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**THE ROLE OF TERRACOTTA FIGURES AND FIGURINES
IN MYCENAEAN CULT.**

Christine Mary Richardson.

**A thesis submitted to the University of Durham in accordance with the
requirements for the degree of M.A. in the Faculty of Arts.**

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**Supervisor: Dr. O.T.P.K. Dickinson
(Dept. of Classics)**

April, 2001.



19 APR 2002

Abstract.

Since the time of Schliemann, Bronze Age scholars, while acknowledging the significance of figurines to Mycenaean cult, have not fully understood their function. This study attempts to shed some light on the topic by an evaluation of figurine findings from three separate contexts, cemetery, settlement and shrine. The views of various scholars are noted, but every attempt has been made to eliminate preconceptions from what aims to be a strictly analytical study. To avoid speculation, wherever possible strict criteria have been employed in the statistical enumeration of figurines and in the recording of find locations. Results have been tabulated and relevant conclusions drawn. It is not anticipated that any sweeping revelations will be made since the nature of the topic militates against dramatic conclusions.

Author's declaration.

This thesis and the data presented are the results of my own original work, except where due acknowledgment and reference have been given. The results presented have not been previously submitted for a higher degree at this or any other University.

Christine Richardson.

26 – 4 – 2001

Acknowledgement.

I embarked on this M.A. after a lot of years spent in the classroom, where my intellectual powers must have become somewhat atrophied. It was a course for schoolteachers held at the British School at Athens in 1990 which fired my enthusiasm for further learning about the Mycenaean Period.

I am grateful, therefore, for having been granted by Durham University the opportunity to study an archaeological topic, a totally new area for study for me, and to read material on the frontiers of current thinking.

I am particularly indebted to my supervisor, Dr. Oliver Dickinson, for his patience and understanding as he toiled over my early efforts but more for the exacting standards and rigorous attention to detail he always showed. His knowledge of current scholarship is encyclopaedic, and I feel that I have been very lucky to study under him.

I am very grateful, too, for the constructive and helpful criticism of Dr. Olga Krzyszkowska and for her suggestions on constructing a methodology.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Abbreviations.

Periodicals

<i>AA</i>	<i>Archäologischer Anzeiger.</i>
<i>AM</i>	<i>Mitteilungen der deutschen archäologischen Instituts.</i>
<i>AR</i>	<i>Archaeological Reports (supplement to Journal of Hellenic Studies.)</i>
<i>BCH</i>	<i>Bulletin de correspondance hellénique</i>
<i>BICS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies (University of London)</i>
<i>BSA</i>	<i>Annual of the British School of Archaeology at Athens</i>
<i>JA</i>	<i>Jahresbuch des deutschen archäologischen Instituts.</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies.</i>
<i>OpAth</i>	<i>Opuscula Atheniensi</i>
<i>SIMA</i>	<i>Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology</i>

Others

BA	Bronze Age
EB(A), MB(A), LB(A)	Early, Middle, Late Bronze (Age)
EH, MH, LH	Early, Middle, Late Helladic
EM, MM, LM	Early, Middle, Late Minoan

Introduction.

Since the beginnings of Bronze Age archaeology, Mycenaean figurines have attracted the attention of scholars because of their sheer numbers. Schliemann talks of ‘gathering more than 200 terracotta idols of Hera’ (1880: 71) in the early part of his excavations at Mycenae, and he and later archaeologists have discovered subsequently, both at Mycenae itself and other Mycenaean sites, literally thousands of figurines of females and animals in a variety of contexts. Clearly, then, these small objects held considerable significance in the minds and lives of the Mycenaean. However, their origin and precise interpretation are both questions which have not been entirely elucidated. These problems can be attributed to a number of causes: (i) their quite sudden appearance and rapid spread (ii) their diverse findspots which include sacred and secular areas as well as graves (iii) the changing appearance and diversification, especially of females, particularly towards the end of the Mycenaean Period.

Early interpretations on the origin and meaning of figurines were often speculative (viz. Schliemann 1880: 10). Subsequently, in the decades after Schliemann, excavators such as Wace and Blegen commented on figurines and their possible function but tended to base their conclusions largely on evidence from graves. This is hardly surprising since none of the major mainland shrines and cult areas had been identified, while the location of many finds from settlement areas was not always recorded with sufficient accuracy to enable precise or even plausible conclusions to be drawn.

It was not until the publication of French’s thorough and scientific study on the various types of figurines, both human and animal, that comment on figurines became entirely based on the interpretation of evidence rather than speculation, an approach much more in accord with modern scholarly methodology where rigour and cautious analysis are the aims. However, while later scholars have made detailed comments on specific deposits of figurines (Tamvaki 1973: 207-65), the work of French has not really been followed up by any detailed study which encompasses the entire spectrum of figurine usage. Hägg (1981) and Kilian (1990) have pointed to the likely significance of figurines in popular cult, while the discovery of the sanctuary at Phylakopi led to a detailed study of figurine usage in that particular context (French 1985: 209-280). Nevertheless, there is as yet no study which attempts to present an overview of figurine usage in all late Helladic contexts. This is despite the availability of potentially informative findings from



recently excavated settlement sites such as Nichoria and from the ongoing excavations at Midea.

It would be presumptuous to claim that this study in any way serves to provide answers to questions which have remained unsolved for over a century. All it can attempt to do is examine some of the material from the various contexts in which figurines are found and from the information thus received try to derive a balanced picture on the possible extent to which figurines might have played a role in LBA mainland ritual. Accordingly, chapter one attempts to relate the role of figurine study to the methodology employed in modern scholarship. Particular emphasis is placed on the criteria laid down by Renfrew (1985) and the difficulties encountered when such a rigorous approach is applied to the study of figurines. Inevitably, since figurines were not unique to the Aegean mainland, this will involve brief comparison to Cycladic and Minoan figurines and the extent to which they might have been influential both in the shaping of modern scholarly thinking on BA ritual and on the development of a BA mainland tradition.

Chapter two gives a brief summary of scholarly views on mainland figurine evidence over the last century or so. This is followed by a description, based on the work of French, of the various types of figurines, both human and animal, and the changes and developments in shape and appearance which took place during the late Helladic Period.

The three central chapters endeavour to present empirical evidence on the function of figurines and constitute the main element of this work. After some introductory remarks on burial practice, chapter three presents the evidence obtained from graves. Two cemeteries are catalogued and studied in detail, those at Prosymna and Mycenae. The evidence is analysed and conclusions drawn wherever possible, but every attempt has been made to avoid speculation or assumption. The evidence from several other burial sites is then appended and summarised in order to provide a control for the two main sites and to offer a broader picture than that obtained from two, albeit important sites in the Argolid. Chapter four concentrates on the figurine evidence from domestic contexts. The evidence from Nichoria in Messenia is discussed, a site which hitherto has been overlooked by scholars in their assessment of figurines and which might provide evidence of domestic ritual at a non-palatial site. The other two sites studied are the Unterburg at Tiryns and those areas at Mycenae where clear evidence was available. Brief comment on the evidence from the settlements of Zygories and Korakou is also given. Since the material from Mycenae was at all times confusing and unreliable as a result of its early excavation date, it was very tempting not to include it, since it could detract from the

major purpose of this work, that is, to gain as accurate a picture as possible of figurine usage. However, the information from such an important site could hardly be ignored and so an accommodation had to be reached, a way round potential obstructions.

Consequently, only those structures on the site which afforded reliable information, at least on numbers, have been taken into consideration. Results from all the three major sites studied have been shown diagrammatically on distribution maps at the rear (Diagrams A – E [Tiryns], Map A [Nichoria] and Map B [Mycenae]). At this point I must stress that the Mycenae map is as accurate as can be on the basis of the imprecise evidence available. For example, I could not include the figurines found by Schliemann during his excavations inside the Grave Circle A. Moreover, the concentration at the Cult Centre is open to considerable doubt. However, if it serves no other purpose, the map does at least have the virtue of indicating the large numbers of figurines from settlement areas at Mycenae.

Chapter five attempts to assess the role played by figurines in shrines and sanctuaries. In addition to the now well-known evidence from the shrines at Mycenae, Phylakopi and Tiryns, material from rural sanctuaries is analysed as well as recent findings from Methana, Dhimini and Midea. Discussion at this point will also focus on the development of the larger ‘figures’ which evolved roughly contemporaneously with cult centres and possibly played a significant role in the ritual performed. Of particular significance is the relationship between these figures and the proliferation of Psi figurines. Finally, some assessment will be given of cult in LH IIIC and the extent to which it might have altered or been modified to accommodate changing circumstances.

While it is true that cult depends for its correct interpretation to some extent on the information provided by Linear B and also on the evidence of frescoes and glyptic representations, it is fair to say that these two sources have received more scholarly consideration than have terracottas. Indeed, it is not overstating the case to claim that undue attention has focused on glyptic evidence since, as Shelmerdine points out (1997: 101), ‘Iconography..... particularly in early Mycenaean glyptic art, echoes the symbols of Minoan religion – without, however, indicating whether the beliefs behind them were also adopted on the mainland’. Figurines, however, constituting such an obviously significant part in several aspects of mainland life and ritual, have been to some extent neglected. It is hoped that this investigation will go some small way to redress the balance.

Chapter 1: The place of figurines in a cognitive study.

The development of archaeological method.

In the century since the archaeological discoveries of Schliemann at Mycenae and Sir Arthur Evans at Knossos, scholarly interest in the prehistoric Aegean has increasingly gathered momentum. Nowhere has this been more the case than in the area of religion and cultic behaviour, where careful research in the field, particularly during the last quarter of the twentieth century, has built on the pioneering work of earlier Aegean archaeologists. Before the evidence from the excavations at Mycenae and Knossos was available, early attempts at recreating the beliefs and behaviour patterns of early societies, including those of the Greco-Roman world, had been based largely on myth and folk culture (e.g. Frazer 1890, *passim*). The Bronze Age itself was first identified officially as a 'pre-historic' period by the Danish scholar Thomsen (1788-1865), but the first scholar to provide physical proof of the era was Schliemann (1821 - 1890). As a result of discoveries in the Peloponnese, Schliemann was able to use archaeological evidence to try to construct a picture of mainland BA belief. However, while not to denigrate his inspiration and effort, Schliemann made no attempt to formulate any coherent conclusion based on a logical study of his findings of figurines and their various contexts, but, in seeking justification for his belief in Homeric theocracy, he simply assumed that they represented 'idols of Hera'. Likewise, Evans' ground-breaking treatise on Aegean cult (1901) and thorough excavations at Knossos have formed the basis for subsequent fieldwork and research on Minoan cult. However, he also was overly concerned with the verification of a culture whose roots were at the time more deeply embedded in legend than hard fact.

For a large part of the twentieth century, Martin Nilsson's views on the relationship of Mycenaean cult to its Minoan predecessor found favour with scholars. In the 1950 reprint of his book on Minoan and Mycenaean religion (first published 1925) he maintained that the Minoan and Mycenaean religions were essentially the same. 'So we have reason to suppose that the Minoan and Mycenaean religions were identical in their outward forms. Practically, in the details of research, we must treat both as one; for no separation can be made between the small monuments, gems etc. whether found on the mainland or in Crete' (1950: 7). One can forgive Nilsson his sweeping assumption, in view of the fact that the significance of many cultic installations, especially on Crete, had not yet been fully understood nor had Ventris produced his translation of the Linear B

tablets. Specifically on the topic of rings and seals found in a mainland context, Nilsson was undoubtedly correct in his claim that they depicted scenes of cult. However, Hägg (1981: 35-7) makes the point that while they are 'potentially very informative on the actual rites and religious ideas. There is, however, the constant problem of what is Minoan and what is Mycenaean'. He claims, therefore, that it is impossible to ascertain whether the scene depicted on a ring or seal had any religious significance for its mainland owner, who might simply have valued it for prestigious reasons, in that it represented a piece of fine Minoan craftsmanship. Possibly the most satisfactory answer to the problem is provided by Niemeier (1990: 165-70). Analysing various cult scenes on rings from the mainland and Crete, he concludes that the Mycenaeans were selective in their adoption of Minoan cult symbolism, reproducing only those iconographic elements which had a bearing on their own ritual.

In the last three decades great strides have been made towards clarifying our understanding of Minoan and Helladic belief and behaviour patterns. However, it is fair to say that the large amount of evidence related to cult from sites in Crete enables us to form a more consistent and accurate picture of Minoan practice than is true for its mainland counterpart, where inconsistency and dearth of evidence have been major factors. This imbalance has in part been redressed by discoveries of areas and installations specifically related to cult at Mycenae and Tiryns on the mainland, as well as at Phylakopi on Melos, though the lack of any overall uniformity relating to these and other Mycenaean sites presents us with difficult problems of analysis. At this point it is necessary to add an important caveat: with the exception of the Linear B texts, which were not intended to incorporate a manual on Mycenaean cultic behaviour anyway, there are no contemporary references to Aegean religious belief. Consequently, though an increasing quantity of mainland cultic installations and apparatus is now being brought to light, these must be distinguished from actual belief. In other words, we can identify structures and artefacts which appear to have some sort of cultic symbolism. In many cases we can even hypothesise with reasonable accuracy on the nature of the ritual which might have taken place in a given installation. However, while ritual might reflect belief in some way, in the absence of precise written texts we have no means of knowing precisely what the Minoans and especially the Mycenaeans believed about their gods. As a result, the views of scholars have tended to divide into two camps: there are those who have concentrated on identifying cultic establishments and apparatus without any great attempt at explaining their function (Rutkowski 1981, 1986), while others have adopted a

more speculative approach without first establishing strict criteria to determine what could be directly related to cultic behaviour (Persson 1942: *passim*; Taylour 1964: 43ff.).

In recent years scholars have applied a more rigorous approach to determine which installations and apparatus can with any degree of certainty be claimed to represent cultic behaviour. Foremost in this methodology is Renfrew in his analysis of the shrines at Phylakopi and their contents. Pointing to the problems for students of prehistoric religion, he notes (1985: 11): ‘The archaeologist has no direct access to the cult practices of early times: his knowledge of them must come, by a process of inference, from the study of the material remains. Still less does he have direct access to the meaning which these cult practices had for their practitioners, or to the religious beliefs of the time’. Since he considers that religion follows a regular formula, Renfrew claims that it is up to the archaeologist to recognize and try to interpret the formula. He goes on to suggest a process whereby the archaeologist might, by logical and progressive deduction, confirm evidence of ancient cultic behaviour. This, in turn, might enable him to reconstruct the underlying beliefs behind particular behaviour patterns. In this sort of analysis Renfrew stresses the importance of symbolism and redundancy, since the recurrence of a particular image might reflect its importance or intrinsic meaning. Furthermore, he argues, in order to distinguish sacred ritual from the purely secular, two crucial features must be in evidence: expressive actions on the part of an adorant within a ‘liminal’ zone (shrine, sacred grove, mountain top etc.), and secondly an indication (by size, gesture, position etc.) that a transcendental being is involved. While Renfrew himself admits (*op.cit.* 432) that this sort of methodology is more a means of establishing cult practice than inherent belief, it does, at least, avoid the common pitfalls either of intuitive guesswork which takes little account of how conclusions are reached or of inferring the sacred nature of a site from its later usage.

On similar lines to Renfrew, Warren (1988: 12ff.), seeking to establish some sort of accurate framework for a study of Minoan cult, maintained that ritual in general consisted essentially of three elements, viz. ‘δρώμενα’ ‘things done’, ‘λεγόμενα’ ‘things said or sung’ and ‘δεικνύμενα’ ‘things displayed’. Pointing out the virtual lack of evidence in Minoan cult (*op.cit.*: 12-13) for ‘λεγόμενα’, Warren then goes on to discuss, within this basic framework, five significant elements of Minoan ritual; these include baetylic, sacrifice and flower rituals as well as those concerned with dance and robing. This method has enabled Warren to formulate a hypothesis on Minoan cultic behaviour which is based, like Renfrew’s, on close observation of repeated scenes and symbols.

Essentially, Warren considers that ritual is the operation of belief and that the latter can be elicited by correct interpretation of ritual. He concludes that the purpose of various Minoan rituals was to effect communication between the human and divine world, in terms either of an offering made by the worshipper to the deity or of an invocation to epiphany. Both of these types of ritual have been examined in much greater detail by Marinatos (1986: *passim*) and Hägg (1986: 41-62).

It is hardly surprising that this sort of rigorous methodology is the approach which has now found favour with modern scholars, in that it avoids the inaccurate and misleading conclusions which were sometimes a part of the writing on various topics of prehistoric archaeology in earlier decades.

The significance of figurines.

In this cognitive approach to Aegean cult, figurines might prove to be a particularly useful area of study for a number of reasons. This is principally because they are clearly non-utilitarian items but appear in significant numbers throughout the Aegean from the Neolithic Period onwards. Consequently, where reliable contexts can be established, figurine find spots might prove potentially informative in a study of cult. This is particularly true when figurines are consistently found in considerable numbers in a specific location with other cultic paraphernalia, since they are likely to be dedications of some sort or another. Nowhere is this more true than on Crete where Peatfield (1990: 117-31) has demonstrated the significance of figurines to peak sanctuary ritual. In the case of Mycenaean figurines, most of which fit conveniently into a particular type or group, we have a finite and self-contained area for study. Moreover, while a great many Mycenaean figurines, especially those in a very fragmentary condition, are clearly not in a primary location and are of little help in establishing a possible meaning, vast numbers of them can with certainty be claimed to belong to one of three contexts, viz. funerary, domestic and sacred; of these the symbolism implicit in the last might prove to be the most persuasive. However, close examination of the frequency and manner of figurine distribution in graves and domestic contexts is likely to prove a useful tool in the cognitive approach to the study of mainland prehistoric religion described above.

Problems of interpretation concerning figurines.

There have been several attempts at explaining the meaning of mainland figurines, though because of the variation of contexts in which they appear precise

interpretation has proved difficult. Some have suggested that they were children's toys (Blegen 1937: 256). This possibility may be borne out by their appearance both in child graves and throughout Mycenaean sites in no specific context – in other words, abandoned at random, as children will do when they tire of playing with a particular toy. However, figurines also appear in adult graves, which might imply a different meaning. Moreover, if they were simply children's playthings, they are hardly likely to have appeared so frequently in what appear to be ritual sites. This in itself also poses a further problem: what sort of cultic role were they understood to have performed in shrines? Were they votive offerings, intended as small replicas of the deity concerned? Alternatively, were they votaries, representations of the worshipper(s), intended as permanent adorants? It is also conceivable that they were intended as cult images, thought to represent the physical presence/epiphany of the deity within his/her shrine.

This particular multiplicity of meaning has led French to make her now oft-repeated suggestion that 'Fundamental to any discussion of the uses of Mycenaean figurines are the contexts in which they are found' (1971: 107). While I have no intention of disputing what seems to be a highly plausible suggestion, it might nevertheless be possible to delineate more precise boundaries between the varying different contexts and thereby ascertain the specific purpose of figurines in them. This will require detailed investigation of deposition patterns in varying contexts. It might also be possible to add to our interpretation of their meaning by direct examination of the figurines themselves, i.e. by closer observation of iconography and gesture. Of particular note here is the changing nature of females and the virtual usurpation of Phi figurines by Psi examples. Highly significant in a shrine context is the relationship of figurines to large figures (both female and bovine). In other words, is there a tendency for small figurines to accompany large ones of a similar type? Does regional/contextual variation play a part, i.e. are females more common in one area or context and bovines in another? A further problem is that, while all figurines show an increasing tendency towards stylisation, Psi females become more diversified towards the end of the LBA. This fact in itself is nevertheless potentially informative, in that many late Psi types of eccentric style first make their appearance in LH IIIC at sites where there is no earlier evidence of figuration. In other words, does this reflect a change in cultic and/or population patterns towards the end of the Mycenaean Period? These are all questions which the current study will attempt to address, though on such a nebulous topic, there can be no firm guarantee of clear-cut answers.

Comparison to other Aegean figurines.

Before examining figurines and their contexts in detail, it seems appropriate to attempt to trace the possible origins of LH III figurines, since clarification of this question might prove a useful tool in interpreting function.

The figurines of LH III do not represent a new phenomenon in mainland Greece. Examples are found to a greater or lesser extent throughout the Aegean from the Neolithic Period onwards. However, occurrences are sporadic with proliferation in one area counteracted by a complete lack of evidence elsewhere. Indeed, while figuration in the Neolithic Period varied greatly from region to region, the mainland demonstrates a rich tradition of mostly clay types, but stone examples are found also. Of particular note are the finds from Thessaly which show a strong emphasis on fertility, while a particularly fine example of a seated figure belongs with a cache of twenty four from the Franchi Cave in the Argolid.

Elsewhere in the Aegean, the last stages of the Neolithic Era saw the start of the Cycladic tradition which continued throughout the EC Period. They were made from white marble and were virtually all humanoid. Early types were schematic in appearance, while in EC II the well-known folded-arm figures appeared [fig. 1]. Though there are variations from the canonical form, mostly they were of medium size with long neck and upturned face; facial details were indicated by paint. The feet turned downwards, indicating that they cannot have been intended to stand upright. Most come from richer graves, though not all graves contained them. Their function is not altogether clear. Dickinson (1994: 172) suggests that they might either have been associated with a particular family or individual to indicate their social or religious status or they could have been used in ceremonial exchanges. Examples of Cycladic figurines are found all over the Aegean, including the mainland, some possibly imported as prestige items (Marthari 1999: 159), while mainland imitations also occur (Dickinson 1994: 172). However, they are unlikely to have had any influence on the development of LH mainland figurines since the tradition of figuration in the Cyclades declined after 2000 B.C., a good six hundred years or so before the appearance of mainland figurines.

On the mainland there is some evidence of figuration during EH, though the examples are not plentiful. A female torso belongs among Lerna IV material and a female figurine was found by Blegen in an EH level at Zygouries; while the latter bears some resemblance to LH figurines, there is no possibility of it in any way influencing their development, since there is no evidence of figurines from the mainland during the MH

Period. Other EH examples are largely animals, for example the seventeen clay bovids/ovids discovered by the Greek Archaeological Service during excavations at Lithares.

On Crete the situation is rather different since a figurine tradition can be traced from the start of the EM Period to the close of LM III. Vessels in the shape of humans and animals appear in the EM Period and have been argued by some scholars to have a cultic function (Peatfield 1987: 90; Goodison 1989: 27-9; Marinatos 1993: 13ff.). Moreover, a vessel found in the pre-palatial settlement of Myrtos has been claimed to be a goddess (Gesell 1985: 7, 114-16; Warren 1988: 4), though Whitelaw (1983: 342) and Dickinson (1994: 262) are sceptical.

Figurines are not found in any quantity in Crete until the First Palace Period, when they appear in great numbers at peak sanctuaries. Peatfield (1990: 117ff) identifies twenty five peak sanctuaries throughout Crete, each of them within a day or so's walking distance of a settlement. They invariably focus on a series of natural terraces, though Juktas has an elaborate arrangement of built rooms dated to MM I – MM II (Karetsou 1981: 145). The clay votive figurines common to most peak sanctuaries were wedged into rock crevices or apparently thrown into fires. Essentially two types of figurines are found : many represented human adorants, both male and female (the males often wearing a codpiece and dagger and the females an elaborate headdress and flared skirt [figs. 2, 3]. Both sexes are shown with their arms held in various poses, but very often upraised in an attitude of worship. According to Davaras (1979: 18) 'they may represent the votaries themselves, replicas of them, which they left at the sanctuary to ensure continuous adoration'. In addition, there were various animal species, especially bovines [fig. 4]. Since as domestic animals bovines were far less common than sheep or goats, and since sacrifice was not necessarily a feature at all peak sanctuaries (for example, Atsipadhes), Zeimbekis argues (1998: 233ff) that bulls in Crete were closely associated with power and status and that it is the symbolism of the bull that is important. Therefore they were not simply linked only with cult or only with economy but embodied a complex interweaving of ritual, economic and social implications. Other animals such as hedgehogs, birds, snakes and beetles also appear, some peculiar to one area. According to Zeimbekis (*op.cit.*: 237-8) all animal figurines were intended as gifts to the deity or deities thought to inhabit the mountain(s), in fulfilment of a vow – which is why they are wedged into crevices; they are, in effect, substitutes for the real thing.

In the Second Palace Period the majority of peak sanctuaries fell out of use.

Peatfield (1990: 127) suggests that this is part of a 'deliberate centralisation of the cult, a religious dimension to the political and economic centralisation which marks the Second Palace Period'. He argues (*op.cit.*: 130) that the remaining peak sanctuaries were the nearest thing to pan-Cretan cult and the obvious choice of the New Palace rulers to promote the growth of their own power. The shrines in the palaces, he considers, were simply repositories for valuable items used in peak sanctuary ritual. However, Dickinson (1994: 275) points to anomalies in Peatfield's argument, noting palatial areas where no associated peak sanctuary exists. He also points to the considerable 'palatial-style' building operations which took place at Kato Symi in the Second Palace Period, as well as some of the wealthy palatial-style offerings, which include bronze figurines, chalices and tables of offering inscribed with Linear A. This palatial attention marks it out as a very important rural sanctuary but one which was not very close to any of the palaces or wealthy villas.

Figurine styles also alter in the Second Palace Period; small figurines continued in use, but, since the smaller peak sanctuaries ceased to function, in real terms fewer were produced. There was greater emphasis on large figures. The peak sanctuary at Kophinas apparently came into use for the first time and provides most of the evidence for large figures, both human and bovine (Zeimbekis 1998: 239). The function of figures remained basically the same as that of figurines. However, Zeimbekis makes the point that since the figures were too large to be placed in rock fissures, they were used as items of display and therefore more highly rated as offerings; this, in turn, put greater emphasis on the status of the individual who placed the gift (*op.cit.* 240). Bronze figurines also began to appear as offerings at Second Palace peak sanctuaries, further indication of the elite attention they were receiving. Mostly they were of the same type as the earlier clay male, female and animal votives, though different examples also appear (Hood 1978: 112-3 figs. 96-9).

