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Ein nackter Mann ist schwer zu finden. Zur Entwicklung einer spätpalatialen mykenischen Ikonographie einer männlichen Gottheit

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG In der Ikonographie der spätbronzezeitlichen Ägäis spielen Darstellungen des menschlichen Körpers eine wichtige Rolle, auf die Angabe primärer Geschlechtsmerkmale wird jedoch verzichtet. Von dieser ikonographischen Konvention weicht das Fragment eines großen scheibengedrehten Terrakottaphallus aus Tiryns deutlich ab. Die kontextuelle und vergleichende Untersuchung des Fundes sowie seine Einbettung in die historischen Rahmenbedingungen des Fundortes verdeutlichen sein außergewöhnliches performatives Potenzial innerhalb von Libationspraktiken und verweisen auf levantinische Einflüsse in der Konzeption dieser männlichen Figur. In Hinblick auf zunehmende archäologische Belege für größerformatige männliche Figuren der mykenischen Spätpalastzeit wird die These aufgestellt, dass das Tirynther Exemplar als Kultbild gedient haben könnte. So scheinen derartige Figuren eine Ikonographie männlicher Gottheiten einzuleiten, die zuvor in der mykenischen Bildwelt nicht zu fassen war. Mit Blick auf den soziopolitischen Hintergrund der Argolis des späten 13. Jahrhunderts v. u. Z. könnte diese ikonographische Neuerung eng mit einer verstärkten Ausformung absolutistischer Herrschaft verbunden sein.

Schlagwörter Mykenische Terrakottafigur; Nacktheit; ithyphallische Darstellungen; Tiryns; männliche Gottheiten.

ABSTRACT Representations of the human body are prominent in LBA Aegean iconography, but they are not differentiated by means of the primary sexual organs. A large wheel-made terracotta phallus fragment from Tiryns departs significantly from this iconographic convention. Contextual and comparative analyses of the find, as well as the site's historical setting, highlight its unique performative qualities in libation practices and point to Levantine influences in the conception of this male figure. In the present article, we argue that the figure may have functioned as a cult image; this hypothesis is discussed in the light of growing evidence for larger male figures in the archaeological record of the Mycenaean late palatial period. Such male figures indicate the incipient iconography for male deities, which was previously lacking in Mycenaean imagery. Set against the socio-political background of the Argolid in the late 13th century B.C.E., this iconographic development may be connected to the emergence of absolutist rulership.

Keywords Mycenaean terracotta figure; nakedness; ithyphallic images; Tiryns; male deities.

Δύσκολα βρίσκεις ένα γυμνό άνδρα. αναζητώντας την εικονογραφική εξέλιξη μιας ανδρικής θεότητας κατά την υστεροανακτορική μυκηναϊκή περίοδο

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ Οι απεικονίσεις του ανθρώπινου σώματος παίζουν ένα σημαντικό ρόλο στην εικονογραφία του Αιγαίου κατά την ΥΕΧ, χωρίς ωστόσο να διαφοροποιούνται με βάση την απόδοση των γεννητικών οργάνων. Το θραύσμα ενός μεγάλου τροχήλατου πήλινου φαλλού από την Τίρυνθα αποτελεί μια ξεκάθαρη απόκλιση από τις παραπάνω εικονογραφικές παραδόσεις. Η ανασκαφική και συγκριτική μελέτη του ευρήματος καθώς και η θεώρηση της ίδιας της ιστορικής κατάστασης της θέσης επισημαίνουν τις μοναδικές επιτελεστικές του ιδιότητες στο πλαίσιο σπονδικών τελετουργιών παραπέμποντας σε επιρροές από την Εγγύς Ανατολή όσον αφορά στη σύλληψη του συγκεκριμένου ανδρικού ειδωλίου. Εδώ υποστηρίζεται ότι το αγαλματίδιο θα μπορούσε να είχε χρησιμοποιηθεί ως λατρευτικό είδωλο. Η υπόθεση αυτή εξετάζεται υπό το πρίσμα των αυξανόμενων αρχαιολογικών ενδείξεων για την παρουσία ανδρικών ειδωλίων μεγάλου μεγέθους στην ύστερη ανακτορική μυκηναϊκή περίοδο. Τέτοιου είδους ανδρικά ειδώλια είναι πιθανόν να υποδηλώνουν την έναρξη εικονογραφικής παράδοσης ανδρικών θεοτήτων, η οποία δεν υπήρχε στην παλαιότερη μυκηναϊκή παράδοση. Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη το κοινωνικοπολιτικό υπόβαθρο στην Αργολίδα κατά τον ύστερο 13ο αιώνα π. Κ. Χ. θα μπορούσε αυτή η εικονογραφική εξέλιξη να συνδέεται με τις απαρχές μιας απολυταρχικής ηγεμονίας.

Λέξεις-κλειδιά Πήλινο μυκηναϊκό ειδώλιο. Γυμνότητα. Ιθυφαλλικές απεικονίσεις. Τίρυνθα. Ανδρικές θεότητες.

INTRODUCTION

A prominent feature of the Aegean LBA is the rich evidence of representational imagery with detailed figural compositions in a variety of different media. Depictions of the human body have piqued scholarly interest ever since the birth of the discipline in the late 19th century, when the first examples of Aegean iconography became known. However, in the past decades, the popularity of gender studies and the growing awareness that the relationship between (biological) sex and (socio-culturally constructed) gender is fluid, and contingent on culturally and historically specific contexts, have increasingly fashioned a new dimension to the study of the human body, as depicted in visual forms. Particularly, gender studies have contributed to a shift in focus from dealing with the aesthetics of the human body within art historical traditions to considering questions of ideological and cultural meaning. If anthropomorphic images are viewed not merely as abstract or idealized representations from nature, but also as a tool for the symbolic expression of ideas and behaviours, they have the potential to provide rich information on the understanding of their role in the production and reproduction of social (and religious) ideologies[1]. A case in point is a large ithyphallic terracotta figure from Tiryns (cf. *fig. 1*), which will be discussed in greater detail below.

REPRESENTATIONS OF FEMALE AND MALE BODIES IN THE LBA AEGEAN

In depicting the human body, the Aegean LBA artisan or craftsperson had a wide range of distinguishing features at his disposal that allowed for a clear-cut differentiation between women and men. In wall paintings and stucco reliefs, the most distinctive feature is the white skin-colour for females and the reddish-brown for men, which serves as a secure means for assigning gender[2]. It has been argued that the use of colours in Aegean wall paint-

We express our gratitude to Maria Kastoula for expertly photographing the terracotta fragment, to Roxana Docsan for her invaluable help in the figure's reconstruction drawings and to Reinhard Jung for pointing out the parallel from Tell Kazel. Melissa Vetters would like to thank Joseph Maran, the director of the Tiryns project, for his continuous support. Thanks are also due to Alkestis Papadimitriou as director of the 4th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities, for facilitating the study of terracotta figures and figurines from Tiryns. Many colleagues and friends discussed various aspects of this paper with us and some of the arguments were presented at the 10th International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East in Vienna: We especially thank Douglas Faulman, Lyvia Morgan, Estelle Orrelle and an anonymous reviewer for providing us with further ›food for thought‹. Any remaining errors are of course the sole responsibility of the two authors.

The following abbreviations are used throughout the paper, in addition to those commonly employed under DAI guidelines:

B.C.E.	Before Common Era
C.E.	Common Era
EBA	Early Bronze Age
MBA	Middle Bronze Age
LBA	Late Bronze Age
EM	Early Minoan
MM	Middle Minoan
LM	Late Minoan
LH	Late Helladic
LC	Late Cypriot
DB-no.	object no. in database (Vetters 2009)

[1] Rautman – Talalay 2000, 1–6; Hamilakis et al. 2002, 1–5. Both references form introductory chapters of conference proceedings and provide an extended bibliography on the topic.

[2] The use of a light colour for female skin and a dark colour for male skin is attested in many ancient cultures of the Mediterranean through millennia in a remarkably consistent pattern, see Eaverly 1999, 5–8; Lee 2000, 116. This convention dominates ancient painting from Old Kingdom Egyptian tomb paintings (3rd millennium B.C.E.) via Minoan and Mycenaean palatial wall paintings (2nd millennium B.C.E.) to Imperial Roman frescoes in Pompeii (1st century C.E.).

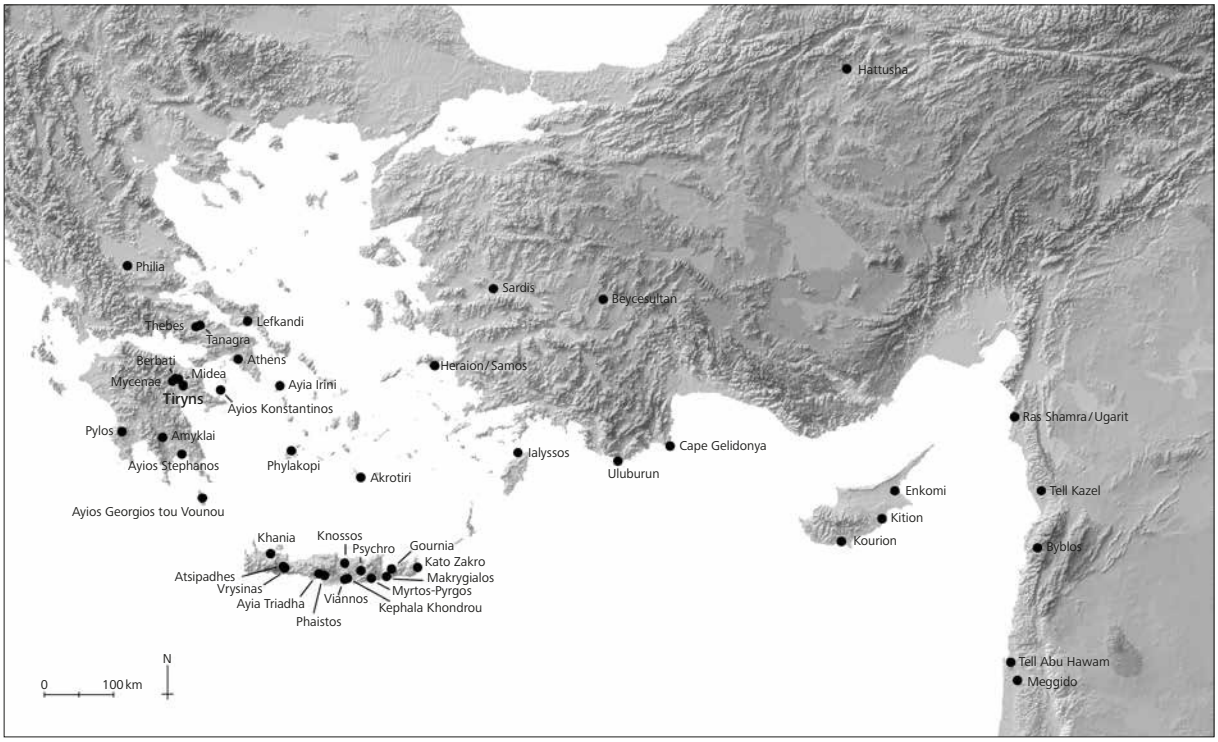

Fig. 1. Map of Greece, Anatolia and the Northern Levant with sites mentioned in the text

ing is less rigid than previously assumed and transcends a universal binary explanation[3]. For example, yellow ochre is likely to indicate age rather than gender[4]. In addition, skin colours may be painted alternately dark red / light red, red / yellow, or red / black for formal reasons in those few representations where individual men overlap each other, in order to visually separate a series of stereotypical figures[5]. However, almost all human figures that appear in Minoan or Mycenaean frescoes can be reliably sexed by the conventional colour of their skin[6]. In other media such as seal-stones, sealings, rings, relief vessels and boxes, vase painting, figures, and figurines the identification of human shapes as female or male is based on a number of criteria. These include physical appearance, hairstyles, body paintings, costumes, headdress, adornment, gestures, postures and activities as well as scale, position and pose in figurative compositions[7]. In general, Aegean artisans pay much attention to the rendition of minute details of clothing (and the patterns on them), hairstyles or

[3] Alberti 2002, 102–109; Shaw 2004, 77–79.

[4] Morgan 2000, 937–940 fig. 4; Chapin 2009, 177; Chapin 2012, 298.

[5] Blakolmer 2002, 84–91 figs. 20–22; Blakolmer 2003, 22 f. pl. 4 figs. 14. 18. 19; pl. 5 fig. 20. This artistic device can also be observed on Tanagra *larnakes*, see Blakolmer 2003, 22 f. with n. 14 pl. 4 fig. 17. In general, the overlapping of human figures is mostly avoided.

[6] Blakolmer 1993, 5–18; Chapin 2012, 297–303. Only the gender and identity of the so-called Priest-King on a relief fresco from Knossos is much contested, see Hitchcock 2000, 70–76. 81 figs. 5, 2–4; Shaw 2004, 77–82 fig. 4, 1–5. Some scholars have questioned the female sex of white figures with long hair and clad in loincloths with prominent codpiece in bull-leaping frescoes from Knossos and the Greek mainland, see Damiani-Indelicato 1988, 39–47; Marinatos 1989, 23–32. We see no compelling reason to deny Aegean women the ability to leap over bulls. For a similar view, see Younger 2016, 579.

[7] Rehak 1998, 192–196; Alberti 2002, 102. On gender-specific gestures made by LM bronze figurines, see Hitchcock 1997. The proceedings of the 13th international Aegean conference on jewellery, adornment and textiles provide much information for the discussion of gender markers in the Aegean Bronze Age, see Nosch – Laffineur 2012.

jewellery. Although women and men share most attributes[8], the combination of such features and the pictorial context in which the figures appear result for the most part in clear gender ascriptions. Although it is not always possible (at least for the modern viewer) to infer sex / gender on a secure basis, sexually ambiguous or indeterminate figures are not a common phenomenon in the figurative imagery of the Aegean LBA[9].

For example, when participating in similar activities, women and men share certain costumes (including hide skirts, long cloaks and long tunics) that are not gender-specific[10]. Nevertheless, skin colour and / or details of anatomy, hairstyle or adornment in most cases provide a hint whether to identify a particular figure as female or male. Interestingly, in most of those comparatively rare representations where women and men appear in close proximity, women are shown with skirts (exhibiting some variation in form and decoration), whereas men are usually depicted as relatively sparsely clad. Their minimal clothing is largely confined to codpiece, kilt and / or tight-fitting belt, leaving chest and limbs bare. Obviously, clothing forms an appropriate means of communicating social constructions of gender by displaying an intrinsic association between women and elaborately decorated textiles, as well as by revealing and accentuating certain parts of the human body[11].

REPRESENTATIONS OF PRIMARY SEXUAL CHARACTERISTICS

Although physical characteristics of human figures are occasionally reproduced clearly enough to allow attribution of biological sex[12], socio-cultural traits such as costumes, hairstyle and accessories seem to be of greater importance in the representation of the human body. This assumption is supported by the fact that primary sexual characteristics (i.e. female and male genitalia) are not among those features which are used for discriminating between the sexes in the Aegean LBA, yet can be regularly observed in human representations of Neolithic and EBA Greece, EBA and MBA Crete and most other societies in the ancient Mediterranean[13]. Symbolic representation of pronounced sexual features with clear renditions of the pubic triangle, the vagina or the penis is almost absent in Aegean LBA imagery of both Crete and the Greek mainland[14]. Likewise, one observes a lack of representations of functional or practical nakedness[15]; neither adult women nor adult men are shown naked when performing certain activities, acting as musicians or dancers, or during physical exercise. The only exceptions to this rule are representations of male children or juveniles,

[8] Along with certain types of costume, much Aegean jewellery seems to be non-gender specific, see Rehak 1998, 194 f.

[9] Prominent examples are figures called ›Aegean priests‹, who are generally viewed as male, but whose sex cannot be determined on a secure basis, see Weilhartner 2014, 448–450.

[10] Jones 2015, 143–153. 251–275.

[11] Lee 2000, 111–123.

[12] Chapin 2012, 300. On the contrary, Alberti 2001, 191–193. 198–202; Alberti 2002, esp. 109–112 argues for a non-sex-based aesthetic of the human body in LBA Minoan iconography. In his view, LM imagery is characterized by a general template for representations of the basic human form, where differences appear only in conjunction with specific contexts and specific types of clothing. However, the evidence of relief art as well as figurines of clay and bronze is not easily reconciled with his view.

[13] For the Aegean, see, e.g., Hamilton 2000; Talalay 2000; Hitchcock – Nikolaidou 2013, 504–510 with further bibliography. For the frequent occurrences of images of the naked body in Egyptian and Near Eastern Bronze Age iconography, see, e.g., Asher-Greve 1998, 14–23; Asher-Greve – Sweeney 2006; Budin 2015.

[14] German 2000, 98–109; Morris 2009, 246. *Pace* German 2000, 105–107, we cannot accept that some of the human-animal figures on the Kato Zakro sealings show clear renditions of a phallus. In view of its position protruding from the chest the element in question on CMS II 7 nos. 109. 110 is likely to be identified as a breast. The interpretation of the curved element on CMS II 7 nos. 142. 143 has to be left open.

[15] On this term, see Asher-Greve – Sweeney 2006, 120–125.

who, as elsewhere in the ancient world, are regularly shown naked with clear indication of genitalia[16], and the depiction of defeated warriors, if the nakedness of drowning men on the miniature style frieze decorating Room 5 of the West House at Akrotiri, Thera is decisive[17]. In general, however, the depiction of primary sexual characteristics did not attract any interest in the Aegean LBA and representations of nakedness concentrate on the upper part of the body[18]. In Neopalatial Minoan representations (18th/17th–15th centuries B.C.E.), this holds true for both men and women: men are often depicted as young males characterized by broad shoulders, a narrow waist and a muscular body; they wear a short kilt or a belt with codpiece. Although the latter draws attention to the penis, it covers and hides the male sexual organ from clear view. Women are regularly illustrated with a curvaceous body and an elaborate, often flounced skirt. While the open bodice emphasizes the breasts by exposing them, the long garment completely conceals the lower body[19]. During the Mycenaean palatial period (14th–13th centuries B.C.E.), one even observes a tendency to cover the chest as well: men are regularly shown with short or long tunics, women tend to wear long tunics[20]. Depictions of the naked breast[21] are largely confined to women wearing Minoan-style robes or large female terracotta figures, a substantial number of which have the breasts accentuated by ornamental painting[22].

