completed with the help of a large number of people, working together, as mentioned above, for many years, is, without doubt, the second in importance systematic archaeological publication about Kythera in the 20th century, after the N. Coldstream and G. Huxley volume. The importance of this monograph should not be only associated with the preservation of remarkable wall paintings from thirty seven collections and forty four churches, but also with the exemplary manner in which these wall paintings were presented and analyzed for future research. As noted above, M. Hatzidakis and I. Bitha, do mention the churches of the Panagia and of Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, as well as the mosaic in the latter.

Nevertheless, the activity of the Greek Byzantinists at Kythera, to which should be also added D.K. Zaglanikis (1962), P. Vokotopoulos, M. Meladini-Georgopoulou (1981, 449–468), A. Katsioti (1991, 115–124), P. Asimakopoulou-Atzaka (1991, 38, 48, fig. 7), and Th. Koukoulis (Koukoulis

1992, 155–163), had a considerable number of side-effects, since it apparently irritated the British. In 1986–1987, a group of archaeologists, including G.E. Ince, D. Smyth, and A.N. Ballantyne, together with Th. Koukoulis, the archaeologist serving in the 1st Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities, later mayor of Kythera, conducted a surface survey at Hagios Dimitrios, the so-called Paliochora, the “Mystras” of Kythera, the town that was never re-occupied after its destruction by Hairaldin Barbarossa in 1537 (Koukoulis 1987, 120–121; Koukoulis and Ince 1986, 32; Ince, Koukoulis and Smyth 1987, 95–106; Ince, Koukoulis, Ballantyne and Smyth 1989, 407–416).

The huge contribution of Chr. Maltezou in the blossoming of research as regards the Byzantine and Post-Byzantine periods at Kythera, should be also taken into account, both in terms of the rescue of the Kytherian archaeological archive and of the large number of articles she has published on the subject (Maltezou 1974, 215–229; 1980a, 244–277; 1980b, 33–43; 1997, 305–314). The work of the Kytherian historian G.N. Leontsinis (Leontsinis 1971; 1980; 1987; 1990, 141–162; 1991; 1995, 423–437), and of M. Patramani (Patramani 1994, 1–21; 1998, 569–619; 2009), I.D. Psaras (Psaras 1987), and F.D. Mavroeidis (Mavroeidis 1978), was also very important for Kytherean history.

The large number of projects and publications concerning the Byzantine period and later, historical times, in the last quarter of the 20th century, was published by the archaeological service. In a special issue of the newspaper *Καθημερινή*, in 1998, a whole article is devoted to the prehistoric and classical antiquities of Kythera (*Καθημερινή*, *Επτά Ημέρες*, 5th of July 1998, Annita Panaretou, I. Petrocheilos, Chr. Maltezou, Ioanna Bitha, Th. Koukoulis, Ch. Bouras, Eleni Gini-Tsofopoulou, G. Leontsinis, G. Nikiphorakis, M. Kalligeros, H. Marcellos, Eleni Charou-Koronaïou). It is fortunate that the gap in the archaeological research was partly covered in 1984 by I.E. Petrocheilos (Fig. 113), a local archaeologist, whose PhD was entitled: “Kythera from the Prehistoric Period to the Roman Rule”, which has become a basic tool for Kytherian archaeology (Petrocheilos 1984).

A particularly important initiative of the B' Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities at Kythera, partly the result of the tireless efforts of the Kytherians themselves, was the housing of the Archaeological Collection during the 1980ies in a building offered by the Cultural Association of Kythera (*Φωνή των Κυθέρων*, March 1984, No 135, 3; *Παγκυθηναϊκή*, March-April 1984, no. 135; according to the *Φωνή των Κυθέρων* (1985, No 145, 3,) the building was offered by the Kytherian Association at Kythera). It is worth noting at this point, that the discussion about a Mu-