Figurines rarely appear in any other contexts in Second Palace Period Crete, but those which do were clearly prestige items and must have been intended for display, at least some of the time. These include the 50 cm. high Palaikastro 'kouros' and the three faience figurines of the snake goddess and her companion(s) from the Temple Repositories at Knossos. The workmanship and materials of these statuettes are of the highest quality, reflecting palatial investment in cult. Dickinson (1994: 173) points to the stylistic links between these figures and the fine ivory trio from Mycenae representing two women and a boy. This group as well as the ivory female figure from Tsountas'

Tomb 27 at Mycenae are clearly prestige items and might indicate some sort of continuation of elite Minoan figuration in the Mycenaean Period, though there are too few examples to confirm this.

In LM III, after the fall of the palaces, there is evidence for a renewed interest in open-air ritual, with additional building activity at Kato Symi and Juktas. The latter became the focus for the dedication of large wheel-made bovines, a feature, according to Zeimbekis (1998: 278ff.), reflecting the breakdown of centralised state society. Similar large bovines also make their appearance on the mainland during LH III and there has been much discussion regarding their origin (Nicholls 1970: 10; Renfrew 1985: 425ff.; Kourou and Karetsou 1997: 112). Though I am not convinced that figures from the one tradition necessarily influenced the development of the other, if such influence was a factor, it is much more likely to have been Minoan on Mycenaean, in view of the history of bovine figuration in Crete. However, Zeimbekis has shown that the large bovine figures of Crete were essentially prestige votives (1998: 278), and this does not seem to be the case with mainland examples which appear to be connected to a specific cult, as will be shown below (pages 69-71). It is far from certain, therefore, that the origin and implicit function of Minoan bovine figures was directly assumed by mainland types.

The same is true for the smaller bovine figurines. While it is true that mainland types bear physical comparison with bovid peak sanctuary figurines, virtually all peak sanctuaries except Juktas were abandoned at the end of LM I, just before the establishment at Knossos of a new ruling class which shows strong Mycenaean links and the beginning of the period of the strongest links between Crete and the mainland. It is unlikely, therefore, that an emerging mainland elite would adopt the outdated symbolism of small bovine figurines. Moreover, the contexts of Minoan and Mycenaean small bovines cannot be compared. On the mainland there are no peak sanctuaries; even the Apollo Maleatas site has been discounted (Sakellerakis 1996: 97n 187), though bovine figurines are found in substantial numbers in other contexts, such as graves and settlements.

These arguments apply equally to small human figurines. Throughout the Second Palace Period anthropomorphic figurines of terracotta became less and less a feature of peak sanctuary ritual and no peak sanctuary figurines were produced after LM I. This is hardly a situation likely to trigger the beginnings of a mainland tradition in LH IIIA. There are other obstacles to such a development. If peak sanctuary figurines were the precursors of mainland types, one would have expected free standing males to appear

in the mainland tradition, but they are almost completely absent. Moreover, as with bovines, the context and function of Mycenaean human figurines are different. While Minoan figurines are found very largely on peak sanctuaries, Mycenaean figurines are found in a variety of contexts. Most significant of all is the probable difference in function. As noted earlier (*supra* p. 10), peak sanctuary figurines are thought to represent votaries in permanent adoration, which, as I hope to demonstrate below, cannot be claimed as the implied meaning of mainland figurines.

The most distinctive feature of the Post-palatial Period in Crete is the figure of the Minoan Goddess with Upraised Arms, which seems to be the focus for ritual in the several bench shrines which appear both in settlements and in more remote areas. Though slight variations occur, the goddess is of a distinct and recognisable type with stylised cylindrical body and arms held aloft in the position adopted by some of the mainland-manufactured figures and by Psi figurines. However, it is virtually impossible for the Minoan figures to have influenced the development of a mainland figurine tradition, since most examples date to LM IIIB (Dickinson 1994: 285) and some of the finest to LM IIIC, well after the beginning and *floruit* of Mycenaean figures and figurines. Indeed, though much of the paraphernalia associated with the Minoan Goddess with Upraised Arms is completely in accord with Cretan cultic tradition (birds, snakes, horns of consecration), it is quite possible that the figure might represent an example of what Renfrew suggests (1981: 32) might be a 'reflux' of religious symbolism from the mainland to Crete. For reasons such as this and for those stated above, I do not believe that Mycenaean figurines and figures were directly developed from Minoan examples – though I can as yet offer no alternative explanation. Further investigation, while it might not resolve the problem of mainland figurine origin, might at least provide reasons for the adoption of figurines on such a wide scale by the Mycenaean.

Chapter 2: A brief review of scholarly discussion and description of types of figurines.

Brief history of scholarship.

As noted above (p. 1), it was Schliemann who first drew attention to Mycenaean figurines. He found in excess of five hundred in the course of his excavations at Mycenae and Tiryns, most of which are now in the National Archaeological Museum in Athens. He considered that the arms of the now familiar Psi figurines were ‘intended to represent the moon’s crescent or the two horns of a cow, or both the one and the other at the same time’ (1880: 10). Shortly after Schliemann, Tsountas conducted further excavations on the citadel of Mycenae and in the cemeteries outside. He distinguished three basic types of figurine as well as variations on standard representations. Like Schliemann, he also referred to them as ‘idols’ and claimed (1897: 297) that the female figurines were ‘images of a deity’. He drew attention to the numbers found by Schliemann ‘in every room of the palace’ (*ibid.*) but points to Schliemann’s naïveté, criticising him for putting ‘Homeric labels on Mycenaean works’. Based on his own excavations at Mycenae, Tsountas also pointed to the large number of figurines which have a tomb provenance. Noting females depicted with arms across the breasts and those which nurse a child at the breast, Tsountas claimed (*op.cit.* 306) that in these figures ‘we must recognise the goddess of regeneration’. He spoke also of ‘terracotta kine in which we recognise the cheap substitute for actual victims’. Such emblems, he claims, ‘could have been offered on household or outdoor altars’. On the basis of the types identified by Tsountas, Winter (1903) then gave a full list of those examples which were known at the time.

Subsequent excavations further attested the significance of figurines, though scholars tended to concentrate mainly on evidence from graves. Persson (1931: 89), comparing figurines to *Ushabtis* in Egypt, thought that female figurines which were found in tombs were intended as servants for the dead. Blegen, as a result of his excavations of tombs at Prosymna (1937), commented on the coincidence of child burial and figurines (1937: 255). He suggested that females might represent nurses and animals a source of milk, or else that both might simply be toys. After many seasons of excavations, Wace said of figurines (1949: 114-5) ‘whether they are cult objects or votive offerings is an open question, but I am inclined to regard them as votives’. Both Wace (1932) and Blegen (1937) gave type classification to figurines but used different terminology from

one another, which made subsequent discussion about context and function difficult. It was not until Furumark made his study of Mycenaean pottery, in 1941, that females, at least, were given a standard classification, the division into 'Phi', 'Tau' and 'Psi' which they have now.

Nilsson (1950: 307) gave a dual interpretation to figurines. Those found in shrines he interpreted as both votives and representations of deities, while those found in graves, he argued, like Persson, were comparable to Ushabtis. This argument had previously been rejected by Picard (1948: 247) and was later attacked by Mylonas (1966: 114-16) who, in a very useful argument on figurines, developed the ideas put forward by Blegen, claiming that 'we can definitely assert that they are characteristic finds of children's burials'. He rejected Nilsson's earlier argument that figurines were found more frequently in poorer tombs, in place of luxury items, in order to secure a luxurious after-life. Mylonas made the point that if this were so, every grave would have one. Mylonas also rejected Persson's interpretations that figurines represented Ushabtis, claiming that since figurines were brushed to the side walls of a tomb after the decomposition of the body, they were not intended as companions in the next world. Mylonas' own view was that Psi figurines developed from the Minoan Goddess with upraised arms and represented divinities in whatever context they were found, though, as noted earlier (*supra* p. 13) this is unlikely on chronological grounds. Phi figurines found in graves, Mylonas considered, represented nurses. However, it is worth noting that he made no comment on the function of Phi figurines in any other context.

In 1961 French produced her Ph.D study of Mycenaean figurines, later published in the *Annual of the British School at Athens* (1971). Her thorough and accurate classification of both females and bovines has been invaluable in providing precise benchmarks of morphology and design which are essential as sources of information on dating and stylistic techniques. 1970 saw the publication of Nicholl's paper dealing with later figurines and figures. His account made a valuable contribution to discussion on the subject, especially on the topic of wheel-made bovines, which he considered to have developed from the LM I askoid bulls of Crete and to be connected with sacrifice at outdoor altars. In the light of subsequent finds from the Cult Centre at Mycenae (Taylour 1970: 270-9) and from the shrine complex at Phylakopi (Renfrew 1985), French later updated her work on figurines with a short article in 1981, which takes account of large figures. However, she still stands firm in her original conclusion that figurines take their function from their context (1981: 173). In other words, according to French, there is a

discrete difference in meaning when a figurine is found in a tomb, outdoor altar or domestic context. In 1985 French made detailed comments on all the figures/figurines from Phylakopi, both human and animal, and their significance to the use of the shrine complex. She noted the 'pairing' of figurine types in the two shrines (1985: 277) as well as the combination of large animal figures with large humans, which include the, so far, unique males.

As further archaeological discoveries, especially of figurines and figures, extended the evidence related to possible mainland ritual, Hägg (1981: 36) postulated two strata of Mycenaean cult, the official and popular. Though he considered that figurines were ultimately derived from Minoan prototypes (1985: 213), he regarded them as un-Minoan in function and largely belonging to the second stratum of mainland cult.

In the late 1970's and early 1980's Kilian conducted his work on the Tiryns Unterberg. His excavations were thorough, precise and very carefully documented. In connection with the present study, his notation of figurine contexts has been most informative and one which no student of mainland domestic cult in the Bronze Age can afford to overlook. In particular, Kilian drew attention to concentrations of figurines at hearths and doorways and suggested, therefore, that they may have had some sort of apotropaic function, an interpretation which has the guarded support of Dickinson (1994: 287). Moreover, Kilian's description of the various phases of the Lower City shrine aids greatly in our interpretation of cult in LH III C. Consequent on his excavations at Tiryns, Kilian added to his discussions on figures/figurines, stressing their importance to both official and popular cult (1988: 148). Further to this and based on evidence of a substantial figurine deposit from the open-air sanctuary of Agia Triada in the Argolid, in 1990, he pointed to the small number of figurines found in the palace areas of Tiryns and Pylos and contrasted this with the high numbers found in fringe areas. On this topic, he talked about 'this curious aspect of selectivity' (1990: 195) and supported Hägg's idea of the association of figurines with a popular rather than palatial religion.

Following up on the large numbers of figurines found in the Citadel House Area at Mycenae and on the work of French, Tamvaki (1973) published her study of those examples which are noteworthy because of their variations from standard types. However she stressed that, on contextual grounds, none of these figurines can be assumed to have any religious import.

The topic of large bovine figures in mainland cult had not received much attention, except for the significance of the Phylakopi material. This situation was rectified in 1996

by the publication of Guggisberg's thorough study of mainland Bronze Age and Early Iron Age wheel-made bovine figures.

Most recently, two studies have been made on the significance of cult centres. Whittaker (1997) has produced a very thorough account of mainland cult centres and their relationship to LM III sanctuaries on Crete and to Palestinian temples. Specifically on the Mycenae complex, 1999 saw the publication of Moore and Tylour's account of the Temple, its contents and its significance to mainland cult. Further publications on installations from the Mycenae Cult Centre are awaited with interest.

Description of figurines

It is appropriate at this point, before attempting any interpretation of the possible function of figurines, to give a description of the various types, both human and animal. Since French has already described figurines in great detail, only the most brief and basic descriptions will be given here, sufficient to clarify what is meant in the text by the various type classifications.

Females.

The development of the various types of female and bovine figurines, illustrated diagrammatically by French (1971), is also appended here [figs. 5(a) and 5(b)]. The original type of Mycenaean female figurine is the 'Naturalistic', which, as the name suggests, most resembles the human form in shape and features [fig. 6]. The arms are formed separately from the body and are held in front of the breasts. It is this type which most resembles peak sanctuary figurines. Earliest examples can be dated to LH II. Three of the remaining four types of females are of the type descriptions 'Phi', 'Tau' and 'Psi, from their resemblance to these letters of the Greek alphabet. The 'Phi' was developed directly from the Naturalistic and can be subdivided into three types (French's classification). The Proto-Phi, developed during LH IIIA, has arms which curve round the sides of the torso. They are plastically moulded but attached to the body [fig. 7]. Phi A has the upper part of the body represented by a disc; the waist is low and the stem thick [fig. 8]. Phi B has a columnar stem and applied plait [fig. 9]. Both of these types belong to LH III A2. All Phi types invariably have a bare head and plastically rendered breasts. The Transitional type, of which there are fewer examples, developed from the Naturalistic towards the end of LH IIIA. The upper body is short and rhomboid in shape with the arms folded across it [fig. 10]. From this developed the Tau, dated to the end of LH IIIA and continuing throughout LH IIIB. The upper body is very shallow and shaped like a

flattened ball, while the stem is thick [fig. 11]; distribution areas of this type are largely limited to the Argolid and Attica.

The Psi can be divided into three sub-groups, all of which were developed at the beginning of LH IIIB and continued into LH IIIC : (i) 'Hollow Psi' which has, as the name suggests, a hollow stem and arms raised like an upturned crescent [fig. 12] (ii) 'Columnar Psi', which has a solid columnar stem, standard waistline and arms held upright as a deep crescent [fig. 13] (iii) 'High-Waisted Psi, which has, a columnar stem, high waistline and shallower crescent arms [fig. 14]. All Psi types have a polos, or religious headdress, of the type depicted on the Agia Triada sarcophagus [fig. 15]; an applied plait is also usual.

All types of figurines are painted with wavy vertical lines, though these become fewer in the developed Psi stage. Indeed, later Psi figures, especially those of LH IIIC, tend to be more sparingly decorated and increasingly show deviation from the standard patterns of painting [figs. 16, 17 and 18].

A variation from the standard types of Proto-Phi, Phi and Tau figurine is the 'kourotrophos'. This is a standard female but has the addition of a child at the left breast, often protected by a parasol [fig. 19]. Two examples of Psi figurines with children also exist, though, as French points out (1971: 142), 'it is unnatural for a Psi to be imagined carrying a child in this way'; in real terms it would virtually be impossible. Rare examples include a sort of 'double kourotrophos'; a pair of figurines is seen to support a child between them, on top of their shoulders.

Animals.

Animal figurines are 'of an indeterminate species, but generally considered to be bovine' (*op.cit.*: 151). French divides them into 'Wavy', 'Linear', 'Spine' and 'Ladder' types, according to their decoration. The first three of these she also subdivides into two. Wavy Type 1, which is confined to LH IIIA, is the most naturalistic. They have curved, slightly forward-pointing horns with a short muzzle and arched, separately modelled tail; they are decorated with wavy lines all over the body [fig. 20]. Wavy Type 2 (middle LH IIIA-B) is more stylised with the lines painted in a more definite design. The horns are straight and upright, rather than curved, but the tail still hangs freely [fig. 21].

Linear Type 1 first appeared towards the end of the LH IIIA and is virtually contemporaneous with Wavy Type 2. The muzzle and horns are very similar to Wavy Type 2 and the tail just an applied strip. The body is decorated with straight lines, beginning from the neck [fig. 22]. Linear Type 2 appeared at the beginning of LH IIIB

and continued until the end of the Mycenaean Period; it has a long body, short legs and long muzzle; the horns are short but splayed and the tail flattened but slightly raised at the back [fig. 23]. Decoration is much more schematic and indicative of the increasing stylisation identifiable also on females. Stylisation increases with Spine Type 1, which seems to be confined to LH IIIB. Both the body and muzzle are elongated while the horns are quite long and pointed directly upward; the tail has a pronounced upward 'bob' appearance. This type normally has a horizontal dorsal stripe with vertical stripes coming from it; these come down over the body and legs [fig. 24]. These are general characteristics, but it is to be pointed out that this particular type has a wide number of variations. Spine Type 2 (end of LH IIIB and the first part of LH IIIC) shows even more stylisation and economy of decoration. The rib lines are much shorter, barely coming down over the body with only one or two extending down the legs. The muzzle tilts upward and the tail is less pronounced; otherwise the shape is little altered [fig. 25].

The Ladder Type, which first appeared at the end of LH IIIA and continued until the end of LH IIIC, is less elongated in shape and fairly sparingly decorated; patterning consists largely of various types of decoration along the spine and coming part way down the body [figs. 26 and 27].

Variations on the bovine include the 'Driven Ox' [figs. 28 and 29], possibly representing an ox being driven to sacrifice. Two-horse chariots also appear; they are very schematic, shown with only two front and two hind legs between the two animals, while the chariot is attached to the rumps of the horses and shows a charioteer and a second figure standing behind the front rail, often with a parasol above them [fig. 30].

Furniture

A further variation on standard Phi and Psi figurines is the 'seated female', epitomised by the fine Psi example found by Tsountas in Tomb 91 at Mycenae [fig. 31], clearly intended to be sitting on a chair. Examples also occur of integral figurine and seat compositions. According to French (1971: 169), seated figurines cover the full spectrum of stylistic development from Naturalistic down to Late Psi. Two types of seats were identified by Mylonas, some with attached figures and others empty. Type A [fig. 32], which began earlier but continued in use throughout LH III, is of a solid high-backed reclining type; often the figure shown is little more than a bulge in the centre of the seat. Chairs of this type show considerable variation; some display a pronounced curve, giving a bucket-seat appearance, while others have projecting pieces (horns) on the corners of the back. Type B [fig. 33] resembles an armed basket chair with open sides

(Krzyszowska 1996: 92-3). According to French, (1971: 170), since the arms of the figure seated on this style of chair rest on the curving arms of the chair, this facilitated a gradual upturning of the figure's arms until a full 'psi' position was reached. Figurines associated with Type B chairs become increasingly stylised, until, as French notes (*ibid.*), 'nothing but a shapeless body roll and a head are shown'. Other examples of furniture noted by French (*op.cit.* 172-3) include four-legged biers or tables, usually shown empty, but there are examples with recumbent figures. Further examples of probable tables are circular with three legs; a composite example of this type is incorporated in the 'bread-maker', published by Blegen (Ann. viii-ix [1946-8] 13).

It is impossible to claim with certainty what meaning these pieces of furniture held for the Mycenaeans. However, in relation to the present study, I should like to suggest that the two types of chairs noted above might be intended to represent divine seats. The importance of seats as a means of segregating a deity or figure of authority is well attested throughout BA iconography (Rehak 1995: 95-117) as are processions of worshippers to a seated deity. It is not inconceivable, therefore, that representations of chairs may be intended to represent a permanent invitation to the deity concerned to accompany/preside over whatever human ceremony is taking place, perhaps as an honoured guest at a feast or as a tutelary figure at funeral rites.

Distribution of figurines.

Naturalistic figurines have a fairly wide provenance. Some of the earliest derive from Messenia, an area having strong links with Crete during LH II. Though figurines quickly became established in the Argolid, Naturalistic types have been found in relatively distant locations of the Mycenaean world, such as Ithaca, Chalcis and Achaia. Proto-Phi types show little expansion of orbit: most are found in areas at the centre of Mycenaean culture (Messenia and the Argolid): of particular note here is the fairly large numbers of early figurine types from Nichoria. Proto-Phi figurines have also been found at Atsipadhes in Crete and the Lipari Islands, though so far no examples appear to have reached the Eastern Mediterranean (French 1971: 116). The development of Phi figurines signalled not only increasing stylisation with two clearly identifiable stages of development (French *ibid.*), but also a vast broadening of orbit, with Phi figurines appearing not only in Rhodes and the Levant but in virtually all those areas of mainland Greece and the Mediterranean which had contact with the Mycenaean world. While Tau and Hollow-Psi types have a limited distribution, Standard Psi and High-Waisted Psi, like

Phi types, while they are concentrated in the Argolid, are found in all parts of the Mediterranean which had connections with the Mycenaean world, though examples from Crete, Rhodes and Cyprus are less common. Late Psi types are unique in that they belong to LH IIIC, a period of change in the Mycenaean world, when many of the well-known sites of LH IIIB had been abandoned. In contrast, new sites appear for the first time in LH IIIC, for example Amyklai and Perati. Late Psi figurines also occur in considerable numbers in the eastern Mediterranean, particularly Rhodes. French has suggested (1971: 139) that this may be a result of the breakdown of the palatial system on the mainland. Refugees from LH III mainland sites fled east, using Rhodes as a stopping-off point.

Animal figurines, though their numbers are less, show a similar distribution pattern to females in that early types are found mainly in the Argolid, while bovines of Linear Type 2 and Spine Types 1 and 2 which are roughly contemporary with Standard and High-Waisted Psi females are found in a much wider Mediterranean orbit.

More than any other item, except perhaps pottery, figurines are an indication of Mycenaean contact. They appear in any area where there is Mycenaean habitation or consistent contact with the Mycenaean world. Though figurines appear elsewhere in the Aegean during the Bronze Age, they are completely different in appearance and are not found in anything like the numbers which occur on mainland sites. Moreover, Mycenaean figurines are contemporary with the period of mainland palace society. They appear at the same time as the wealthy citadels and palaces began to emerge and, with the exception of those few new LH IIIC sites, they disappear almost as quickly as the palaces and palatial society. Furthermore, the deposition of figurines seems to be closely associated with the main centres of Mycenaean culture i.e. they are at their most dense in those areas which represent the core of Mycenaean society, the Argolid in particular. While figurines still appear in areas further removed from the main Mycenaean orbit, such as Thessaly or Achaea, evidence shows thus far that their numbers are much less. Figurines are, therefore, a unique cultural indicator of 'Mycenaean-ness' and as such cannot be overlooked by anyone attempting to gain insight into any aspect of the mainland civilisation of the Late Aegean Bronze Age. Moreover, in view of their association with shrines and cultic areas noted above (*supra* p. 1), it is possible that they will offer some insight into Mycenaean religious belief.

Chapter 3: Figurines in a funerary context.

Remarks on tombs and burial practices.

Little need be said here regarding Mycenaean tombs or of burial rites, since these topics are not a major concern for this study. However, in view of the emphasis laid on the significance of figurines in a funerary context and some of the problems of interpretation which arise as a result of mortuary practice, it seems appropriate to offer a few comments on tomb construction and burial practice.

Most cemeteries were located at a distance of a few hundred metres from the settlement with which they were associated (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 61), though it is not uncommon for children to be buried underneath the floors of inhabited houses. While variations such as tumuli occur – especially in the Mycenaean Period – essentially four types of tombs are evident during LH III, though the fourth type vastly outnumbers the other three and is where, by and large, most figurines are found: (i) Pit graves were simply a hole cut into earth or rock and usually rectangular, but oval and circular types are known (Dickinson 1983: 56). They are usually found in cemeteries with other graves, though some have been found in the areas between the houses in the Tiryns Unterburg. They are well constructed and are covered over with wood, often reinforced by layers of clay; some also have a slab (*ibid.*). (ii) Like pit graves were cists; these have slabs or rubble sides and a slab cover. (iii) Tholoi, possibly first developed in Messenia in the sixteenth century (Dickinson 1994: 225). Since their construction required so much effort and resources (Wright 1987: 173), they were ostensibly tombs for the elite of Mycenaean society. Circular structures, they were built underground and lined with rubble, or, in the case of the more elaborate tombs, ashlar masonry, using the corbelling technique; the finished product had the familiar ‘bee-hive’ shape. All tholoi were approached by an open dromos, which ended in a ‘stomion’ or entrance; this was narrower than the dromos and roofed over. (iv) Chamber tombs were by far the most common grave types used during LH III, especially in the Argolid. Cut directly out of the rock, they consisted of a dromos leading via a stomion into a hollow chamber. This was often roughly circular, though any shape was possible and a few had one or more side chambers. Judging by the nature of the finds, chamber tombs seem to have been used by a wide range of Mycenaean society. The gold and ivory grave goods from some chamber tombs seem to betoken great status and affluence, often, one imagines, on a similar scale to the incumbents of tholoi. It is not clear whether those at the lower end of the social scale were entitled to use chamber

tombs; indeed Dickinson has suggested to me (pers. comm.) that a section of the population might have been excluded from this form of burial.

Cavanagh and Mee (1998: 103-120) have given an account of likely burial ritual and the treatment of the dead, based on anthropological studies as well as archaeological evidence. Using the evidence of the Tanagra larnakes, they point to funerary processions, largely composed of women who appear to perform some sort of rhythmic dance (Cavanagh and Mee 1995: no. 44 fig. 7; *ibid.* Scenes 19-20, 42-3). Status of the deceased is recognised by jewellery, weaponry, seals or even, in the case of craftsmen, tools (*op.cit.* 11 note 67). This sort of symbolism attains its most ostentatious in the opulent burials of Grave Circle A but is much more frequently exemplified by a single bronze pin or stone button and a few pieces of pottery. Common in the Argolid were ceremonies of toasting the dead and the subsequent smashing of kylikes against the wall of the stomion.

A notable feature of chamber and tholos tombs is the amount of pits both within the chamber itself and in the dromos. Cavanagh and Mee argue (1988: 116) that this custom of 'secondary burial' was a direct result of the development of these types of tombs, which were deliberately designed to be re-opened for successive burials by the same family. They suggest that because family members needed to come to some sort of accommodation with the concept of having to face the remains of earlier interments they developed the ritual of secondary burial. Further on this topic, Voutsakis (1995: 60) makes the point that secondary burial arose from the need at the end of the MBA to glorify the ancestors at a time when Helladic culture was coming under strong Minoan influence. However, not all previous interments received such careful treatment, as, while some bodies were buried along with grave goods in prepared pits, remains of others appear to have been crammed together as tightly as possible; often one small pit might contain the remains of as many as eight or ten bodies. In other cases there is frequent evidence of bones simply being swept to the side of the chamber or piled in a heap. Many tombs also show evidence of the practice of fumigation, a periodic clearance and burning within a tomb. This presumably occurred when a tomb became too crowded or when an entire family died out and the tomb was taken over by another family group. In consequence, some tombs contain evidence of two or more strata of burials and frequently excavators record finding layers of burnt earth or carbonised remains; this is particularly so in the case of Tsountas' tombs at Mycenae. In these cases it is impossible to give any estimate of burial numbers since 'carbonised remains' can imply any number of bodies or indeed none at all, since it might refer to wood or other combustible material.