Considering the rich and diverse corpus of anthropomorphic images of various scales and in different media during the 17th–12th centuries B.C.E. from a broad geographical area covering Crete, the Greek mainland, the Cyclades, and the Dodecanese, the visual representation of the naked body that clearly displays the genital area of adults is an astonishingly rare phenomenon. The most familiar examples of naked females are two cut-outs of sheet gold from Shaft Grave III of Grave Circle A at Mycenae from the very beginning of the LBA (i.e. 17th/16th century B.C.E.), which show naked women (one with doves on her head and shoulders, the other with a single dove on her head) with hands holding breasts and clear indication of the pubic area[23]. The iconography of these ornaments is clearly derived from Near Eastern prototypes in the tradition of the ›Nude Goddess‹. Significantly, later representations of females, which display some resemblance to this type, leave only the breasts exposed; the rest of the body is covered[24]. Another early example of female genital imagery

[16] Rehak 1998, 192 f.; Rehak – Younger 1998, 240 with n. 110; Morgan 2000, 934. 937; Rutter 2003, 37–46 figs. 8. 9. 12. 14. 24; Papageorgiou 2008, 89–93 fig. 3; Chapin 2009, 176–180 pls. 26. 27. This seems to be an iconographic convention to differentiate between male children and adults. Interestingly, female children are not portrayed in the nude in Aegean iconography. On a likely single exception to that rule, see Papageorgiou 2008, 90 f. fig. 7; Budin 2010, 25 f.

[17] Morgan 2000, 934; Chapin 2012, 299 f. One of the drowned victims is painted with male genitalia. In ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian imagery, fallen or captured men (about to be killed or humiliated) are regularly depicted as stripped of all clothes, see Asher-Greve 1998, 20 f. fig. 9; Asher-Greve – Sweeney 2006, 113 f. fig. E1; 123 f. figs. M3. M4. E5. E6. In analogy to Egyptian and Near Eastern tradition, nakedness in Aegean depictions of war likely signals death or defeat.

[18] Kyriakidis 1997, 119–126. Following Hallager – Vlasakis 1984, 5 f., Böhm 1990, 7–13 and Warren 1990, 198 n. 30 view a number of females in glyptic scenes such as CMS II 3 nos. 103. 114 or CMS V Suppl. 1A no. 143 as naked. However, the new renderings published on the CMS-Homepage <http://arachne.uni-koeln.de/drupal/?q=en/node/196> (16/09/2017) raise doubts whether these depictions really represent completely naked women without any indication of clothing. For a similar view, see Crowley 2013, 352. 355. In any case, none of the female figures in question is shown in frontal view.

[19] German 2000, 98–104; Chapin 2012, 297–303; Hitchcock – Nikolaidou 2013, 510 f.

[20] Rehak 1998, 194.

[21] Morris 2009, 243–249.

[22] E.g. Palaiologou 2015, 111–113 figs. 2–4. 9–11.

[23] Karo 1930, 48 pl. 27, 27. 28.

[24] On that phenomenon, see Müller-Celka 2001, 283–285; Dubcová 2016, 271 f. The only possible exception is a small fragmentary ivory statuette from Tsountas' Tomb 103 in Mycenae, which seems to date to LH III A, see Poursat 1977, 100 f. pl. 34 no. 319; Xenaki-Sakellariou 1985, 287. 289 pl. 44, 4940; Böhm 1990, 15 pl. 1 f (M3) with a more general date (LH II–LH III B). Although the female sex of this figure has been disputed (Jung – Pacciarelli 2016, 31), the physical characteristics as well as the hint of a pubic triangle clearly point to an interpretation as a female figure, see Dubcová 2016, 271 n. 80.

is of a different type. A bronze figurine from Makrygialos, Crete, which dates to LM I B (16th century B.C.E.), combines the depiction of genitals with indications of clothing: a central opening of the skirt on the front side uncovers the vulva with a protruding clitoris[25]. Further examples of representations of female genitalia are provided by the crude outline of a woman *en face* without arms on the narrow side of a pilgrim flask from Rhodes dated to LH III B (13th century B.C.E.), with clear indication of the breasts with nipples and the pubic area indicated by paint, although she wears a robe[26], and two anthropomorphic clay vessels, one from Gournia, Crete, dated to LM III A2–B (14th–12th centuries B.C.E.) and one from Ayia Triadha, Crete, dated to LM III C or Sub-Minoan (12th–11th centuries B.C.E.). The latter is in the form of a naked, sitting female with breasts and clear indication of an incised vulva and pubic hair by means of an added clay area, interpreted as a parturient woman[27]. The Gournia example, which shows painted decoration on head, body, legs and arms, is a rhyton with a hole in the crown of the head and another one below the clitoris.

Clear depictions of male genitals include a man of small size identified as a groom on a Mycenaean krater found at Klavdhia near Kition (Cyprus), dated to LH III A (14th century B.C.E.), who is generally viewed as naked from the waist down, although he wears a short dotted tunic on his upper body[28], and a small number of figures and figurines. Among the most expressive examples is a small, plain male figurine with its genitalia apparently broken off found in a LM III A2–III B Early (14th/13th century B.C.E.) layer in Poros-Katsambas near Knossos[29] and at least five handmade terracotta figures from the West Shrine of Phylakopi, Melos dated to LH III C (12th century B.C.E.) with male genitals displayed despite painted indications of clothing[30].

[25] Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1995, 13 f.; Davaras 1997, 126 f. fig. 16; Mantzourani 2012, 105–112. Some scholars consider the figure as a possible hermaphrodite, see Coulomb 1978, 226; Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1995, 14. However, the drawing of the figure clearly speaks in favour of viewing the particular anatomic features as female genitals, see Mantzourani 2012, 108 fig. 12, 2. 3.

[26] Vermeule – Karageorghis 1982, 155. 227 no. XII.18. On the opposite side of the flask another woman is shown in a similar fashion, although without indication of nipples and genitals.

[27] Karetsou – Andreadaki-Vlazaki 2000, 263 f. nos. 263. 264; Phillips 2008a, 214–217; Phillips 2008b, 25 no. 35; 50 f. no. 78. See Rethemiotakis 1998, 74 pl. 32 γ. δ; Rethemiotakis 2001, 24 f. fig. 27. Anthropomorphic vessels in the form of a naked female with swollen abdomen (as if in pregnancy) either kneeling or standing with knees bent (thought to represent women giving birth) have been termed ›Gravidenflaschen‹ by Brunner-Traut 1970 on the basis of material from Egypt. In Egypt, this type of vessel is largely confined to Dynasty XVIII (16th–14th centuries B.C.E.), although some older examples exist, see Dubcová 2016, 270 n. 64 with further literature. In Crete, images of squatting women with a rounded body and pendulous or flattened breasts are found in various media from the proto-palatial period onwards, although infrequently. Images of this type in the form of anthropomorphic vessels seem to be a rather late phenomenon. For a probably MM II rhyton of unknown provenience in the shape of a seated woman with her pubic area highlighted by paint, see Younger 1995, 171 no. 120. Although direct links are difficult to identify, some form of Egyptian inspiration seems likely, see Phillips 2008a, 216 f. For arguments in support of a Minoan development, see Budin 2010, 21–24. Another example of this type of vessel is reported from Kephala Khondrou, Crete, dated to LM III B, see Gesell 1985, 50. 82 no. 31; 187 fig. 68; Phillips 2008b, 71 no. 123. Based on published evidence no conclusions can be drawn regarding the design of the pubic area.

[28] Vermeule – Karageorghis 1982, 30. 198 no. IV.18; Hiller 2001, 46 f. pl. 5, 5. Due to his small size and the depiction of six fingers, this figure has been deemed to represent an outcast or a bodily deformed person. Two male figures depicted in the act of libation on a spouted jug of the late Middle Cycladic period from Akrotiri, Thera, are said to show tiny genitals, see Papagiannopoulou 2008, 441–444 figs. 40, 14–20; Blakolmer 2016, 69 f. fig. 4, 1. However, position and scale defy an unequivocal interpretation of this particular feature. In any event, both figures are clad in a Minoan loincloth worn around their waist and hanging down in front and on the back.

[29] Rethemiotakis 1998, 163 pl. 84 α–γ; Rethemiotakis 2001, 41–43 fig. 46; 143 fig. 149 β.

[30] French 1985, 223–230 figs. 6, 12–14 (SF 1520. SF 1544. SF 1550. SF 1553. SF 2340); Renfrew 1985e, 420–424. Another fragment may originally have displayed male genitals, see French 1985, 223. 227 (SF 817). According to French 1985, 223 and Kardamaki 2015a, 78 male figures and figurines may become more prominent during LH III C than in the preceding palatial

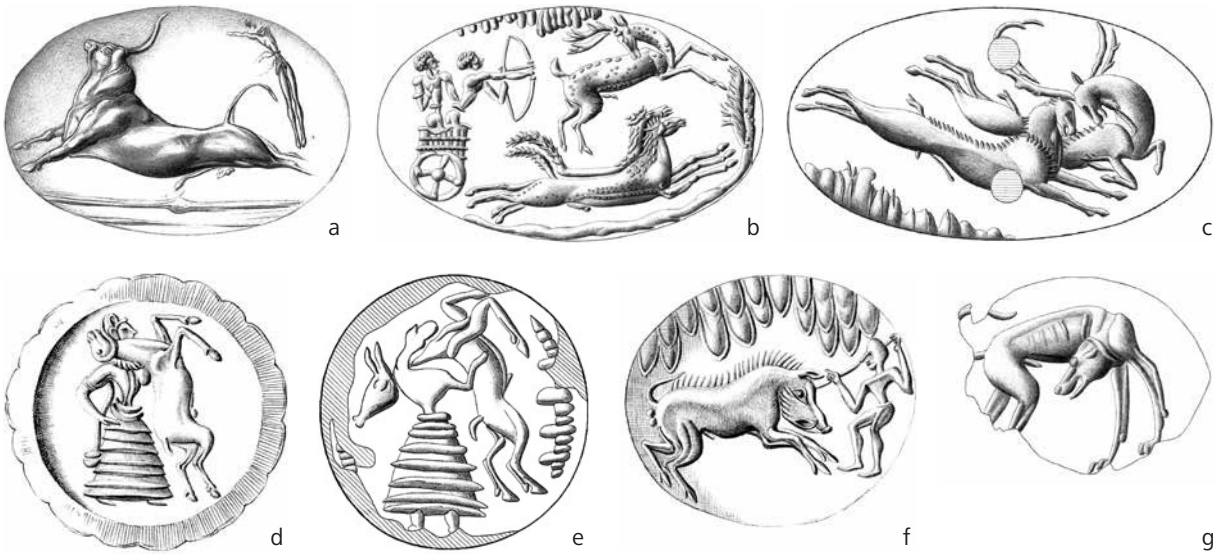

Fig. 2. Glyptic imagery of animals with erect penises (not to scale): a. Bull with erect penis and testes, CMS II 7 no. 39. – b. Stallion and stag with erect penis, CMS I no. 15. – c. Wild goat with erect penis and testes, CMS II 6 no. 70. – d. Ram with erect penis and testes, CMS I no. 221. – e. Billy goat with erect penis, CMS II 7 no. 23. – f. Boar with erect penis and testes, CMS I no. 227. – g. Dog with erect penis, CMS II 6 no. 75

Other instances provoke more disputes. For example, a fragment of a Mycenaean male terracotta figurine from the Acropolis at Athens has been quoted by Elisabeth French as an exceptional example of clearly modelled male genitalia[31]. However, at the crucial point the figurine is broken. According to its painting, the figurine may rather wear a belt with codpiece. The interpretation of other male figurines is equally ambiguous as can be demonstrated by a figure with traces of red-brown paint and arms in front of the chest, found in a LM III C context in Ayia Triadha[32], which perhaps features a penis. However, this feature may well be another example of a modelled codpiece with its accompanying painted belt not visible anymore[33]. In addition, some Minoan bronze statuettes, mostly from the Psychro cave, may not wear the typical codpiece[34]. However, a clear distinction between codpiece and penis is not possible. In any case, since these figurines are dated to the Cretan post-palatial period on stylistic grounds, they are a rather late phenomenon. On the Greek mainland, it is not until the Early Iron Age (ca. 1000–700 B.C.E.) that primary sexual characteristics are

period. A phenomenon mostly of the post-palatial period are so-called Handmade Burnished Ware-type figurines that comprise inter alia schematic anthropomorphic terracottas. These are occasionally attested in the Aegean, on Cyprus and in Italy, see Vetters 2009, 130–139; Vetters 2012a, 34; Borgna 2014. Some show crudely modelled genitals; for details and bibliography, see Vetters, forthcoming, table 2.

[31] French 1971, 148. She refers to a photograph of the broken figurine. The original is now on display in the new Acropolis museum.

[32] Rethemiotakis 1998, 34 pl. 57 β; Rethemiotakis 2001, 41 fig. 45; 143 fig. 149 α.

[33] For a similar case, see Tzachili 2012, 234–238 figs. 25, 1. 2. She refers to clay torsos of two male figurines of Neopalatial date, both without head and arms, from the peak sanctuary at Vrysinas, Crete. Both objects show clear emphasis on the genital area. However, the sexual organs seem to be encased in a codpiece. See also the depiction on a gold signet ring from Thebes (CMS V no. 199), which shows a male figure standing in front of a seated female figure of presumably divine nature. The detailed rendering of the feature in question suggests the representation of a vertical phallus. If true, this would be without parallels in the whole corpus of glyptic imagery. Usually, male figures are clad with a belt and / or a codpiece.

[34] See, e.g., Verlinden 1984, 149–151 pls. 65, 145. 146; 66, 150; 67, 154; 68, 156. 157; 69, 162; 70, 163. 164. 167.

a significant factor in the visual discourse[35]. Among the many significant social and cultural innovations of that period is the emergence of a distinctive new figurine tradition, which constitutes a genuine break with the figural conventions of the Bronze Age in terms of representing nakedness[36].

As the listing of the rare exceptional illustrations demonstrates, there is no clear evidence in the Aegean LBA of representations of the pubic triangle with genitalia on prestige artworks and artefacts such as frescoes, metal signet rings, (semi-)precious seal-stones, relief vessels, chests or boxes. These objects are generally deemed to convey elitist or palatial ideologies. This is certainly not the result of technical difficulties in rendering small details. Rather, it attests to the general cultural reticence to represent human genitalia.

Significantly, none of the rare images of naked females are shown with arms pointing to the genitals, as is typical of images of the so-called nude fertility goddess in the Ancient Near East[37]. This gesture clearly emphasizes the idea of sexual activity and female fertility. Correspondingly, none of the occasional male figures whose genitals are depicted features an ithyphallic penis pointing horizontally forward. This is in line with the fact that renditions of phalli, whether as part of ithyphallic male figures or figurines, as phallus-shaped necks with heads, or in the form of votive phalli, are almost completely missing in Aegean LBA material culture[38], although this most conspicuous reference to male sexuality and reproduction is clearly attested in previous periods[39]. Obviously, neither the portrayal of female pudenda nor of male phalli was conceived as important symbolic expressions of fertility.

If a fully erect penis is shown, it is in representations of animals. Clear examples are provided by glyptic imagery, which document bulls *(fig. 2 a)*, stallions *(fig. 2 b)*, stags *(fig. 2 b)*, wild goats *(fig. 2 c)*, rams *(fig. 2 d)*, billy goats *(fig. 2 e)*, boars *(fig. 2 f)* and dogs *(fig. 2 g)* in ithyphallic pose. In other media the ithyphallic representation of animals occurs as well. An early example from the mainland appears on the stone relief stele found above Shaft Grave V of Grave Circle A in Mycenae, which presents a warrior in a horse-drawn chariot. The horse is obviously ithyphallic[40]. Later examples are witnessed in Mycenaean pictorial vase painting, which documents horses and bulls with their genitals clearly depicted[41].

[35] Langdon 1984, 88–213, esp. 190; Langdon 1999. Interestingly, representations of sexual characteristics are asymmetrical. While pronounced genitalia (whether ithyphallic or not) are common among male figurines (of different types such as god, warrior, charioteer or rider), only on relatively few of the fully naked female figurines is the genital area explicitly rendered, see Langdon 1999, 24. Contrary to the Aegean LBA, male figurines far outnumber female representations in the Geometric period.

[36] Langdon 1984; Langdon 1999.

[37] Böhm 1990, esp. 125–143; Budin 2015, esp. 315.

[38] Possible exceptions to that rule are two objects which have been interpreted as votive phalli, one made of clay, the other of bronze, found at Ayios Georgios tou Vounou, Kythera, and which are ascribed a LM I date, see Sakellarakis 1996, 88 n. 72; Sapouna-Sakellarakis et al. 2012, 269 no. Π22 fig. 22 pl. 3, 15. However, it is important to note that the so-called phalli from the small rural peak sanctuary at Atsipadhes, Crete, to which the objects from Kythera have been compared, have been re-identified as arms of human figurines wearing bracelets, see Morris – Peatfield 2002, 109.

[39] For general remarks on the significance of the depiction of genitals and their symbolic connotations in prehistoric Greece, see Mantzourani 2012, 110; Hitchcock – Nikolaidou 2013, 506–510. On various examples from Neolithic Thessaly, see Wace – Thompson 1912, 57 fig. 30; 163 fig. 110; Marangou 2009, 82 f. pl. 11 a. b. For a fragment of the lower part of a male figure from Myrtos-Pyrgos, Crete, almost certainly of MM II B date, which seems to display an erect penis, see Cadogan 2009, 228 pl. 38 a. b. For another Minoan male figurine with clearly rendered genitalia and imported to Ayios Stephanos, Laconia, that has tentatively been dated to MM III, see Taylour – Janko 2008, 452. 455. 575 f. no. 7092 fig. 10, 4.

[40] Karo 1930, 33. 168 f. no. 1428 pl. 5; Marinatos – Hirmer 1973, pl. 169.

[41] See, e.g., Vermeule – Karageorghis 1982, 40. 201 no. V.17; 42. 202 no. V.26; 53. 204 no. V.80.

REPRESENTATIONS OF SEXUAL INTERCOURSE

This phenomenon of restricting a pictorial motive or scene to animal life can also be observed in the context of sexual intercourse, as clear-cut depictions are limited on present evidence to a pair of mating (wild) goats[42]. Although such copulation scenes are rare, they are attested in a variety of media ranging in date from the pre-palatial period of Crete to the post-palatial period of the Greek mainland: mating (wild) goats with clear signs of sexual dimorphism as regards the varying length of their horns are carved on an outstanding gold signet ring and two or three additional seals, one made of hippopotamus ivory and two made of steatite (one of which may be post-LBA)[43]; shaped as a miniature terracotta figurine[44] – all found in Crete; or painted on two vases from Lefkandi, Euboea[45].

The striking absence of overt human sex scenes in the Aegean LBA, whether of heterosexual or homosexual nature, is remarkable in comparison with the acceptance of this theme as documented in the iconographies and literature of the contemporary Near East and Egypt as well as in later periods of ancient Greece[46]. This conspicuous phenomenon is not confined to the Aegean LBA: in all of the known Aegean Bronze Age figurative representations from the beginning of the 3rd millennium B.C.E. until the end of the 2nd millennium B.C.E., at most two or three examples exist, which may show a couple engaged in sexual intercourse. One appears on an ivory seal of pre- or proto-palatial date (late 3rd / early 2nd millennium B.C.E.), found in Viannos, Crete, depicting a figure seemingly sitting on another figure's lap[47]. Another potential example is depicted on a green steatite disc seal that originally had been assigned an early date (i.e. proto-palatial, early 2nd millennium B.C.E.)[48]. On one side, it shows a robed female figure that approaches an apparently male figure sitting on a stool, on the other side goats are shown in the act of mating: the mating goats clearly speak in favour of interpreting the couple as having sexual intercourse[49]. However,

[42] Rutter 2014, 198; Weilhartner 2016, 7 f. figs. 12–15.