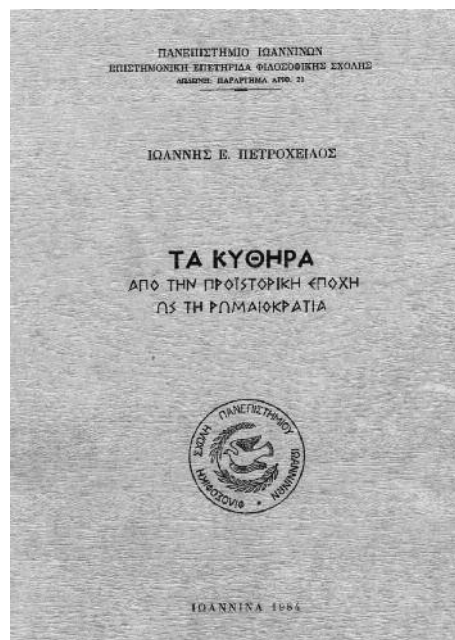


Fig. 113: Front cover of book on the ancient history of Kythera by I.E. Petrocheilos (1984).

seum on Kythera and the appointment of a curator, who would be in charge of the museum, can be traced back to the time of the German-Italian occupation of the island; it was when the Italian conquerors of the island tried to steal one of the museum exhibits, as mentioned in 1953, by M.K. Petrocheilos (*Καθημερινή* 5.5.1953). As noted above, various Kytherians hand over antiquities “for the Kythera Museum” and Kytherians abroad send Australian pounds “for the construction of exhibition cases and furniture for the Museum”.

The Kythera Museum, in which the Minoan stone lamp collected from Palaioiopolis by S. Benton was placed, “after action taken by the late schoolmaster Spyr. Stathis”, as noted above, is also mentioned in 1957 (*Κυθηραϊκή Δράσις* 28/2/1957, 198, 2). What was then described as the Kythera Museum, was of course a space where the Kytherian antiquities were housed at Chora, and was understood as such only by the Kytherians themselves and by the local Kytherian press; the official state seems to have ignored its existence. In 1946 the Collection at Kythera is mentioned officially for the first time (*Ζημΐαι τῶν ἀρχαιοτήτων ἐκ τοῦ πολέμου καὶ τῶν στρατῶν κατοικῶν*, Ministry of Education and Religion, Department of Antiquities and Historical Monuments 1946, 26). Only in 1960 is the establishment, not of a Museum, but of an archaeological collection at Kythera, discussed in a semi-official manner, and even then, not by the state, but by the Archaeological Society, which also issued a money order to that effect.

The following is related in the Proceedings of the Council of the Archaeological Society: “Concerning a document sent by the Ministry of Education

(no. 119418/6767), dated 17/9/1960, the council sanctions the payment of the sum of one hundred and fifty thousand drachmas (150.000), which is not to be exceeded in any way, for the establishment of an Archaeological Collection at Kythera". Prot. No 832 – Meeting 9, 23rd of September 1960, 119. "The sum of 150.000 dr. is to be issued for the establishment of an archaeological Collection at Kythera. This sum will be supplemented by the transfer of money from the reserve fund" (Meeting 22, 23rd of May 1961, 201).

In 1989, the American Archaeological School, which had not expressed any interest in Kythera until now, applied to the B' Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities for permission to conduct a topographical and architectural investigation at Palaiokastros (Document No 5251/7.11.89, by the American School of Classical Studies); the American School was obviously interested in filling the gap left by the British School of Archaeology, especially in an area that had been investigated by H. Schliemann, as early as the 19th century. As if by instinct, the Kytherian I. Petrocheilos also applied to the B' Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities for permission to conduct a topographical and architectural investigation at the same site (Palaiokastros) (Document No 5888/1.12.89, by the lecturer of the Department of Philosophy of the Ioannina University), almost simultaneously with, and definitely independently of, the American archaeologists.