Criteria used in recording data.

In view of these difficulties, accurate recording of the numbers of bodies is virtually impossible, particularly in those cases where an excavation report simply records a 'pile of bones', there being no evidence of skulls. Consequently, in the case of figurines, it is often difficult to determine which bodies they might originally have been intended to accompany. Moreover, in some of the very early excavations, particularly at Mycenae, there are no records of the recovery of any human remains; possibly they were so few as not to have been considered worth recording. This situation is in some cases exacerbated by the depredations of tomb robbers who, while they were interested neither in human remains nor in the figurines which accompanied them, would no doubt have caused considerable disturbance and displacement within the tomb. These are all problems which compound the difficulties inherent in any attempt to obtain accurate data. However, in view of the numbers of figurines which appear in LH III graves and their implied significance in this context, some sort of compromise must be reached regarding the recording of data. Blegen's report of his excavations at Prosymna is clear and well documented. By counting the number of skulls he arrived at a minimum number of burials. I have used his criteria wherever possible. However, rarely are things quite so straightforward, since thigh and other heavy bones tend to survive but skulls are frequently crushed and leave no clear evidence. Consequently, in order to reach some sort of modus operandi I have adopted the following criteria to identify and count individual burials: -

- (i) where an excavation report simply says 'no bones' but records grave gifts, I have counted this as one burial.
- (ii) 'bones' / 'pile of bones' and no skulls I have reckoned as one burial.
- (iii) 'a large pile of bones' I have counted as two burials.
- (iv) References to 'bodies' I have counted as two and 'several bodies' I have reckoned as four.
- (v) 'a mass of bones' I have also counted as two and 'many bodies' as seven.

I am fully aware that these statistics are far from accurate and that the number of burials in these circumstances is likely to be considerably greater than my hypothesised ones. In fact, since, as Cavanagh and Mee point out (in Hägg and Nordquist 1990: 56) 'archaeologists tend to underestimate the number of burials in a tomb by a factor of two', my calculations, as it were, 'at third hand', are likely to be even less correct. In the case of Tsountas' tombs, where the recovery and recording of human remains was arbitrary and

in some cases negligent, my estimated figures are likely to be even more inaccurate. However, when the same criteria are used in the case of all burials where the information is so nebulous, there is at least some element of consistency.

I also attempted to assess the number of individual burials which were accompanied by figurines. This proved difficult as it is virtually impossible to estimate what is meant by a 'pile of bones'. Furthermore, where a group of bodies was present accompanied by several figurines, it was unclear how many of these burials included figurines, since it is quite possible that all the figurines in a tomb might have accompanied only one burial. Nevertheless, however inaccurate they are likely to be, these are the criteria I have observed: -

- (i) where the number of figurines corresponds to or is greater than the number of bodies, I have based my calculations on the number of bodies.
- (ii) Where several bodies are present and only one or two figurines, I have assumed that no more than one body can be accompanied by an individual figurine and so have discounted all superfluous burial numbers.

Child burial posed even greater problems, since on account of their small size and fragility child skeletal remains are more vulnerable to decay as a result of soil conditions and consequently will leave no visible trace. I have used two criteria for the identification of child burials: -

- (i) the presence of small, obviously children's bones.
- (ii) the presence of feeding bottles; miniature pottery vessels I have not included as these involve a greater element of doubt.

Occasionally only adult bones are visible in a grave where feeding bottles are present; I have counted one child burial in these circumstances also, on the assumption that one or more children were buried next to an adult and have left no visible trace.

The various grave sites.

The recent excavation of the Aidonia cemetery in the Argolid affords particularly interesting evidence for the early use of figurines in a funerary context in view of the cemetery's establishment in LH I (Demakopoulou 1996: 19). In Chamber Tomb 6 were discovered two very fine early examples of Naturalistic figurines (possibly as early as LH II), one of them in standard early pose [fig. 34], the other a kourotrophos [fig. 35]. Both of these had been deposited in a pit to accompany a secondary child burial. Other tombs at Aidonia also contained examples of all standard types of figurines. Chamber Tomb 15

in particular contained some particularly fine examples, including three unusual Psi types. Other cemeteries in the Argolid provide evidence for the frequent, though far from universal, practice of placing figurines in tombs. Consequently, I have examined the contents of graves in three separate sites in the Argolid, these being the cemeteries at Tiryns (Rudolph 1973) and Prosymna (Blegen 1937) as well as the excavations by Wace (1932) and Tsountas (published by A. Xenaki-Sakellariou 1985) of some of the many tombs scattered around Mycenae. The two palatial sites ought to afford good evidence for the burial practice of families belonging to established palace-based societies. However, as will be shown below, due to the early excavation date of the majority of tombs, the recorded data are not all that reliable. Prosymna, therefore, non-palatial, but prosperous and close to other major sites in the Argolid, with the added benefit of being carefully excavated and reported, in many ways afforded more accurate statistics. As a control for these sites, I have also given a very brief summary of the numbers of figurines found in graves at other sites, both in the Argolid and elsewhere.

Tiryns.

The evidence from the graves which have been excavated in the Prophitis Ilias cemetery at Tiryns is not always entirely clear, possibly due in part to the much later publication of the original excavation. The contents of the graves, apart from the pottery, are very limited both in quantity and quality. There are virtually no luxury goods or items of jewellery, and weapons are likewise poorly represented. Such small finds as do exist tend to be spindle whorls and minor bits and pieces of bone and bronze. Thus one might assume from the contents of these graves that the occupants were of relatively modest status. Of the eighteen excavated chamber tombs only four contained figurines. Moreover, it is noticeable that only those which were in continuous use for most of LH IIIA, the whole of LH IIIB1 and most of IIIB2 contained figurines. Those where the period of use was interrupted contained no figurines. All of the figurines were Phi or Psi females; there were no bovines. The evidence from the graves is summarised below: -

Grave VI: Two Psi figurines placed near the stomion and therefore presumably associated with an earlier burial. Two Psi (one of them a miniature) and an early Phi placed against the northern wall associated with one of a group of five skulls and some bones.

Grave XIV: On Phi and one Psi figurine (the latter quite large and in the north-west corner not far from a skull and some bones). The only other items here apart from human remains were of pottery.

Grave XV: Three Psi in a group in the southern sector, possibly connected with a skull and bones. Other items close by included a bronze button and some glass and stone beads possibly indicative of a female burial.

Grave XVI: In the southern half there were two figurines associated with bones and a feeding bottle (infant burial?). A third figurine was in the northern part.

From this fairly meagre evidence it appears that figurines might have been placed in these graves to accompany the reburial of a previous occupant. There are also indications that these figurines might be associated with female or child burials, a feature which supports the evidence from the Aidonia cemetery and the suggestions made by Blegen and Mylonas.

The evidence from the other three cemeteries is more extensive and has consequently been tabulated on the enclosed charts (Tables 1, 2 and 3 at rear) in order to present a clearer picture of figurine distribution.

Prosymna

The information from the Prosymna tombs (Table 1) might be summarised thus:

Total number of tombs: 53

Total number of figurines: 98

Tombs containing figurines: 22

Tombs not containing figurines: 31

Tombs containing figurines and evidence of child burial: 16 i.e. 72.72% of tombs containing figurines.

Therefore, just over 41% of tombs contained figurines, a fairly notable percentage.

However, the total number of identifiable burials is 415 skulls as well as bones in 39 other areas such as cists and pits i.e. 454, while those accompanied by figurines amount to 42, i.e. 9.25%, a considerably lower percentage. Moreover, if, as seems likely, the number of child burials is greater than those identified, the percentage will be even lower. In other words, under one tenth of burials at Prosymna is accompanied by a figurine/figurines, indicating that, while figurines appear as a significant feature in graves, they are a far from essential item of grave goods. What we must try to determine is the purpose behind the placement of figurines in some graves and not in others. It is clear that wealth was not

a factor, since those burials accompanied by figurines do not seem to have been particularly wealthy, apart perhaps from those in Tombs III, XLIII and XLIV. However, it cannot be argued that burials unaccompanied by figurines show any greater signs of opulence.

One noteworthy feature is the coincidence of child burial and figurines, i.e. 16/22 (72.72%) contained evidence of child burial and figurines, while 8/31 tombs (25.8%) contained evidence of child burial but no figurines. These figures indicate, therefore, that roughly three quarters of all child burials at Prosymna were accompanied by a figurine. This contrasts fairly strongly with the statistics for adult burials, where the percentages are much lower, i.e. 6/22 (27.27%). In other words, while it appears that more than three quarters of all child burials are supplied with figurines, just over one fifth of adult burials follow this pattern, suggesting that death in infancy/early childhood was a determining factor in the placement of figurines in graves. That being said, it is difficult to explain why not all child burials were supplied with figurines. Indeed, those burials which were unaccompanied by figurines did not display any different characteristics from those that did have them, i.e. manner of burial (except for the one child burial in a larnax – Tomb XVII), other grave goods, date of tomb etc., and so it is not clear why figurines were not among the grave goods. One can only assume that for some families particular habits or beliefs did not dictate that figurines should be placed, even with a child burial.

The other significant feature of the Prosymna tombs is the distribution of figurines. While the figures suggest an approximate ratio of 1:9 for figurine-accompanied burials, the charts indicate that figurines were not evenly distributed. More than half the tombs contained no figurines at all, whereas some contained several, a feature already noted at Tiryns. In fact, figurine clusters are a notable feature of the Prosymna graves. Of the 22 tombs which contain figurines, 13 have 'clusters' (3 or more figurines) i.e. just over half. What is even more significant is the distribution of the figurines themselves. Of the total number of 98 figurines, 80 belong in clusters, at least 33 of them accompanying a single burial and 77 of them possibly associated with a child burial. Of particular note here are the 16 Phi figurines accompanying the child burials in Tomb XXXIII.

One final point is worth noting about the Prosymna tombs. Of the total number of 53 tombs, 27 contained weaponry of some sort (including knives, cleavers etc.). Of the 27 tombs which contained weapons, 14 also contained figurines. In 9 of these the figurines were definitely not associated with the weapons, being in completely different places; these include Tombs XXIX, XXVIII, XXVII, XXXIII, XXXVI, XLIX, XLII, XLIV and

XLVI. There were therefore 5 tombs where weapons appear to have been associated with figurines. The tombs are listed as follows: -

XXXVII: towards the western end of a large heap of bones and other debris to the left of the chamber lay a sword, 6 gold-headed rivets and a dagger. One bovine lay in the middle of this heap.

XXXVIII: directly inside the door was a skeleton associated with which were a cleaver and knife. As well as all the pottery accompanying this burial was a single bovine.

N.B. There were a further two bovines and four females in this tomb also, but these are in a different area and probably associated with a child burial.

III: near the back of the chamber lay a single skeleton accompanied by a bronze arrowhead and knife as well as a bovine.

N.B. There was a second bovine and two Psi females associated not with this individual skeleton but with a large pile of bones, pottery, beads, buttons and a small amount of weaponry.

XLIII: To the inner right of the tomb lay a large pile of bones heaped up against the wall; there were at least 7 skulls and some children's bones and feeding bottles. Included among the bones were 4 daggers, a knife, an arrowhead and 9 rivets. There were also 5 Phi females.

X: In the centre of the tomb lay a heap of bones which included some children's bones. There was also a small amount of weapons (a knife, 3 spearheads, an arrowhead) as well as 8 female figurines.

In the first three of these tombs, where there appear to be examples of exclusively male burials (XXXVIII and III are single burials), the burials are accompanied by a single bovine, indicating that bovines might have been considered more appropriate in male burials. In the other two tombs where there were examples of females and weapons together, these formed part of a heap of several burials which also contained children's bones. In other words, there are only three examples in all of the Prosymna tombs of figurines accompanying male burials; all three examples are single bovines. There are no examples of female figurines being associated with exclusively male burials; where females appear with weapons it is in a mixed context which also contains children's remains.

Mycenae (Wace)

The figurine evidence from the tombs excavated by Wace at Mycenae (Table 2) is less persuasive than that from Prosymna. This is largely due to the paucity of clear infant burials. Only four clear examples of figurine-accompanied child burial are identifiable, (those in Tombs 502 (dromos), 504, 505 and 519); the four additional figurines in the dromos of Tomb 505 might also be associated with the infant burial there. The information may be summarised thus: -

Total number of tombs:	24
Total number of figurines:	48
Tombs containing figurines:	11
Tombs not containing figurines:	13
Tombs containing figs. and evidence of child burial:	4

Despite the difficulties, there are still some interesting conclusions which might be drawn. In seven of the eleven tombs where figurines were found they appeared in clusters, at least 13 of which were probably associated with child burial, a trend comparable to that already noted at Prosymna. Females greatly outnumber bovines : there were 38 females compared to 9 bovines/driven oxen, making relative percentages of 81% females compared to 19% bovines. Only four of the total number of tombs contained weapons (i.e. 515, 518, 529, 533). The first three of these were also particularly wealthy, containing, in addition to weapons, some very fine pottery, items of gold and ivory and beads of semi-precious stone, indicating that they belonged to wealthier families. None of these tombs contained figurines. Moreover, Tomb 518 was constructed in LH I and the other three in LH IIA, though all continued in use until the end of LH IIIA. Of the remaining seven tombs which did not contain figurines only one (520) was constructed in LH III; this was also a wealthy tomb. Of the other six, four (516, 517, 530, 532) were constructed in LH IIA and two (526, 528) in LH IIB. All continued in use during LH III. Two of these (517, 526) were also very wealthy. Two fairly secure conclusions might be drawn from this evidence: -

- (i) Figurines in these tombs do not appear in graves along with weapons, thus indicating that they are possibly not associated with male burials, a feature which corroborates evidence already noted at Prosymna.
- (ii) Figurines only seem to appear in tombs which were constructed during LH III when the figurine tradition was already established, even though tombs which were constructed earlier, which might have belonged to wealthier families, continued in use

during LH III. In effect there might be a tendency towards conservatism among some families, as already noted at Tiryns, an unwillingness to follow the growing trend towards figurine-accompanied burial.

Mycenae (Tsountas)

The evidence from the tombs excavated by Tsountas (Table 3) at Mycenae has been published by Xenaki-Sakellariou (1985). In many ways it is difficult to assess. Firstly, there is a noticeably small amount of pottery compared to some of the other items and one wonders how thorough the collection and recording of ceramic evidence was. There seems to be a similar problem with skeletal evidence. Many tombs are recorded as having no bones recovered; this includes eleven of the tombs containing figurines. Under normal circumstances, these might be used as tentative evidence for child burial, since, as already noted, small bones often do not survive. However, in view of the paucity of pottery, one must exercise caution here. Nevertheless, despite the negative factors, it is still possible to draw some conclusions on figurines and burial. With the exception of four tombs (1,46,65,79), all the graves contained only female figurines. In fact, females outnumber bovines by 58:4, i.e. 93.4% compared to 6.6% of the total. In addition to the standard types, there was also one large figure, two chairs and a boat. These numbers do not take account of the female and bovine figurines in Tomb 36, since the number is not specified. Furthermore, Tsountas talks of finding 14 Psi, 6 Phi, 2 unspecified types, 3 chairs and a chariot from his 1887/8 excavations and a further female from his 1895 excavations; since none of these come from a known tomb provenance, they cannot be included in the data, though the same emphasis on females is to be noted.

There were 103 tombs altogether. Of these, twenty contained figurines, i.e. approximately 20%. There were at least 65 figurines, though, as noted above, there were undoubtedly more than this. Of those 65 in a known provenance, 52 belong in eleven clusters. Of those twenty tombs which contained figurines, only four also contained any obvious weaponry, again 20%. Of the remaining 82 tombs without figurines, 30 contained weapons, i.e. 36.6%, indicating that, in these particular tombs, at least, weapons appear more frequently than figurines. It is apparent also that, as at Prosymna and Wace's Mycenae tombs, figurine placement is not a common feature with male burials; in fact, those that do occur (4/20) might not be associated with a male burial at all but might belong with the remains of another member of the family which have not survived, i.e. those of a child.

Another point can be made. With the exception of the very rich Tomb 91 and possibly Tombs 5, 11, 76 and 79 which show moderate wealth, the tombs which contained figurines tend to contain grave goods of relatively modest value or no grave goods at all. Of those tombs which did not contain figurines, several were very wealthy indeed. These include Tombs 47, 55, 58, 68, 69, 75, 81, 88, 102, 103, all of which contained items of gold, and Tomb 27 which contained some very fine worked ivory. This appears to corroborate the evidence from Wace's chamber tombs i.e. that figurines tend to appear in tombs belonging to less wealthy families. Whether these were also not constructed until LH III it is impossible to say, since at the time of Tsountas' excavations distinctions between the various phases of Mycenaean pottery had barely been noted. One further point might be made on the figurines from the Mycenae tombs excavated by Tsountas. Two of them (40, 41) contained figurines which for one reason or another warrant particular comment. One of the three figurines from T41 [fig. 36] is an exceptionally large and much finer kouroutrophos than those usually found in graves. The other [fig. 37], from T40, is even more noteworthy since it is closer to figures and similar in size and appearance to the figure from Room 32 in the Cult Centre [fig. 38]. Tsountas does not record the recovery of any human remains from either of these tombs, nor are the other offerings of note. One can only speculate, therefore, on why such fine pieces, possibly more appropriate as dedications or, in the case of the one from T40, a possible representation of a deity, were found in tombs. It may be that Tomb 40 contained the grave of a priest/priestess. Above all, however, it is a warning to us, if any were needed, that, until we know more, we should not try to attach any strict formula to the function or placement of figurines, even those found in a strictly funerary context.

Other cemeteries.

It is to be stressed that this evidence has been obtained from only four cemeteries in an area of mainland Greece where figurines were a common feature. It is therefore worth making a brief comparison between these results and the numbers of figurine-accompanied burials from cemeteries elsewhere, both in the Argolid and further afield. As always, precise numbers were sometimes difficult to obtain, since often the excavation report could only record a 'pile of bones', which might represent one or several burials.

Argos (Deshayes, J. 1966)

Though there were some examples of fine pottery, the Argos tombs do not appear to have been particularly wealthy. Items of jewellery were of little intrinsic value and there does not appear to be any weaponry at all.

The figures for the Argos tombs may be summarised thus: -

Number of tombs:	25
Number of bodies:	150
Number of figurines:	36
Number of tombs containing figurines:	10
Number of identifiable child burials with figurines:	3
Number of identifiable child burials without figurines:	4
Number of identifiable female burials with figurines:	2
Number of figurines accompanying child/female burials:	16

The coincidence of definite child burial with figurines is less strong here, though when combined with clear female burials accompanied by figurines the number amounts to half the tombs where figurines appear and accounts for 16/36 figurines. There were no examples of exclusively male burials with or without figurines. Clusters were again a feature of these tombs, appearing in 3 of the 10. A total of 15 out of 36 figurines belong in these three clusters. Females outnumber bovines again by 29:7.

Dendra (Persson, A.W. 1942)

There were 14 tombs altogether at Dendra, only 5 of which contained figurines. There were a total of 18 figurines (15 female, 1 bovine head, 2 chairs). There was in addition a faience figurine. Most of these (two thirds) were concentrated in 2 tombs (5 females in Tomb 1, 7 females and 1 chair in Tomb 3). Neither of these tombs was particularly wealthy; Tomb 1 contained no weapons, Tomb 3 contained one knife. Two of the tombs which did not contain figurines (Tomb 2, Tomb 10) were particularly wealthy. Tombs 7 and 8 contained much weaponry and no associated figurines (N.B. the figurine in the stomion of Tomb 7 was not related to the weapons' accompanied burials in the chamber).

Asine (Frödin, O. And Persson, A 1938)

Surprisingly, in view of its being in the Argolid, none of the eight chamber tombs excavated at Asine was found to contain any figurines, even though figurine fragments were found throughout the settlement area. Moreover, the reason cannot be that they were

robbed or disturbed, since much pottery and items of gold, bronze, ivory and stone were retrieved. This further confirms that there is no strict formula on the placement of figurines in tombs, even in an area where the use was prevalent.

Berbati (Åkerström, A. 1987)

In the seven tombs excavated at Berbati, eighty-one adult burials were identified and only three of children, though for reasons stated earlier there may have been more. Only one of these child burials (that in Tomb II) was accompanied by figurines, four in all (including a kourotrophos) – the total for the entire excavation.

Pylos (Taylour, Lord William and Donovan, W.P. 1973)

In addition to the two tholoi, Tombs III and IV, six chamber tombs, one cist grave and the so-called 'Grave Circle' have been excavated at Pylos; the chamber tombs and cist contained a total of 37 adult burials and four child burials, two of which were accompanied by figurines (Pit A in Tomb E4 [1 figurine], child burial in Tomb E6 [2 figurines]). There was a further burial in a pit within Tomb E9; this might have also been a child burial, since the pit was very small compared to the other two in the chamber; two figurines were found with this burial. There was, however, a further child burial in Tomb E6 which was not accompanied by a figurine. In the 'Grave Circle', pit 1 contained a single burial, pit 2 two burials, pit 3 'a large number of bones and skulls' (using my criteria = 7 burials) and pit 4 five burials. Only one of these burials contained a figurine; this was the fine Naturalistic figurine associated with one of the two adult burials in pit 2 (one male and one female). Altogether, this makes a total of 51 burials. The ratio of figurines to burials is, therefore, 6: 51, meaning that roughly one burial in nine was accompanied by a figurine. However, since four of the six figurines were probably associated with three of the four child burials, it indicates that at Pylos the placing of figurines to accompany the burial of children was usual, though not, as indicated by one of the two child burials in Tomb E6, essential. Moreover, while the evidence also suggests that figurines only occasionally accompanied adult burials, most of those in the 'Grave Circle' belonged to LH I and LH II i.e. before the introduction of figurines.

Athens (Immerwahr, S.A. 1971)

Only three of the forty-one tombs published by Immerwahr contained figurines (X, XX, XXVI.). One of these was so badly disturbed that it is impossible to say

definitively that the Phi figurine was associated with a child burial. The other two have both been identified by the excavator as containing figurines directly associated with child burial. It is also worth noting that one of these tombs (XXVI) also contained items of pottery which the excavator considers may have been of a ritual nature. She therefore concludes that 'we may be dealing with a person of some religious status' (Immerwahr 1971: 228).

Perati (Iakovidis, S.E.1969).

One hundred and ninety two graves were excavated at Perati, nine tenths of them chamber tombs, all dating to LH IIIC. The excavator estimates the number of burials to be in the region of 600 (Iakovidis 1969: 422). The ratio of figurines to burials is very small. Total numbers were as follows: -

Psi females – 7

Psi wailing females for attachment to bowls – 7

bovines – 10

other quadrupeds – 6

birds – 3

chair - 1

This is the only cemetery where bovines appear in roughly the same numbers as females; in fact, when combined with other quadrupeds, the number exceeds that of females, particularly if the 'wailing' females are not taken into account, since they were a distinctive feature of LH IIIC and appear to have a rather different and specific function. This might reflect a change in emphasis during LH IIIC from female to bovine and therefore might also indicate that whatever the bovines represented (a god?) had now become more important than whatever was symbolised by female figurines. The feature which stands out particularly here is the coincidence of child burial and figurines. Of the 15 tombs containing figurines, 11 contained evidence of child burial i.e. 22 of the total of 33 figurines were associated with child burial. (This does not account for one female which does not appear to have a known provenance). These are quite startling statistics compared to other cemeteries in Eastern Attica, though in view of Perati being dated exclusively to LH IIIC, they might reflect changed circumstances.

Additional comments

A summary of these results is appended at rear (Chart A). The statistics do not provide any definitive evidence; they go no further than to indicate trends. However, broadly speaking, one can conclude from this limited evidence that, with the exception of Asine, figurines seem to appear more frequently in graves in the Argolid. Moreover, the negative evidence from Asine simply serves to stress the inconsistent behaviour in mortuary practice in an area where, by and large, figurines were a common feature, therefore underlining how little we know about the reasons why figurines might have been placed in graves. The evidence from Athens and to some extent Perati indicates that the placement of figurines in tombs is less common in Attica. Indeed, as Cavanagh points out (1998: 109ff), the other cemeteries in Eastern Attica produced no figurines at all, though those in Western Attica produced many, a trend which reinforces the findings from Asine compared to other sites in the Argolid.

Overall, the impression gained from the findings in all these cemeteries is the coincidence of figurines with child burial. Hitherto, observations on this particular topic tended to be based on results from individual cemeteries. However, where the same trend is repeated several times in a number of cemeteries, it does much to establish more concrete evidence that, for whatever reason, many families, particularly those living in areas at the centre of Mycenaean civilisation, considered it appropriate to place a figurine/figurines in the graves of children.

Elsewhere, the tombs in Achaea have also produced very few figurines – only eight females in total, three of them from the cemetery at Aigion (Papadopoulos 1979: 135-7). As Cavanagh says of tombs in Attica, but this comment holds good for LH tombs throughout the Greek mainland (1998: 109), ‘Plainly there were cemeteries where they were considered appropriate offerings, and others where they were not...’ and ‘that the Mycenaean of Eastern Attica, for example, failed to place Phi and Psi figurines in tombs does not imply that they held religious beliefs radically different from their neighbours who did. But popular beliefs varied. In other words, whilst some of the variations in ritual practice can arise from differences of status and class, others must be based on quite localised patterns of belief’. There might well be reasons for this, but until more concrete evidence is available, these remain elusive.

Chapter 4: Figurines in a domestic context and their possible significance.