[43] Krzyszkowska 2005, 127 f. fig. 214 colour pl. 22. The striking composition on the gold ring of Neopalatial date (CMS VII no. 68), which displays details such as the bristly coat, beard and the ribbed long curving horns of the billy-goat, has been described as an »outstanding example of Minoan naturalism«, see Krzyszkowska 2005, 128. The seal made of ivory (CMS II 1 no. 369) is ascribed to EM III–MM I A, the first seal made of steatite (CMS II 2 no. 306 a) to MM II. On the second steatite seal see n. 48–50.

[44] Rehak 2009, 15 pl. 2 g. The figurine, which is said to come from Mount Ioukhtas near Knossos, has been photographed by Paul Rehak in the Heraklion Museum. No information regarding the date and exact find-spot is given.

[45] On the fragment of a LH III C krater from Lefkandi mended from two sherds, see Vermeule – Karageorghis 1982, 143. 224 no. XI.85; Rutter 2014, 198 f. fig. 21, 3. The animals are to be identified as goats by their short upward-curving tails. Another krater from the same site seems to show a similar scene, albeit less explicitly, see Rutter 2014, 198 f. fig. 21, 2. Although the fragmentary vessel is not fully preserved, the position of the animals (one close behind the other) as well as the varying length of their horns (indicating female and male sex according to the iconography on seal-stones) speaks in favour of viewing this vessel as featuring another scene of copulating goats, *pace* Crouwel 2006, 241 f.

[46] Reinsberg 1989; Stewart 1997; Budin 2016, 11 f.; Orriols-Llonch 2016, 199–201. It is important to note that neither in Mesopotamia nor in Egypt is the corpus of images of copulation large.

[47] CMS II 1 no. 446 a. See Koehl 2001, 240 pl. 79 f. g. *Pace* Koehl the sex of the human figures is not altogether clear.

[48] This seal was published by Arthur Evans in his first paper on seals from Crete, see Evans 1894, 343 fig. 67 a. b. Evans' description of the seal is as follows: »On the green steatite disk, the other face of which is occupied by two goats, a branch and other objects, we see what, owing to the naiveness of the art, may either be interpreted as a comic or a tragic scene. A figure in a long tunic, behind which is a high-spouted vase, is represented attacking and apparently overthrowing a naked figure seated on a stool«. Although both sides of the disc are depicted and described, he does not comment on the overt animal sex-scene on the other side of the disc.

[49] Matz 1928, 107 pl. 9, 24 (K129) and, more cautiously, Bloedow 1990, 74 n. 93. Matz 1928, 13 noted that nothing is known about its place of storage. Therefore and since the seal is not listed in one of the CMS volumes (presumably due to its potential historical date), Weilhartner 2016, 8 n. 42 wrongly suspected that it had been lost. It was, however, purchased by the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1942 (inv.-no. 42.11.1), see Davies 1969, 224 f.

this seal may belong to the 8th/7th century B.C.E.[50]. To these one may add the representation of what may be copulating human clay figures referred to by Livingstone Vance Watrous as on display in the Heraklion Museum among votive objects from MM peak sanctuaries without providing further details[51]. As it seems, explicit sexual acts were hardly ever depicted in representational Aegean art. Oral myths and hymns, poems, love songs and magic charms or mimic dances and other ritual performances may have been deemed more appropriate channels of expression[52].

Returning to the Aegean LBA, it is important to note that references to kissing, embracing or fondling among humans, which may be viewed as a symbolic representation of sexual intercourse, are also virtually absent[53]. In cult scenes on seals and golden seal rings females and males occasionally appear in close proximity; however, they barely interact with each other[54]. In wall painting, close contact between the sexes is equally exceptional[55], and one observes a clear tendency of showing women and men performing their activities in separate groups[56]. Some examples speak in favour of explicit gender segregation[57]. The only exceptions are the unique scene on the Jewel Fresco from Knossos[58], which shows a male hand fastening or removing a necklace from a woman's neck suggestive of a symbolic representation of sexual relations, and some examples of LBA glyptic, which have been referred to with varying degrees of probability as depictions of the ›hieros gamos‹ / ›sacra conversazione‹ type[59]. In none of these representations are the human actors clearly shown naked.

This lack of interest in completely naked bodies in the figurative imagery of the Aegean LBA pertains to both women and men. If visual representation is a reliable guide to understanding Aegean LBA concepts of the human body[60], the fact that the depiction of sex-based distinctions by means of primary sexual characteristics is avoided may point to a sexual ideology of a rather balanced and complementary nature between Aegean women and men. The lack of explicit scenes of human sexual intercourse, which are generally viewed as a phenomenon of male-dominated societies, may also point to relative gender equity[61].

[50] Boardman 1963, 129 G6; Davies 1969, esp. 224 f. figs. 6–8; Brown 2001, 436.

[51] Watrous 1995, 399 n. 44. On the virtual absence of sex scenes in Minoan art, see Cadogan 2009, 227–229, who refers to figures of copulating couples of possibly Protogeometric date, Cadogan 2009, 228 n. 12. Younger 2016, 580 refers to a Mycenaean terracotta group of unknown origin showing two people reclining on a couch and one figure's arm placed on the other figure's chest as a couple having sex, see Richter 1966, figs. 24. 25. However, as these figures are fully dressed and modelled identically without any indication of primary or secondary sexual characteristics, this representation may be viewed as a symbolic depiction of sexual relations at the most.

[52] Nikolaidou 2002, 89.

[53] Rehak 1998, 193.

[54] See, e.g., CMS I no. 126; CMS II 6 no. 10; CMS V Suppl. 3 no. 68; CMS VI nos. 280. 286. See Niemeier 1989; Wedde 2004.

[55] Rehak 1998, 196.

[56] Marinatos 1987, 23–34.

[57] Hitchcock – Nikolaidou 2013, 512 f. referring to the Sacred Grove and the Grand Stand frescoes from Knossos and the fresco programme of Xeste 3 at Akrotiri, Thera. See also Younger 2016, 583.

[58] Evans 1921, 525–527 fig. 383; Cameron 1987, 324 fig. 5. The intimacy of this scene is without parallels in Aegean art.

[59] Säflund 1981, 198–200; Säflund 1987, 232 f. fig. 13; Koehl 2001, 239–241 pl. 79 a–e. Among these examples are a proto-palatial clay sealing from Phaistos (CMS II 5 no. 324) and a proto-palatial (?) half cylinder seal from Knossos (Ashmolean Museum 1938.790), which show a woman in a skirt and a man without indications of clothing (but without depicting genitals) turning their faces towards each other and holding hands. The latter has often been suspected to be a forgery. It is not included in the CMS, see CMS VI, 28 with further references.

[60] See, however, Zeimbeki 2009, 151 f., who sounds a note of caution as regards generalizing comments on gender on the basis of visual data.

[61] Cadogan 2009, 229 with some cautious notes.

REPRESENTATION OF GENDER IN LINEAR B LOGOGRAMS

Besides iconography, the phenomenon of avoiding representations of genital imagery can also be observed on written documents. The logograms for human beings in the Mycenaean Linear B script attest to a differentiation between women and men, which is not based on observable anatomical characteristics but on socio-cultural elements[62]: the representation of a standing, passive figure clad in a long costume serves to construct female gender *(fig. 3 a)*. An upright posture of a walking, active figure, with emphasis on broad shoulders and a narrow waist, and no indication of clothing, serves as a symbol for man *(fig. 3 b)*[63]. Despite their abbreviated designs (the logogram for woman consists of a triangle, two diagonal strokes and a semi-circle, the logogram for man of an X with a horizontal stroke on top and a semi-circle) these signs focus on those parts which are essential for recognition; they provide a valuable source of information on gender-specific elements that are mutually exclusive. As in Aegean LBA iconography, the representation of primary sexual characteristics is clearly avoided. Since logograms regularly include small details of the humans, animals or objects in question, the lack of representation of pudenda and phalli is not the result of technical difficulties in drawing. Rather, this points to a socially shared concept of femaleness (based on long clothing and passivity) and maleness (based on physical strength and activity) that does not draw on the depiction of genitalia. To summarize, based on the aforementioned evidence, representations of female and male figures in the LBA Aegean are primarily contingent on socially constructed, i.e. gendered role models, and the depiction of primary sexual organs does not constitute a distinctive feature in iconography. Hence the attestation of a large terracotta phallus in a Mycenaean palatial settlement context comes as a surprise.

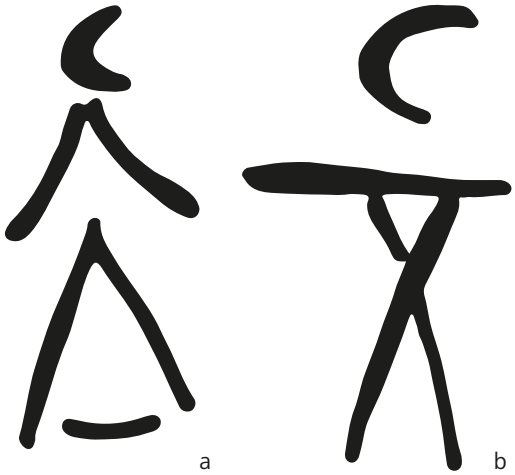

Fig. 3. Linear B logograms:
a. for woman (MUL, KN Ak[3] 783.1). –
b. for man (VIR, KN As[2] 1516.3)

AN ITHYPHALLIC TERRACOTTA FRAGMENT

The ensuing discussion centres on three ›enigmatic‹ terracotta fragments that, as we argue, belong to a large, wheel-made, male, ithyphallic figure[64] from the environs of the Upper Citadel and the Mycenaean palace of Tiryns in the Argolid *(fig. 4)*. The terracotta fragments comprise a hollow wheel-made phallus with the fingers of the right hand modelled in the

[62] For a more detailed analysis of the logograms for woman (MUL) and man (VIR) including the standard form as well as graphic variants, see Weilhartner 2012, 287–295 pl. 66.

[63] The Sumerian signs for human beings reflect a completely different concept in creating symbols for woman and man. In their original form these signs can be clearly traced back to representations of the vulva and the penis respectively, see Asher-Greve 1998, 10 f. diagram 1.

[64] French 1985, 223. 224 fig. 6, 10 pl. 37 e–h; Voigtländer 2003, 130 T 41; 229 f. pl. 94. Henceforth, the terracotta fragments under discussion will be cited with their data-base numbers according to the detailed catalogue in Vetters 2009.

pubic area at the start of the penis[65] and two additional fragments[66] – apparently parts of extremities – that in all probability derive from the same figure, although they do not join *(fig. 5)*.

The main fragment (DB-no. 2679) consists of a ca. 11 cm long, wheel-made, tubular phallus with a central hole / spout in front and one hand modelled on the right side with grooves between fingers indented by a (wooden?) modelling tool *(fig. 5 a)*. The phallus is painted monochrome red except for the glans and the hand, which bears stripes of paint along the upper ridges of the fingers[67]. The interior of the phallus exhibits clear rotation marks from wheel-throwing and some drying-cracks and partial finger indentations around the area, where hand and testes were modelled onto the phallus[68]. Notably, the hollow interior of the hand – and by extension of the arm – communicated with the horizontal tube of the phallus via a perforation of the phallus' wall at the point where the hand was attached. The exterior length of the phallus shows striations from a modelling tool, on top of which red paint was evenly applied. The break on top of the hand attests to a once approximately vertical arm with the phallus positioned at a straight angle, which means that the phallus jutted out perpendicularly from the now lost body and can thus be characterized as ithyphallic *sensu stricto*.

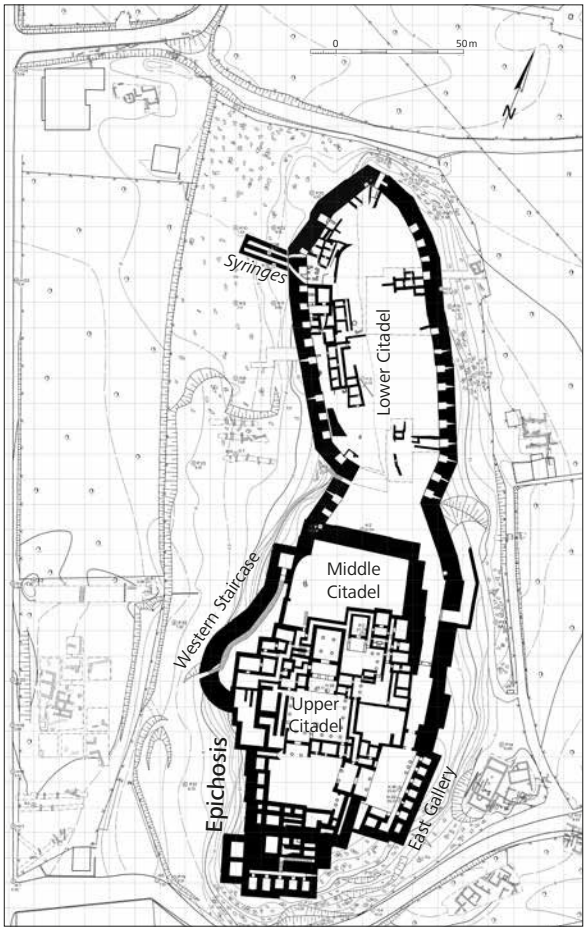

Fig. 4. Plan of citadel of Tiryns and part of the surrounding settlement (scale 1 : 3000)

The first extremity (DB-no. 2680) is a ca. 10 cm long tubular wheel-made fragment *(fig. 5 b)*. It is best interpreted as a vertical part of a large figure (i.e. an extremity) and features a torus-shaped thickening approximately halfway along its length, which may mark an elbow or alternatively a bangle worn around the upper arm[69]. One thick band of cursorily applied red paint, which ends in a tongue-shaped splash, accentuates this thickening. Remnants of another painted stripe are visible along the upper edge / break on the back of the fragment[70]; very slight traces of a third painted stripe may be extant at the bottom edge / break. The diameter of this fragment is on average larger than that of the second extremity, but both display approximately the same wall thickness. DB-no. 2680 shows rotation marks from wheel-throwing inside the tube, yet these marks run slightly diagonal

[65] Vetters 2009, DB-no. 2679.

[66] Vetters 2009, DB-nos. 2680. 2681.

[67] Along the length of the phallus no marks of a detached second hand are evident indicating that the second, missing hand did not imitate the pose of the first but was modelled to represent a different gesture.

[68] Since the whole circumference of the wrist is extant, it appears that the hand did actively grasp the penis and was not just modelled onto the now missing torso in the pubic area, i.e. the gesture is not one of presentation but one of actual activity.

[69] Cf. below n. 79.

[70] Close examination of the fragment also revealed faint traces of four thin, wavy lines on the front side at the joint of the shoulder- to the chest-area, which may either constitute the remains of dripping paint or perhaps thin strands of hair once rendered with red paint.

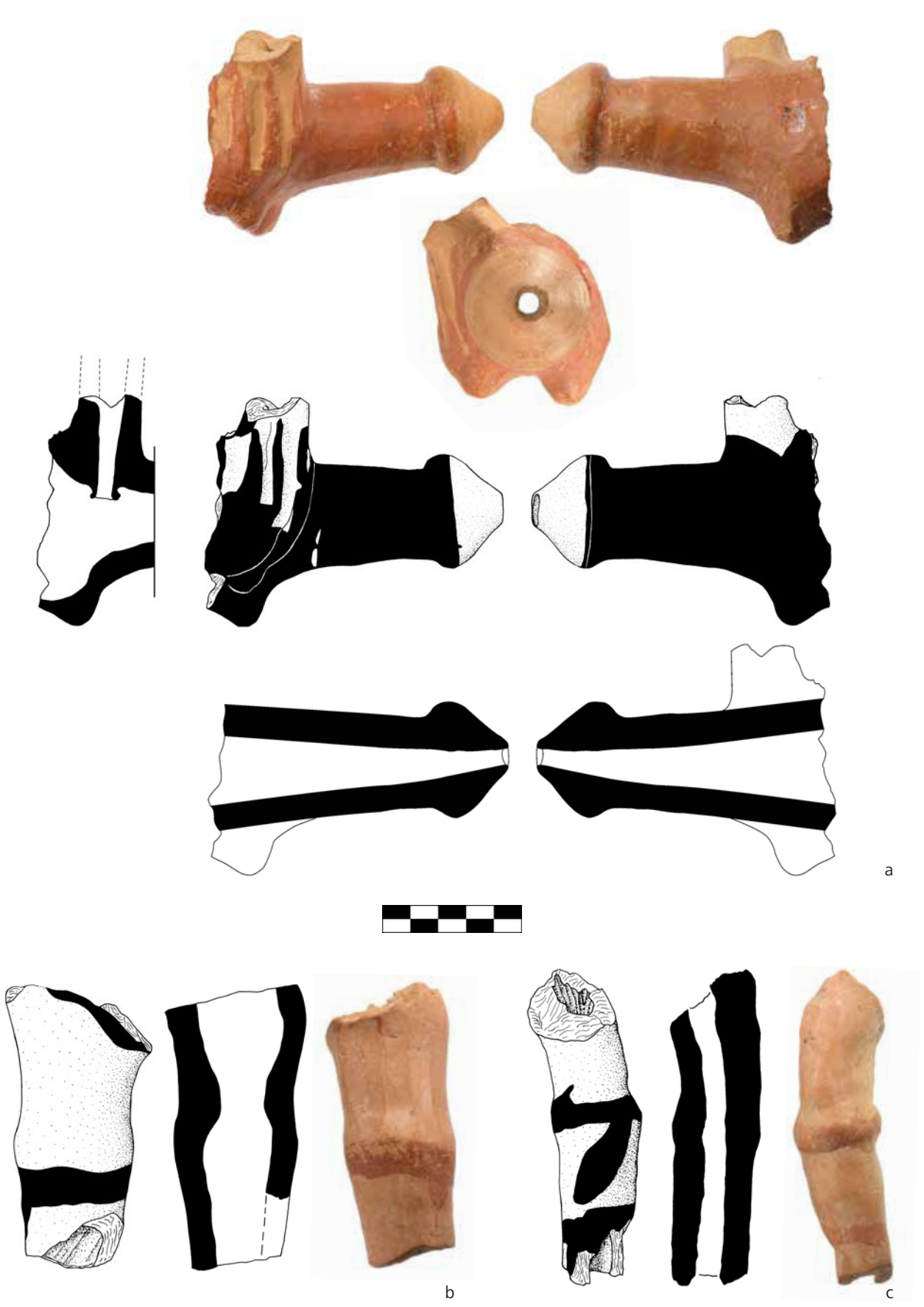

Fig. 5. Terracotta fragments of male figure from the Epichosis (scale 1 : 2):
a. DB-no. 2679. – b. DB-no. 2680. – c. DB-no. 2681

to the break along the upper edge, which points to the production of separate tubes on the wheel only later to be joined or attached to each other by hand and with the help of a modelling tool. The upper edge of DB-no. 2680 exhibits considerable variation in wall-thickness: the section is much thinner towards the back of the original figure and the profile starts to curve inwards at the point where the neck once presumably started. The interior also displays a partial finger indentation at this point and a slight bulge of the clay immediately below, where shoulder and neck were originally joined. The wall thickness in front and in the break on the opposite end is almost twice as thick and the profile at the bottom break is slightly curving outwards (towards the start of a hand). Clearly visible striation marks from a modelling tool run along the whole length of the fragment. The self-slip in a patch on the upper and presumably rear part in the area of the armpit is not completely oxidized but exhibits a whitish sheen, since this area was apparently in close contact with the surface of other parts, i.e. the torso, of the figure.