The permission to conduct an investigation at Palaiokastros, the first to be conducted at the site, 102 years after the great H. Schliemann, was finally granted to the Department of History and Archaeology of the Ioannina University and to the Kytherian archaeologist I. Petrocheilos, a dedicated scholar of Kytherian history. The ongoing investigation conducted by the fellow archaeologist, I. Petrocheilos at Palaiokastros, at the church of Hagios Georgios and at an altitude of 323 m, led to a particularly important discovery; at the highest point of the ancient town, was identified an old and respected Greek sanctuary of the Late Geometric and Archaic periods, most definitely the sanctuary of Aphrodite, the one that gave the island the Homeric adjective "*záθηα Κύθηνα*", a further example of the continuity of cult at Kythera. The finds, apart from pottery, i.e. kotylae, plates, ring-based craters, amphorae or hydriae, some of which were decorated with narrative scenes, also included many small finds, of glass, bone, bronze, and iron, votives, such as beads, rings, finger-rings, brooches, pins, fibulae, knives, and clay and bronze figurines, both human and animal (*Ergon* 1993, 75–77; Petrocheilos 1993, 154–161; 2003, 1, 77–84; 2004, 453–460; 2007, 295–306). The wide range of votives suggests a close relationship between Kythera and the Argolid, or Attica, the latter on a smaller scale, as well as with the Cyclades, while the presence of Italian and Phrygian

brooches perhaps indicates the presence of pilgrims from more faraway places.

The Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities in charge of the island became very active at Kythera, immediately after the identification and the excavation of the sanctuary at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno. A. Tsaravopoulos, has conducted a number of excavations and other investigations, which we hope will be properly published, and has thus enriched our meager knowledge of ancient Kythera. Pottery of the final Neolithic, as well as Minoan and Mycenaean vases, have been found in the cave of Hagia Sophia, at Kalamos. A tomb was located at Chorokambos. A cemetery of the Classical period was excavated at Katochori Alexandradon. A considerable quantity of Minoan pottery was discovered on the road at Tholos. At Viaradika was collected a clay lamp and a Mycenaean Phi-type figurine. A cave excavated at Diakofti, at the site of Chousti, had been apparently in use during Neolithic times, during the 3rd millennium, and during the Classical period, while an EH building in the same area yielded obsidian blades. Minoan and Mycenaean vases came to light in a cave at the top of Myrmigaris and at the site of Kataphygadi. At Mitata was found a square grave, completely looted. A grave was also located at Karavas, at the site "Spilia tou Arapi", the contents of which, a clay and a stone vase, were handed over, as noted above, in 1950, to the Prehistoric Collection of the National Archaeological Museum. Another tomb was discovered at Aloizianika. On the surface of a road at Partheni was found a Minoan stone bird's-nest bowl. An inscription, which implies the existence of an Asklepius sanctuary was discovered at Hagios Theodoros. The pottery sherds of the Coldstream and Huxley excavation, that had been thrown away, were also re-discovered.

On the island of Antidragonera, finally, was located and excavated a sanctuary of Poseidon that was used during the Hellenistic and the early Roman period; the votive offerings from the sanctuary included iron rings, seal stones and 216 coins from 54 different towns in different parts of the Aegean, the Mediterranean, the Black Sea, the Velearides, Sardinia, Carthage, and Egypt, to Phanagoreia on the Black Sea. They were obviously votives dedicated to the sanctuary by passing seafarers (see lecture given by A. Tsaravopoulos in the Kytherian Association at Peiraeus, on the 20th of May 2002, the Athenian and Kytherian press - *Έθνος* 14/7/2003; *Καθημερινή* 11/7/2003; *Απογευματινή της Κυριακής* 14/9/2003; *Κυθηραϊκή Ιδέα*, July-Aug. 2003, and articles based on the information provided by the press; see also Tsaravopoulos 1997, 105–108; 2005). A. Tsaravopoulos finally, conducted excavations on Antikythera, at Palaiokastros, at the ancient cemetery at Charchaliana and in the area of the Primary School.