Graves are not the only context in which figurines are found in substantial numbers. A great many have also been recorded as coming from habitation areas. Indeed, French (1981: 48) has claimed of figurines at Mycenae that 'any given spot would yield an average of six fragmentary figurines in each basket'. Consequently, in attempting to reach any conclusion on the function of figurines during LH III one cannot afford to ignore these findings, since they might provide vital evidence for the use of figurines in a non-funerary, day-to-day context. However, any attempt at analysing figurine finds from habitation areas is fraught with all sorts of difficulties. In the first place, when figurines are found scattered randomly throughout a site and in no specific location, they are almost certainly not in a primary context and can afford little or no evidence for a specific function. This problem is further increased at sites such as Mycenae where early excavation reports were rarely completely clear or thorough in the recording of small finds and their locations. Secondly, by their very nature, figurines fragment very easily and so when one finds, as is frequently the case, a large number of, for example, leg and horn fragments, it is impossible to say how many complete figurines this represents, since two or more fragments can be from the same piece. Thirdly, how does one determine what is a meaningful location? The criteria may be regarded as arbitrary. The finding of a group of figurines together in a particular area does not necessarily constitute a significant cluster. It might simply represent the results of natural erosion and build-up or the disposal of rubbish. Obviously, this is a question which must be addressed if any conclusions are to be drawn.

I have elected to study three sites in some detail (Nichoria, Tiryns and Mycenae), and as a comparison I have included some brief notes on Zygouries and Korakou, though in the case of the last two, comment is difficult owing to the lack of complete information from the excavation reports. I focused on Nichoria, partly because, by and large, it has been neglected by scholars studying figurines and partly because of its comparatively recent excavation in the 1970's; information on finds from it should therefore be detailed and accurate. Moreover, it was continuously inhabited from the early MH period until the end of LH IIIB2 (McDonald and Wilkie 1992: 722ff) and provides some of the earliest examples of figurines. The second site is the Unterburg at Tiryns, part of which was thoroughly excavated by Kilian in the late 1970's and early 1980's. In addition to the benefits of Kilian's detailed annotations of finds and their contexts, the Unterburg affords

evidence for figurine usage in an area not directly connected with the palace. Finally, one cannot overlook Mycenae itself, simply because it is such an important site and because from the beginning of LH IIIA until the end of LH IIIB the quantity and variety of figurines found there is far greater than at any other site.

In order to come to terms with these problems and enable the evidence from sites to be of some use, just as with graves, I have had to adopt some sort of methodology. Obviously, this will be imperfect and inaccurate in several areas, for the reasons stated above. However, as I have pointed out in my discussion on graves earlier, when the same criteria are used in all cases, this does, at least, give some consistency of method.

My first decision was on the criteria necessary for regarding particular areas on habitation sites as having a likely cultic significance. I considered that within a domestic context three locations might be argued to have a possible cultic association and certainly one beyond the purely practical. The first, and most obvious, is the hearth which, it has been argued, was a possible focus for cult from MH times onwards (Hägg 1968: 46; 1985: 203-25; Vernant 1983: 128-31). Quoting Hägg, Wright draws attention to the paraphernalia found around the hearth in the megaron at Pylos, which he considers to afford evidence of its sacred nature (1994: 57). In later Greek culture also, the hearth symbolised the unity of the household (Burkert 1985: 170, 255). It could be argued, therefore, that figurines found close to a domestic or open-air hearth might in some way be related to ritual. A second possible location might be some sort of display area, such as a niche or bench. It was a feature of Aegean religion, both in Crete and in the Mycenaean culture area for iconic representations of a deity or deity impersonators to be displayed in an area where visual impact would be greatest. One thinks of 'windows of appearance' and polythyra at Minoan palaces and villas as well as the benches in shrines of the Goddess with Upraised Arms. Moreover, later discussion of Mycenaean shrines affords ample evidence for the use of benches in mainland cult. A third area which might be argued to be connected with ritual is doorways in that they have a function as liminal zones (Parker Pearson and Richards 1994: 24-9). This is less easy to justify, but it is clear that gateways and entrances had particular significance for the Mycenaean. One can point to ceremonial propyla at the palaces and the monumental nature of the Lion Gate with its sculpted relief, which is surely intended to convey more than simply an impression of defensive might (Turner 1967: 20-32). Of note also are the frequent occurrences of conglomerate thresholds at the entrances to dwellings. Consequently, where figurines appear at any one of these three locations in a domestic context, I have

counted this to be of ritual significance. Sometimes figurines occur in rooms/dwellings, but not related to any of these three locations. I have assumed that these belong with the building in association with the appropriate occupation level, as it is hard to imagine why a figurine could be washed naturally into a room or deliberately taken there unless the room were being employed specifically to tip rubbish. However, I have not derived any particular significance from these figurine deposits, save to note when numbers are sufficient to indicate a cluster.

As noted earlier, the majority of figurines which appear in habitation areas do so at random and very probably not in a primary location. It is extremely difficult to draw any useful conclusions from these, save to note their numbers, since this in itself is a significant factor in their domestic use. Wherever possible, when the information was available, I have recorded numbers and have also drawn attention to the locations where they appeared, as well as relative numbers of females and bovines. If any other structures of possible significance appeared nearby, I have pointed this out but drawn no particular conclusion. Where figurines were clearly rubbish or infill, I have noted this also and drawn attention to what might be considered more than usual numbers. If any particular period of figurine manufacture is strongly represented above that of others, I have noted this also. I have not attempted to make any statement on the possible significance which might be attached to scattered figurines associated with no particular structure, since such comment would be purely speculative. However, where it seemed appropriate, I have counted figurine numbers in particular areas and noted the ratio of figurines to dwellings, since this appeared to be the only way to assess the significance of these figurines in a day-to-day context. While one might not be able to explain them, one cannot ignore substantial numbers of the same non-utilitarian item.

Nichoria.

Evidence has shown that Nichoria was an important town and the local capital of the Five Rivers area of Messenia (McDonald and Wilkie 1992: 758, 762). During the early part of its history it was independent and possibly a focal point for neighbouring villages. Later, at some time, possibly early in LH IIIB, it was incorporated into the Pylian state (op.cit. 766). Consequently, it ought to provide evidence of the lifestyle and behaviour patterns of a prosperous but non-palatial settlement throughout the Mycenaean era.

Quite a large number of figurines came to light from the settlement area of Nichoria, 121 altogether, though this bears no comparison with the large numbers which have been found at sites in the Argolid, especially Mycenae. Some of the earliest types of figurines have been recovered, including several Naturalistic or Proto-Phi types. It is worth noting that, while figurines appear in all LH III levels at Nichoria, they do seem to occur more frequently in LH IIIA pottery contexts. This might simply be because this is the best represented period anyway, LH IIIA2 pottery being found throughout the Nichoria ridge (McDonald and Wilkie 1992: 495) and indicating that LH IIIA was the period of greatest population and prosperity at Nichoria (McDonald and Wilkie 1975: 138). Certainly, Phi figurines and even Naturalistic and Proto-Phi are much more common than the later Psi, and even these appear to be the 'high-waisted' style which disappears before mid-LH IIIB. Likewise, most of the bovines, though close identification is difficult due to their poor state of preservation, appear to be of French's 'Wavy Type 2' or 'Linear Type 1'.

The evidence from Nichoria indicates that, soon after their appearance on the mainland, figurines (both female and bovine) quickly took on some significance in the everyday lives of those belonging to a non-palatial settlement. In other words, the attachment to figurines does not appear to have been a result of elite/palatial stimulus but rather of some real or imagined meaning they might have had for the population of Nichoria.

Figurine findspots have been plotted on the accompanying map (Map A in envelope at back), though it has not been possible to give completely precise locations due to the margin for error in grid references. Unfortunately, successive periods of construction and human interference combined with natural erosion mean that it is difficult to establish valuable contextual evidence about most of the figurine findspots at Nichoria. It is noticeable, however, that throughout the site very few figurines appear in those areas where no structural remains exist; the vast majority occur in association with dwellings/thoroughfares. Though evidence is limited to excavated areas, excavation maps show that even where trenches were dug away from habitation areas, figurines rarely appear in them. Comments on style/appearance of figurines and specific findspots are detailed in the relevant publication, so will not be reiterated here, save to point out features which are of particular note.

Habitation remains are particularly poorly preserved in Area II and figurine evidence is likewise poorly represented. Ten figurine fragments altogether were found in

Area II, most of them belonging to LH IIIA but from no reliable stratum and therefore providing no contextual information.

Area III contains clear evidence of a LH IIIB Mycenaean street, thought to link Areas II and IV. However, few buildings survive from either LH IIIA or IIIB, the best preserved being Unit III-2 (LH IIIA2) in the N.W. Many figurines were found in Area III, but few were in a reliable primary context, several clearly having fallen down the slope from Area II. This is clearly the case for the cluster of four females and six bovines in the N.W. corner. While obviously not in a primary context, they point to early figurine use (2075), an early head and shoulders with bulging eyes [fig. 39] and variation from standard types (2140), an unusual animal pair [fig. 40]). If the small cluster of figurines in and around Unit III-2 are associated with the habitation period of the house, they might give some idea of the ratio of figurines to dwellings (7:1), though this is by no means certain, since it is impossible to say which, if any, are in a primary context.

Remains from LH IIIB in Area III are extremely poor. Most of the figurines are early types and therefore cannot be associated with LH IIIB structures; many have clearly fallen as tumble from higher up and collected at the foot of retaining walls or other structural remains. However, the apsidal building Unit III-3 probably belongs to LH IIIB2 and might be the latest Mycenaean structure at Nichoria (McDonald and Wilkie 1992: 403). Two females and a bovine came from the Mycenaean stratum (level 4) within this building. The large head (2064), 'The Dame of Nichoria' [fig. 41], being badly worn, has a rather terrifying appearance but is nevertheless remarkable. Hughes-Brock (1992: 766) makes a possible link between this piece and the 'idols' from the Cult Centre at Mycenae. Certainly, its fairly large size must put it into French's 'Figure' class, unlike all the other figurines from Nichoria. Moreover, despite its present battered state, one can see that it was carefully modelled. It is reasonable to assume, therefore, that it was not intended to have the repellent features that it does now. Presumably the hollow eye sockets contained eyes of a different material. Remains of what looks like a polos would put it more into the class of idol than adorant and it bears some comparison with the head from House G at Asine (the so-called Lord of Asine [fig. 42]). It is tempting to make all sorts of speculation about this figure and her presence in a structure which was not typical of Mycenaean building style and which is considered to have been in use for only a short time (McDonald and Wilkie 1992: 403). Though the stones from the walls of this building were largely removed in the Early Iron Age, pieces of two other figurines were recovered, a fragment of a Psi figurine (a head with polos) from a LH IIIB2 level and a

bovine leg/horn (2122). These three items can in no way be termed a cluster. Moreover, there was no other cultic apparatus associated with the building and no sign of a cult bench/niche where figure 2064 might have been displayed. However, one does wonder if this structure was perhaps hastily erected at a time of growing crisis to accommodate some sort of communal cult. It is worth reiterating that the female figurine found with 2064 was a Psi and therefore not typical of most of the other figurine evidence from Nichoria which, as has been noted, consisted largely of LH IIIA Naturalistic, Proto-Phi and Phi types. In addition, Unit III-3, being apsidal, is not typical of other structures at Nichoria from the Mycenaean Period. As Wright points out (1994: 61), the establishment of cult centres might have been a feature of the Late Mycenaean Period in consequence of situations which had not arisen in the early years of the palaces – though this is not true of Phylakopi. Moreover, while one might account for the lack of more significant figurine evidence here to be the result of Early Iron Age activity on the site, no two cult areas were exactly alike and that at Mycenae demonstrates that dedications of large numbers of figurines was not necessarily a feature.

Area III is in many ways frustrating. It contains more figurines than anywhere else on the site, but because so few can with certainty be associated with any particular structure and none with a specific part of any structure (e.g. hearth, niche, doorway), they cannot offer any precise evidence of their meaning/function. Nevertheless, one point is worth noting. There is evidence for six structures/houses of the LH IIIA and IIIB periods in Area II and six in Area III, into which it is agreed that many figurines originally associated with Area II structures fell. The total number of figurines from the two areas is 59 i.e. 10 from Area II and 49 from Area III. This makes a ratio of virtually five figurines per building, and while it is true that some structures might have left no extant traces, the same can be said for figurine evidence. The indication is, then, that during LH IIIA-IIIB and, judging by the figurines themselves, particularly LH IIIA, figurines were significant items of apparatus and furnishing in a domestic context. Though this does not necessarily confirm cultic significance, on the basis of Renfrew's criterion of redundancy, it does at least imply it, otherwise it would be difficult to explain such numbers of the same non-domestic item within a settlement context.

Area IV is regarded by the excavators as being the 'core' of the Nichoria community from an early period. The structures in it are virtually enclosed within an area surrounded by three gullies to the north, west and south, which therefore give good stratigraphic evidence of debris from this and neighbouring higher areas. Despite the

superimposition of Dark Age and Byzantine structures, remains of LH III buildings are reasonably substantial, those of LH IIIB being particularly numerous. The so-called megaron (Unit IV - 4) in the southern part of the area is of greatest interest. It belongs to LH IIIA1 and contains a central hearth with a column either side. Two fragments of 'Naturalistic' female figurines were found in Room 4 of this structure. Both were found in a LH IIIA1 context. From the same area are two unusual pieces; 2148 might be a bird's head and neck and 2150 [fig. 43] is part of an unusual two-footed bowl. In the main room (Room 1), from the floor near the hearth, came the head and shoulders of a female (2068) [fig. 44], possibly Proto-Phi and therefore belonging with the habitation period of the building. There were in addition fragments of three shallow conical cups, considered by the excavator to be ritual vessels (McDonald and Wilkie 1992: 438). While it would be unwise to attach too much importance to these finds, since one figurine is insufficient evidence to establish a cultic function, in view of its proximity to the hearth and the presence of possible libation vessels, it might be that some sort of ritual took place here, a point which is made by the excavator (*ibid.*). Moreover, if this edifice represents the official dwelling of an area chieftain, as the central hearth and columns suggest, it implies the possible performance of some sort of official local cult centred round the hearth and involving figurines, from a very early period.

There are five other points in Area IV where figurine clusters appear, though since none of them was in a reliable primary context no particular significance can be attached to them. By far the greatest concentration of figurines occurred in the western gully, there being 13 females, 5 bovines and an indeterminate piece. Most of them belong to LH IIIA2 and were presumably deposited there in the process of natural filling-in of the gully which happened after the retaining wall A was constructed. Obviously no cultic significance can be attached to the findspot of these figurines. However, their numbers are significant and when those figurines found elsewhere in Area IV are added, the total comes to 51. There are 8 identifiable LH IIIA or IIIB units in Area IV which makes a ratio of 6 figurines per unit, a number comparable to Areas II and III combined (5:1).

In summary, the following statements can be made based on the figurine evidence from Nichoria: -

- (i) females outnumber bovines by 59 to 43 i.e. 57.8% compared to 42.2%, though both types were found scattered randomly throughout areas of habitation. It is worth noting also that even though there are more females than bovines, the relative numbers are much closer here than they were in most of the graves

studied, where, by and large, females far outnumber bovines. This indicates that, whatever meaning was attached to bovines, they seem to have been more appropriate in a domestic context than a funerary one, at least during LH IIIA and IIIB. If they represented a substitute for animal sacrifice, such an offering might be considered more appropriate in a domestic cult where family well-being and a regular food supply must have been constant considerations.

- (ii) Most of the figurines belong to LH IIIA. There are very few from a straight LH IIIB context. This indicates that the ratios of figurines to buildings noted earlier (5:1 Areas II and III and 6:1 Area IV) might in fact be higher, since most of these figurines were possibly associated with LH IIIA buildings which have disappeared, though one assumes that they might have been replaced by a comparable number of LH IIIB structures. That being said, if the ratio of figurines to buildings at Nichoria is roughly 6:1 or slightly more, in the ninety years or so of LH IIIA, roughly 1.5 figurines per generation belonged to each household.

These are hardly startling statistics but they do suggest that during LH IIIA, the period of Nichoria's greatest prosperity, figurines were considered important enough domestic equipment that every family should have at least one. Unfortunately, there is little precise evidence to elucidate the purpose of figurines: few hearths remain, none of the extant rooms appear to have niches or display areas and, as noted many times, few figurines are in a reliable primary context. However, Unit IV-4A, often considered a 'proto-palace', does provide limited evidence which suggests a connection between ritual centred around the hearth and figurines. This would imply that on parts of the mainland from an early period figurines played a role in house cult. Since many of those at Nichoria are Naturalistic or Phi types, this would imply that while earlier interpretations of some sort of role related to child burial might be correct in the context of graves, this cannot be true in the case of those found in a domestic context. One can only speculate on why they are found in houses at Nichoria. In view of the appearance, especially of early ones where attention is drawn to the breasts and belly, perhaps they represented fertility symbols. It is worth pointing out that they are the only non-utilitarian items which occur consistently throughout the site. Obviously, we cannot discount the possibility of simply 'copy-cat' behaviour. However, since these items had no practical use, the relative frequency with which they appear implies some other association. At a time when the priorities of life must have been family well-being, survival and regeneration, it is difficult to imagine that

this association was not in some way connected with a need for protection by a deity associated with nurture and fertility.

The Argolid

As already noted, figurines are most plentiful on sites in the Argolid. Hence, I shall now consider two of the most significant sites in that area, namely Tiryns and Mycenae.

Tiryns

Parts of the Unterburg at Tiryns were systematically excavated by Kilian and his reports and analyses documented at length in *AA* (1978, 1979, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1988). The charts in Diagrams A, B and C are an attempt at some sort of systematic and chronological survey of figurine distribution in the rooms so far excavated.

An examination of these charts reveals several fundamental differences in the arrangement of the Unterburg between LH IIIB and LH IIIC. At this point I propose to discuss the layout and evidence for cult at Tiryns during LH IIIA and IIIB only; in the following chapter (chapter 5) I shall note those considerable changes which took place in LH IIIC, after the downfall of the palace. I should like to state at the outset that, while some of the following points might appear rather 'Kilianesque', they are made simply on the basis of Kilian's material findings reported in *AA*. My German is totally limited to cataloguing finds with the aid of a dictionary. I do not have the syntactical knowledge to evaluate Kilian's arguments and conclusions. A plan showing the particular area of the Unterburg under study is included at the rear of this volume (diagram A). Those structures noted in the text are numbered and findspots for figurines and other relevant cultic items have been plotted. The conclusions obtained from study of these diagrams are noted in Table 4, The Tiryns Unterburg.

Immediately apparent is the considerable number of wall chambers within the Curtain Wall which were in use throughout LH IIIB, presumably as adjuncts to dwellings, used mainly for storage. Buildings of LH IIIB tend to be conglomerations of several small rooms, often with a corridor down one side, linking rooms together, for example Bau V and Bau VI. Some have direct connection with one or more wall chambers. Other structures are built more in a 'megaron' style with one main room preceded by or connected with one or more smaller rooms, for example Bau I and Bau III. It is also

noticeable that the main courtyard in this area, that associated with Bau VI, lies between it and the Curtain Wall, giving access to the wall chambers.

As far as cult during LH IIIB is concerned, an accurate picture of figurine distribution cannot be ascertained until the whole of the Unterburg is excavated. However, in those structures which are visible, there are indications of figurine clusters in certain areas. Bau VI and its environs provides a notable example, with Room 214 especially containing a high percentage of figurines, particularly bovines; indeed, Kilian considers this building to have been the house of a priestess (*AA*. 1982: 403). Though there is no clear evidence for the sex of the religious functionary, strong evidence for the sacred nature of this edifice seems to be Room 123, a room which during LH IIIB was subdivided by a tongue wall. A number of cultic installations came to light here. In a corner between the tongue wall and the west wall is a semi-circular pedestal c. 2.6m high and, in front of this, a round ceramic plastered hearth which shows signs of burning in the centre. On the south wall is a pedestal, possibly for cultic equipment, and in the northern part of the room a fireplace next to which stands a barrel-like structure. On the other side of the tongue wall and angled against the west wall is a structure of mud brick covered in white stucco which Kilian interprets as a house altar (*op.cit*: 400ff). On the front of it was a clay cult horn and on the floor in front broken kylikes and steatite beads. Kilian does not record the finding of any figurines here. However, the other equipment and paraphernalia do seem to point to this being a house shrine.

It is interesting to note how frequently figurines appear in rooms where there is a hearth, often in close proximity to it (Rooms 190, 214, 210, 215), and also that grinding stones, whetstones, a box oven and other items such as steatite beads or specifically cultic equipment like rhyta and clay lamps are often associated with figurines. Though these items do not appear exclusively in a figurine context, the coincidence is quite striking. As in the case of Rooms 190 and 9 (Bau VII), there were sometimes wall niches also, possibly for the placement of figurines, though none actually appeared *in situ*.

Evidence for cult involving figurines has already been tentatively suggested at Nichoria (*supra* p.43). At Tiryns, however, the coincidence of apparent figurine clusters in rooms where there is a hearth, sometimes also a niche or a stone pedestal (Rooms 214, 218), appears to provide much stronger evidence for some sort of domestic cult in the Unterburg during LH IIIB. It is impossible to give the precise interpretation of what this might have been, but presumably it centred round what was symbolised by the hearth i.e. the focus of family cooking and eating. It is not unreasonable to suggest that concurrent

with the pouring of libations and the consumption of bread or meat, great significance might have been attached to the dedication at the hearth of an iconic representation of the deity whose beneficence was considered to have been influential in providing all essential victuals.

Possibly the most striking examples of figurine clusters are those linked to the two hearths in the courtyard associated with Bau VI. This courtyard was not in use long and the number of figurines found in it is remarkably high. Kilian considers that this area might be a forerunner of Cult Room 119 and the later 117 (AA 1981: 162-6). Since it lies directly in front of Chamber 7, which in turn was above the niche/schnitt in the West Curtain Wall, he postulates that the large deposit of figurines found in the niche is a result of periodic clearance from this courtyard through Chamber 7. In the courtyard itself, around one hearth are 8 female figurines, 6 bovines and 2 chariots, with a further 3 figurines a little further south. Added to this is the very large figurine deposit outside the citadel wall below Chamber 7, which lies opposite these two hearths [fig.45]. There is also a third cluster of 7 females and 8 bovines at the very southern end of the courtyard. These do seem to be unusually rich findings of figurines. Since they appear in the courtyard of Bau VI, which itself seems to contain at least one room with apparent cultic significance, one is tempted to speculate that there might have been some sort of open-air ritual regularly conducted in this courtyard throughout LH IIIB. Moreover, the three hearths (one directly in front of Chamber 7), the rhyton fragments and the moveable hearth at the south end of the courtyard are further pointers to cultic activity. Indeed, the most northerly of the hearths in this courtyard lies in the vicinity of the later Room 119, Kilian's 'provisional' cult room. It may in fact be possible to conclude further that this whole area (Bau VI, the courtyard and Chamber 7) was a LH IIIB cult complex which contained a large house with several rooms where small-scale private cult could be performed by a person in charge of cultic operations. In addition, the open-air courtyard might have served as an area for communal cult activity which might involve some sort of ritual placement of figurines in the vicinity of the hearth or (in the case of the group in the south) at the entrance to a sacred area. Added to this, one could postulate regular open-air gatherings for priest-led ritual sacrifice and dining, an activity which might be intended to confirm and promote divine approval for the lifestyle and culture of the Unterburg in LH IIIB.

I am aware that Kilian's findings are disputed. Indeed French has stressed to me (pers. comm.) that, since the survival rate of figurine stems is extremely high, it is essential in any evaluation to consider only whole figurines which can with certainty be deduced to be in a primary context. However, even if some of Kilian's clusters contain some secondary fragments, one must still explain their concentration at hearths and doorways rather than a random scatter throughout the site.

That Bau VI had special cultic significance or was the house of a priest/priestess is further confirmed by the finding in the area (at LXI 41/89, LXII 43/77 and LXI 44/28) of pieces of a large wheel-made female figure. Unfortunately, the upper part of the body and the head are missing, but enough does remain to make it clear that it is a very fine piece [fig. 46]. It seems to have been of the same overall shape as the Lady of Phylakopi and to be similarly, if sparingly, decorated. The scatter of fragments indicates that findspots were not primary locations, but it is not unreasonable to suppose that it is connected with Bau VI in some way and that one of the rooms in this structure might have been the shrine that contained it. It is clearly an important piece and must have held considerable significance as a focus of cult in the early part of LH IIIB. This figure and its possible location in Room 123 of Bau VI marks a very significant development in Mycenaean cultic behaviour and iconography. The numerous figurines of females and bovines discussed hitherto were possibly produced at little cost for popular use. However, the fragments from this example show that it was both considerably larger and also of finer quality than standard figurines: such figures were comparatively rare. Even more significant is the figure's likely location in a room set apart as a possible shrine which presumably served as a permanent focus for worship. This implies deliberate and organised cult of a deity in a specialised area and must surely be linked in some way with palatial organisation of cult. More will be said on this topic on completion of the discussion of standard figurines.

Mycenae

Mycenae is generally accepted to be the most important Late Bronze Age site on the mainland and demands careful consideration by anyone making a study of figurine distribution and cultic behaviour. However, one is faced with a number of problems, not the least being the impossibility of obtaining accurate statistics from which to formulate any theory. Hundreds of figurines have been found at Mycenae, but of these many have not been accurately recorded. Some of the early discoveries have since been lost and

many of the more recent finds have not been published. For this reason, this section of discussion only takes into account selected areas of the site for which reasonably reliable data are available. It is in no way a comprehensive survey but simply a representation of distribution patterns in certain locations.