The third fragment (DB-no. 2681) is the longest (11.2 cm) and part of a second extremity modelled once more from a wheel-made tube with a slightly larger diameter at one end / break than at the other, yet the piece is not straight but slightly warped *(fig. 5 c)*. It also features a torus-shaped thickening halfway along its preserved length but displays an overall smaller diameter than the previous fragment. A thick but cursorily painted stripe runs along the central thickening and a splash of paint continues from this band towards the break at the end with the smaller diameter, where remnants of a second painted stripe are visible along the edges of the break. It seems most probable that this fragment was once also in a vertical position but did not form an extension of the first vertical fragment, since the extant diameters of these two pieces are incongruent. The piece arguably constitutes part of a right arm, since the diameter and wall-thickness along its lower edge are approximately the same as in the upper break of DB-no. 2679, i.e. the hand attached to the phallus. The right arm fragment DB-no. 2681 also shows diagonal rotation marks in its interior and clear vertical marks of a modelling tool on its exterior. These modelling marks are only missing at the point where the extant fragment was apparently in close contact with another part of the original figure – here again the self-slip is incompletely oxidized and retains a whitish sheen. The clay of all three fragments is levigated and almost no inclusions are visible to the naked eye. All fragments feature the same red and tan hues[71] – notably, the essentially tan surface colour contrasts with the more often white-slipped or light colour of large wheel-made female figures[72], but conforms to the already mentioned red or brown skin-colour of men in LBA Aegean wall painting.

Although the fragments do not join, they exhibit the same clay fabric, manufacturing techniques and strong similarities in surface finish and colouring, thus supporting the hypothesis that all three fragments were originally part of one and the same large, wheel-made terracotta figure. The reconstructed size of this intriguing male figure is considerable – the length of the phallus measures 11 cm alone, its height including the start of the hand more than 8 cm, the other two fragments are between 10 and 11 cm long[73], whereby one probably represents part of the upper (left) arm, the other of the (right) lower arm[74].

[71] Munsell colours clay fabric: 5YR 5/6 (yellowish red) – 5YR 6/6 (reddish yellow); self-slip: 5YR 6/6 (reddish yellow) – 10YR 8/6 (yellow); paint: 10R 4/6 (red) – 10R 4/8 (red); the clay matrix appears to be completely oxidized.

[72] Compare the type-A figures in Palaiologou 2015, 114 f. figs. 9–11.

[73] Phallus fragment (Vetters 2009, DB-no. 2679): height: 8.2 cm, width: 6.4 cm, length: 10.8, diameter max–min: 4.0–0.6 cm, weight: 177.8 g; fragment of upper arm (Vetters 2009, DB-no. 2680): height: 10.1 cm, width: 5.2 cm, diameter: 4.0 cm, weight: 132.3 g, fragment of lower arm (Vetters 2009, DB-no. 2681): height: 11.2 cm, diameter max–min: 3.2–0.8 cm, weight: 95.9 g.

[74] One may counter that the shape and especially the thickness of the hypothetical arm fragments differs to a great extent, but we argue that arms of different

RECONSTRUCTION OF THE ORIGINAL FIGURE

Initially, these three fragments were published as part of a centaur figure by Walter Voigtländer[75]. However, the identification of the long tubular fragments as parts of legs cannot be sustained after detailed inspection of the extant remains[76]. The shaping of the two extremities *per se* defies Voigtländer's interpretation as the fragmentary legs of a centaur: First, the profile at the upper break of DB-no. 2680 attests to the original position of this fragment next to but not underneath the original torso of the figure. Second, the only partially oxidized patch of self-slip at the back of the other fragment, DB-no. 2681, again speaks for close contact along the length of the piece with other surfaces of the original figure, which seems unlikely in the case of a leg. More importantly, this second fragment (DB-no. 2681)[77] exhibits a curvature that – as a leg fragment – would not provide a sufficiently stable base for the whole figure. Additionally, the swelling in the centre of both fragments, which is highlighted by a stripe of red paint, also points to an interpretation of these fragments as parts of arms instead of legs in regard to iconographic conventions[78].

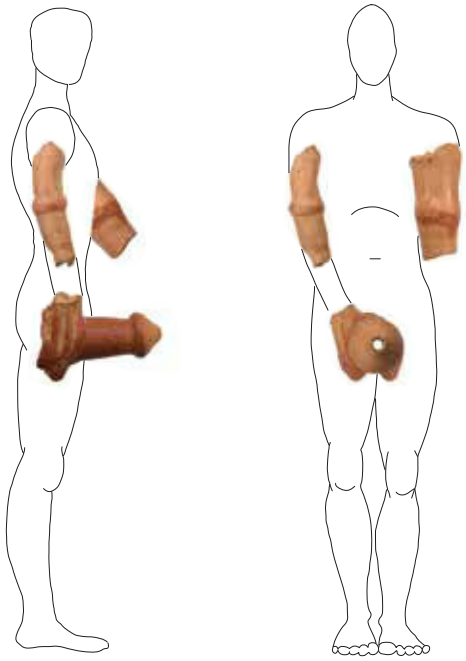

Fig. 6. Schematic reconstruction of male figure from the Epichosis

shape and thickness may be due to a different gesture of each arm, and not the antithetical or mirrored position, as seen in most type-A figures; for different positions and even varying lengths and diameters of arms on the same figure, see type-B figures in Mycenae, Papadimitriou 2015, 170 f. 184 f.; contrastingly, the arms in our proposed reconstruction of the Tiryns figure are evidently not both raised in front of the chest or even higher, but one arm bents downwards to hold the phallus and the other is probably outstretched. The concise angle cannot be determined, but for arms in front of the body with different positions of each arm, see type-B figures in Mycenae, e.g. Papadimitriou 2015, 170–185; and arguably the hand of a large terracotta figure from Amyklai holding a kylix, Demakopoulou 1982, pl. 26.

75 Voigtländer 2003, 229 f.

76 Voigtländer 2003, 229 reconstructs a total height of 40 cm for the figure. However, the phallus fragment alone is almost 11 cm long and weighs 177.8 g – a weight (plus the additional torso of the implied equid), which has to be counterbalanced by the purported leg fragments that have a diameter of max. 4 cm and which Voigtländer estimated to originally have been ca. 10–15 cm long. Even if the torso and the two additional extremities of the hypothetical centaur / equid may be able to distribute some of the figure's weight, the curved fragment especially still seems too frail and insecure to serve as a support.

77 Voigtländer 2003, 130 T 41 c pl. 94. A parallel for the curved or warped shape of the arm fragment DB-no. 2681, for instance, is an arm fragment of a wheel-made female terracotta fragment from Argos, Palaiologou 2015, 119 fig. 13.

78 Terracotta legs of bovid wheel-made figures and hybrid creatures mostly do not exhibit a torus-shaped thickening of knees or fetlocks and are generally painted with vertical patterns or made completely monochrome. For exceptions, see LH III C bovids from Amyklai: Guggisberg 1996, pls. 10, 1. 2; 11, 2; Demakopoulou 1982, pls. 29, 70 α; 31, 74 α; 34, 80 α; LH III C bovid from Athens: Guggisberg 1996, pl. 15, 1; LH III C bovid from Phylakopi: Guggisberg 1996, pl. 28, 3. 2; LH III C donkey / mule from Ialyssos: Guggisberg 1996, pl. 34, 2; yet all examples show vertical stripes or décor along the extremities. The sole exception is the LH III C bovid from Phaistos with a torus-shaped thickening and a horizontally painted band around it, Guggisberg 1996, pl. 44, 4. 5. If knees and / or fetlocks are modelled on hybrid creatures such as the bicephalous centaurs from Enkomi (cf. e.g. Courtois 1971, 293 fig. 123; 298 fig. 126), the examples from Ayia Triadha (D'Agata 1999, pls. 41. 50) or the Protogeometric centaur from Lefkandi, they are naturally shaped as a bulge in front but not as a torus around the whole diameter of the leg, cf. Courtois 1971, 299 fig. 127. Furthermore, if extremities are decorated with horizontal bands, these are generally regularly spaced, e.g. Courtois 1971, 291 fig. 121; Demakopoulou 1982, pl. 30, 71.

The painted stripes or bands are best interpreted as the depiction of bangles worn around the upper arm. Such bangles are common adornments of human males often found in Minoan-Mycenaean iconography[79]. Overall, a reconstruction of the fragments as parts of the same standing[80] rather than seated male figure[81] seems to be most plausible at the moment *(fig. 6)*[82]. The fact that no parts of the torso, head or lower body are preserved does remain a problem.

DATING THE FRAGMENTS

Voigtländer dated the fragments to the post-palatial period (LH III C; 12th century B.C.E.) for stylistic reasons[83]. A closer examination of technical aspects in the figure's manufacture reveals the clearly visible striations from a modelling tool as a technique, which is not very often attested on Mycenaean anthropomorphic figures[84] and figurines – such traces were usually obliterated by smoothing or even polishing the surface before firing. Taken together with the thick and evenly applied red paint on the phallus such features slightly resemble

[79] For arm bangles and bracelets cf. Effinger 1996, 61 f. 78 f. with further bibliography; for bracelets as symbols of male status, see Kilian-Dirlmeier 1985, 207; for metal bangles from tomb α and their position in relation to the skeleton in tomb β, Grave Circle B of Mycenae, see Mylonas 1973, 36 fig. 4 pl. 21 α; one of the clearest iconographic examples of males wearing bracelets or bangles is the LM I Chieftain Cup from Ayia Triadha, cf. e.g. Koehl 1986, pl. VII a, but they are already attested on Minoan proto-palatial terracotta figurines from the Atsipadhes peak sanctuary on Crete, cf. Morris – Peatfield 2004, 50 figs. 7. 8 and above n. 38.

[80] See also Schofield 2007, 157 f., without, however, further reasoning for this identification. No parts of the torso, head or lower body are known, but if the original is reconstructed as a standing male figure, its maximum height may well have reached 60 cm and more. That the figure was probably standing is implied by the angle of the partially preserved wrist, whose orientation seems to be straight rather than at an inclined angle, which would be the expected anatomically correct orientation for a seated figure. We thank Douglas Faulman for this observation.

[81] For a much later seated ithyphallic male terracotta figure from Sardis, cf. Greenewaldt 1971. Examples of LBA wheel-made, seated terracotta figures are so far only known from Crete, cf. Eliopoulos 1998, esp. 308 f. figs. 13–17; Borgna 2012, pl. 74, but these examples are all female. For the scarcity of male figures on thrones in Minoan-Mycenaean iconography, see Vetters 2011a, 319 f. For Late Geometric bronze statuettes of males, in the pose of ›smiting gods‹ from Philia, Thessaly, see Theocharis 1966, pl. 291 α. β, one of which is apparently ithyphallic, Theocharis 1966, pl. 291 β; see also Langdon 1984, 207 no. C97; 311 no. 97; Christiansen 1992, 56 inv.-no. 3607, termed »sperm-offering (?) man«.

[82] It is also unlikely that these arm fragments constituted parts of an anthropomorphic vase in a common closed shape, because in the known Minoan-Mycenaean examples the arms have a much smaller diameter and lie immediately on top of the vase and there are no traces of detachment visible on the curved fragment, whereas the other fragment would be too straight to have been convincingly attached to the upper part of a rounded vessel. Prominent examples of Mycenaean anthropomorphic vases come from Mycenae (Moore – Taylour 1999, 46 pl. 11 a; Palaiologou 2015, 116 fig. 12), from Thebes (Andrikou 2009, 38 f. figs. 2. 3), or from Phylakopi (French 1985, 215. 222 SF 2691 pl. 32 c. d [head] and 222 SF 2679 pl. 33 e. f [arm fragment]). For a unique post-palatial head-vase from Tiryns, see Maran – Papadimitriou 2015, 54 f. On Crete, anthropomorphic vases are known since the pre-palatial period, cf. the so-called EM II ›Goddess from Myrtos‹, e.g. Gesell 1985, 7. 179 fig. 36. For an overview of LM anthropomorphic vases, cf. Rethemiotakis 1998, 77–79 pls. 17 no. 14; 29 nos. 7. 68; 32 nos. 8. 10; 34 no. 137; 35 nos. 135. 152. Furthermore, no examples of anthropomorphic vases with a clear rendition of the genital area are known from the LBA Greek mainland – in contrast to Crete, where such vessels do occasionally occur, see above n. 27 (the vessel of a parturient woman from Gournia) and Rethemiotakis 1998, 20 no. 10 pl. 32 γ. δ. Such vases are also rarely attested in the Greek Early Iron Age, cf. Buschor 1951 for a Subgeometric–Early Archaic libation jug of an ithyphallic figure from Samos.

[83] Voigtländer 2003, 130; for the dating of his stylistic group Epichosis III to LH III C, to which he assigns the terracotta fragments, see Voigtländer 2003, 31 f. French 1985, 223 does not venture to date the phallus; she only mentions that it is unstratified.

[84] Similar striations are visible on a monochrome stem fragment of a wheel-made figure from the *Syringes*, Tiryns, Vetters 2009, DB-no. 2564; Kardamaki 2015a, 48 n. 10. The fragment features the same fabric, surface colour and surface treatment as the phallus fragment from the Epichosis. Due to the poor state of preservation with regard to the original figure, it cannot be determined whether only the stem or part of it were rendered monochrome red or whether the figure was indeed a type-B figure.

Hittite coroplastic art[85] or Cypriot[86] and Western Anatolian archetypes[87]. However, according to the macroscopic inspection of the clay fabric, to see the figure as an import seems very implausible, because the fabric conforms to a well-attested and wide-spread local or regional fabric of the palatial and post-palatial period in the Argolid[88]. Thus, technical features and fabric do not point to a more specific date than LH III B / C.

As there are no intrinsic characteristics of the figure that allow for a precise stylistic dating, the find context of the fragments may provide a terminus ante quem for the figure's manufacture and use-life. The figure's fragments were found in the so-called Epichosis of Tiryns[89]. The Epichosis is a dump of material from the Upper Citadel, southwest of the palace and outside the western fortification wall of the citadel on the slope beneath the palace's external court and the adjacent South Citadel *(fig. 4)*; it is thus located just south of the Small Propylon, which demarcates the southern border of the palace proper. Although four differently coloured strata (burnt / unburnt) could be distinguished during the excavation[90], the whole dump appears to have been deposited during a short period of time, because joins between potsherds were made between the different strata[91]. The dating of the Epichosis deposit is mainly based on pottery[92] and terracotta

[85] E.g. Hittite zoomorphic relief vases that mainly stem from the Later Empire period (ca. 14th–13th centuries B.C.E.), cf. Boehmer 1983, pl. 43. For comparable traces of smoothing the surface of so-called libation arms of Red Lustrous Wheel-made Ware with modelling tools that leave traces that look like burnishing, cf. Fischer 1963, pl. 124 nos. 1089. 1098. 1103. 1106. 1109. 1113. 1122–1124. 1128. 1140. Similar smoothing marks are also visible on the leg fragments of Hittite animal vases, cf. Fischer 1963, pl. 136 nos. 1274. 1275. 1287. 1292. 1294. 1301.

[86] Cf. a male ithyphallic figurine with its left hand at the genitals, four black stripes around the left arm and a latticed belt around the waist from Grave 44 in Kourion, Karageorghis 1993, 15 cat.-no. D4 fig. 2; Karageorghis 1996, 1053. 1059 fig. 4. The terracotta originates from badly documented early excavations of the British Museum and was thus only identified as Base Ring Ware and very generally dated to LC II–III for stylistic reasons. Karageorghis, however, dates it to the transition from LC II B to LC III A, i.e. the early 12th century B.C.E.

[87] Compare approximately the MBA zoomorphic vases from Beycesultan (Level V or IV, see Lloyd – Mellaart 1965, 48 nos. 623. 624 pl. 32) and the pottery of the Red Lustrous Wheel-made Ware of LC I–III A1 on Cyprus (Eriksson 1993). The surface treatment of the Tirynthian phallus fragment resembles most closely smoothing marks evidenced on libation arms; for libation arms, see Eriksson 1993, 15. 27 f. fig. 7. Such vessels are restricted to LC II even on Cyprus, i.e. they are not attested after ca. 1200 B.C.E. (Eriksson 1993, 140 fig. 40 [see type VIII]), whereas some Red Lustrous Wheel-made Ware is still found on Cyprus in the 12th century B.C.E. and would thus be contemporaneous with LH III C on the Greek mainland.

[88] The homogeneous and rather compact clay matrix is oxidized, inclusions are fine and rather sparse and consist mainly of a few small and slightly angular grey particles; no mica is visible on the surface.

[89] For the Epichosis in general and associated pottery, see Verdelis 1959; Ålin 1962, 26–28; Schachermeyr 1962, 222. 251; Verdelis et al. 1965; French 1971, 115. 125. 127. 132. 134 f. 144. 157 f. 160. 183 pl. 18 b; Wardle 1973, 304 n. 26; 321 fig. 13 b; Voigtländer 1973, 245–255; Slenczka 1974, 39–52; Voigtländer 1975, esp. 148–150; French 1985, 223–244; Güntner 2000, 15. 18. 174. 180 f. 200. 202. 205. 225. 229. 231. 258 f. 262. 264. 267. 270. 294; Voigtländer 2003; Gauß 2006; Jung 2006; Koehl 2006, 51. 159 no. 608 fig. 26, 608; 339 pl. 39, 608; Kardamaki 2009, 307–321; Vetters 2009, 249–281; Kardamaki 2015b, 81. 93 f. The Epichosis is also sometimes called the West Wall Deposit in the Anglophone bibliography, for the latter, see French 1971, 115. 183; Wardle 1973, 297.

[90] Burnt stratum 1 (Kε-1), yellow stratum 1 (Kι-1), burnt stratum 2 (Kε-2), and yellow stratum 2 (Kι-2); yet further finds are designated as unstratified (AΣ), cf. Verdelis 1959, 5; Verdelis et al. 1965, 137 n. 1.

[91] Four figurine fragments can now also be added to the pottery joins: one join could be made between Kε-1 and Kι-1, two between Kε-2 and Kι-2 and a final join between Kι-1 and Kε-2, cf. Vetters 2009, 258. 307 table 10.