As regards the Greek archaeological activity at Kythera, it should also be noted that G. Kokkorou-Alevra is currently studying the quarry at Avlaimon, as well as other Kytherian quarries, along with the geologist Ach. Hatziantoniou, as part of a program concerned with the study of ancient Greek quarries.

It is also worth noting that immediately after the Greek excavation at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, the forgotten island of Kythera was suddenly remembered by two foreign Schools of Archaeology, the Australian and the British; although they are both members of the Commonwealth, the simultaneous interest shown by the Australian and the British School must be a coincidence, and they did manage to divide their respective academic territories on the island on a geographic basis, so as to avoid overlaps. The relatively new Australian School of Archaeology, which had never before expressed an interest in Kytherian archaeological research, despite the particularly emphatic presence of Kytherian immigrants in Australia, created a program entitled “Paliochora-Kythera Archaeological Survey” (ARKAS). The program, which began in 1999, with the expressed aim to conduct a surface survey of the north part of Kythera, is directed by I. Johnson, with E. Gregory as assistant director. News of the results of this survey are limited for the moment (*AR* 2001–2002, 17; *AR* 2003–2004, 15; see also lecture by Paspalas 2006; catalogue of the exhibition at the Museum of Cycladic Art entitled: “Ξένες αρχαιολογικές σχολές στην Ελλάδα”, Athens 2007, 42–44).

Immediately after the excavation at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, the interest of the British School of Archaeology in the forgotten island of Kythera, was, as is to be expected, renewed. Of course the planning of the surface survey of the central-eastern part of Kythera, in the area of the Minoan colony at Kastri, the forgotten important excavation of N. Coldstream and G. Huxley, before the discovery of a peak sanctuary at Hagios Georgios sto Vouno, was very well organized. This program, entitled “Kythera Island Project” (KIP), directed by C. Broodbank, who is working with a large team of specialists, is obviously the preamble, a modern, methodical preparation, of a new large-scale British excavation at Kythera. The preliminary yearly reports of this surface survey, which lasted from 2000 to 2002, have already been published (*AR* 2000–2001, 20–21; *AR* 2001–2002, 16–17; *AR* 2002–2003, 15–17; *AR* 2003–2004, 14–15; *AR* 2004–2005, 14; *AR* 2005–2006, 17; Broodbank 1999, 191–214; Broodbank, Bennet and Davis 2004, 227–239; see also, Ohnesorg 2004, 283–289; Bevan et al. 2002, 55–96; Bitha 2004, 565–577; Vokotopoulos 2003, 49–56; see also *Η' Διεθνές Πανιώνιο Συνέδριο* (21st–25th of May, 2006), Athens 2009: A. Bartsiakas;

K. Sueref; M. Patramani; K. Tsiknakis; Ch. Maltezou; A. Letterio; I. Marsellos; K. Liambi; N. Poulou; A. Christou; M. Lambrinou; V. Leutheris; Th. Koukoulis; T. Gregory; M. Koumanoudi; Em. Drakaki; I. Demetis; K. Michalakaki; V. Leutheris and K. Kassimati; P. Kavakopoulos; I. Kassimatis; S. Evangelatos; D. Menti; I. Garcia-Galvez; E. Alexakis; A. Papamichail-Koutroumba; M. Vrelli-Zachou; P. Kamilakis; V. Chrysanthpoulou; D. Vagiakakos; E. Bafouni; E. Kyriazopoulos and N. Lourantos; S. Volyraki and G. Frangou; Z. Synodinos).

It is obvious that the prospects of the archaeological investigation of Kythera in the beginning of the 21st century are quite encouraging. It is our hope that the labour of the archaeologists and the scholarly studies of the historians will enrich our knowledge about Kythera, with more publications and more conferences.

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Κύθηρα 3

Γιάννης Σακελλαράκης (ἐπιμ.), *Κύθηρα*.

Τὸ μινωικὸ ἱερό κορυφῆς στὸν Ἅγιο Γεώργιο στὸ Βουνό, ΤΟΜΟΣ 3.

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