On the inside of the Lion Gate a small wall juts out from the citadel wall and runs parallel with the western flanking wall of the gate. The small rectangular space thus created is generally agreed to have enclosed a staircase leading up to the top of the Cyclopean walls (BSA 25[1921-3]: 18). A total of 15 females, 9 bovines and a driven ox belonging to the LH IIIB period were discovered in this area, while a further 13 females, 14 bovines and 3 chairs/chariots belong to LH IIIC. These are significant numbers, especially since they are associated with the Lion Gate which might, in that it was the main entrance to the citadel, have had cultic associations; as has already been demonstrated at Tiryns, gateways and entrances are not infrequently the site of figurine clusters. Moreover, as noted earlier, the Lion Gate with its monumental façade of lions, column and incurved altars is highly suggestive of cult symbolism (Turner 1967: 20-32). However, French is unwilling to accept that this was a true cultic deposit (1981: 41, 48), since the very fragmentary condition of the figurines makes them nothing more than a 'normal phenomenon for Mycenae'. That said, even if they do simply represent deposits of everyday habitation, their numbers seem to be comparatively high (slightly over half the total number of figurines found throughout the entire site of Nichoria).

On the inside of the Lion Gate the Great Ramp leads up towards the palace. At the top of the Ramp excavations of four Hellenistic chambers revealed 5 female figurines, 2 bovines and 1 chair. To the west of these chambers is the Little Ramp, at the foot of which were found 7 females, 4 bovines and 2 chairs, a total of 21 figurines. They are not contextually significant, but again, as examples of natural wastage in a limited area their numbers are comparatively high. To the south of Grave Circle A, below the Ramp, is the Ramp House, partly excavated by Schliemann and completed by Wace. On the eastern side of the house (the only area where stratification was visible) in a level comparable with the early strata of the Lion Gate, were found in a corridor, within a deposit of LH IIIA pottery, 7 bovine figurines, 1 female and 2 chairs. Outside the north wall, again in a deposit of LH IIIA pottery, were found a further 6 females (total 7 females, 6 bovines and 2 chairs). It would appear that these figurines, along with the pottery, represent an early deposit from the time when the house was built in LH IIIA. It is therefore impossible to attach any significance to them, save to say that they are a representative sample of

figurines discarded during everyday use in that period and the numbers are more than double the ratio of figurines to dwellings at Nichoria i.e. roughly 15:1 compared to 5/6:1 at Nichoria. Moreover, they give further indication of how firmly a figurine tradition became established in everyday usage shortly after its inception.

The South House, where excavation was begun by Schliemann, was further excavated in 1920 by Wace. Its construction is considered to be roughly contemporary with the Lion Gate. A total of 17 females, 5 bovines and a chair were discovered in this building, six of the females having come from the West Room, which was covered by a thin layer of lead in its southern section, possibly the remains of lead vessels which had melted when the house was burned. The excavation of this house was completed and extended to the south by Lord William Taylour (1954-68). He revealed there two independent buildings which had been referred to by Wace as the Citadel House but which is now more commonly known as 'The Cult Centre' (to be included in subsequent discussion). In the course of his excavation, 1507 figurine fragments were discovered, most of them as yet unpublished. While many can be dated stylistically to the period of use of the cult buildings, I am informed (French, E.B. pers. comm.) that the total number is a gross figure for all levels in the whole area, many of them having no connection with either of the two cult rooms and some of them possibly transported with soil from elsewhere on the site. However, it is still a very large number by any standards, particularly when compared to other sites. If nothing else, it serves to illustrate the significance of figurines in an everyday context at Mycenae.

The possible cultic significance of Grave Circle A has been the subject of speculation since the time of Schliemann. During the course of his excavations there he records finding female figurines on both sides of the Grave Circle – both inside and out- (Schliemann 1880: 129) and also at a low level, well below that of the stelae. During LH IIIB the whole of the Royal Grave Area had been levelled off and then enclosed by the now familiar double row of stone slabs. This process involved not inconsiderable building operations, in that a supporting terrace wall was constructed to the west, using the earth and debris from the eastern side (including pottery and figurines); this terrace wall was further supported at a particularly vulnerable point by a small batter on its western side. The area between this batter and the western Cyclopean wall had been cut away and filled with a packing of small stones as a bedding for the Cyclopean walls. Within this fill, among LH III pottery, were found 8 female figurines and 3 bovines. From a test in the supporting wall a further 4 females were found. All the figurines are stylistically typical

of LH IIIB, though none of them can be claimed to have any formal cultic significance since they belong among earth and rubbish transported from elsewhere, nor are their numbers particularly startling (15, not counting the unspecified amount found by Schliemann, which he leads us to believe was quite large). However, as a representation of general wastage there are a lot of them. To give a very rough comparison, if one were to excavate within the grounds of Glastonbury Abbey, is it likely that one would find fifteen examples of virtually the same non-utilitarian object?

Outside the citadel, figurines are also plentiful. In 1955 British excavation on the Panagia ridge revealed the existence of a group of private houses of LH IIIA. During further excavations (BSA 59 [1964]: 241ff) a cutting made across the dromos of the later Treasury of Atreus (the so-called 'Atreus Bothros' deposit) revealed much LH IIIA1 domestic rubbish which had presumably fallen or been cleared from houses. Among this rubbish were a large number of figurines which had clearly come from early LH IIIA houses. The north section of the deposit contained 31 female figurines, most of them Proto-Phi, a breadmaker, 2 seated figurines, 2 unidentifiable, 12 bovines, 10 chariot horses, 1 bird, 1 dog, 3 fragmentary horns and 1 leg. The south section contained 7 females, 3 bovines and 1 chariot horse; the rest comprised various leg and horn fragments. Obviously, since this is rubbish, cleared from elsewhere, the context is meaningless. However, it again indicates the frequency with which figurines are found in a domestic context, even from the period of their initial appearance on the mainland. In view of the early nature of this deposit, the numbers bear comparison with those found in the western gully at Nichoria (mainly belonging to LH IIIA2), a total of nineteen. The figurines in the Atreus Bothros outnumber those in the Western Gully at Nichoria by nearly 4:1, affording further evidence of what has been suggested before, namely that figurines quickly became established on the mainland but are much more common on sites in the Argolid, and particularly Mycenae, than elsewhere.

In a later excavation, Ione Mylonas Shear (1987) records finding a total of 235 figurines from the Panagia houses. Of these 29 are definite Psi, 33 Phi and 4 Tau. All types of French's classification are represented except late Psi. There were also 150 animal fragments, 4 very well preserved. Diversity of type is a feature, there being, in addition to bovines, horses, 2 possible dogs, a deer and 6 possible chariots. These figurines are not a stratified deposit, being mostly from fill and in poor condition. Though no contextual significance can be drawn from them, the frequent association between dwellings and figurines again stands out.

At the northern end of the Panagia ridge is a group of structures thought to have some sort of commercial/light manufacturing use. The so-called House of the Wine Merchant contained pithoi, more than fifty stirrup jars and a particularly fine rhyton. To the north east of this is the structure known as Petsas' House, which contained a hearth as well as six hundred LH IIIA unused pots in one room and a store of kylikes in another. Both these structures contained figurines. I was unable to discover precise numbers but am aware of over 50 females, 16 bare heads and at least 32 bovines coming from the latter. In the same area is the structure known as the Cyclopean Terrace Building. This structure is argued by French to have some sort of industrial use (*BSA* 49 [1954]: 267-91). In the North Room were found 2 females and 2 chairs (1 with a figurine), in the South Room 1 female, 1 bovine and 1 chair and in the Deposit under the North Room 12 females, 7 bovines and 1 chair, making a total of 27, substantial numbers by any standards. Several were also found in trenches which were excavated to the north later.

Further south, the House of Shields is also built on a terrace. Latest discussion on this structure has concluded that it was used for the storage and assembly of ivory inlays which had been made elsewhere. Consequently, though it was not directly involved in ivory working, the structure might be argued as having a commercial/craft rather than domestic function. In a cutting made against the east terrace wall of this building, a large pottery deposit was revealed, amongst which, as at the C.T.B., were many kylikes but also 8 female figurines, 1 head with polos, 1 kourotrophos, 9 bovines and a chariot horse, as well as 6 legs and a fragment of an animal vase – total = 27 (incl. vase).

As has been pointed out, some of the structures noted above were not simply domestic dwellings but were also connected with manufacturing in some way. These include the South House which contained Linear B tablets relating to artisans and the House of Shields. In addition to these are structures which, like Petsas' House and the Cyclopean Terrace Building, appear to have been specifically related to light industry. The presence of figurines within these structures could imply a special relationship between craft-working/craftsmen and cultic behaviour. Indeed French (1981: 41), in her discussion of cult locations at Mycenae, makes the comment that the House of Shields 'clearly possessed a specialist function of some kind' (presumably cultic). At present there is no real evidence (bar the figurines themselves) to prove such a theory, since no figurines have appeared on or close to workbenches. However, the correlation does at least suggest a broader function for figurines than purely house cult. This might simply be that they were regarded in some way as talismans, important to have about the person in

one's daily life and work. In other words, while figurines might, like the crucifix for many people now, have been imbued with a deep religious symbolism for their owners, their presence in dwellings or workshops does not necessarily imply the constant or regular performance of any cultic ritual but simply that, because of their understood meaning, they carried with them a symbolism for the Mycenaeans, a tangible expression of belief and so were kept in the vicinity of one's living or working area. Alternatively, as Hägg suggests (1981: 38), they might simply have been carried around on the person – in which case so many casual finds might be explained.

That the Great Poros Wall functioned as a retaining wall to support the mound over the Tomb of Clytemnestra was first suggested by Lord William Taylour (BSA 50 [1955]: 209ff) and has since been accepted as such (Hope Simpson and Dickinson 1979: 33). In the course of his excavations, Taylour opened up a number of trenches which revealed a huge amount of pottery, most of it in a fragmentary condition but including kylikes and miniature vessels and also a large number of figurines. The total number is as follows: - bovines 25, females (mostly Phi) 22, other animal 1, chair 1 (all dated to LH IIIB). The number of LH IIIB figurines in such a confined area is far too high to be simply debris. Moreover, the large pottery deposit, which includes many vessels associated with libation and toasting rituals, is indication in itself of cult practice. It seems that the Great Poros Wall, with its carefully built ashlar façade, became a focus of some sort of cult during LH IIIB. Indeed, Dr. French has confirmed (pers. comm.) that she did consider that the figurines in this deposit, as well as the pottery, formed a 'cluster of possibly cultic origin'. Almost equidistant between the tholoi of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus, this structure seems to have been not only a cultic focus per se but also to have served as the western boundary of what became an official cultic area of which the East-West wall marked the northern boundary (an area which by itself produced fragments of 4 female figurines and 2 bovines, as well as a lentoid seal depicting a human figure and two griffins either side of a column, an established cultic symbol [Turner 1967: 20-32]). Possibly the cult area within the citadel walls afforded limited access to a privileged few or was only used on specific occasions. It is conceivable that casual offerings made by a wider cross-section of the population might have become centred around the tombs of recently dead leaders who might themselves have done much to promote their own image as the successors of the Shaft Grave rulers.

As noted above, this is not a comprehensive survey of figurine findspots at Mycenae, since, for reasons already pointed out, such a survey is not possible. Indeed,

large parts of the site have not been discussed at all. Nevertheless, I have attempted to produce a map (Map B) showing the density of figurine distribution in the various areas studied. In most cases it is in no way reliable as an indicator of the cultic function of figurines, since the majority are not in a primary location. However, it does at least provide evidence of the vast numbers of figurines found in a day-to-day settlement context at Mycenae. The evidence documented above does, however, complement the present argument on two particular points: -

- (i) The number of figurines found at Mycenae simply as part of natural wastage is very high and might be greater than at any other site. In those areas where figurine numbers can be recorded with any accuracy (e.g. the Ramp House, 15, the South House, 23), it implies that the ratio of figurines to dwellings is also high and certainly much higher than at Nichoria. The Atreus Bothros deposit and the huge numbers found in the area of the Citadel House indicate that figurines quickly took on a meaning for a great proportion of the populace at Mycenae, though they do not appear to have been regarded in any way as heirlooms since so many have been found among rubbish. Without clear contextual evidence it is difficult to say what their meaning might have been. However, since so many are found in or around domestic dwellings, it further verifies the possibility of some sort of house cult, possibly hearth ritual, already suggested at Nichoria and Tiryns. The large amount of random fragments, however, suggests that individual figurines were not intended as permanent offerings.
- (ii) The Great Poros Wall, possibly because of its accessibility and its association with a Mycenaean ruling dynasty, shows obvious signs of being a focus for popular cult, albeit probably on an occasional rather than regular basis, since numbers are nothing like as huge as those of votive figurines found at peak sanctuaries. No similar arrangement has yet been shown to exist at any other site. At Tiryns the courtyard close to Bau VI has been identified as having probable cultic associations, (*supra* p. 47) though of a different nature. There the foci are the hearths and their use for possible feasting rites, while the dedications of figurines at the Great Poros Wall suggest a cult of the dead kings of Mycenae. A second function for figurines in settlement areas is therefore implied, that they were used as dedications at sites of cultic significance.

Further comments on non-palatial sites.

It has already been pointed out that both Tiryns and Mycenae were major palatial sites and so could in that respect be considered in some way special. While Nichoria was not a palatial site, its main period of prosperity was LH IIIA, slightly earlier than the floruit of Mycenaean civilisation in LH IIIB. It is therefore worth comparing the evidence from Tiryns and Mycenae with two other sites which were not of palatial status but which attained some importance during LH IIIB.

Zygouries in Corinthia was excavated by Blegen in 1928. It was inhabited from EH times until LH IIIB, its two greatest periods of prosperity being EH II and LH IIIB (Hope Simpson and Dickinson 1979: 66). As well as what the excavator refers to as 'insignificant shattered bits', a total of 40 LH III female figurines came from Zygouries. There were 14 complete examples, all, however, from a funerary context. Those from the settlement (at least 16) were all in a fragmentary condition. The Potter's Shop is considered to be the house of an important local individual and possibly an administrative base (Hope Simpson and Dickinson 1979: 66). From a terrace north of this building came 8 pieces – 6 Phi, 1 Psi and a base – while 5 heads and 2 bodies were found in a drain trap above the Potter's Shop and a kourotophos below the west slope of the hill. 5 bovines also came from the Potter's Shop terrace as well as others from various locations on the hill. This makes a total of 21 figurines, mostly from one excavated area, a substantial but not startling number. While the Potter's Shop might simply have been the site of their manufacture, these numbers certainly represent a cluster and, in view of the suggested function of the building, one wonders if it might have been the focus for some sort of open-air cult centred around the house of a local dignitary.

Korakou in Corinthia, also excavated by Blegen (in 1915-16), is a settlement mound with evidence of more or less unbroken activity from EH I to late LH IIIC, and might have been a site of some importance in LH III (Hope Simpson and Dickinson 1979: 61). Altogether, 22 females and 19 bovines have been discovered at Korakou, all associated with habitation areas. While the numbers are not remarkable, they are significant, especially since they embrace virtually the full range of figurine types (Rutter 1974: 518) and include one of the earliest Naturalistic examples (French 1971: 105). There are examples of all female types except Transitional, as well as a complete spectrum of bovines and in addition some composite animal types (driven ox, chariot, horse and rider). This latter feature is of no small significance to the

present argument. It indicates that, at a non-palatial site, a little away from the direct orbit of the powerful sites in the Argolid, figurines came into popular use almost immediately after their inception. Moreover, they continued in use, changing in appearance and type, along with examples from some of the bigger sites, right until the end of the Mycenaean Period.

The evidence suggested by these early excavations has now been confirmed by finds from other sites such as Nichoria (discussed earlier) and Asine, namely that figurines are not confined to the major palatial sites. Moreover, find locations from all sites studied appear to indicate a strong link with popular religion not centred on the palaces.

Chapter 5: Mycenaean figures and figurines in shrines and sanctuaries.

The decipherment of the Linear B texts half a century ago suggested that shrines and sacred areas existed in the vicinity of palaces for the conduct of ritual centred on particular deities. The texts also refer to religious officials of both sexes who apparently presided at these shrines and to the donation of various commodities such as gold, foodstuffs (especially honey), wool and animals to deities, though they give no clue either about the nature of ritual or how these commodities were offered. Regarding figurines, the Linear B tablets appear to be silent and possibly therefore misleading. The texts do refer to a number of deities, both male and female but it would be most unwise to attempt to pair up names of Linear B deities with figure/figurine evidence. However, the excavation of three apparently purpose-built Mycenaean cult centres within the last three decades has now confirmed the evidence of Linear B on the existence of shrines. To whom precisely the shrines were dedicated and what sort of ritual took place still largely elude us, though it is clear that figures/figurines played a significant role.

Cult centres were a development of the Late Helladic Period and possibly arose in response to the different needs of those communities they served, though so far only two have with certainty been identified, on the mainland, at Mycenae (LH IIIB) and on the island of Melos at Phylakopi (LH III A – IIIC). In addition to these, successive phases of a single cult room were identified in the Tiryns Unterburg (LH IIIC). They have a similar construction and arrangement to Mycenaean dwellings (Whittaker 1997: 12ff) and were positioned against a fortification wall, though in the case of Phylakopi the early phase of the complex antedated the building of the defences. All three examples consisted of one or two rooms with benches as the focus for cult activity.

There has been much debate on the nature of cult centres and their relationship to palaces. Mylonas, for example (1972: 34-5; 40), suggests that they represent ‘official’ cult and are directly connected with the palace. While the processional way leading from the palace at Mycenae down to the Cult Centre does suggest this, only at Mycenae so far has this arrangement been identified. Moreover, Wright (1994: 61-2) points to the lack of monumental masonry at citadel cult centres and the position, as far away from the palace as possible. Indeed, in Tiryns the succession of cult centres which Kilian identified in the Unterburg did not appear until early LH IIIC, though as noted earlier (*supra* p. 48) fragments of a large figure from Bau VI indicate that there might have been some sort of official cult practised in this area during LH IIIA and IIIB. Factors such as this might indicate less emphasis on control by the palace, though some of the accoutrements of

shrines suggest some palatial involvement. Indeed Wright, following Antonaccio (1992: 103-5), concludes that cult centres developed after the palaces, as the elite sought justification for their extension of power. This implies that they arose as a result of a subtle complex of factors linking palace and popular cult.

At this point, it is perhaps appropriate to make brief mention of the sanctuary at Ayia Irini on the island of Kea, since during part of its period of use there was a considerable Mycenaean presence on Kea. It was first set up in the MBA (Caskey 1981: 127), when Minoan civilisation was becoming dominant in the Aegean, a period which affords virtually no evidence for mainland sacred architecture (if it existed) or ritual behaviour. The period of use appears to have extended right through the LBA (*ibid.*). The temple itself was an independent edifice and consisted of a series of long, narrow rooms with benches down the sides, not a feature of Cretan architecture. It contained over fifty large statues of garlanded, dancing women which appear to have been manufactured throughout the Second Palace Period (Dickinson 1994: 175); there was also a later figure (LH IIIA1), apparently a deliberate copy of the others, which therefore appears to indicate some continuity of cult from the MBA to the LBA. The statues themselves closely resemble peak sanctuary figurines but are much larger than any other known figures from a Minoan context.

So what are we to make of the temple at Ayia Irini and its relationship to later mainland cult centres? Clearly, from its inception and for a large period of its use it cannot be claimed to be a mainland-style cult centre, since no structures are known to have existed on the mainland during the early part of the shrine's existence. However, in style and arrangement, it bears much closer resemblance to later mainland domestic and sacred architecture than it does to Minoan cultic installations. Moreover, as noted above, while the statues look Minoan they have no known precursors or parallels in Crete. It seems likely, therefore, that the Ayia Irini complex represents some sort of local provision for cult. It is reasonable to assume, since Kea is so close to the mainland, that architectural features might have been similar, but that the dancing figures probably represent a local cult, perhaps deliberately overlain with Minoan features.

Rural sanctuaries.

Returning to mainland cult sites, it is perhaps appropriate to comment on the evidence for rural sanctuaries before discussing cult provision at palatial sites. Wright argues that, as they expanded their territory further, the elite established rural sanctuaries which contained cult equipment similar to that in palace cult centres but of a more simple

nature. However, some rural sanctuaries clearly pre-date the palaces. The Apollo Maleatas sanctuary at Epidauros, for example, shows evidence for cult as early as LH I and possibly earlier (Rutkowski 1986: 203). The main focus for cult seems to have been a large ash altar testifying to hearth ritual and animal sacrifice, while the large number of kylikes afford evidence of toasting rituals. From the later Mycenaean Period there were many finds of Mycenaean figurines, both female and bovine and including pieces of large bovines, as well as part of a life-size bronze bull's head (Lambrinudakis 1981: 59-62). This open-air site is important in that it affords evidence for rural cult before the period of the palaces, though some of the finds suggest that in its earlier period it might have been a focus more for elite rather than popular cult. Hägg argues (1981: 36) that the double axes found at the site put it into the sphere of official cult, since it was only the wealthier classes in mainland society, especially at the beginning of the Mycenaean era, who were exposed to Minoan-style cult and cult apparatus. However, later evidence of mainland figurines establishes an early link between figurines and ritual centred round the ash altar and possibly involving toasting. Since ritual connected with the altar on the site goes back to LH I and possibly late MH, it implies that the sort of ritual performed was intrinsic to mainland cult. The appearance of figurines in LH III levels implies a deliberate association, therefore, between figurines and altar/hearth ritual, thereby giving greater credibility to hearth-centred ritual involving figurines in a domestic context, already noted at Nichoria and in the Tiryns Unterburg.

Evidence of a further possible example of a rural sanctuary is the finding at Tsoungiza (ancient Nemea) of a deposit which includes part of a large figure and figurines (LH IIIA2) as well as a large number of kylikes (Wright 1994: 69). It is from a dump and therefore not associated with any architectural feature, but Wright considers that it was probably connected with the settlement higher up the hill (*ibid.*). It therefore would seem to centre round popular rather than official cult. A similar deposit was found at Klenies, near Ayia Triada in the Argolid. It comprised largely female figurines dated to mid-LH IIIB. There were also the foot of a large bovine or animal rhyton and some pottery associated with toasting. Again, there were no architectural remains. It is considered by Hägg (1981: 38-9) and Kilian (1990: 185ff.) to be a rural shrine at which visitors might deposit votive offerings.

The unifying feature of all these three sites is the correlation between figurines and kylikes/toasting vessels. This suggests a deliberate association between figurines and libation which, according to Hägg (1990: 177) played a central role in Mycenaean ritual. Moreover, the fragmentary female figure from Tsoungiza and the large bovines found at

the Apollo Maleatas sanctuary imply that they possibly represented the centrepiece around which any ritual took place.

The evolution of large figures such as these, possibly representing a deity, is closely linked with the growth of palatial cult centres and shrines as well as those in more rural locations. Frequently, one or more large figures, either human or bovine, appears to have been set up on the bench(es) within sanctuaries, often surrounded by figurines. Mention has already been made of the large female figure from Bau VI of the Tiryns Unterburg. These figures differ from figurines in that they are larger, much rarer and invariably wheel-made with very fine decoration (see French 1981: 173ff for precise clarification). The earliest of these dates to LH IIIA2 (French 1985: 415, on the Lady of Phylakopi) and they appear to have been specifically made to act as a focus for worship within cult centres. Wright suggests (1994: 75) that standard figurines 'may have symbolised the figures at cult centres and thereby provided a symbolic link to the seat of cult at the citadel centres'. However, comparative dating suggests that this might only be true of Psis. Figurine types have already been discussed (*supra* p. 17-20), but for the purpose of clarification brief recapitulation is offered here. It has been established that Naturalistic figurines [fig. 47] were first developed in LH II (French 1971: 105-6) and quickly became established in LH IIIA, frequently found in a domestic context. In other words, Naturalistic figurines appear to have evolved earlier than large figures. Naturalistic figurines are shown diagrammatically by French (1971: 109) to have subdivided into two groups, Phi and Transitional. It is clear that the arm position of Naturalistic figurines with arms held diagonally across the breasts offered the possibility of two very different arm positions in later more schematic examples. The immediate development, that of one arm curling round the torso and held between the breasts while the other lay across the stomach, led to the appearance of Phi figurines. However, a less direct development was from Naturalistic to Transitional (LH IIIA2). Here the arms are folded across the breasts and there is even a hint in some examples of an upward curve being formed by the shoulders [fig. 48(a) and 48 (b)]. The torso is much shorter than that in Phis and the skirt proportionately longer. From the Transitional, two types evolved, the Tau (LH IIIB) with even shorter torso, longer skirt and arms a simple strip resting over the breasts. The other style was the Psi (LH IIIB1); as noted earlier (*supra* p. 18), while slight variations occur, essentially the arms are always uplifted in the position assumed by most of the large figures, the first dateable example of which is the 'Lady of Phylakopi' (LH IIIA2). It is apparent, therefore, that large figures were first developed roughly contemporaneously with Transitional types to which they might owe some influence,

while Psi figurines appeared a little later. While it is impossible to separate natural trends in figurine development from deliberate human interference, it is possible that the ruling elite noted popular attachment to early figurines and deliberately developed their own official figures with arms held aloft in the attitude of epiphany, a gesture already developing in Transitional figurines and well-known from Minoan iconography. Such figures would be guaranteed popular approval since they were so closely related to established cultic icons. Mass-produced Psi figurines would then be a natural development from figures. In fact, Wright (1994: 75) has pointed to the similarity between Psi figurines and large figures. He suggests that this link might be an effort on the part of the palaces 'to establish a viable ritual object for common use that was tied into the ideological structure controlled and administered by the palace'. In this way the palaces would gain some sort of control over cult. If this were the case, it would explain the apparent decline in the use of Phi figurines, while the Psi, because of its similarity to the goddess figures, represented the epiphany of the goddess herself in all her possible guises and therefore became the universal icon. Consequently, it was seen as the most appropriate item of dedication, not only at shrines and sanctuaries where goddess figures were displayed, but also in a domestic context – as evinced by the concentrations noted at Tiryns. A further point is worth noting. Odd examples of ivory figurines exist (Prosymna Tomb VI, Mycenae Tomb 27 [figs. 49(a) and 49(b)]. However, since there are so few of them, they possibly represent a deliberate attempt at copies of Minoan artwork and are therefore prestige items, intended to reflect the status of their owners rather than have any cultic associations. Moreover, they all resemble Naturalistic types. There are no examples of Psi figurines in ivory, as, for example, some figurines at Second Palace Period Minoan peak sanctuaries were produced in bronze, reflecting elite involvement in cult. In other words, the Psi, while its development might be related to that of large figures, does not represent direct involvement in cult by the elite, otherwise it is likely that at least some examples made from a more costly material than terracotta would exist. Consequently, the vast numbers of cheaply produced Psi figurines, many of them from shrines and other potentially cultic contexts, are likely to represent the manifestation of popular, rather than elite ritual.