[92] Additionally, the pottery assemblage of the Epichosis features a large amount of miniature vessels (at least 126), cf. Damm 1997, 257–270. 273 f. 276–298. 300–302. 304 f. 307 f. 312–315. 317. 319. 322 nos. M 6. M 8. M 13. M 17. M 21. M 22. M 26. M 28. M 32. M 36. M 43. M 50. M 55. M 58. M 59. M 65. M 68. M 69. M 72. M 76. M 81. M 83. M 87. M 91–M 93. M 95. M 96. M 100. M 103. M 106. M 113. M 118. M 120. M 124. M 127. M 140. M 163. M 171. M 175. M 193–M 195. M 200. M 204. M 206. M 209. M 213. M 226. M 231. M 242. M 243. M 246. M 249. M 251. M 256. M 258–M 260. M 268. M 268. M 274. M 276. M 277. M 279–M 281. M 289. M 290. M 303. M 307. M 308. M 310. M 314. M 316. M 322. M 326. M 334. M 340. M 344. M 349. M 351. M 352. M 356–M 359. M 363–M 365. M 372. M 380. M 383. M 388–M 390. M 396. M 401. M 413. M 420. M 425. M 426. M 438. M 443. M 445–M 448. M 449. M 450. M 458. M 459. M 465. M 479–M 481. M 485. M 488. M 492. M 493. M 497. M 516. M 517. M 570. M 574. M 591. M 596. M 614. M 615. M 639. M 640. M 642. M 643. M 671 pls. 1–35. 39. 41. 43. 45. 47.

figurines[93], because additional small finds are few and chronologically difficult to date very precisely[94]. The latest assessment of the pottery by Eleutheria Kardamaki[95] provides convincing arguments to date the bulk of it to LH III B Developed / Final[96]. Stylistic comparison of the assemblage of small handmade terracotta figurines from the Epichosis with well-stratified areas in the Lower Citadel (LH III B Developed / Final) and Lower Town Northwest (LH III C Early) also suggests that the majority of the Epichosis' figurines conform to types of the late palatial period, i.e. before 1200 B.C.E.[97]. To summarize the matter: it seems more convincing to date the figure to the end of the palatial than to the post-palatial period.

The final palatial date of the majority of the Epichosis finds also argues against an interpretation of the terracotta fragments as part of a wheel-made hybrid creature, i.e. a centaur[98]: An interpretation of the Epichosis fragments as belonging to a centaur is challenging, as no evidence for centaurs can be found in the iconography of the Mycenaean palatial and early post-palatial periods[99]. The development of hybrid creatures in wheel-made terracottas[100] is a phenomenon that appears to start in LH / LM III C Advanced[101] (last quarter of the

[93] A total of 114 terracotta figurines have been reassembled from 118 fragments. Voigtländer 2003, 122–130. 223–231 pls. 90–94 published 97 figurines reassembled from 102 fragments. 19 additional fragments were identified later, see Vetters 2009, 263. 304–306 table 9. 86 fragments were found in strata Kε-1 (5), Kι-1 (24), Kε-2 (24), and Kι-2 (33); 35 fragments are unstratified (AΣ). Anthropomorphic figurines amount to 67 individuals. A further 33 zoomorphic terracottas, seven skeuomorphic and seven composite figurines make up the total of the terracotta assemblage. The overall terracotta assemblage is rather well preserved: three figurines are almost complete, nine preserve three-quarters of the original, 14 two-thirds of the original figurines, i.e. almost a quarter of all terracottas attest to a better state of preservation than usual in settlement debris. Anthropomorphic figurines feature predominately types prevalent in the late palatial period: 14 Tau-figurines, 11 Psi-figurines with hollow stem and 18 fragments of hollow stems (deriving from either Tau- or Psi-figurines with hollow stems).

[94] These amount to only 19 finds, see Rahmstorf 2008 (electronic catalogue), 1 f. – terracotta whorls: Rahmstorf 2008, 1 cat.-nos. 2178. 2180; 2 cat.-no. 2179; serpentinite *conuli*: Rahmstorf 2008, 1 cat.-nos. 2183. 2184; 2 cat.-nos. 2181. 2182. 2185; glass and stone beads: Rahmstorf 2008, 1 cat.-no. 2176; 2 cat.-no. 2177; stone weight: Rahmstorf 2008, 1 cat.-no. 1216; stone spool: Rahmstorf 2008, 2 cat.-no. 2186; stone ball: Rahmstorf 2008, 2 cat.-no. 2187; stone axe: Rahmstorf 2008, 2 cat.-no. 2188; bone points: Rahmstorf 2008, 1 cat.-no. 1448; 2 cat.-no. 1449; fragment of a boar's tusk: Rahmstorf 2008, 1 cat.-no. 2189; small rectangular bronze rod and bronze wire: Rahmstorf 2008, 1 cat.-nos. 480. 489. Jung 2016, 554 table 1, has recently argued that there is evidence for plundering of the Upper Citadel at the end of the palatial period, a view to which we would subscribe in view of the scarcity of precious small finds in the Epichosis deposit.

[95] Kardamaki 2009, 307–321, esp. 314. 320; Kardamaki 2015b, 81. 93 f.; see also Podzuweit 2007, 222; Vetters 2009, 261–269.

[96] Kardamaki 2015b, 94 (here termed LH III B2 Late).

[97] Vetters 2009, 261–269. For details on figurine types and distribution in the Lower Citadel, esp. in the area of Building Complex A, Building VI and the so-called ›Zwinger‹, see Vetters 2015a, 343–347. 353–357 figs. 4–8; for a detailed discussion of early post-palatial figurine distributions in the Lower Town Northwest, cf. Vetters 2015b, 78–81 pls. 5, 3. 4.

[98] Later Greek centaurs may feature human genitalia. However, the best known example, the Protogeometric centaur from Lefkandi (cf. Desborough et al. 1970, 24), only shows a hole in the genital area, which does not provide evidence for separately attached genitals, but probably constitutes a firing hole. Lembessi 1996, 148 f. suggests interpreting the male figure SF 1553 from Phylakopi as a centaur; for the male figures from Phylakopi, cf. French 1985, 223–230 pls. 35–37. Definitely human genitalia feature on a much later, Late Daedalic bronze statuette of a centaur found in the Cretan sanctuary of Syme-Viannou between Myrtos and Psychro, cf. Lembessi 2002, 251–255 pl. 30.

[99] The earliest example so far is a recently excavated terracotta fragment that constitutes the head of a wheel-made centaur from Lefkandi, see Lemos, no date with a preliminary image; for its context see Lemos 2008. Another depiction of a centaur with a tree branch is found on a Submycenaean–Protogeometric straight-sided *pyxis* from the Kerameikos, Athens, see Bohen 1988, 15 fig. 3.

[100] Wheel-made examples of hybrid creatures are known from the Piazzale dei sacelli in Ayia Triadha, cf. D'Agata 1997, 92–98, esp. 98, and from the Sanctuary of the Ingot God in Enkomi, cf. Courtois 1971, 280–310. On terracotta hybrid creatures in general, see Misch 1992, 205–207.

[101] D'Agata 1999, 67–72. If Angeliki Lembessi's (1996, 148 f.) interpretation of the male figure SF 1553 from the West Shrine in Phylakopi holds true, then this would represent the earliest example of a centaur figure in the Mycenaean world. For the dating of the destruction of phase 2b of the West Shrine to LH III C Advanced, cf. Mountjoy 1999, 39 table 2;

12th century B.C.E.) and is first confined to Crete and Cyprus[102], which at that time feature closer cultural ties with each other than with the Greek mainland.

AMALGAMATIONS OF MINOAN-MYCENAEAN WITH NEAR EASTERN ICONOGRAPHIES

When searching for parallels for the motif or antecedents of the Epichosis figure, very few comparable terracotta figurines or bronze statuettes can be found in LBA Greece or the Eastern Mediterranean[103]. The parallels most often cited for the Tiryns phallus are the terracotta figures from the West Shrine of Phylakopi on Melos. Polymnia Muhly was the first to highlight Near Eastern influences in these post-palatial figures in an unpublished paper given at a conference in Athens in 1987[104]. She pointed to features such as the accentuated genitalia[105] and the outstretched arms that end in hands which are flattened and curled in to represent fists, as well as the rather flat bodies of three figures[106], which is uncommon for contemporary Mycenaean figures and which therefore need some sort of a backing support[107]. The modelling and the unusual shaping of the arms recall bronze rather than terracotta figurines as prototypes, since the flattening of the arms and the curling in of their ends to form the fists is a technique especially witnessed in bronze statuettes, which are sometimes also depicted as naked, with a conical cap and even with a dagger at the belt[108]. Such features are especially found in Levantine bronze statuettes of the smiting god-type[109]. Reinforcing these stylistic parallels between the locally made male terracotta figures of Phylakopi and Levantine bronze statuettes, the sanctuary even features such imported Near East bronzes[110]: two smiting gods[111] and a small face mask made of sheet gold[112], which in all probability was to be attached to the face of such a Levantine statuette[113]; also a small bronze bird[114], found

48 f. 863, in contrast to Renfrew 1985c, 84. 86 table 3, 3; 87, who dated the destruction to the end of LH III C Developed. In contrast to the Tirynthian fragments none of these centaurs can be used as a rhyton, which may be adduced as another argument against Voigtländer's interpretation.

102 D'Agata 1999, 74 f.; Lembessi 2002, 253 f. For the development of hybrid creatures on Crete around the end of the 12th century B.C.E., see Guggisberg 1996, 266–271, esp. 268–270.

103 Far removed in space and time are two small male terracotta figurines that were found in MBA strata (Level IV) of Beycesultan in western-central Anatolia, cf. Mellaart – Murray 1995, 119 nos. 166. 167; 164 fig. O 14. Both are probably depicted as ithyphallic and feature applied and incised breasts, one clearly has its hand at the phallus (no. 167), whereas the arms and phallus of the second figurine are broken off (no. 166). Also originating from central Anatolia is an Old Hittite (ca. 1750–1500 B.C.E.) hut or temple model with a seated naked male figure (deity or cult statue), cf. Özgüç 2002, 254 fig. 8.

104 Melissa Vetters would like to thank Polymnia Muhly for providing her with a copy of the unpublished manuscript; see also Kardamaki 2015a, 65. 78 with n. 211.

105 Except figure SF 1520, cf. French 1985, 227. 228 fig. 6, 13 pl. 36 d.

106 SF 1553: French 1985, 226 fig. 6, 12; 229 pl. 36 b; 37 a. b. d; SF 1550: French 1985, 227. 229 fig. 6, 14 pl. 35; SF 1520: French 1985, 227 f. fig. 6, 13 pl. 36 d.

107 Metaxa-Muhly, no date, 1.

108 Metaxa-Muhly, no date, 2.

109 The backing support of the Phylakopi figures is also comparable to technical features of the bronze statuettes, which often show two small dowels underneath the feet which were inserted into a base of different material to stabilize the objects.

110 Metaxa-Muhly, no date, 3.

111 Renfrew – Cherry 1985, 303–310. SF 518: Renfrew – Cherry 1985, 304 fig. 8, 3 pls. 67. 68, found east of the East Shrine in levels that are contemporaneous with phase 2b; SF 1802: Renfrew – Cherry 1985, 305 fig. 8, 4 pls. 69. 70. The second example is unstratified; it was excavated in the debris that accumulated after the demise of the sanctuary.

112 SF 192: Renfrew – Cherry 1985, 302 f. fig. 8, 2 pl. 59; see also Maran 2011.

113 Compare a statuette with a separately modelled mask of precious metal from Byblos, Seeden 1980, no. 1506 pl. 85.

114 SF 1578: Renfrew – Cherry 1985, 310 f. fig. 8, 5 pl. 59. The four artefacts, i.e. the two smiting god statuettes, the sheet gold mask and the bird, are the only metal objects in the whole sanctuary of non-utilitarian character.

together with the earlier of the male figures and representing perhaps the finial of a bronze standard or stand as known from Cyprus and the Levant[115].

Characteristic of Levantine bronze statuettes is the standing or striding pose with both arms outstretched in front or above the body[116]. The majority of such bronze statuettes come from Byblos (mainly from sanctuary hoards of the first half of the 2nd millennium B.C.E.[117] and less frequently in the latter half of the 2nd millennium) or Ugarit (here more common in the second half of the 2nd millennium B.C.E.)[118]. In contrast to the ubiquity of male bronze statuettes female examples are almost completely missing in the corpus[119]. According to the typological development outlined by Helga Seeden, male statuettes with kilts successively replace ithyphallic types from the EBA to the LBA. However, a revival of naked bronze statuettes is noted shortly before the socio-political and economic systems-collapse of east Mediterranean centres such as Ugarit around 1200 B.C.E.[120]. With regard to the LBA Greek mainland and Tiryns, reference should be made to a bronze Levantine smiting god statuette *(fig. 7)* found by Heinrich Schliemann on the Upper Citadel[121]. The Tirynthian example wears a helmet and an incised kilt[122] and apparently brandishes a rod / weapon in the hand of its outstretched right arm[123]. Contextual evidence for a pre-

Fig. 7. Near Eastern bronze statuette of smiting god from the Upper Citadel of Tiryns, National Archaeological Museum, Athens inv. no. 1582

115 See the so-called dove standard from Enkomi, Catling 1964, 261 f. pl. 48 e. Such bronze birds are also known as appliqués on the rims of bronze vessels, e.g. on a bronze mug in the Tiryns treasure, cf. Maran 2006, 132 n. 16; 133 fig. 8, 1.

116 Seeden 1980, 3.

117 Seeden 1980, 95.

118 Seeden 1980, 3 n. 13. Byblos features more than 1700 such statuettes; 40 examples derive from Ras Shamra / Ugarit.

119 Seeden 1980, 4.

120 Cf. Seeden 1980, 154: »The urbanization of god and goddess brings an end to mass production of votive figurines in metal. Before the destruction of the most developed urban centres there appears a new style in figurative metalwork strangely reminiscent of the more grotesque figures of the beginning of this cult practice, possessing schematized face and body and often exaggerated nudity. […] The nude phallic figure reappears. […] This transition appears at the time of the disruption of the palace systems of some of the most developed urban centres.«

121 It was excavated at a depth of 3 m below the surface, cf. Schliemann 1878, 16 no. 12; Schliemann 1886, 187 no. 97; Negby 1976, 37 no. 1407; 41 table 6; 168 pl. 29; Seeden 1980, 127 f. no. 1816; Kilian 1981, 53 n. 34; Demakopoulou 1990, 370 fig. no. 356. The statuette is exhibited in the National Archaeological Museum, Athens, inv.-no. 1582.

122 Described as naked by Schliemann 1886, 187, because he had not yet recognized the incised kilt (probably due to the corrosion layer).

123 Notably, some of the smiting god statuettes wear separately modelled bracelets around their arms, but neither the example from Tiryns nor the one from Mycenae seem to feature bracelets. For brace-

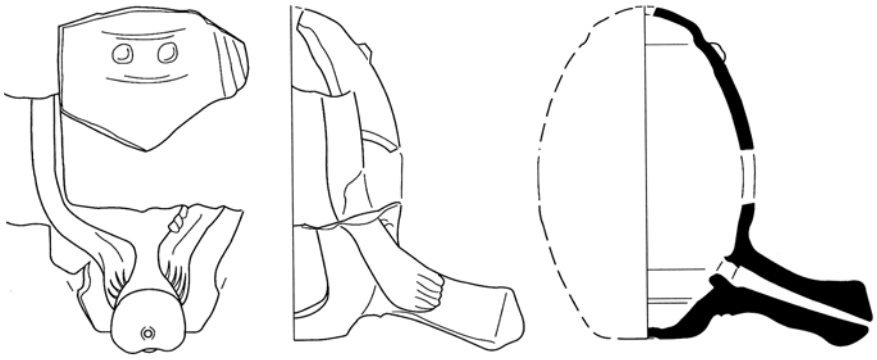

Fig. 8. Anthropomorphic vessel from Tell Kazel

cise dating of the Tirynthian statuette is lacking[124], but it provides further evidence that three-dimensional male images were extant, if rare, on the Mycenaean mainland.

The most striking parallel to the terracotta fragments from Tiryns comes from further south along the Levantine coast – from Tell Kazel, Syria, which was once perhaps the capital of the kingdom of Amurru[125]: the finds in the courtyard of a temple in Area IV of the tell[126] featured inter alia several Mycenaean pictorial vases[127], which were produced in the Argolid according to neutron activation analyses[128], but also two local ›vessels‹[129]. According to the stratigraphic context both examples date shortly before the mid 13th century B.C.E.[130]. One is a jug with an ithyphallic spout[131], the other constitutes a fragmentary male figure *(fig. 8)* that was shaped as a vessel and shows part of the face, the arms and again an ithyphallic organ that functioned as a spout – with the hands of the figure clasping the penis[132].

lets or bangles on smiting god statuettes, cf. a figure from Minet el-Beida near Ugarit, dated variously between the 15th–13th centuries B.C.E. (Seeden 1980, 104 no. 1693 pl. 97, 1693) and a figure from Phylakopi (Renfrew – Cherry 1985, 304 SF 518 fig. 8, 3 pls. 67. 68). Male terracotta figures from Phylakopi do not show any modelling or painting of bracelets on their upper arms, cf. French 1985, 226 fig. 6, 12; 228 fig. 6, 13; 229 fig. 6, 14.

124 Apparently, all bronze statuettes of smiting god-type found outside Syria or Lebanon stylistically date to the last centuries of the 2nd millennium B.C.E. (due to their resemblance to statuettes of Seeden's group IX from Byblos and group X from Ras Shamra as well as examples from Megiddo and several other Levantine sites). Earliest examples originate from Enkomi, Tiryns, Mycenae, Phylakopi and Sicily (the last is a maritime find at the southern coast of the island between Capo Granitola and Capo San Marco), see Seeden 1980, 130. *Contra* Renfrew 1985e, 421, who dates the Tirynthian bronze statuette and the large wheel-made male terracotta figure to the post-palatial period, one should keep in mind that the dating of the Tiryns finds was probably made in analogy to the deposition context of the Phylakopi pieces, but see Renfrew – Cherry 1985, 306 no. 2; 308 f. with a general date between the 15th–13th centuries B.C.E. for the smiting god statuettes from Phylakopi. Two of these bronze statuettes come from the debris of the destruction at the end of phase 2b, which only provides a terminus ante quem for the objects: the figures may have been set up in the shrine for a much longer period than envisaged by Renfrew. Such long-time curation is evidenced by the many finds of terracotta figurines and figures of LH III B-date (and long vanished from the repertoire of types produced in LH III C) in this destruction layer, see Vetters 2016, 47 n. 87.

125 Badre – Gubel 1999/2000; Badre et al. 2005; Badre 2006, 67; Jung 2006.

126 Badre – Gubel 1999/2000, 125 fig. 1; 136–198; Badre 2006, 68 fig. 2; 69 fig. 3.

127 Badre 2006, 71–74; Jung 2006.

128 Badre et al. 2005, 25 table 3; 26 fig. 2, 3. 4.

129 Badre – Gubel 1999/2000, 149.

130 Based on the stylistic dating of Mycenaean pictorial pottery a date contemporary with LH III B1 and LH III B Middle (i.e. ca. 1300–1250 B.C.E.) has been suggested, see Badre – Gubel 1999/2000, 197; Badre 2006, 69 table 1; 74. A roughly contemporary date is based on the historical chronology of the Dynasty of Amurru (around 1300 B.C.E.), see Badre 2006, 77. 92.

131 TK 97.334: Badre – Gubel 1999/2000, 149. 158 fig. 18 a.

132 TK 96.224: Badre – Gubel 1999/2000, 149. 158 fig. 18 b. The reconstructed drawing of this item is, however, problematic, as the phallus, which constitutes the spout of the anthropomorphic vessel, does not end on the same level as the wheel-made vessel's base in the reconstruction of the fragments, but below it. The major difference between this and the Tiryns figure is that the Tell Kazel example lacks any legs and thus does not either offer any further evidence for the reconstruction of the Tirynthian male figure as either sitting or standing.

TIRYNS AND THE LEVANT IN THE LATE PALATIAL PERIOD

Recent research has demonstrated that Tiryns maintained intense relations with the Levant and Cyprus in the late palatial period[133]. A remarkable example is a faience animal head-shaped vessel found in the Lower Citadel – such vessels were employed as elite drinking cups in the Eastern Mediterranean, but the Tiryns example features a particular trait; the aperture in its snout corroborates its usage as a libation device[134]. Another example is a unique record of a fragmentary epigraphic document with cuneiform signs[135] of the Ugaritic short alphabet[136] that was brought to light in the vicinity of the faience vessel and derives from a workshop context[137]: this small ivory rod may have been employed in Ugaritic practices of rhabdomancy[138] and comparable finds are so far unknown on the LBA Greek mainland. The citadel of Tiryns has also yielded the most numerous examples of incised Cypro-Minoan signs on vessels outside of Cyprus[139]. Altogether, the material record from Tiryns attests to very close ties with Cypriot and Levantine material culture and may even suggest the presence of small groups of individuals from these regions in Tiryns[140].

Fragments of two Mycenaean fish rhyta *(fig. 9 a)*[141] found in the Tirynthian Epichosis are also uncommon finds on the Greek mainland[142]: they constitute another indication of shared material culture between Tiryns and the Northern Levant. Mycenaean fish rhyta are especially numerous in Ras Shamra / Ugarit[143]; they are most probably products of Argive workshops[144]. Combined with a conical rhyton *(fig. 9 b)* of pictorial style (depicting a robed, probably male figure)[145] also originating from the Epichosis, the fish rhyta provide tentative evidence for an emphasis on libation practices in the Epichosis material.

In contrast to the Aegean, the northern Levant displays evidence for a developed iconography of male figures, some of which advertise expressive genitals, and which are contem-

133 Maran 2004b; Cohen et al. 2010; Maran 2010; Stockhammer 2015, esp. 184.

134 Kostoula – Maran 2012 with further references. See Maran 2016, 585 for the suggestion that this rhyton may have been used as a mask in an enacted libation ritual.

135 Cohen et al. 2010.

136 Tropper – Vita 2010; Weippert 2011.

137 Brysbaert – Vetters 2010; Brysbaert – Vetters 2013, 195–199. 204; Brysbaert – Vetters 2015, 164. 167; Vetters et al. 2016, 100 f. 125.

138 Dietrich – Loretz 2010.

139 E.g. Döhl 1979; Olivier 1988; Hirschfeld 1996; Vetters 2012b; Davis et al. 2014.

140 E.g. Maran 2008, 90; Brysbaert – Vetters 2013, 204; Davis et al. 2014, 103 f.; but see Maran 2012, 121 for a more dialectical interpretation.

141 Verdelis 1959, 7 fig. 13 = Voigtländer 2003, 130 R1; see also Guggisberg 1996, 53 cat.-no. 152. Fragment R2, which is not assigned to a specific type of figure by Voigtländer 2003, 130 R 2 pl. 94, but which he catalogued together with the two fish rhyta, is probably part of a hollow wheel-made bull figure according to oral information by Elizabeth French, whom Melissa Vetters would like to thank for discussing this fragment with her.

142 Interestingly, the sanctuary of Phylakopi also features a fragment of a fish rhyton, see French 1985, pl. 48 e.

143 For a fish rhyton in Minet el-Beida near Ugarit associated with two hedgehog rhyta in a purported cult area, see Guggisberg 1996, 192 cat.-no. 654; Koehl 2006, 124 cat.-no. 339 pl. 27, 339; for a fish rhyton in Ras Shamra / Ugarit cf. Guggisberg 1996, 193 cat.-no. 657; for the distribution of Mycenaean fish rhyta in the Levant and finds in Ras Shamra / Ugarit and its harbour town Minet el-Beida, but also in Tell Abu Hawam, cf. Leonard 1994, map 24. For rhyta in western Asia Minor and in the Levant, see also Koehl 2006, 345–348. The sites of Ras Shamra, Minet el-Beida and Tell Abu Hawam, which display the largest numbers of Mycenaean rhyta, are also the sites with the highest amount of imported Mycenaean ceramics consisting mainly of dinner ware, instead of storage vessels as on other Levantine sites, cf. van Wijngaarden 2002, 109 f.

144 The fish rhyta of Ugarit are closely comparable to the well preserved fish rhyton from Tiryns, cf. Guggisberg 1996, 53. Koehl 2006, 37 suggests that Mycenaean fish rhyta were perhaps made specifically for export to eastern markets. For the as yet single chemical proof of Argive provenience, in the class of animal-head vessels at least, see the rhyton in Badre et al. 2005, 37 sample TK 1; Badre 2006, 74. 75 fig. 7, 6.

145 Verdelis 1959, 6 fig. 12; Slenczka 1974, 44 cat.-no. 87; 130 fig. 20, 6 pl. 7, 1. 2; Koehl 2006, 159 cat.-no. 608 fig. 26, 608. Koehl 2006, 159. 339 suggests that the robed figures represent priests and argues that rhyta in LBA Aegean tombs may be interpreted as evidence for priest-burials; for the latter see Koehl 2006, 337–342.

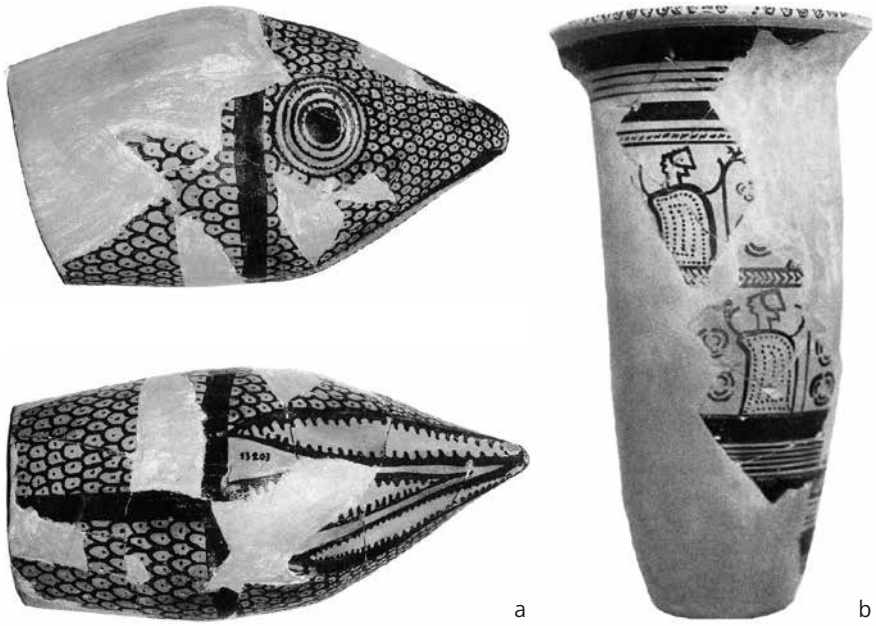

Fig. 9. Libation vessels from the Epichosis of Tiryns (not to scale): a. better-preserved of two fish rhyta. – b. conical rhyton with male figures.

porary with the late and final palatial Mycenaean mainland. It thus seems not too far-fetched to assign to this iconography a decisive part in the formation of the imagery manifest in the Tiryns male figure [146]. Names of major male deities of the later historical period already attested in the Linear B tablets clearly provide evidence for the importance and veneration of male deities[147], although female anthropomorphic figures and figurines dominate the corpus of Mycenaean coroplastic art and although murals of the palatial period feature females more frequently than males in religiously connoted scenes. Not only the epigraphic data but also the particular composition of terracotta images in two sanctuary assemblages may be adduced as further support for a less ›gynaikocentric‹ view of venerated deities: based on the interpretation of the material remains in Room A of the LH III A / B sanctuary in Ayios Konstantinos on the Methana peninsula and in the LH III C West Shrine of Phylakopi, a veneration of one or more male deities seems very plausible in both cases[148].

146 Cf. already Metaxa-Muhly, no date, 5: »Conversely, it is the male divine representations from the Levant that were imported and – as I believe – also copied in the Aegean, an area that lacked models for such figures.«

147 Cf. e.g. tablet PY Tn 316 listing a number of vessels of precious metal offered to various male as well as female deities, Hiller 1976, 290. 293 f.; Duhoux 2008, 321–335; Weilhartner 2013, esp. 163–167. Known from the pantheon of Olympic deities in historical times, Zeus, Poseidon, Ares, Hermes and Dionysos, and indirectly, Hephaistos are already attested in the 13th century B.C.E. at the latest. On the prominence of Poseidon in Pylos, see Hiller 2011, 185.

148 This is suggested by the idiosyncrasies of the respective assemblages: the male figures, the frequency of hollow wheel-made bull figures and of chariot models (French 1985, 280 table 6, 2), and the two bronze smiting god statuettes in the West Shrine of the sanctuary of Phylakopi were taken as arguments for the veneration of a male deity, see Renfrew 1985e, 420; Kardamaki 2015a, 80. The same is postulated for the settlement sanctuary of Ayios Konstantinos, because female figurines are almost completely absent in Room A (except for a Psi-figurine with hollow stem), whereas the assemblage consists mainly of bovid terracottas, oxcart-models and abbreviated as well as canonical chariot groups, rider figurines and ›toreadors‹ in numbers that are completely unknown from other sanctuary deposits, cf. Konsolaki-Giannopoulou 2003, 375 f. 383. For the importance of libation rituals that are indirectly attested by conical rhyta and animal figures in Ayios Konstantinos, cf. Konsolaki-Giannopoulou 2001, pls. 67 d. e; 68 a–d. For the argument that wheel-made bovine figures may be indicative of the veneration of male deities, cf. Meinhardt 2005; Kardamaki 2015a, 80.

VOTIVE OR CULT IMAGE?

The debate as to whether anthropomorphic cult statues can be identified in the archaeological record of the Mycenaean palatial period is as old as the discipline[149]: it has focused on the large wheel-made terracotta figures and oscillated between affirmative[150] and negative – the latter points out that the lack of male anthropomorphic figures (although male gods are attested epigraphically), the lack of specific iconographic attributes, and the co-occurrence of sometimes several large female figures next to each other on the same bench is equivocal and cannot support the existence of anthropomorphic cult statues, but rather indicates a function as votives and votaries[151] or at best tutelary deities. In an analysis of written testimonia regarding Archaic–Hellenistic Greek cult images Tanja Scheer has demonstrated that a distinction between cult image and dedicatory statue is a modern concept[152]; also, that adorning, clothing, washing, anointing, feeding and parading images enabled the worshipper to conceptualize the image and the deity as identical[153], but did not preclude that several images in the same context could be venerated as cult statues of one and the same deity[154], because an anthropomorphic image was a facultative option for a deity to take its seat amongst worshippers, but other forms of embodiment could be chosen as well according to contemporary notions of the divine[155]. Scheer's discussion provides several relevant arguments for the interpretation of three-dimensional images in the Mycenaean palatial period: taken in isolation, small size[156] and the co-occurrence of several images cannot preclude the existence of cult images *per se*. It is the ceremonial or performative context and the opportunity to provide a three-dimensional representation with special care, sustenance, offerings and veneration that transforms an image into a cult statue, and thus contextual associations and patterns of performative enactment(s) may be informative clues for the identification of images as cult statues.

This line of thought is relevant for the interpretation of the smiting god statuette from the Upper Citadel of Tiryns: although neither the actual context nor traces of performative enactment are preserved for the Tirynthian bronze smiting god statuette, the cumulative evidence for homologous iconographies and libation practices in the material record of Tiryns, especially on the Upper Citadel and in the Epichosis material, i.e. debris that is not clearly derived from the palace proper[157] but nevertheless comes from its environs, lend

149 Schliemann 1878, 15 on Psi-figurines as representations of a tutelary goddess, namely Hera, in Mycenae and Tiryns.

150 The most influential discussion is probably still Renfrew 1985b, 22–26; Renfrew 1985d, 361–367. 372 f.; Renfrew 1985e, 413–415; see e.g. recent discussions by Whittaker 2009, 104–106 (for an interpretation of some of Mycenae's type-B figures as cult statues); Pliatsika 2012, 618 (who once more argues that large female figures acted as cult statues, when set up on benches, since they were the recipients of offerings in the form of beads, jewellery – and probably also textiles) and most recently Kardamaki 2015a, 78–81 with n. 228. 230 (for the use of figures as cult statues due to their size, specific adornment or occurrence on benches).

151 See, e.g. Ruppenstein 2011; Moore – Taylour 1999, 93–101 on the monochrome figures of type B in Mycenae, whereas the type-A figures are interpreted as likely cult statues, Moore – Taylour 1999, 90–93.

152 Scheer 2000, 4–34. 301; this also implies that the mere size of a cult image did not correlate with its importance.

153 Scheer 2000, 54–66. 302 f.

154 Scheer 2000, 89–93. 130–136. 304.

155 Scheer 2000, 304 f.

156 Especially with regard to the lack of life-size or larger three-dimensional images in the Mycenaean world.

157 The deposits clearly associated with the palatial destruction are those found on the west slope of the Upper Citadel in the area of the Western Staircase, see Kardamaki 2009; Kardamaki 2015b. The Epichosis deposit is a dump of material from the palace environs that may originally stem either from the palace or adjacent areas such as the Internal Courtyard in front of the palace with its accompanying room suites or from rooms located in the South Citadel. We are grateful to an anonymous reviewer for having drawn our attention to this important distinction between palace proper and other functional areas of the Upper Citadel.

Fig. 10. Male figure head from Kontopigado (scale 1 : 2)

some probability to our proffered interpretation. Tentative evidence has been suggested for ritual handling and dressing of such statuettes in Phylakopi[158]. If the Tirynthian smiting god statuette is viewed against the background of intense relationships between Tiryns, Cyprus and the Northern Levant that lead to idiosyncratic adaptations of enacted ritual practices, it seems plausible that in accordance with Levantine customs such a statuette[159] – although inserted into a new cultural context – was regarded simultaneously as a dedication and the focus of rituals (i.e. a cult statuette)[160].

The suggested adaptation of Near Eastern cult images of male deities (i.e. the Levantine bronze statuettes) by higher echelons of Mycenaean society and a male component in cult practices on the Tirynthian Upper Citadel may not seem as far-fetched as it appears at first glance[161]: Helène Whittaker has suggested that some of the monochrome, type-B figures from the Cult Centre in Mycenae may have been (occasionally?) clad in helmets and may have gripped weapons thus resembling the pose of Near Eastern smiting god statuettes[162]: she specifically adduced the shape of the head of one such figure and the idiosyncratic pose of another as support for her hypothesis. Furthermore, for the first time during the late LH III B period, images of male figures that may be regarded as cult statues surface in the extant archaeological record of Mycenaean Greece: Kardamaki published a detailed study of a wheel-made head of a male warrior figure *(fig. 10)* from Alimos / Kontopigado, Athens[163] that follows an established Mycenaean iconography instead of Near Eastern imagery. The ivory head of a male (cult?)[164] statuette in the Room of the Frescoes of the Cult Centre in Mycenae is another potential candidate that will be discussed below.

158 Maran 2011; Maran 2016, 585.

159 The smiting god statuette found in Mycenae definitely dates to the palatial period, as reinvestigations have shown, see Iakovidis 2006, 4.

160 Cf. Gallet de Santerre 1987, 8, who postulates that the Levantine male bronze statuettes found in the Aegean during the LH III B / C period probably represented cult images or ›Götterbilder‹ of Oriental type.

161 See e.g. Stavrianopoulou 1995; Maran – Stavrianopoulou 2007 for an eminent role of the *wanaks* not only in Mycenaean social hierarchies (e.g. Kilian 1988; *pace* Nakassis 2013 for a less rigid hierarchy) but also in cult practices. Hence the hypothesis that such a figure was rather used in such an ambience than by a small collective of elite members of the new post-palatial society.

162 Whittaker 2009, 103 f. fig. 5; Kardamaki 2015a, 72.

163 Kardamaki 2015a, 68–72. 81 f. The head was found next to installations that may have served in the initial processing of flax, see Kardamaki 2015a, 55. The date for the head-fragment is disputed, see Kardamaki 2015a, 79; yet the deposition of the fragment can generally be dated by the accompanying pottery to LH III C Early at the latest, see Kardamaki 2015a, 49 with n. 14; 70. For a discussion of the date of the final palatial destruction in Athens and Attica, see Kardamaki 2015a, 55–57 with n. 63. This head compares well to the heads of the LH III C male figures SF 1544 and SF 2340 from Phylakopi *(fig. 8 d. e)*, see n. 30.

164 Wardle 2003, 321; Krzyszkowska 2007, 21.

THE FIGURE'S ›FUNCTION‹ AS A LIBATION VESSEL

To merely attribute the Tirynthian male figure a function as cult paraphernalia is perhaps only partially correct: Since this figure is exceptional in size and type, an interpretation as a cult statue seems to be more apt than as a protective image or a ritual device simply used in cult practices. Especially in the absence of comparable images in other contexts, this figure stands out: it was most probably connected to an assemblage, which emphasizes libation rituals and presumably constituted part of a former ›cult inventory‹ of the palace or functionally closely related areas on the Tirynthian Upper Citadel[165]. Although of a completely different habitus than the Near Eastern parallels, this three-dimensional model of a masturbating anthropomorphic male literally spouts forth semen[166] and in a context of religious libations actually enacts a fertility rite[167].

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

To investigate the context of the ithyphallic figure from Tiryns in a more historically contingent framework, we wish to re-evaluate a few concepts about Mycenaean religion in the late palatial period. The ensuing discussion of archaeological contexts in the late 13th century B.C.E. focuses specifically on two contexts in the Cult Centre of Mycenae: we argue that they cannot be used to define canonical or normative characteristics of settlement sanctuaries, but rather represent idiosyncratic changes in ritual practices shortly before the collapse of palatial society in the Argolid that may hint at socio-political transformations during this phase.