Mycenae.

The Cult Centre at Mycenae was first constructed in LH IIIA2, significantly the period, as noted above (supra p. 60), when large figures first began to appear. Changes and adaptations seem to have taken place throughout LH IIIB. Excavated in four

stages, it has only been partly published, but those structures and finds which have been published are so well known as to require only the briefest of summaries here. More detailed discussions include those of Iakovidis (1977) and Mylonas (1981), as well as comments by French (1981). However, the most comprehensive and up-to-date work is the account by Moore and Tylour (1999) of the so-called 'Temple'. Part of the 'Well-Built Mycenae' series, it represents the most thorough and analytical insight into that particular installation thus far. The whole complex consists of four separate buildings: Tsountas' House and attached shrine, the 'Megaron' (Room 2), the 'Temple' which has the 'Room with the Idols' to the north of it and the 'Room with the Fresco', Room 31 with attached shrine, Room 32 [fig. 50].

Tsountas' House consists of a group of storerooms separated by a corridor from the main megaron-style room, which contained a central hearth. Above the house, to the north east, is the attached shrine. It was approached via a processional way leading from the palace, thereby indicating palatial interest. The shrine consists of two rooms, the one at the rear being where Tsountas discovered the now famous plaque depicting the 'War Goddess'. The room in front of it was open on the side which faced the courtyard, thereby affording cult provision to a wider audience. This room contained, at the back, the familiar horseshoe-shaped hearth and projection for libations. Next to the hearth was a large flat stone, thought to be a slaughtering stone. These structures clearly formed the focus for cultic activity. Around the middle of LH IIIB the entire floor of the shrine was filled in with earth, covering both the hearth and slaughtering stone. The shrine was then modified by having a small stepped altar built at the entrance, presumably to replace the earlier horseshoe altar and testifying to the maintenance of this element of ritual.

The 'Megaron' lies to the west of Tsountas' House. According to French (1981: 44) it was architecturally comparable to the palace and consisted of one large main room divided by a wall and two smaller basement rooms; in the main room was a central hearth which had a covering of black ash and animal bones. No ritual objects were found in this room, but its cultic nature is suggested by the central hearth and the fragments of a procession fresco (identified by Cameron in 1978). There is straightforward access from the megaron to the Tsountas' House Shrine with slaughtering stone and hearth. Since the hearth in Tsountas' House shows only limited signs of burning, it is conceivable that sacrifice and blood libation centred around Tsountas' House to be followed by a ritual banquet in the 'Megaron'.

To the west of the 'Megaron' lies the so-called 'House of the Idols' or 'Temple' [fig. 51]. Its inception belongs to late LH IIIB1 (Phase VII in the history of the

site). Essentially, the structure consists of four rooms (Room XI, Room 18, Room 18 Alcove, Room 19). It has been conjectured (Moore and Tylour 1999: 82) that Room XI, termed the 'Vestibule', was rather more than simply a thoroughfare, since it contained a hearth (with ash), possible benches and a basin-like structure. Clearly, some sort of activity related to cult took place here; Tylour (Mycenae Archive 2308: 34) has postulated that ritual ablutions might have been performed at the basin, though libation is clearly another possibility. Both Moore and Tylour suggest (*op.cit.* 82) that Room XI might have acted as a sort of halfway house, dividing a sacred inner area from that of the world outside.

Room 18 contained at its far end a series of platforms of varying heights as well as a low dais slightly off-centre (not a hearth since there were no signs of burning). Moore and Tylour (*ibid.*) consider that the platforms are particularly striking as attention-focussing devices since their varying heights would ensure that the visitor's attention was drawn immediately towards them. The only access to the Room 18 Alcove was by climbing over these platforms. Whether the rock face at the east end or indeed the alcove as a whole was in any way related to the cult performed in Room 18 is unclear, though, as Moore and Tylour note (*ibid.*), if this were the case, more emphasis is likely to have been given to it when the structure was originally built. Room 19 was approached via a staircase and seems to have been simply a storeroom, there being no indication of ritual activity having taken place.

At some time in mid-LH IIIB the Temple suffered some sort of structural damage, perhaps caused by a minor earthquake. As a result of this the doorway to Room 19 was blocked up after much of the material from the previous phase had been relocated there. The Room 18 Alcove was similarly used at this time as a deposit for material from Phase VII. Much of the material from both these deposits was badly broken and appears to have been placed where it was in some haste, as there is no evidence of any careful planning re the position of various items.

Whatever it was which caused this damage, it brought Phase VII of the Temple to an end. However, the complex continued in use in what has been termed Phase VIII (mid.-end LH IIIB), when minor alterations to the structure can be detected. Room 19 was blocked up and no longer used, while the staircase, platform and dais were coated with plesia.

Most of the finds from the Temple appear to belong to the Phase VII period of use, since they were found either in Room 19 or the Room 18 Alcove deposit. These include three of French's Type A female figures (complete or fragmentary) and eight

terracotta snakes (complete or fragmentary). No bovines or any other animal were found within the Temple in either phase of the Temple's use. Room 19 contained the well-known female figure (68 1577) clutching her breasts [fig. 52], though, since this room appears to have been primarily a storeroom, it is likely that during Phase VII the figure was displayed in Room 18. Also from Room 19 was part of 68 1585 [fig. 53] with a further joining fragment coming from Room 18. The third figurine (69 68), found in the Room 18 Alcove, is merely a fragment from a skirt and might not originally have belonged in the Temple. Moore and Tylour do not therefore take it into consideration. They have made a very convincing case, however, that both 68 1577 and 68 1585 were cult images, though the former is the more exceptional piece. On the basis of criteria established by Renfrew (1985: 23), they argue that the size of 68 1577 and the fine quality of its decoration mark it out as cult image rather than votive. Moreover, certain other factors serve to confirm this. One is the gesture adopted by the figure, with hands cupped across the breasts, a pose which emphasises the figure as a symbol of female fertility and which is echoed so many times in the attitude of Naturalistic and Phi figurines. Secondly, the traces of a polos-type headdress, facial markings and necklace are all features which have been argued to indicate divine status (Nichols 1970: 3; Marinatos and Hirmer 1960: pl.XLII; Kilian – Dirlmeier 1979). The other figure (68 1585) is considerably more damaged and less carefully decorated. However, though one is missing, it is clear that both arms were originally held aloft. On the evidence available, Moore and Tylour argue that both of these figures might have served as cult figures in the Temple during Phase VII, but that, because of its greater size and far finer execution, 68 1577 was probably the dominant, if not the only, cult image in the Temple. Thus we might have, during the Phase VII use of the Temple, a belief and behaviour system essentially based on a female deity of fertility and nurture, a suggestion which is further supported by the finding of some small glass plaques which had been placed along with other items in a bowl and sealed away in Room 19 when it was blocked up at the close of Period VII. The plaques [fig. 54] show female figurines in flounced skirts which, like figure 68 1577 and also like the gold foil cut-outs from Shaft Grave III [fig. 55], have the hands directed towards the breasts. In the same deposit was a Phi figurine, while a Proto-Phi came from the Room 18 Alcove deposit. It is possible that the plaques and the two figurines are dedications, representations of the deity given as offerings in her shrine, a suggestion which the evidence of frescoes might further justify. Two of the five procession frescoes suggested for Mycenae came from the South West Building (Immerwahr 1990: 117), considered by Mylonas to be the house of a high priest. The

'Mycenaean Lady' and several other fragments of women were published in 1982 by Kritseli-Providi, who considers the former to be a seated figure and therefore a goddess [fig. 56]. She wears a saffron yellow dress with red and white borders and holds a necklace which she has presumably just received from the procession of women coming from the left. Two other fragments come from a different wall of the same building and possibly represent a second procession moving towards the left. One shows a foot resting on a rectangular stool and belonging to a seated figure facing right. The other shows a pair of hands holding a figurine or figure wearing a dress of the same yellow colour with red edging as the 'Mycenaean Lady' [fig. 57]. It would appear that the figurine is a deliberate facsimile of the 'Mycenaean Lady' from the other procession and the rite being enacted here is one of dedication by votaries within a sacred context of an image of the goddess to the deity herself. A similar depiction appears on a procession fresco from Tiryns (Immerwahr 1990: 120 fig. 33b). Here also a female procession fresco is depicted, with one of the women apparently carrying a figurine. These examples could imply, therefore, that, on the mainland, processions of elite females took place in order to place a representation of the deity in her shrine, possibly at particular times of the year.

It is difficult to explain the role of the other probable deity figure (65 1585). As Moore and Taylour have suggested (1999: 93), she might represent a different deity of inferior status to that of 68 1577, or she might, as has also been suggested (*op.cit.* 117), belong in a different part of the complex altogether. It is also not clear how ritual in the Temple was affected in Phase VIII when both figures were locked away in Room 19. Had the presence of the figure(s) in the previous phase made sufficient impact to guarantee maintenance of the same cult without the focus of a cult figure or did ritual and/or belief modify? There is, to date, insufficient evidence to make a conclusive statement either way.

The other human figures [fig. 58] from the Temple deposits are so far unique to Mycenae and are what French refers to as Type B figures (1980: 173). From Phase VII there were twelve complete and five fragmentary pieces in Room 19 and a further four complete and two fragmentary pieces in the Room 18 Alcove. Moore and Taylour (1999: 93-101) give a full discussion on the character and function of these figures and so little beyond the briefest comment is necessary here. The figures are larger than Type A figures and monochrome except for some rather carelessly applied paint on the faces. Facial features and hair are plastically modelled and while each one is unique, they all have a forbidding appearance. Their arms are held uplifted and away from the body, some of them wielding hammer axes. A further figure was found from the Phase VIII period. It

was on one of the platforms in the NE corner beside a small clay offering table. Moore (1988: 219ff.; 1999: 93-101) makes a convincing case for these figures being adorants rather than deities, their different poses and gestures delineating them as performing various ritual functions. He argues that, since the figures are so uniform in type, it is not their individual identity which is significant, since they all represent the same class (i.e. cult officials), but their actions. In other words, as occasion demanded it, an entire sequence of cultic rituals or particular parts of it could be permanently represented within this structure – as evinced by the standing figure in Room 18, clearly intended to be represented as celebrating cult in perpetuity since it had been deliberately attached to the bench when the latter was plastered over in Phase VIII. Precisely what the ritual was and how it related to the goddess figure from Room 19 is at this stage, however, unclear, though the pottery from the deposit, mainly kylikes, cups, bowls (Taylour 1968: 92), suggests that libation might have formed a significant part. There was also a lamp and two braziers, implying the use of burning/purification rites also.

The purpose of the snakes [fig. 59] is also unclear. Snakes are well attested in Minoan ritual (viz. the Snake Goddesses from the Temple Repositories and the association of snakes with the Minoan Goddess with Upraised Arms), though no independently modelled snakes appear. Moreover, thus far no other certain examples have been found in a mainland context, though odd examples of snakes attached to other items have been suggested (Demakopoulou 1982: 55-6). Whether they had any connection with rituals involving either the goddess figure or the Type B figures it is impossible to say, though in view of all three different figures belonging to the same deposits, this does seem a likely possibility.

The Room with the Fresco lies to the west of the Temple. It consists of an anteroom approached by a large conglomerate threshold, main chamber and storeroom (Room 32). In the centre of the main room was a large, oval hearth and to the left of the entrance a bathing tub and various pouring vessels, suggesting ablution or libation rites. A bench ran down the entire south side of the room, while at the east end was a platform. On the wall behind the platform was the well-known fresco, now in Nauplion Museum, depicting three female figures, two above the platform and a smaller one below and to the side [fig. 60]. The smaller figure is depicted with arms upraised in the familiar 'Psi' position; however, she is holding aloft ears of corn. There has been much debate about her identity (see Marinatos 1988: 245; Rehak 1992: 39ff.), but she appears to be some sort of religious personage, possibly connected with harvest, though whether priestess or goddess is not altogether clear. The other fresco, above the platform, which shows on a

larger scale two female figures, one dressed in a shaggy robe standing outside a building façade and holding a sword, is interpreted by Rehak (1984: 539ff) as a goddess; the other wears a flounced skirt and holds what is possibly a spear or sceptre; A recent restoration by Diana Wardle (1997: 111) shows the latter smaller than the other female and therefore presumably of inferior status. However, this point had already been discussed and dismissed by Marinatos (1987: 247) who, though she notes the differences both in the size of the figures' feet and in their attire, nevertheless argues that there is no 'pronounced discrepancy in the hierarchy and the two females seem equivalent'; in other words, both figures represent goddesses. Between these two figures hover two small stick-like figures which appear to be male. Rejecting the possibilities that these are either adorants or figurines suspended from strings, Marinatos claims (*op.cit.* 248) that they represent souls/spirits. However, this seems a rather presumptuous interpretation and I see no objection, in view of their small size compared to the main figures and since they have their hands forward in the attitude of offering, to their being human adorants. Whatever the precise meaning of the scene, its cultic significance is beyond doubt.

From this room also came three very fine pieces of ivory sculpture carved in the round, a sword pommel, a lion and the almost life-size head of a young man. The former are likely to be dedications, the sword pommel being particularly appropriate in the shrine of a possible warrior deity. However, the function of the head is more of a mystery. It is conceivable that it formed part of a statue which was made of a different material (wood, for example). In this case, its large size and careful carving might mark it out as the only example of a male cult figure thus far found in a mainland context. While this is an interesting idea, so far there is no evidence whatsoever to support the hypothesis. It is also worth noting that, despite the obvious cultic nature of this room, no figurines, either female or bovine, were found in it. This might be a reflection of its status as belonging to the sphere of official cult, though if this were so it is difficult to explain the female figurines in the Temple, since this is part of the same complex. Alternatively, it might not have been considered appropriate to offer figurines to the particular deity/deities which were worshipped in the Room with the Fresco.

Room 32 lies directly to the east of the Room with the Fresco. In the south west corner was a low platform on which stood a figure of a goddess with upraised arms and a beneficent expression [fig. 38], dated to LH IIIB. No other figures were found in this shrine. At the foot of the platform was an assemblage of glass beads, which had presumably belonged to some sort of offering made to the goddess. There was also a good deal of pottery of the type associated with libation as well as a selection of ivory

workshop material. Indeed, there is evidence from the whole Cult Centre area for a craft/cult connection, though this might simply be that since, in the case of those craftsmen working in the Citadel House area, they were producing items to be used for cultic purposes, it was more appropriate for them to work in the vicinity of the shrines for which their craftsmanship was intended.

Whether the male ivory head is later shown to represent a male deity or not, it is clear that a different cult is represented in this complex from that in the Temple. The cult in the Temple may have been based on some sort of goddess of nurture, while the scene depicted in the Room with the Fresco appears to reflect the cult of a possible war goddess. The goddess from Room 32 appears to be different again and bears comparison with the figure from Bau VI at Tiryns and with the Lady of Phylakopi discussed below (p. 69). Whether all three examples represent the same deity is impossible to say, but it does seem plausible that, as suggested earlier (*supra* p. 60), examples such as these were strongly influential in the development and proliferation of Psi figurines.

The installations discussed above afford ample evidence of the eclectic nature of Aegean belief and ritual in the LBA. It is clear that more than one deity is represented, possibly two or even three. Until further evidence comes to light regarding the male ivory head, it appears that only female deities are represented. Moreover, while the rituals performed in the different sections seem to have varied considerably, libation is suggested in all three areas, attesting further to its importance in Mycenaean ritual. It is also worth reiterating that standard figurines were not a strong feature in any part of the Mycenaean cult complex.

Phylakopi.

One of the earliest Mycenaean cult complexes is that at Phylakopi, on the island of Melos, excavated by Renfrew in the 1970's. Its inception belongs to LH IIIA2, maybe twenty years or so after the final destruction of Knossos. Evidence for cult activity prior to the sanctuary is limited but shows an obvious Minoan influence. Renfrew (1985: 376) points to an animal figure found in the course of the 1904 excavations which has close Minoan affinities, and also a female figure decorated in light-on-dark style which has the typical 'bell skirt' of peak sanctuary figures. However, from the period of the Fourth City, the one hundred and six fragments of female and bovine figurines scattered throughout the site provide evidence of Mainland figurine usage.

There were two shrines, West and East, with an open courtyard linking them, similar to the arrangement at Mycenae. A baetyl stood at the entrance to the West Shrine.

Renfrew has documented the arrangements of both in painstaking detail, and reiteration here is unnecessary save for the briefest of summaries. The West Shrine was constructed during LH IIIA and the East in LH IIIB, when the baetyl was set up in front of the West Shrine. At some point early in LH IIIC the complex suffered a major disaster, referred to as 'The Collapse'; it is to this period that the most important assemblages belong. This in itself presents a problem of interpretation, since there are no LH IIIB levels discernible and consequently it is impossible to say categorically what changes took place in cultic behaviour from LH IIIB-IIIC. However, the very fine 'Lady' [fig. 61], a large, wheelmade figure probably manufactured in the Argolid and similar to the fragmentary figure from Bau VI at Tiryns and also to the Tsoungiza example, is dated stylistically by French to LH IIIA1/2 and was possibly the earliest focus of cult on the south-west platform in the West Shrine. Accompanying female figurines [figs. 62 and 63] but also bovines [fig. 64] from various phases testify to the maintained cult of what must have been a female deity until the Shrine's collapse. The other platform, that in the northern corner of the West Shrine, contained the only example known so far of a possible male deity [fig. 65] who appears to be the focus for the cult celebrated on this platform. The figure is accompanied, appropriately enough, by two other males as well as two chariot groups and bovine figurines, though no large bovine figures. These two assemblages are of particular interest, not only because of the male figures from the northern platform, but also because of the association of the large bovines with the cult of the 'Lady', a feature completely absent from the Mycenae cult complex. Possibly even more significant is the arrangement of two apparently different cults to different deities, a female and probable male, even within the same shrine.

The East Shrine housed what was apparently a different sort of cult, possibly represented by one or both of the wheelmade bovines which belong to the LH IIIB period of the Shrine. Many figurines belong to the East Shrine's first period of use, mostly bovines, with a chariot group and driven ox; there are no females at all. Other finds from this deposit include ten sealstones, mainly of steatite, mostly involving scenes of animals (bovines and agrimi), presumably for sacrifice. Also found were a bronze arrowhead and a knife; notably absent were querns, grindstones and items of that nature, which were stored in Room B, the storeroom behind the West Shrine. Both shrines, however, contained bovine rhyta, suggesting that, as at Mycenae, libation again played an important role in the ritual conducted at Phylakopi, and also that ritual at shrines involving figures/figurines is inextricably linked with libation and therefore gives greater credibility to suggestions of a domestic cult involving figurines and libation.

Phylakopi is an important site for several reasons; it represents possibly the earliest purpose-built 'cult centre'. Moreover, since the 'Lady' derives from the Argolid, it implies that the building of the West Shrine was as a result of palatial stimulus and a deliberate move by the elite to influence cultic development. The East Shrine and its bovines serve to illustrate to us the non-uniform nature of Mycenaean cult. Not only were there clearly different deities but they might have separate cult rooms within the same complex or even share the same room, a feature suggested by the Linear B evidence. Developments in LH IIIC will illustrate even greater signs of diversity.

Methana.

It might be that the cult practised in the East Shrine at Phylakopi was the same as that represented in the Methana Shrine which was associated with a LH Mainland settlement (Konsolaki 1995: 242). On the site of the church of Ag. Konstantinos is a four-room complex, one room of which (Room A) appears to have had a cultic function. Against the north wall was a stepped edifice, interpreted as a bench. As well as part of a fine wheel-made bovine, scattered about on the steps were one hundred and fifty figurines, mainly bovines, of all types from naturalistic to stylised. There were also driven oxen and some unusual composite types – horse and rider, bull leaper and two-man chariots. There was only one female (a hollow-stemmed Psi), with a further two female figurines found in a child's grave of LH IIIB1 which had been cut into the floor of Room Γ to the north of the cult room. In the south-east corner was a hearth with ashes and animal bones. Other finds include kylikes, a triton shell and a pig's head rhyton. Here again, the hearth and ritual vessels attest to the importance of these two elements in Mycenaean ritual. Also significant is the appearance of both of these features in the context of figurines. To the south of Room A, Room B also contained a hearth as well as cooking implements and stone tools. A possible workshop has therefore been suggested. Konsolaki has suggested that, in view of its proximity to the sea and the nature of the finds (horses, chariots, bovids) this shrine was dedicated to a male deity with whom were associated those attributes later connected with Poseidon. Since the figurines date from LH IIIA to the beginning of LH IIIC, it implies that the cult of a male deity with whom the bovines might be connected existed right through the late Mycenaean Period – a trend also suggested by the Phylakopi material.

Dhimini.

A probable 'house shrine' similar to Room 123 at Tiryns and also dated to LH

IIIB has recently been discovered at Dhimini, an important Mycenaean centre in the vicinity of Volos still under excavation (*BCH* 120 [1996]: 1212-4). Six private houses have so far been excavated. In a corner of House K a low wall separated off a small shrine area from the rest of the house, an arrangement similar to that at Tiryns. A very fine example of a large wheel-made bovine was discovered in this shrine [fig. 66]. It was decorated with a four-leaf clover design and had a painted necklace. In size and style it bears comparison with some of the large bovines from Phylakopi and might amount to further evidence for the worship of a male deity in bovine form. Such a phenomenon is not unprecedented. Discussing Hittite religion, Gurney (1990: 123) makes the comment 'At the poorer shrines the deity was represented by a symbol or fetish. The weather god was often represented in the form of a bull, as illustrated in the relief found at Alaja Hüyük', and he shows an illustration of a bull standing on a pedestal. In an earlier publication (1977: 25) Gurney notes 'The exception is the weather-god who in most instances was represented by a bull, both before and after the enrichment of the shrine, just as we see him represented on the well-known sculpture at Alaja Hüyük'. On current evidence, it is impossible to state categorically that this shrine represents the cult of a male deity or one envisaged in bovine form. However, the shrine itself and its internal arrangement do afford further evidence for organized house cult in a non-palatial setting during LH IIIB.

Midea.

Recent excavations in the Argolid have revealed yet another potential cult centre. In 1994 a building of megaron type was revealed on the lower terraces at Midea close to the circuit wall. It was dated to LH IIIB with LH IIIC repairs consequent on an earthquake and had a central hearth surrounded by four columns. According to the excavator, G. Walberg, a number of features point to the importance of this structure (Demakopoulou et al. 1996: 31): (i) it was built in the same architectural style as the Megaron (Unit IV – 4A) at Nichoria (ii) the final internal arrangement closely resembles Megaron W at Tiryns (iii) an external staircase, cut out of the rock, led down from it to a lower terrace, in a similar arrangement to the Megaron (Room 2) at Mycenae. Walberg concludes (*ibid.*) 'Undoubtedly the Midea building was used for the same purpose as these closely parallel buildings at Tiryns, Mycenae and Nichoria'. Two features point to the possible cultic significance of the structure (i) a niche was found at the back of the main room related to the LH IIIC occupation level. Inside the niche was a deposit of objects, including three large sword pommels of ivory, alabaster and lapis

lacedaemonicus. Walberg points to the ceremonial use of swords of this type and compares them to the depiction of such a sword from the Room with the Fresco at Mycenae which also, as noted earlier (p. 67), contained in a bench beneath the fresco a pommel similar to the Midea examples. A fourth similar sword pommel was subsequently found during excavations in the area in front of the megaron while Room XX a little to the west contained in its north west corner a semi-circular platform, possibly an altar or bench. Finds from Room XX and its environs include several figurines, both human and animal, and including the head of a snake, as well as spouted bowls and lead vessels. These finds led the excavator, G. Walberg, to suggest (Demakopoulou et al. 1997-98: 90) that Room XX might have been a cult room.

One other find from the 1995-6 excavations at Midea deserves particular attention here. From Room VI next to the West Gate came a lot of vases, tools, equipment for food preparation, beads, seals and spindle whorls. There were also many fragments of female and animal figurines. However, of greatest import was the finding of a large, wheel-made figure [fig. 67], referred to by the excavator, K. Demakopoulou, as 'obviously a goddess' (*op.cit.* 68). She claims it had fallen from an upper storey into what were obviously storerooms and workshops. It is a very fine piece, obviously intended for display, though where this would have been is still open to question.

The discovery of the Midea figure and particularly the bovine figures from Methana and Dhimini urge us to dismiss any preconceptions we might have had regarding the nature of official cult in LH IIIA and LH IIIB. The variation in the appearance and structure of mainland shrines, and particularly their contexts, serves as an illustration of their non-uniform nature. Small domestic shrines and rural sanctuaries existed as well as larger cult complexes. The relative importance of particular deities might have varied from region to region, depending on a range of circumstances, but in the larger centres provision seems to have been made for more than one deity within the same complex. In LH IIIC there were even greater changes, as I hope to show in the following brief discussion.

The nature of cult in LH IIIC.

The nature and extent of cult varied greatly from site to site during LH IIIC. At Nichoria, for example, there is a gap in habitation sequence between the end of LH IIIB and the beginning of the Dark Age, while at Mycenae, after the downfall of the palace at the end of LH IIIB, only parts of the citadel were reoccupied in LH IIIC. The Granary, for example, continued in use, as did some of the structures close to the Palace. However, the

whole of the Cult Centre was filled in with rubble and debris, later reoccupation being at a much higher level. Figurines of LH IIIC style are comparatively rare at Mycenae, possibly representing population and behavioural changes. There are only two foci which could possibly have had cultic associations, these being an altar-like structure next to the citadel wall and a possible open-air altar on the debris above the Room with the Fresco; however, no finds were associated with either (French 1981: 47-8).