The common narrative of the period between ca. 1250 and 1200 B.C.E., i.e. after the end of the ceramic phase LH III B1 until the end of LH III B2, runs as follows: a decline in metal trade in the entire Eastern Mediterranean after LH III B1 is assumed[168], based inter alia on the comparison of metal cargoes in the Uluburun[169] and Cape Gelidonya[170] ship wrecks. A concurrent decline in exports of Argive pictorial kraters and other pictorial pottery after LH III B1 is supported by neutron activation analyses that demonstrate increasing local production of Mycenaean-type pottery on Cyprus[171]. These are just two examples cited in

[165] For a strong connection of libation rituals with palace ceremonies, see also Koehl 2006, 370. He noted that Mycenaean rhyta fade away in the post-palatial period.

[166] In contrast to most Minoan as well as the canonical Mycenaean female figures of type A and the unique figures of type B, the Tirynthian male figure features hollow, not solid arms; for an exception, see the wheel-made LM III A2–B male figure with arms extended in front of its chest and standing on a pedestal from Gortyn, northeast of Phaistos, Rethemiotakis 1998, 39 no. 139 pl. 28 fig. 44, 139; Rethemiotakis 2001, 23 f. fig. 26. Since the torso of the Epichosis figure is not preserved, it cannot be determined, whether at least the hollow arm, which extended from the right shoulder to the phallus, communicated with the hollow torso and ultimately head of that figure or not. If so, the figure's use as a rhyton may have had an even more exceptional effect: when liquids were poured into the figure (presumably from the head), these would have flown not only into the torso but also into the arm and from the hand into the penis, where ultimately both, the liquid flowing through the body and that flowing through the arm and the hand would have coalesced; the constriction of the liquid caused by the arm and hand would have added additional pressure to the flowing liquid and perhaps even may have caused it to sputter – transforming an act of libation into a realistic performance of ejaculation. We owe this important observation to an anonymous reviewer, whom we would like to thank very much for pointing out this additional aspect of the figure's performative potential.

[167] ›Mycenaean *Spermalot*‹ would thus be an apt nickname for our figure.

[168] Maran 2010, 245 with n. 24.

[169] E.g. Pulak 2010.

[170] Bass 2010.

[171] Most recently Jung 2015.

the literature as evidence for signs of economic crisis before the final collapse of Mycenaean palatial society ca. 1200 B.C.E.[172]. Yet the archaeological record also provides instances that can be interpreted as signs of consolidation and prosperity: large-scale architectural remodelling of the citadels in Mycenae, Tiryns, Midea and probably Athens[173] takes places in LH III B2, accompanied by the extension and monumentalization of fortifications in Mycenae[174], Tiryns[175] and Midea[176]. Additionally, huge infrastructure projects are witnessed, e.g. the construction of the Tirynthian dam[177]. Such large-scale fortificatory, hydraulic and infrastructure works[178] must have involved immense labour forces and economic means[179].

Such a narrative calls for a closer look at the archaeological remains of the decades between ca. 1250 and 1200 B.C.E. and – with regard to the interpretation of the Tirynthian figure on a regional scale – for a focus on cult contexts, as ideology and power often influence the layout and use of such locales. Several major buildings in Mycenae show evidence for destruction at the end of LH III B1, e.g. the West House Group connected to palatial administration outside the citadel[180] and buildings in the Cult Centre on the citadel hill[181]. The cause of this destruction horizon is said to have been (an) earthquake(s)[182]. Although the architectural remains within the Cult Centre are not yet finally published, it is evident that the Cult Centre's design changed decidedly between LH III B1 and LH III B2. Whereas the area was not enclosed by the fortification wall in the earlier phase and freely accessible from the Lower Town of Mycenae, the extension of the fortification wall in LH III B2 not only included the Grave Circle A into the citadel area but also walled off the Cult Centre from the Lower Town and changed access routes within the area considerably[183]. The

[172] The literature on the topic is vast, see e.g. Cline 2014.

[173] But see Privitera 2013, 60–65.

[174] For Mycenae see e.g. French 2002, 56 f.; cf. also Fitzsimons 2011, 100 on constructing monumental architecture in times of political / social stress and as advertising the supreme power of its builders / instigators. Similar arguments are proffered by Brysbaert 2013, 86 f.; Maran 2015, 282.

[175] Maran 2004a; Maran 2010; Brysbaert 2013; Damm-Meinhardt 2015, 17. 19–23.

[176] Demakopoulou – Divari-Valakou 2010, 15.

[177] Maran – Papadimitriou 2006, 129 f.; Thaler 2009, 351; Maran 2015, 280. 282; Maran – Papadimitriou 2015, 52; Maran – Papadimitriou 2016, 19. 73. 108 f., who all indicate that the construction of the Tiryns dam dates to LH III B2.

[178] On the roadworks, see Hope Simpson – Hagel 2006, esp. 148 f. 156 with contended dates for the highways (either LH III A–LH III B1 or late LH III B); even if the few sherds of late LH III B only stem from repairs, these would still indicate maintenance of the extended road system at the end of the palatial period.

[179] Brysbaert 2013, esp. 77–82; Maran 2015, 283; on work feasts, see Weilhartner 2017, 227–229.

[180] E.g. French 2002, 67; Tournavitou 1995, 286 f. 298 f.

[181] Moore – Taylour 1999, 3 table 1; Wardle 2015, 590 f. For detailed accounts of the Cult Centre during the palatial period, see Albers 1994, 13–52; Moore – Taylour 1999; French – Taylour 2007. Stretching over 8 m in altitude, the Cult Centre comprises five building complexes with adjoining courts on the three lower terraces of the west slope and is bounded by the fortification wall of Mycenae's citadel; Albers 2001, 47. A staircase with large shallow steps descends from the upper slope terrace into the first courtyard of the Cult Centre on the upper terrace with two cult buildings, and continues as a long ramp with a stucco floor, which turns abruptly at one point. The courtyard also provides access to other, potentially partly frescoed corridors through the upper parts of building complexes onto the second terrace and into the lower court with free-standing cult buildings, as well as towards Tsountas' House and its courtyard. Tsountas' House is a two-storied corridor house located on the lower and middle terrace of the Cult Centre; for a description of the Cult Centre, see also Albers 2004, 121.

[182] French 2002, 64. 67; French – Taylour 2007, 4 table 1 (earthquake between Phases VII and VIII), yet see the cautious note by Tournavitou 1995, 298. Destruction by earthquake was a ›fashionable‹ argument in the 1980s and 1990s for the decline and eventual collapse of the Mycenaean palatial society, see e.g. Kilian 1996, 65 for earthquakes in LH III B1 and LH III B2; French 1996, 51 (but without any conclusive evidence that the observed destruction horizon was caused by seismic activity); Åström – Demakopoulou 1996, 38 f. with some archaeological support of an earthquake event in LH III B2. For the problems on identifying earthquake damage in the archaeological record, cf. Hinzen et al. 2015 and also the ongoing HERACLES [Hypothesis-Testing of Earthquake Ruined Argolid Constructions and Landscape with Engineering Seismology] project; <http://www.seismo.uni-koeln.de/projects/heracles/index.htm> (21/04/2017).

[183] Wardle 2003; Wardle 2015.

Greek-British excavations in the area of the Cult Centre encountered several destruction deposits whose pottery dates the final conflagration to ca. 1200 B.C.E.[184]. However, in at least two architectural structures, the so-called Temple and the so-called House of the Frescoes, an earlier phase could be distinguished stratigraphically and architecturally[185]. This earlier phase displayed differently structured architecture and was dated to mid LH III B, i.e. ca. 1250–1225 B.C.E., based on the associated pottery[186].

Comprising a vestibule, the main Room 18 with an alcove and Room 19 behind on a higher level and only accessible via stairs, the Temple was almost devoid of finds in its last phase of use (so-called Phase VIII) that ended with the final palatial destruction[187]. The main room was furnished with shallow benches along its sides. The only *in situ* find in Room 18 was encountered on the northwest bench next to the staircase: a single large, wheel-made, monochrome, type-B figure was placed in front of the wall's corner; a broken and haphazardly repaired offering table made of stucco acted as a focus for ritual offerings in front of this figure [188]. The staircase behind the figure literally led to nowhere, as the previous entrance to Room 19 on a higher elevation was sealed by a mud brick wall in the latest phase [189]. Yet Room 19 (as well as the alcove in Room 18) yielded rich contents upon excavation, which are often classified as parts of a cult inventory originating from the building's previous phase(s) of use (so-called Phase VII)[190]. The room was stacked with finds, especially along the rear wall: twenty-seven monochrome figures of type B and seventeen terracotta models of coiled snakes, which are also painted monochrome, are unique not only for Mycenae, but so far only attested in the Temple[191]. Three of the anthropomorphic monochrome figures (mostly intact) were found in a peculiar position: right in front of and facing the wall, as if they had been ritually buried[192]. A small carinated bowl in front of the rear wall contained beads, pendants and other precious small finds[193] and points to votive offerings that were kept together and perhaps constituted the Temple's treasure. At least one intact anthropomorphic vase of unspecified sex constitutes another rare find in the Temple[194]. Notably, the widely attested large wheel-made female figures of type A[195] are very infrequently displayed in the Cult Centre: one was found in the sealed cult deposit of Room 19[196], another one still *in situ* on a

184 French – Stockhammer 2009, 182 table 3; 185–195.

185 Phase VII: Moore – Taylour 1999, 3 table 1; French – Stockhammer 2009, 182 table 3; French – Taylour 2007, 4 table 1. There is more evidence of different use phases within the LH III B Cult Centre, see, e.g., Albers 1994, 17 for two floor phases of the stucco pavement on the upper storey of Tsountas' House.

186 Moore – Taylour 1999, 2; French – Taylour 2007, 23; see esp. Wardle 2015, 591.

187 Moore – Taylour 1999, 3 with table 1 (yet sealed destruction deposits were rarely encountered within the Cult Centre); French – Taylour 2007, 4 table 1 (destruction between Phases VIII and IX).

188 Moore – Taylour 1999, 15 pl. 4 b; 26 fig. 9, 29 pl. 9 b; 30 f. 61 pl. 21, 98.

189 Moore – Taylour 1999, 15 pl. 4 a; 22; cf. French 1996, 54; French 2002, 90 for the mention that the plaster apparently covering the blocking door was polished.

190 Moore – Taylour 1999, 17–20. 24 fig. 7; 27 f. pls. 7. 8; 32–34. 36–41 figs. 10–15; French 2002, 90.

191 The head of a snake that was excavated in Passage 34 northwest of the House of the Frescoes in all probability originates from debris ultimately connected to the cult assemblage in the Temple, see French – Taylour 2007, 36. 37 pl. 12 a.

192 *Pace* Moore – Taylour 1999, 22.

193 The bowl held more than 140 beads of glass, steatite, amber, carnelian, lapis lazuli and rock crystal; French 2002, 89 fig. 40; Krzyszkowska 2007, 7 fig. 2 I-3; 25 f.; inter alia, a rock crystal pendant in the shape of a duck, more than 22 glass relief beads in the shape of a Minoan female with flounced skirt, a seal, a faience scarab (with the cartouche of the Egyptian queen Tiye, wife of Amenhotep III, for this see also Wardle 2015, 582 with n. 50), small cosmetic implements made of ivory as well as a minuscule ivory figure; Moore – Taylour 1999, 17. 18 table 2 (finds marked with *); 19 fig. 2; 20 pl. 6; 111–113.

194 Moore – Taylour 1999, 46. 51 pl. 11 a; Wardle 2015, 582 with n. 46 with a stylistic dating of the anthropomorphic vase to LH III A2. Most scholars also tend to avoid a clear gender ascription to the monochrome figures, but this topic is still hotly debated, cf., e.g. Kardamaki 2015a, 72 n. 162, who interprets some as male and some as female.

195 For a list of most type-A figures, see Pliatsika 2012, 619–625.

196 Three fragmentary figures of type A have been identified in the Temple, Moore – Taylour 1999, 46. 51 pl. 11 b–d; 52 pl. 12 a, but only the example from Room 19 is almost completely preserved. The oth-

low bench in the back room (Room 32 or so-called Shrine) of the House of the Frescoes[197]. This room complex lies southwest of the Temple and is best known for its *in situ* mural on the east wall of Room 31.

The type-A figure in Room 32 was associated with 44 relief glass beads of beehive-shape[198], repeating a pattern of votive offerings[199] also indirectly witnessed by the contents of the carinated bowl in Room 19 of the Temple. The main room of the House of the Frescoes, Room 31 (also called Room of the Frescoes) features a platform in its northeast corner; the wall above has a mural with the depiction of two large female figures in front of a cult architecture facing each other[200]: both hold long objects in front of them – the left one probably a sword, the right one perhaps a staff or spear. The two small human, arguably male, figures painted in red and black respectively and floating in the space between the larger female figures are unique in Mycenaean iconography[201]. On a lower register, another female figure with sheaves of corn in her hands[202] is depicted in front of ceremonial architecture and accompanied by a scarcely preserved, perhaps hybrid creature – either a griffin or a lion[203]. The platform in front of the mural is also covered with white plaster and shows the remnants of a painted frieze of horns of consecrations on top of a schematic entablature along its upper edge on one side. It was in all probability used as an altar for the setting-up of votives and other small find dedications. Yet the most valuable small finds in this room were not in use anymore during its final stage (Phase VIII) in LH III B2: they were buried in the levelled debris of the previous occupation phase that apparently came to an end due to earthquake destruction[204]. After this earlier destruction the room was remodelled[205]: the debris was levelled and covered by stone slabs along the room's side[206]. An ivory head of a human male[207] was excavated in front of the platform with the murals behind, but had been deposited prior to the construction of the latest floor (or walking surface) in the room. Nearby, another carved ivory statuette was found – this one in the shape of a couchant lion[208]. The carving shows a slot for a tenon underneath the lion so that the sculpture could be fixed upon a staff or sceptre[209].

er two are fragmentary: one merely represents the stem, the second the stem, parts of the torso and one arm of the original figures.

197 Moore – Taylour 1999, 46. 52 pl. 12 b.

198 French 2002, 92; Pliatsika 2012, 619 appendix no. 5: the so-called Lozenge Lady; for the finds, see Albers 1994, 43 f.

199 Albers 2004, 124 n. 46 on various items apparently being used as dedications in protective rituals: apart from terracotta figurines and beads or other items of adornment, these may be tools, e.g. moulds, as well as partly worked and raw materials.

200 E.g. French 2002, pl. 12; 90–92. The bibliography on this fresco is vast; see, e.g. Rehak 1992; recently Chapin 2016 [*non videmus*].

201 Yet they are reminiscent of antithetical, standing, male figures (red and black respectively) and of red male figures shown as bull leapers / toreadors on one of the Tanagra *larnakes*, cf. Aravantinos 2010, 101 fig. (without number).

202 Often termed *si-to-po-ti-ni-ja* with reference to the Linear B term on a fragmentary tablet found in the Cult Centre, but originating from higher up on the citadel's slope (general provenience: Citadel House Area), MY Oi 701.3; see Varias García 2014, who interprets the text as a ration list to various artisans attached to the palace in the context of feasting.

203 Rehak 1992, 54 f. pl. 18 a.

204 French 1996, 54 specifically refers to the infill and subsequent covering of votives in the Room of the Frescoes in the context of discussing earthquake damage in Mycenae.

205 An actual re-use of the room seems probable in view of the new floor layout, but due to the blocking of the entrances in the room's longitudinal axis it has been argued that the Room of the Frescoes was not used anymore during LH III B2, cf. Albers 1994, 39. 41. 51 and n. 216 below.

206 French 2002, 90 fig. 41; 92; for a different interpretation of the stone slabs, see Wardle 2015, 589 f.

207 Krzyszkowska 2007, 16–24 I-1 with pls. 1. 2. The head features a perpendicular hole at the bottom of the hollow neck for attachment to a torso *vel sim.* of a different material that did not survive.

208 Krzyszkowska 2007, 16. 20–25 I-2 with pls. 3. 4.

209 It is probably not fortuitous that a lion functions as a portable escort of a male cult statue, accompanies a female deity on the fresco (if one follows Rehak's reconstruction, see above n. 203) and constitutes the only extant monumental relief (i.e. the Lion Gate) in the Mycenaean world emblematic of Mycenae's projected power; cf. in a similar vein Thaler – Vetters, forthcoming, 471.

These finds are important for two reasons – their purported position in front of the platform[210] suggests that they originally were set up on this altar and may have acted as a focus of veneration[211]. Yet the male head was apparently not curated and reused subsequently, but ritually buried with the lion in front of the altar[212]. Additionally, it is argued that the adjacent Room 32 was only used in Phase VII and not frequented in Phase VIII anymore[213]; the room's assemblage featured a single three-dimensional image in the shape of a terracotta female figure of type A as a focus for performing rituals, which was set up on the low bench in the rear, south-west corner of the Shrine / Room 32[214].

[210] The exact find positions are difficult to pinpoint and the descriptions of the find situations are contradictory: Albers 1994, 41 refers to an assemblage consisting of the lion, an ivory sword pommel, a serpentinite vessel of the Minoan bird nest-type and a clay dipper in the south-eastern corner of the room, in the space between platform and southern wall, but underneath the stone pavement. According to Albers the male ivory head was associated with eleven miniscule ivory disc-shaped beads and was found in the fill slightly above the original floor and underneath the stone slabs, but in the southwest corner of the platform; compare this with French 2002, 91 f.: »At the south end of the altar lay tumbled a group of rich items: a Cretan stone bowl and two handsome ivories (the pommel of a sword and a couchant lion) […]. A short distance in front of the altar there lay on the floor the ivory head of a presumably male figure. […] This had probably fallen off the altar […].«; Krzyszkowska 2007, 8: »Several outstanding finds came to light at the southern end of the altar. One was the magnificent lion […]. The remarkable male head […] was recovered nearby, apparently fallen from the altar […]«. In contrast, Rehak 1992, 43 with n. 38 relates that the lion, the sword pommel, the serpentinite bowl, the dipper, a lead vessel and a piece of obsidian were not merely found on the higher platform, but actually »built into its top, as if part of a foundation deposit.« Yet another description is provided by Wardle 2003, 322: »The disaster which befell this group of rooms [i.e. House of the Frescoes], which may perhaps be attributed to earthquake, caused its users to abandon it. The walls still stood to a height of over a metre and a half but the features became covered over so that the Room with the Fresco (Room 31) was filled in to a depth of a metre at the edges with a rather shallower fill in the centre. How far this fill was intentional and how far the result of collapse is debatable. After this it was perhaps an open space, with a trodden surface and some function which required a row of large slabs to be laid against the southern wall. These slabs were at first thought to be one of the features of the Room with the Fresco, or at least a covering for the sacred objects. The first is certainly not true while the second is probably mistaken. […] The major destruction at the end of the LH III B 2 period which affected the whole area […], left a level of burning over the trodden floor.« See also Wardle 2015, 589 f.: »[Due to damage at the end of Phase VII] A new floor was created in the Room with the Fresco, sealing over the fallen debris and the cult deposits in that room and the adjacent ›Shrine‹. This floor is marked against the south wall by a row of large flat slabs which are set just above the level of the top of the altar and of the base of the wall painting. In the earlier reports it was suggested by Taylour that these slabs were the surface of a bench built to conceal some of the cult objects – and therefore an original feature of the room. Sadly, although this misinterpretation has been corrected in several places in the Mycenae publications, this correction has not been picked up in a number of discussions of the room and its finds and accordingly has been used to support several erroneous assumptions and interpretations. […] there is almost nothing to suggest that this group of objects [the ivory head and the lion, sword pommel, Minoan stone bowl, etc.] was buried to retain its sacred character, rather than simply debris left when the floor level was raised. […] Each of these could have been easily overlooked amongst the remaining debris.« See also Wardle 2015, 582 with n. 48 on the faience plaque with a cartouche of Amenhotep III found in a lead vessel within the Room of the Frescoes.