At Tiryns the situation is rather different. There were certainly great changes at Tiryns in LH IIIC, both cultic and architectural (diagram B). In the west curtain wall ten of the chambers which were in use during LH IIIB were filled in. The houses of LH IIIC differ in having fewer but larger rooms and no corridor. Often a building is, in fact, simply one large room. Some are constructed against the repaired city wall, and the original courtyard has tended to move inwards, being at the centre of a group of several structures. Such a change in arrangement possibly reflects the very different circumstances experienced by the inhabitants of the Unterburg during LH IIIC. It is an introspective layout and shows signs of cultural and economic change. House walls are less thick, indicating single-storeyed structures, and the palatial emphasis on storage has gone. Bau VI contracts into the much smaller Bau VI(a), which nevertheless contains some evidence of continued cult activity in Room 103. The courtyard moves inwards and becomes more square, the apparent centre around which other structures are built. Figurines appear far less frequently in a domestic context, though there is clear evidence of cultic continuity from LH IIIB – LHIIIC, albeit rather different (diagram C). As noted above (p. 47), Room 119, Kilian's 'Provisorium', belongs to the first part of LH IIIC and contained, as well as a hearth, six female figurines and five bovines; it also contained the upraised arm of a large figure. The room opened to the west, where there were six more figurines and four bovines. This apparently specifically built cult room was constructed at the top end of the LH IIIB courtyard, to which belonged the three hearths and the figurine deposits. It would therefore appear to be a conscious decision at the beginning of LH IIIC to construct a purpose-built cult room in an area which already had a tradition of cultic importance. At the other end of the erstwhile courtyard, at LXI 42-44, Room Complex 74-77 belongs to the first rebuilding phase after the catastrophe. This room group also contains limited evidence of some continuation of cult in an area which seems to have had cultic significance in LH IIIB; I refer to the relatively high numbers of figurines to the south of Bau VI. From the IIIC period Room 77 contained a Psi figurine at the doorway and a grinding stone, perhaps indicating a figurine function similar to the previous period.

The most interesting cultic development of LH IIIC was the establishment against the citadel wall, just above the point where Chamber 7 had been in the earlier period, of Room 117, a small room intended solely for cult (diagrams D and E). It has a cult bench and niche at the back, for the placement of figures. Apart from the back wall it was free standing and, according to Kilian's reconstruction (1981: 52), had a gabled roof supported by one internal column and a fairly elaborate columned façade. It contained, as well as three Psi figurines, the arm of a large figure; the arms of a second are associated with a large open-air hearth to the north. The establishment of this cult room suggests a change in religious practice in the Unterburg in LH IIIC. Instead of the fairly widespread placement of figurines at particular sites (at doorways and near hearths) within a range of individual houses, with one house in particular (Bau VI, 'The House of the Priestess') apparently having particular cultic importance, now a single purpose-built edifice (a temple?) becomes the focus of cult. It was clearly only a small room (despite its careful construction) and would only be able to accommodate a few worshippers at a time. Regular communal gatherings therefore (which would be important events in the affirmation of leadership once the palatial arrangement had collapsed) could be held outside at the large altar where the remains of animal bones provide supporting evidence for sacrificial and presumably feasting activities. Moreover, the large figurine deposit in the courtyard outside Room 117 is perhaps an echo of the earlier LH IIIB practice of placing figurines in an area of strong cultic significance.

Room 110 succeeded Room 117, being built directly on top of it. In its cultic paraphernalia, at least, it appears to have been wealthier than its predecessor. The room was longer and narrower (needing no internal support) but had the same cult bench at the back. In front of the cult bench were found four large wheel-made figures of the finest quality [fig. 68]; their size, the quality of the fabric and the style of painting are all indicative of their intrinsic value and lead Kilian to think that they represent deities (1981: 55). Also associated with this cult bench are figurines, presumably votives, and miniature vessels, steatite beads and, outside, an animal rhyton, suggesting further evidence of libation. As Kilian himself points out (*op.cit.*: 58) this cult room and its forerunner Room 117 are valuable indicators of the nature of cult at Tiryns in LH IIIC. Both rooms were carefully constructed, while the figures from Room 110 were of very fine quality. Perhaps for a period after the fall of the palaces some sort of organised cult was maintained in the Unterburg to provide a focus for the rebuilt, rearranged structures. Certainly, this part of the Unterburg seems to have been reformed in a sort of town-square arrangement, with Room 110 as its centre-piece. Possibly, the square served as part of the ritual area and

could accommodate the sort of numbers which were too large to be contained within the shrine. Room 110 was succeeded by Room 110(a), which again contained a cult bench but is very poor in equipment, containing only a Psi figurine and some pottery. It seems to indicate the impoverishment of the Unterburg and a gradual cessation of cult.

At Phylakopi every attempt seems to have been made to maintain cultic activity in LH IIIC both before and after the 'Collapse', albeit with structural modifications. The southern half of the West Shrine was closed off by the construction of a blocking wall, thereby preventing use of the south-west platform. The 'Lady' and the figures accompanying her seem to have been stored away in Rooms A and B and not employed in later ritual. To replace the south-west platform, a new platform was constructed in the north-east corner. A locally made Psi figurine, part of a female figure, as well as a female fragment, a quern and some mortars testify to a continued association with a female cult among local inhabitants, though the poorer quality of the material conforms with the breakdown of elite society. The platform in the north-west corner continued in use and centred round the probable male divine figure 1550, which was accompanied by two male figurines and a Psi female. It is unusual to find a female figurine appearing as a votive in a male-centred cult, and as such it might represent a change of emphasis and a growing tendency towards male deities, a trend which might also be indicated by the two 'Smiting God' figures [fig. 69], one attributed to the 2b phase of the East Shrine and the other to phase D when the shrine was no longer in use.

In the East Shrine the platform associated with the earlier period continued in use with bovine figurines, possibly all of them re-used, again the main items of cult. This sort of picture continued until the final abandonment of the shrine at the end of LH IIIC after a period of steady decline. Most of the bovines were secondary pieces, though there were, in addition, two examples of late Psi figurines, hitherto unknown in the East Shrine. Other items of interest include a tiny head of gold sheet and fragments of tortoise shell and ostrich shells. Presumably these were dedications perhaps made at a time when the perceived sanctity and symbolism of the Shrine itself held more significance than the cult of any specific deity.

Two features emerge at Phylakopi in LH IIIC. One is the increasing evidence for a male deity in human form, and the other is the attempt to maintain cultic activity, even after the 'Collapse'. Moreover, there seems to have been a less clear distinction between the cults practised at the various platforms, all of them having both female and bovine figurines among the cult material, as well as the use of the large male figure 1550.

Other LH IIIC Shrines.

Elsewhere on the mainland in the post-palatial era new types of cult site are visible in a variety of contexts. The Amyklaion in Laconia, for example, though most of the figures are probably fill from elsewhere, yielded a total of 136 figures/figurines, 71 of which are late Psi figurines. The only male human figurines were two riders. There were also three large wheel-made bovines as well as fragments of another ten. Possibly the most noteworthy finds are the two fragments of large female figures, a head with polos and a hand holding a kylix, evidence of the continued importance of libation. The remaining figurines are animal, mostly standard bovines. It is impossible to say whether the two figure fragments are both from females or even whether they are from the same figure. They are both of very fine workmanship, however, and must surely have belonged to the cult image(s) to which the Psi figurines were presumably offered as dedications.

It seems that at the Amyklaion during LH IIIC one or possibly even two female deities were worshipped. Demakopoulou (1982: 174-5) points to the fact that in the historical period Hyakinthos was worshipped alongside Apollo at the Amyklaion and concludes that, during the Mycenaean period also, the Amyklaion was dedicated to Hyakinthos, that his memory lived on into the historical period and that the Amyklaion is therefore a rare example of religious continuity from the Mycenaean to the historical period. However, there are three factors which present obstacles to this interpretation: the first is the gap in pottery sequence between the end of the Mycenaean and the beginning of the Protogeometric Period. Demakopoulou argues (*op.cit.*: 175) that during this period, possibly libations were the only offerings made, which have therefore left no trace. However, this is an argument from negative evidence and is therefore a dangerous assumption. Furthermore, if the libation was the only rite, one would have thought that there would have been at least some evidence of it – fragments of kylikes, rhyta, for example. Secondly, it is impossible to establish that Hyakinthos was indeed a pre-Dorian god (Dickinson 1992: 114). The third objection to Demakopoulou's argument is the nature of the finds themselves. Since, excluding the large bulls, the evidence for a cult figure indicates that the deity worshipped was female, it is unlikely that Hyakinthos was the principal deity at the Amyklaion. The shrine is, nevertheless, an important one in that it is indicative of the efforts made in the post-palatial era to maintain cult as it had been in the previous period. In fact, as Wright notes (1994: 65), the figure fragments 'fit into an important tradition of ceremonial drinking associated with the nobility and with divinities'. It is also possible that shrines such as this became a focus for ritual, possibly centred on an open hearth, once the cult areas connected with the palaces had fallen into

disuse, so, perhaps indicating a return to traditional Helladic cult, based on hearth rituals, such as at the Apollo Maleatas sanctuary:

A similar picture may be seen at Kalapodi, which lies in what was ancient Phocis. Though no structural remains are extant, seventeen Mycenaean layers have been identified, the earliest of which belongs to the beginning of LH IIIC. Many finds were of the usual Late Psi figurines, including the head of what must have been a particularly large example, as well as part of an unusual composite group, showing women wearing a long garment (a religious robe?) with some sort of plastically-rendered neck decoration, recalling the status from the temple on Kea. There were, in addition to females, some of the standard bovine figurines and later, horses, but by far the most significant finds are the large wheel-made bulls which might have represented a deity. The significance of large bovines has already been noted in the LH IIIB mainland shrines of Methana and Dhimini, as have those from Phylakopi. The Kalapodi examples might indicate that during LH IIIC, bovines, perhaps representing a male deity, were beginning to supercede females as symbols of cult and might thus indicate a change in religious emphasis from female to male, a trend already noted at Phylakopi (*supra* p. 75).

Cult seems to have taken place on a terrace and Felsch (1981: 88) considers that the focus might have been an open-air altar and that the shrine might have served as a rural religious centre for the surrounding area. At any rate, it bears close comparison with the Amyklaion and affords further proof of attempts to maintain cult after the fall of the palaces. One can imagine that regular gatherings round an open-air altar, perhaps accompanied by communal feasting and the offering of votives, would do much to promote stability and confidence in the changed circumstances of LH IIIC.

Morgan (1993: 47-9) draws attention to the finds from both the Amyklaion and Kalapodi which indicate an emphasis on feasting and drinking. Moreover, she points out that both sites lie in significant areas; the Amyklaion is in the middle of the Spartan plain and, as Wright notes (1994: 65), conveniently situated for sites such as the Menelaion, Vaphio-Palaiopyrgi and Ayios Stephanos. Likewise, Kalapodi lay between the Corinthian Gulf and Thessaly and controlled the main route into Phocis; Morgan postulates, therefore, that after the downfall of the palaces the inhabitants of LH IIIC lacked a common focus of leadership and social structure. Consequently, new shrines were established close to routes of communication and accessible to a large proportion of those living in a particular area. At appropriate times of the year regular gatherings could take place for communal feasting and the performance of ritual where such issues as leadership, alliance and community regulations could be reaffirmed.

A different type of post-palatial shrine belongs in House G at Asine, a substantial house of megaron type, the main room having two columns on a central axis. A cult bench stands in the north east corner of the main room, immediately to the left of the door. The finds from the bench are well known and include Psi figurines, two of them fairly large. The most significant was a fairly large head, 'The Lord of Asine' [fig. 42], now agreed to be female, originally perhaps belonging to a complete figure, though no other part of it remains. Moreover, one cannot imagine that a complete figure of such a size would have originally been the focus for cult in what was a comparatively small shrine; it is conceivable that it represents an item of salvage from elsewhere. Also on the bench was a substantial amount of pottery, including a kernos and a large upturned jug which had had its bottom deliberately broken and which is assumed to have been a receptacle for libations.

Clearly this represents some sort of house cult. In form and layout it bears comparison with the shrine of the Double Axes at Knossos. Bench shrines within houses such as the Asine example were not a feature of Mycenaean cult, and this represents a further modification in cultic behaviour. However, it is to be noted that the underlying rituals of libation and dedication seem to be largely the same as before, with female figurines playing a significant role in ritual.

LH IIIC was a period of change and adaptation to circumstances. Since the palaces themselves could no longer serve as a focus for cult, at some sites ritual seems to have been maintained throughout the period but centred around small public or domestic shrines, such as those at Tiryns and Asine, though why this should occur at some sites and not others is unclear. Perhaps the most notable development of LH IIIC is the establishment of rural shrines at significant communication crossroads, though because they are difficult to identify there are as yet few known examples. I have suggested that possibly rural shrines had existed throughout the Mycenaean Period. However, in LH IIIC they possibly received the attention of a dispersed elite class eager to maintain some sort of alliance network. Such a possibility would explain some of the quality cult items which appear at some LH IIIC shrines. Female deities still seem to have featured prominently, but there is evidence for a growing trend towards male cultic icons and votive figurines such as horsemen, chariots and an increasing number of bovines, though in the case of the latter, the evidence from Dhimni and especially Methana, where female figurines are virtually absent, suggests that a male deity to whom bovines were considered more appropriate offerings had existed throughout the Mycenaean Period. This picture is also indicated by Linear B where, as already noted, many male deities appear to receive

offerings. There is some evidence for limited continuity beyond LH III C at certain sites, such as Kalapodi, but, generally, the picture is one of a cessation of cult at most Mycenaean sites towards the end of LH III C.

Conclusions.

The main purpose of this thesis has been to elucidate the origin and function of figurines in Mycenaean ritual. The first requirement, therefore, was to outline the methodology which was to be used to attain a satisfactory solution. The primary aim was to avoid the pitfalls of speculations and conjecture which are to some extent inevitable when one is dealing with a topic for which there is no contemporary written evidence. To this end the cognitive methodology of Renfrew (1985) and Warren (1988) was briefly discussed and it was decided, wherever possible, to follow their approach, since it appeared to be the one least susceptible to error, being based on observation and deduction rather than subjective assumption. Consequently, in applying this method of working to the study of figurines, I have examined repeated patterns of distribution of figurines and related material in three specific locations, these being graves, houses and shrines. The information thus derived could then be assessed for significant pointers to ritual activity.

To begin with, it was necessary to establish the possible origin of Mycenaean figurines. Unfortunately, this enquiry proved negative and of limited success in that it was more informative in establishing from where figurines were not derived rather than confirming their actual source. A comparison with earlier figurines was made, especially Minoan types, since Crete had made such an impact on Mycenaean development in other ways.

A comparison with Minoan peak sanctuary figurines revealed that, while early Naturalistic mainland figurines did indeed resemble Minoan types, there is insufficient evidence to prove that they are the antecedents of mainland figurines. Points can be summarised as follows:-

1. Male figurines common to peak sanctuary ritual are extremely rare on the mainland.
2. During LM II – LM IIIA, when the ruling class at Knossos was an ethnic mix of Minoan and Mycenaean elites, ritual at all peak sanctuaries except Juktas ceased; this in turn abolished the need for peak sanctuary figurines, which were no longer produced.
3. It emerged that the function of peak sanctuary figurines appears to have been different from mainland examples: human examples of the former, it has been argued (*supra* p. 10), represented the adorant in constant veneration within the natural environment of the deity, while the latter, it has been suggested, as

facsimile dedications to a deity represented the presence of the deity within the domain of the worshipper. In other words, the understood meanings of the two types are diametrically opposed. This evidence suggests that either the Mycenaeans misunderstood the meaning of peak sanctuary figurines, which I find difficult to believe, or did not, after all, derive their own figurines from peak sanctuary types.

Argument next focused on the three major locations where figurines are found. On the matter of figurines in a funerary context, no completely consistent pattern emerged. While it is true that figurine-accompanied burial is more common in the Argolid, this might be simply because more cemeteries have been excavated there than in other parts of Greece. Moreover, as Cavanagh's findings from Attic cemeteries show (1998: 109ff), there can be widely different evidence from various groups of graves within the same area. In other words, figurines were not essential grave goods, otherwise all graves would have contained them. In those graves studied, the coincidence of females and bovines together was uncommon, implying that, while they were not mutually exclusive, their understood function might have been different.

Despite the difficulties inherent in a study where the evidence is so elusive, the following statements may be made about the function of figurines in LH graves:-

- (i) Females outnumber bovines by anything up to 93%, indicating that, in a funerary context, the accepted function of females was more appropriate.
- (ii) There was strong evidence to support the theory that female figurines are fairly standard though not obligatory with child burial. Only rarely do figurines appear in burials where swords or daggers are an important feature, thereby denoting a male burial. Moreover, as noted already, those females that do appear in a weapons context might belong with an infant buried alongside a male relative. There are also signs that where a male burial is accompanied by a figurine, this will be a bovine and not a female.
- (iii) There is a limited amount of evidence (from this study, Tomb 40 of Tsountas' Mycenae excavations and Tomb XXVI of the Athens tombs) that a small amount of adult graves might have been singled out for special attention. This might be the placement of a particularly fine figurine or the inclusion of ritual vessels along with figurines. This evidence is as yet too limited to confirm the status of the individuals who received this attention. However, one may make

the tentative suggestion that they might have held some sort of significant role in cult practice.

- (iv) Figurines tend to be used by those families whose tombs were first constructed during LH III and who might be less wealthy, rather than by those who inherited tombs from LH I or LH II and continued to use them during LH III.
- (v) Psi figurines occur just as frequently in tombs as Phis; this includes those which appeared with child burials. Since the Psi, by its very appearance, does not look like a nurturing figure, this indicates that female figurines in graves were not simply, as some have suggested, divine nurses.
- (vi) Where figurines appear in graves, it is usually in clusters of three or more. There is clear evidence of this from individual sites. However, it is also worth noting the proportion of clusters for all those tombs examined. Out of the eleven sites considered, there was a total of 287 figurines. 187 of these belonged in clusters i.e. 65%.

It is difficult to explain why some child burials were accompanied by figurines while others were not. Again, one can only speculate; perhaps the sex of the child is a factor or his/her position in the family (the first-born child?). Since figurines accompanied small children as well as newly born infants, death at birth does not seem to be a factor. It does appear that figurines accompanied the burials of children more frequently than those of adults, but evidence shows that they were certainly not a prerequisite. Some families clearly regarded them as important grave goods, while others did not. The reasons for this might be connected with the figurines themselves or with the beliefs of those for whom they were important.

More than this it is impossible to say, and any further comment would be speculative. One can simply point out that, apart from pottery and items of jewellery/weaponry, figurines are the only non-essential and in some way meaningful grave goods found consistently, albeit in varying degrees, throughout mainland Greece. Moreover, they form such a unique class of offering and one that is different from all other items that some sort of deep attachment is implied. However, apart from points noted earlier, on the evidence available so far, it is simply impossible to say definitively what that might have been.

Figurines were obviously important to the Mycenaeans in some way. Otherwise, why would so many of them have found their way to Rhodes and Cyprus along with those mainland inhabitants who migrated overseas (French 1971: 139)? Chapter four attempted to assess the possible function of those figurines found in settlement areas. It was noted

that some of the earliest examples come from non-palatial sites (Nichoria and Korakou), while many early examples from Mycenae date to LH IIIA, the period before the building of the existing palace and fortifications. In other words, the attachment to figurines seems to have developed in consequence of popular rather than palatial stimulus. Furthermore, apart from one or two possible LH II examples from Aidonia noted earlier (p. 25), early figurine deposits in settlement areas are dated no later than graves, i.e. their appearance in graves does not antedate their appearance in settlements. Consequently, it cannot be said that they began to appear in domestic contexts as a result of their understood function in graves. It was also noted that numbers in the Argolid far outweighed those at Nichoria. At Nichoria, figurines coincided with the period of greatest prosperity (LH IIIA), indicating a possible link between figurine production and material wealth, though it is difficult to explain why this should be so. The relative proportion of females and bovines was found to be much closer than that noted in a funerary context, though numbers of females were still higher. This suggests that whatever symbolism was intended for bovines was more appropriate in a domestic context.

While many figurines appear as a random scatter throughout areas of habitation, a good percentage is found within dwellings. Numbers here are significant, roughly 6:1 at Nichoria but in the region of 15:1 at Mycenae. In addition to what might be called 'casual' domestic finds, there is also evidence, particularly from Tiryns, but also from Nichoria, of figurines being found in association with domestic hearths, often along with other potentially cultic paraphernalia such as rhyta, cups and lamps. Moreover, the several outdoor hearths in the Tiryns Unterburg are suggestive of communal eating associated with figurines. The significance of the hearth – both indoors and out – was discussed earlier (p. 38) and it was concluded that this was a feature intrinsic to mainland cult. The placement of figurines, rather than other items, in such a significant context, therefore affords evidence for some sort of ritual use both in private house cult and in that involving a wider audience. It was therefore concluded that figurines were probably intended as dedications to whatever tutelary numen was understood to be present at the hearth. A similar function appeared to be associated with figurines placed at doorways and entrances, though evidence for this was less strong, being only clear at Tiryns.

A further example of the possible dedication of figurines was the Great Poros Wall at Mycenae, where substantial, though not huge, figurine deposits implied some sort of ancestral cult. This in itself might indicate a slightly different function from dedication at hearths, since there the emphasis is on family/communal commensality and well being,

possibly understood to be provided divinely. It would seem, then, that figurines, because of their implied cultic associations, could be used to represent any act of ritual dedication, not only one intended for a particular deity.

It was difficult to explain so many casual finds on habitation sites. Such findings imply that figurines had little or no intrinsic long-term value. In other words, they were not valued by successive generations or regarded in any way as heirlooms as, for example, weapons or jewellery might be. This would indicate, therefore, that in a domestic or settlement context, it was not the figurines themselves which were important, but the understood purpose behind the action of the individual by whom they were placed as offerings. A similar example might be the lighting of a candle in an orthodox church. The candle itself, when it has burnt out, either completely or in part, will then be thrown away. However, this fact in no way detracts from the original act performed by the devotee.

Discussion of shrines and cult centres revealed one very significant point on the nature of cult during LH IIIA and IIIB, that is the variety of possibilities even within one complex. To summarise :- a female figure seems to be the focus of cult in the Shrine (Room 32) at Mycenae and possibly also in the Tsountas' House Shrine, though the ritual appears to be different; the goddess in Room 32 might have been given offerings of beads and suchlike, while the 'War Goddess', to judge by the altar and libation area, was apparently offered blood sacrifice and libation. The south west platform of the West Shrine at Phylakopi and possibly Bau VI in the Tiryns Unterburg also seem to have housed female deities similar to the goddess from Room 32. However, while figurines accompany the Lady of Phylakopi and the Bau VI figure, the goddess in Room 32 at Mycenae was displayed on her own. A bull figure, possibly representing a male god, appears to have been the focus for cult at the Methana and Dhimini shrines, both of them associated with LH settlements, that at Dhimini possibly being of major importance. However, while the Methana shrine contains largely either bovine figurines or riders/chariots and only one female, several female figurines were found in association with the Dhimini shrine. At Phylakopi, the north west platform with its male figures is unique, as is the baetyl. At Mycenae, the Room with the Fresco is unparalleled, as are the large idols and snakes in the Temple, though the snake head from Midea might indicate a similar cult. It should also be noted that no bovine figures appeared in the Cult Centre at Mycenae, though they appear quite frequently elsewhere, sometimes as the focus of cult, but in the case of Phylakopi accompanying the 'Lady'. Likewise, figurines are common

votives in most shrines but not at Mycenae. So there is no fixed formula. Both female and male deities appear to be represented, and likewise cult patterns varied. One can see elements of all the significant religious rituals to a greater or lesser extent, viz. sacrifice and libation, dedication, display and even possible lustral ceremonies (Room with the Fresco). Not having inherited the patterns of ritual behaviour and symbolism which the Minoans had, the Mycenaeans adhered to no fixed canons within a given framework and could select and adapt their behaviour as occasion seemed appropriate. However, in all of these various cultic installations, the one unifying element seems to have been either votive figurines or iconic figures.

A further point is worth noting. The Linear B tablets, it has been pointed out, give us the names of relatively many male and female deities and they indicate that several were sometimes worshipped at more than one site. This has appeared to be at odds with archaeological evidence where female figurines predominate. However, the many different permutations of ritual and paraphernalia which even this very limited number of shrines and cult centres provides surely affords us with evidence that several deities appear to have existed, both male and female. Different deities presumably required different ceremonies, rituals and accoutrements. And so the archaeological evidence might not in fact be as much at variance with the Linear B texts as had initially appeared to be the case.

This survey has probably done more to provoke further questions than it has to provide answers to a topic which is nebulous and constantly changing. However, if it has done nothing more than to demonstrate the unique significance of figurines to all aspects of LH III Mycenaean life and ritual, it will have served its purpose. Further archaeological discoveries and scholarly study will no doubt clarify the function of figurines further.

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Fig. 1. Cycladic female figurine of canonical type, c. 2600/2500 B.C.