[211] Mycenae provides further evidence for composite figures with in-set heads such as the male ivory head: two female plaster heads, one found in the Cult Centre, the other originating from the so-called Prinaria are often interpreted as parts of composite figures probably constituting cult statues, cf. Vetters 2011b, 33–36; Pliatsika 2012, 615.

[212] A reuse of the room seems rather probable when one regards the careful paving of the area with the find concentrations by the stone slabs, *contra* Wardle 2015, 589 f. Also, Wardle does not explain why one would not salvage the precious (and less miniscule than it may sound in Wardle's description) finds when the stone slabs were laid out. Altogether, Wardle's insistence that the ivories and other objects had not been ritually buried seems peculiar, given the description that he himself provides for the room's stratigraphy.

[213] See Taylour 1981, 9 f. 20. However, in contrast to the Temple, the entrance to Room 32, which was only accessible via Room 31, was not blocked after Phase VII and the rather tidily arranged stone slabs above the destruction debris of Phase VII in Room 31 argue for some kind of continuous use of these spaces, although on a much reduced scale.

[214] For the large cache of worked ivory in the room, see Albers 1994, 43 f.; Krzyszkowska 2007, 9. 51; Wardle 2015, 590. 593.

To sum up the major points in the late palatial history of the Cult Centre relevant to our argument: evidence pointing to the ritual burial of cult equipment and probably cult statues was hitherto dismissed[215], but is probably attested even twice – once in Room 19 of the Temple, once underneath the latest floor of the Room of the Frescoes. Use of both, the Temple and the House of the Frescoes, presumably continued afterwards yet on a much reduced scale and with a notably poorer assemblage[216]. Arguably, a male cult statue is venerated in Phase VII in the Room of the Frescoes, but evidence for male iconography or even male cult statues is lacking in the succeeding period.

Set in its wider architectural context, the Cult Centre[217] is commonly portrayed as an important part of an intricate urban layout of ›materialized power relations‹[218] in Mycenae: Especially the access to the megaron via a procession route passing the Cult Centre and connecting it with the Lion Gate[219], Grave Circle A[220] and ultimately the Grand Staircase[221] has been linked to the concept of the ›hearth-wanax-ideology‹[222] and been adduced to ulti-

[215] See, however, Hinzen et al. 2015, 15 f.; Kardamaki 2015a, 73 n. 174 with further references.

[216] For the potential white-washing of the fresco in Room 31, see French 2002, 92, who also argues against a subsequent use of the room: »The main part of the complex was taken out of use at the time of the ›disaster‹ and was not used during the last years of the thirteenth century BC though it would have been visible. The fresco was white-washed and a filling of fine soil was laid over the cult items and dedications. Over this, along the sides of the room where such items were known to lie, a series of large slabs was tidily laid.« Wardle 2015, 593 is more cautious in his assessment whether the white-washing of the fresco was intentional or not, and argues that the Room of the Fresco Complex fell out of use in LH III B2, see above n. 210. 212. 213.

[217] Albers 2001, 14–17; Albers 2004, 126 f.; Thaler 2009, 347 f. The Cult Centre is limited to the east by the large terrace supporting the hill slope, which was probably densely settled but is now eroded. Thus the procession way from the Cult Centre to the palace proper cannot be reconstructed in detail, Albers 1994, 14. Albers postulates that the sloping terrace above the eastern entrance to the Cult Centre was connected to a central street network in the older ceramic phase of LH III B2, by which the entrance / exit of the Cult Centre was directly connected with the Great Staircase of the palace and the Lion Gate. See Albers 1994, 15 for the change of direction into the South Corridor, when one descends the large and shallow steps from the palace to the Cult Centre, which led to its eastern entrance. The South Corridor featured white stucco and the eastern entrance a monolithic conglomerate threshold and double-winged door. The representative character of the eastern entrance, i.e. the conglomerate threshold, the double-winged door and remains of *in situ* murals depicting traces of a chariot scene and ›anabates‹ in front of the eastern entrance, demonstrate that this was the official entrance to the Cult Centre, which continued afterwards as a wide ramp, i.e. Tsountas' Corridor. Another entrance to the buildings in the Cult Centre was established in the north. Here, Room 4 with white stucco on its walls and on a wide bench with shallow steps in front (the bench was potentially used as a cupboard / shelf) along the north-eastern side of the room was also connected to Tsountas' Corridor and opens at its southwest corner into three rectangular rooms, perhaps used for storage. Two other major roads led up to the Northeast Entrance of the Cult Centre: the Small Ramp coming from the Lion Gate and a very narrow, long entrance to the Cult Centre that provided access in the west from the fortification wall and the House of the Warrior Vase and South House.

[218] On architectural connections between cult places and rulers in general and the ideological power wielded by such architectural embellishments, see Rollason 2016, 241–318. 387–390.

[219] For a construction date of the Lion Gate relief in LH III B, see Blackwell 2014, 467.

[220] Wardle 2015, 587–589. Thaler 2009, 345 on the inclusion of Grave Circle A into the fortification circuit in the middle of LH III B, i.e. by ca. 1250 B.C.E.

[221] Albers 2001, 48 f.; for access routes between Lion Gate, Cult Centre and palace, especially the megaron area on the citadel of Mycenae, see Albers 2004, 115 fig. 1; 127.

[222] Mycenaean religious ceremonies that focused on the protection of the hearth-fire and drew upon and mimicked but also monumentalized domestic hearths have been termed ›hearth-wanax-ideology‹ by James Wright (1994, 56–59), elaborating on Klaus Kilian's *wanaks* model (1988, esp. 293 with fig. 1).

mately infer a superior role for the Cult Centre[223] – the complex[224] has long been portrayed as a regional or even supra-regional cult centre[225]. Although severe problems in the precise dating of events remain due to the lack of final publications, we would contest the opinion that these contexts constitute normative or even paradigmatic examples of Mycenaean settlement sanctuaries as often stated[226]: firstly, recently published evidence contradicts such an interpretation – finds that are closely comparable to those found in the Cult Centre came to light in a building complex in the northern part of the citadel[227]. Building complex M is not yet fully published, but the finds strongly suggest that the role of settlement sanctuaries was much more nuanced and varied that hitherto acknowledged. According to the Linear B tablets from Pylos various sanctuaries must have existed[228] within the major palatial settlements and Building M now provides material evidence for such settings. Secondly, the architectural remains from the Cult Centre in its latest architectural stage point to a restriction in access internally and from the Lower Town outside the citadel and to a transfer of the focus of ceremonies and cult practice to another place, most probably the megaron area[229], at the end of LH III B. Thus, the Cult Centre represents a specific historical development and idiosyncratic example that is contingent on wider socio-political events in the second half of the 13th century B.C.E.[230], namely the question who ruled the Argolid in LH III B2. In the absence

223 See Albers 2004, 127 »[…] the palace / wanax was also in the immediate control of the central cult area of the citadel« and thus identifies Mycenae as the leading regional cult centre and the site as the seat of supreme power in the Argolid; »[… the] palace, i.e. wanax, had immediate control over this central area [i.e. the Cult Centre] which was devoted to cult places and veneration […]«, Albers 2001, 48; and she thus identifies the *wanaks* of Mycenae as the regional overlord, with the palatial site of Mycenae as the regional capital since LH III B; she argues (Albers 2001, 48 f.; Albers 2004, 125 f.) that the denomination »official cult centre of Mycenae« is a valid characterization and that Mycenae acts as a regional cult centre for the Argolid, which implies that it also constituted the socio-political centre of the region. According to Albers 2001, 49 the scarcity of cult centres as the one attested in Mycenae additionally highlights Mycenae's importance as a regional cult centre that is intimately connected with socio-political power and acts as a central place for the veneration of the most important deities; see also n. 226.

224 On public communal sanctuaries in settlement contexts in general, see Albers 2004, 112; on citadel cult centres, see Wright 1994, 61–63; but see Albers 2004, 120 n. 28 with an emphasis that not all Mycenaean public communal sanctuaries in settlement context are *per definitionem* cult centres; they are not a generic component of Mycenaean citadels and did not have identical functions and comparable religious significance.

225 Albers 2001; Albers 2004, 125 f.; Maran 2015, 281.

226 See Albers 2004, 113 n. 9, who notes that the bulk of data for Mycenaean cult places is dated to the rather restricted time span of LH III B–LH III C. Albers acknowledges that Mycenaean cult buildings do not adhere to a canonical architectural layout, and states (Albers 2004, 125) that »[…] the public communal cult practised in that special precinct at Mycenae during the LH III B period can therefore not be conceived as having been homogenous. […] the cult either of different deities or perhaps of rather fundamentally different aspects of a most important deity […] were represented in the complex, each with its own cult building and arranged side by side or perhaps even in an hierarchical order«. Nevertheless, chronological sub-phases in LH III B with important changes in layout and history of use of certain rooms and architectural structures are glossed over and thus a rather unified, synchronous approach to the different building stages of the Cult Centre is created with a result that seems slightly ahistorical in view of the large building projects under way throughout the citadel of Mycenae in the second half of the 13th century B.C.E.

227 Pliatsika 2015.

228 See esp. PY Tn 316, above n. 147.

229 *Pace* Albers 2004, 125, who states that »[… the Cult Centre was] deliberately *separated* from but in function intimately *linked* to the palace on the acropolis […]«, we would concur with her view that Mycenae's administrative and cultic ascension to the top of the regional socio-political hierarchy are connected historical phenomena, but contend that the Cult Centre apparently ceased to be of major importance to the megaron and ultimately the *wanaks* of Mycenae during the later part of the 13th century B.C.E.

230 Cf. Albers 2004, 131 n. 65 on construction works on citadels in the Argolid all dating to LH III B2 »[…] it [i.e. the building programme] thus operated under the ultimate supervision of the regional centre.« See also Kilian 1988, 294: »[…] the political will and sheer power of a *wanax* are clearly documented […] in the complete rebuilding of the citadel at Tiryns in the course of a couple of years in the LH III B period […]«.

of relevant Linear B testimonies from Mycenae and Tiryns, the archaeological discussion of the political geography in the Argolid has focused on architecture and has highlighted the use of conglomerate in Mycenae and Tiryns as architectural sign posts to the respective megara[231]; this archaeological observation so far offers the best indication of a subservient role of the Tirynthian megaron to Mycenae's supremacy in the Argolid[232]. The question of political pre-eminence is, however, further confounded by the iconographic invisibility of any Mycenaean ruler[233]. Yet the Argolid in particular has been singled out in recent research as the centre of ›royal building programmes‹ that adopt and incorporate styles, techniques and concepts of Hittite architecture during the Great Empire period[234]. Be that as it may, the ritual burial of cult equipment and – as we would argue – cult statues both in the Temple and in the Room of the Frescoes points to profound changes in religious practice and cult performance: in the LH III B1 Cult Centre of Mycenae, the century-old and traditionally Minoan prevalence of female images in religious iconography is juxtaposed for the first time with effigies of males and figures that cannot be clearly gendered. These images in Mycenae are then made obsolete by being buried and the overall architectural changes imply that the megaron becomes the main focus of cult. At roughly the same time, the citadel of Tiryns is thoroughly remodelled[235] and the megara[236] constitute materialized concepts of a ruler ideology that may attempt to slightly reshape the concept of rulership and cultural memory[237] by

231 Thaler 2009, 348 refers to the monolithic entrance thresholds on the main access route to the Cult Centre as the conscious connection of cultic, political and funerary spheres, which is made evident by the use of conglomerate as »royal building material« in the thresholds providing access to the megaron area, in thresholds of the Cult Centre, in the fortification walls, and in the tholos tombs of ›Atreus‹ and ›Clytemnestra‹.

232 Maran 2015, 281; but see Maran 2015, 281 n. 43 for views that Tiryns became the paramount centre in LH III B2, referring to Thaler 2009, 352, who argues *pro* Tiryns as potentially the ultimate palatial seat of power in the Argolid during the younger palace period, due to its more spacious layout of courts and thus providing more convenient locales for gatherings, processions and feasts than Mycenae. Thaler 2015, 355, despite his earlier hypothesis, seems to return to the commonly held assumption of Mycenae's supremacy; on the ›functional‹ superiority of Mycenae, see already Thaler 2009, 349: according to his apt analogy, Mycenae itself comprises the functions of the Louvre, the Cathedral of Rheims and the Basilica S. Denis, whereas Tiryns can be termed a Mycenaean ›Versailles‹.

233 The literature on Mycenaean kings as not being visible as individuals is vast, see lately Palaima 2016, 152. Palaima 2016, 151 refutes an Indo-European origin of the title *wanaks* and refers to Hittite influences in the concepts of a Mycenaean ruler; see also Palaima 2016, 142 on »begetting« and fertility as a suggested nexus between Hittite and Mycenaean terms for ›king‹ and a semantic relationship transmitted via myth and ritual, and Palaima 2016, 151 f. on power claims of Mycenaean *wanaktes* through title and office, which may both have been linked to a founding ancestral figure with such a title and whose title referred to procreative powers and protective, military power. For a slightly different view, see Petrakis 2016, 116. 127–140 on the *wanaks* as a Near Eastern loanword ultimately integrated into Mycenaean Linear B via Minoan Linear A precursors.

234 For Hittite influence in corbel vaulting, see Maran 2004a, 266–271, and in the Lion Gate relief, see Blackwell 2014, esp. 455. 475–484; see also Thaler 2009, 350 on the late palatial appearance of corbel vaulting in bridges of the road system in the Argolid, in the so-called South and East Galleries and in the *Syringes* of Tiryns, and in sally ports of Mycenae, Tiryns and Midea respectively.

235 See Kilian 1990, 112 on the excessively planned and intricately organized building programme, master plan and blue print for the new layout of Tiryns' citadel that suggests a strongly hierarchical organization with a single person at the top.

236 For access to the megara in Tiryns and for ritual separation of visitors via potentially segregated movements towards the throne, see Thaler 2015, 340–350 esp. 342 fig. 1.

237 On communicative vs. cultural memory, see J. Assmann 2008; on bodily or incorporated practices that store social memory and thus act as a communal submitter medium for traditions, see A. Assmann 2008, 105. This means that ritual performances and bodily memory also shape communal / social memory; for the latter see Connerton 1989, esp. 4. 5: »[…] I believe, further, that the solution to the question posed above – how is the memory of groups conveyed and sustained? – involves bringing these two things (recollection and bodies) together in a way that we might not have thought of doing. […] If there is such a thing as social memory, I shall argue, we are likely to find it in commemorative ceremonies; but commemorative ceremonies prove to be commemorative only in so far as they are performative; performativity cannot be thought without a concept of habit; and habit cannot be thought without a notion of bodily automatisms.«

drawing on performative ceremonies that were potentially adapted from Hittite court protocol[238]. In view of the overall historical characterization of the time period, we have no way of knowing whether these changes were perceived as responses to a crisis situation in the later 13th century B.C.E., but we may witness a change to a more male-oriented iconography as a corollary of an even more exclusive role of the ruler – not as *primus inter pares* anymore, but as the most elevated and important, but detached social and religious, *persona* in Mycenaean palatial society[239].

In conclusion, we argue that profound changes in the performance of rituals took place during the final palatial period: Mycenae witnesses transformations of the Cult Centre that shift the ritual focus away from this location. The assemblages do not provide evidence for the often claimed canonical components of Mycenaean settlement sanctuaries, but instead feature very idiosyncratic finds and find combinations that point to a conscious selection of cult paraphernalia and hence probably the veneration of very specific deities.

In Tiryns on the other hand, we contend that one witnesses for the first time the establishment of a new iconography for a three-dimensional male cult statue just before the fall of the palaces. Although perhaps far-fetched, we would view these phenomena in the light of the socio-political situation during LH III B2: monumental building programmes are executed that architecturally elevate the palace with the megaron at its apex above everything else; the managerial requirements to organize the tasks and the work force required a very strict hierarchical organization probably enforced by religious ideology.

It may even be possible that the transformation of a monarch tightly entwined with the Mycenaean ruling aristocracy to the absolute rulership of a single person was finally realized only at the very end of the palatial period. Ironically, this inferred absolutist or even dictatorial system very soon fell victim to the systemic collapse probably provoked in part by the overextension of resources and dire exploitation of lower members of the society[240].

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[238] See Thaler 2009, esp. 417 f. on analogies in Hittite and Mycenaean palatial architecture and the use of identical or similar tools and techniques, but most importantly, similar spatial concepts; also Thaler 2016, 127 f. 134.

[239] Thaler's (2015, 341) hypothesis that the ruler on special occasions, e.g. ceremonial processions, counterbalanced »the image of an almost inapproachable king« by parading from one citadel to the other, adds to our suggested portrayal of an aloof monarch at the end of the palatial period.

[240] cf. Jung 2016.

Sources of illustrations: *Fig. 1:* map Anavasi editions / H. Birk, modified by M. Vetters. – *Fig. 2 a:* CMS II 7 no. 39. – *Fig. 2 b:* CMS I no. 15. – *Fig. 2 c:* CMS II 6 no. 70. – *Fig. 2 d:* CMS I no. 221. – *Fig. 2 e:* CMS II 7 no. 23. – *Fig. 2 f:* CMS I no. 227. – *Fig. 2 g:* CMS II 6 no. 75 (Courtesy of the CMS Heidelberg). – *Fig. 3 a:* Chadwick et al. 1986, 298. – *Fig. 3 b:* Chadwick et al. 1990, 148. – *Fig. 4:* plan Tiryns archive, with additions (courtesy of J. Maran). – *Fig. 5:* photographs M. Kostoula; drawings E. Besi, adapted by R. Docsan. – *Fig. 6:* photographs M. Kostoula; drawing R. Docsan. – *Fig. 7:* photograph National Archaeological Museum, Athens, inv. no. 1582 (courtesy of Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports / Archaeological Receipts Fund). *Fig. 8:* Badre 2013, 748 fig. 10 (drawing R. Yassine, courtesy of L. Badre). – *Fig. 9 a:* Voigtländer 2003, pl. 94 R 3 (courtesy of J. Maran). – *Fig. 9 b:* Slenczka 1974, pl. 7, 1 (courtesy of J. Maran). – *Fig. 10:* Kardamaki 2015a, 69 fig. 13 (courtesy of E. Kardamaki).

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