Fig. 2. Terracotta figurine of male from Petsopha

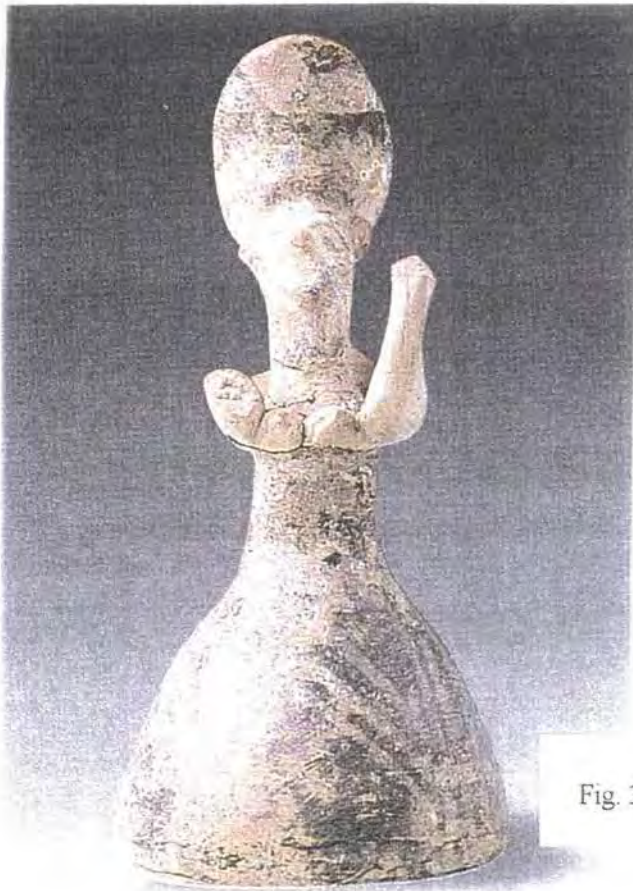


Fig. 3. Terracotta female figurine from Petsopha



Fig. 4 Terracotta figurines of animals from Mount Juktas.

Fig. 5(a). Diagram of the development of female figurines.

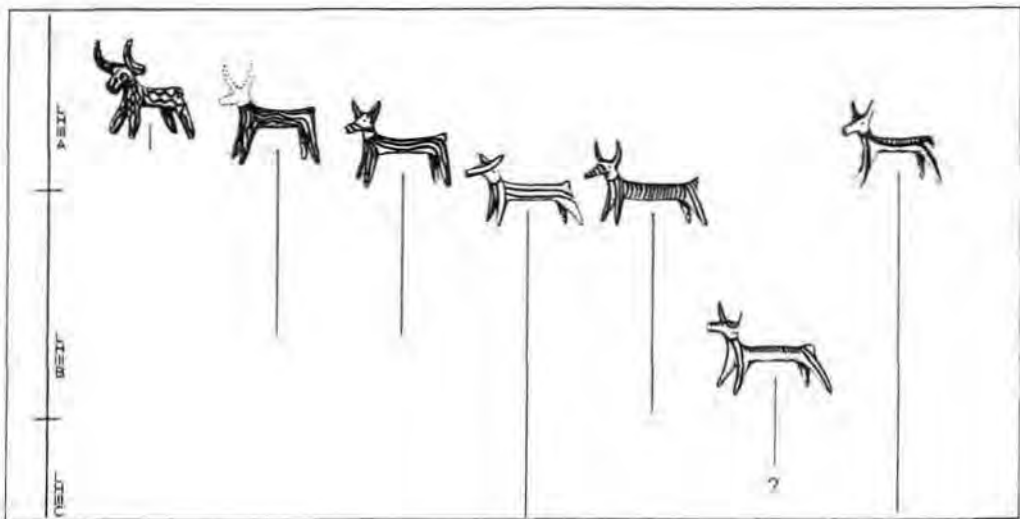
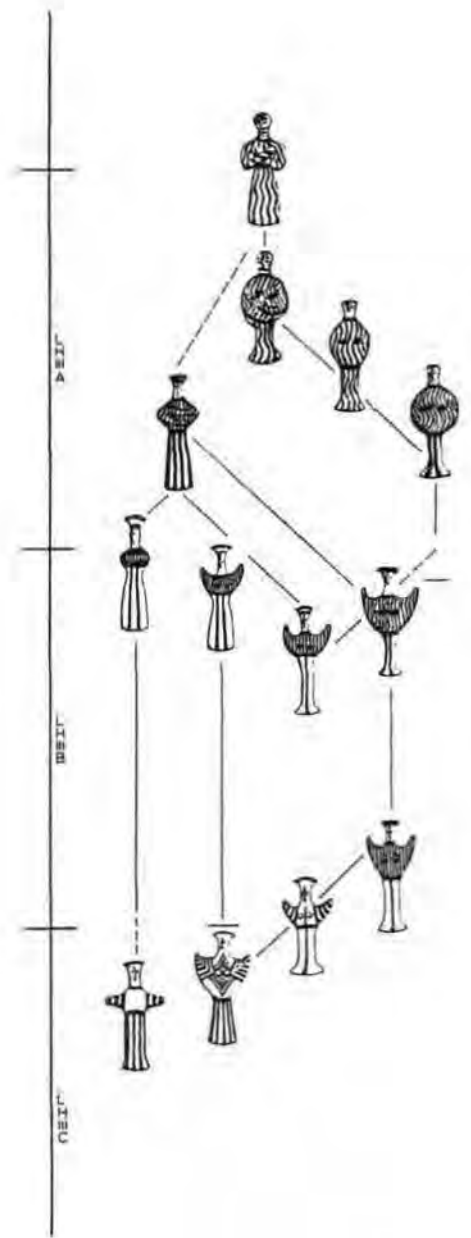


Fig. 5(b). Diagram of animal figurines.

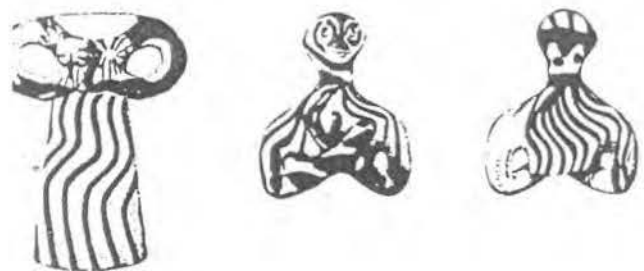


Fig. 6. Naturalistic figurines (after French)



Fig. 7. Proto-Phi figurine from Tomb XXIX at Prosymna.

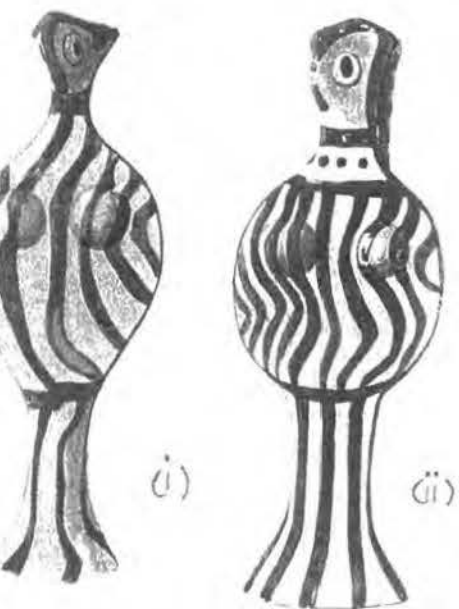


Fig. 8. Phis, Type A, from (i) Tomb XXXIII and
(ii) from Tomb XXVII at Prosymna.



Fig. 9. Phi, Type B, from the acropolis at Tiryns.



Fig. 10. Transitional type figurine from a chamber tomb at Mycenae.



Fig. 11. Tau figurine, from Tomb XXXVI at Prosymna.



Fig. 12. Hollow Psi figurine, from Tomb XXXVI at Prosymna.



Fig. 13. Columnar Psi figurine, from Tomb XXXVIII
at Prosymna.



Fig. 14. High-waisted Psi figurine, from a chamber tomb
at Mycenae.



Fig. 15. Agia Triada sarcophagus: central figure
wearing religious-style headdress (polos)



Fig. 16. Late Psi figurine, Assemblage K, West Shrine Phylakopi (after French)



Fig. 17. Late Psi figurine, Assemblage L, East Shrine Phylakopi (after French)



Fig. 18. Late Psi figurines, from Amyklai



Fig. 19. Kourotrophos figurine, from a chamber Tomb at Mycenae



Fig. 20. Bovine, Wavy Type 1 (from Tomb XLVI at Prosymna)

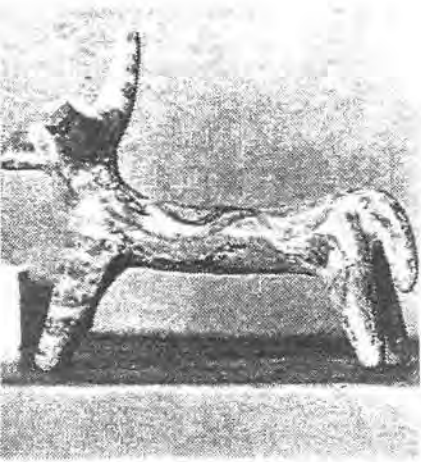


Fig. 21. Bovine, Wavy Type 2 (from Tomb XXXVIII at Prosymna)

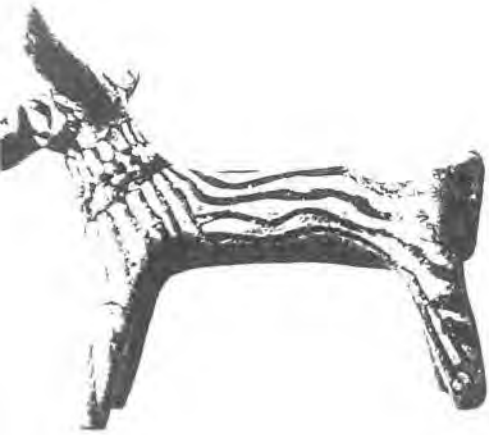


Fig. 22. Bovine, Linear Type 1 (from Mycenae)



Fig. 23. Bovine, Linear Type 2 (from Tomb IV at Prosymna)



Fig. 24. Bovine, Spine Type 1 (from Tomb IV at Prosymna).

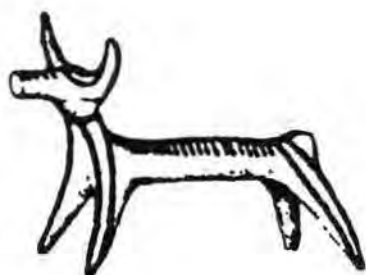


Fig. 25. Bovine, Spine Type 2 (after French).



Fig. 26. Bovine, Ladder Type (after French)



Fig. 27. Bovine, Ladder type (from Mycenae).



Fig. 28. Driven ox (from Tomb IV at Prosymna).



Fig. 29. Driven ox (from Tomb XXXVIII at Prosymna).



Fig. 30. Chariot (from Tomb XXII at Prosymna).

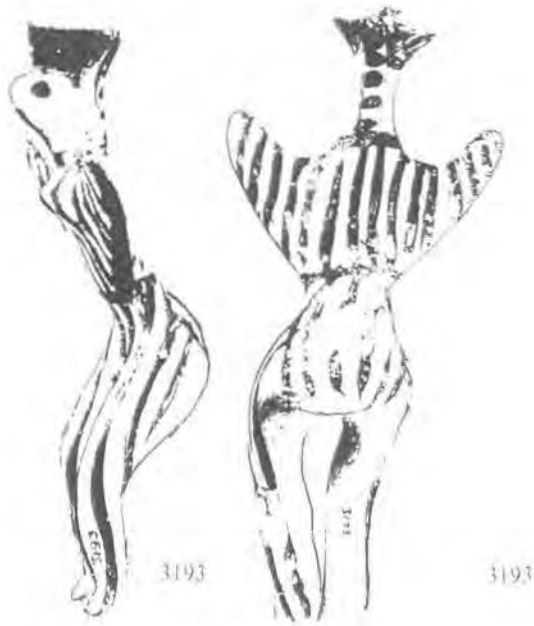


Fig. 31. Seated female (from Mycenae)

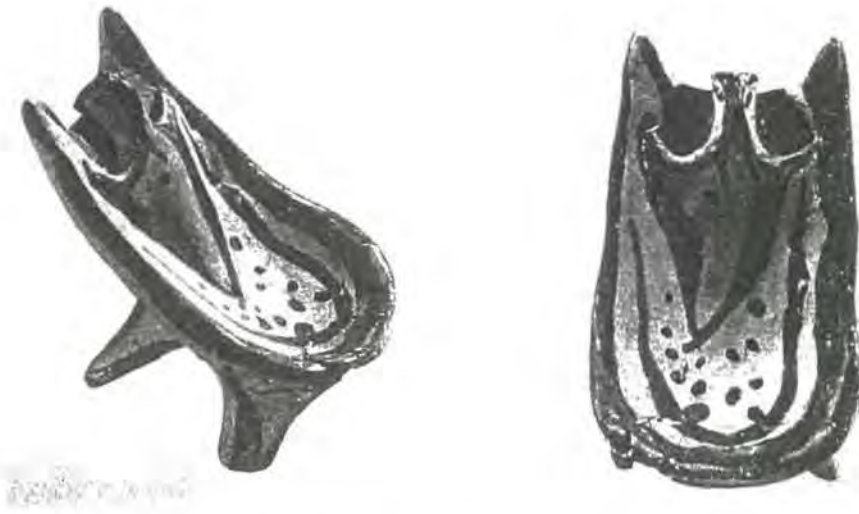


Fig. 32. Type A chair: bier with occupant (from Tanagra)

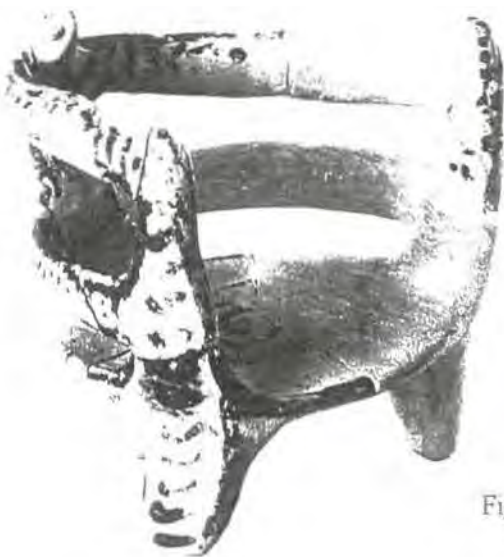


Fig. 33. Type B chair: with occupant (from a chamber tomb at Mycenae)



Fig. 34. Naturalistic figurine (from Chamber Tomb 6 at Aidonia)

5. Kourotrophos figurine (from Chamber Tomb 6 at Aidonia).



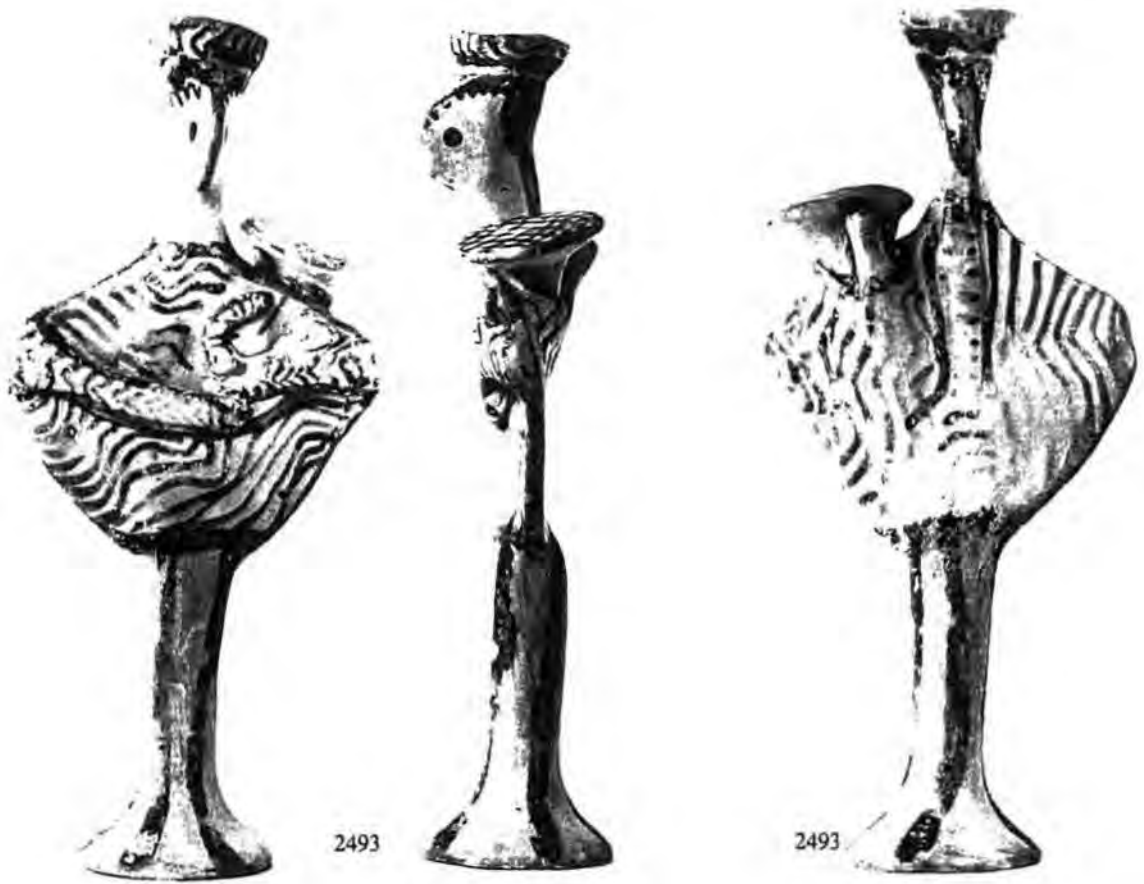


Fig. 36. Kouroutrophos figurine (from Chamber Tomb 41 at Mycenae).

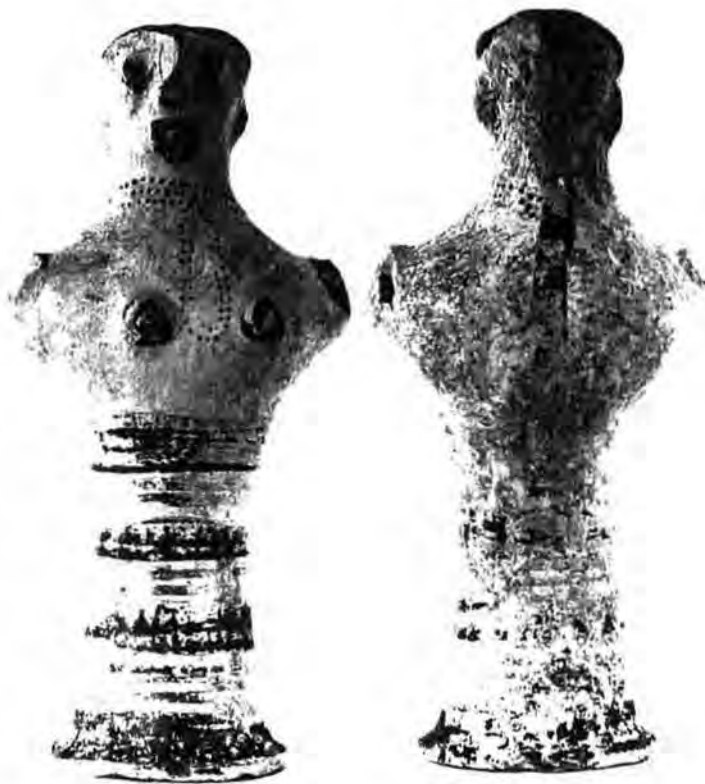


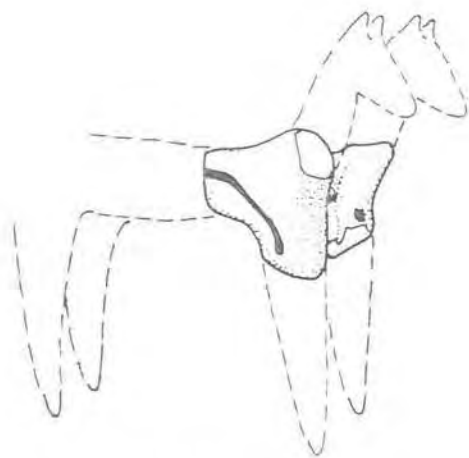
Fig. 37. Figure from Chamber Tomb 40 at Mycenae.



Fig. 38. Figure from Room 32 of the Cult Centre at Mycenae.



Fig. 39. Proto-Phi figurine from Nichoria.



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Fig. 40. Unusual animal pair from Nichoria.



41. Head of figure from Nichoria, the 'Dame of Nichoria'

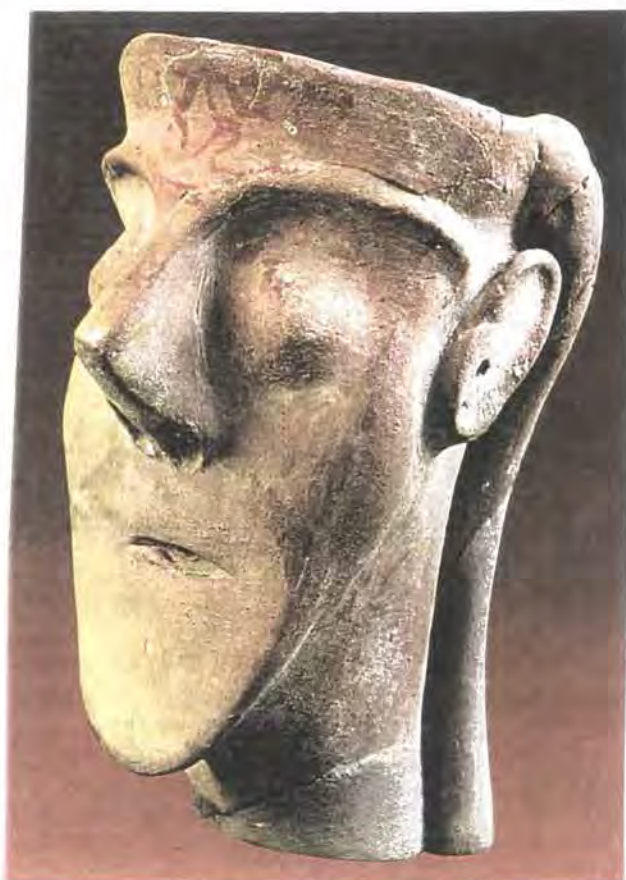


Fig. 42. Head of figure from Asine, the so-called 'Lord of Asine'

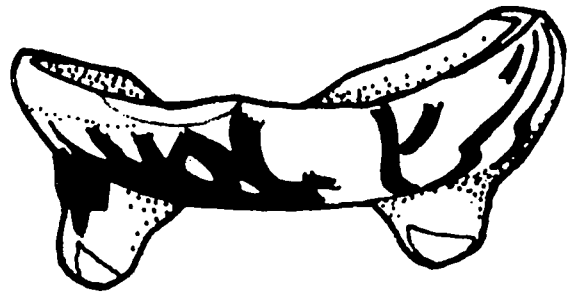
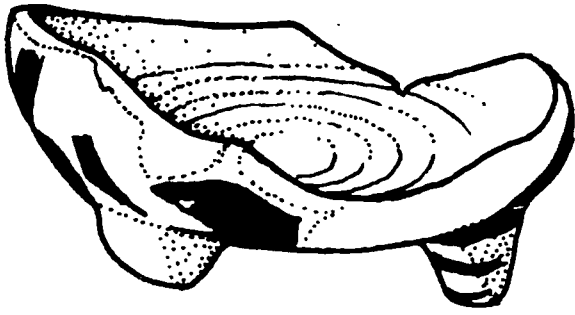


Fig. 43. Unusual two-footed bowl (from Nichoria).



2068

Fig. 44. Drawing of head and shoulders of ?Proto-Phi from Nichoria.



Fig. 45. Psi figurines from the Westschnitt, Tiryns Unterburg.

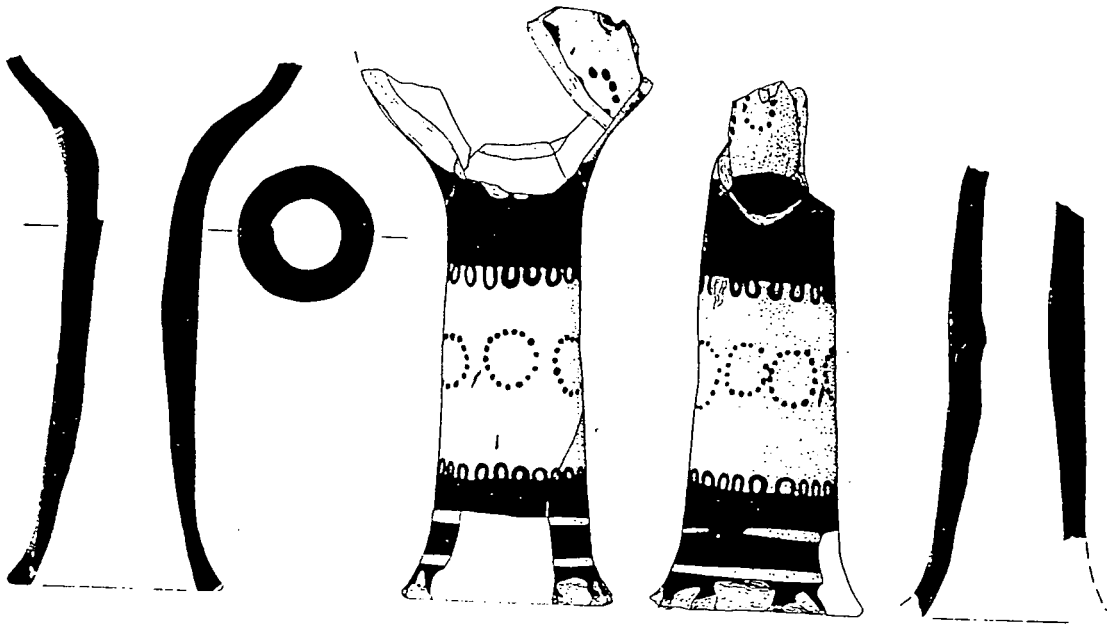


Fig. 46. Headless figure from Bau VI in Tiryns Unterburg.



Fig. 47. Naturalistic figurine from Kea.



Fig. 48 (a) and 48(b) Two Transitional figurines from Mycenae.



Fig. 49 (a) Ivory figurine from Tomb LI at Prosymna



2472



Fig. 49(b) Ivory figurine from Tomb 27 at Mycenae

Fig. 50. Plan of the Cult Centre at Mycenae.

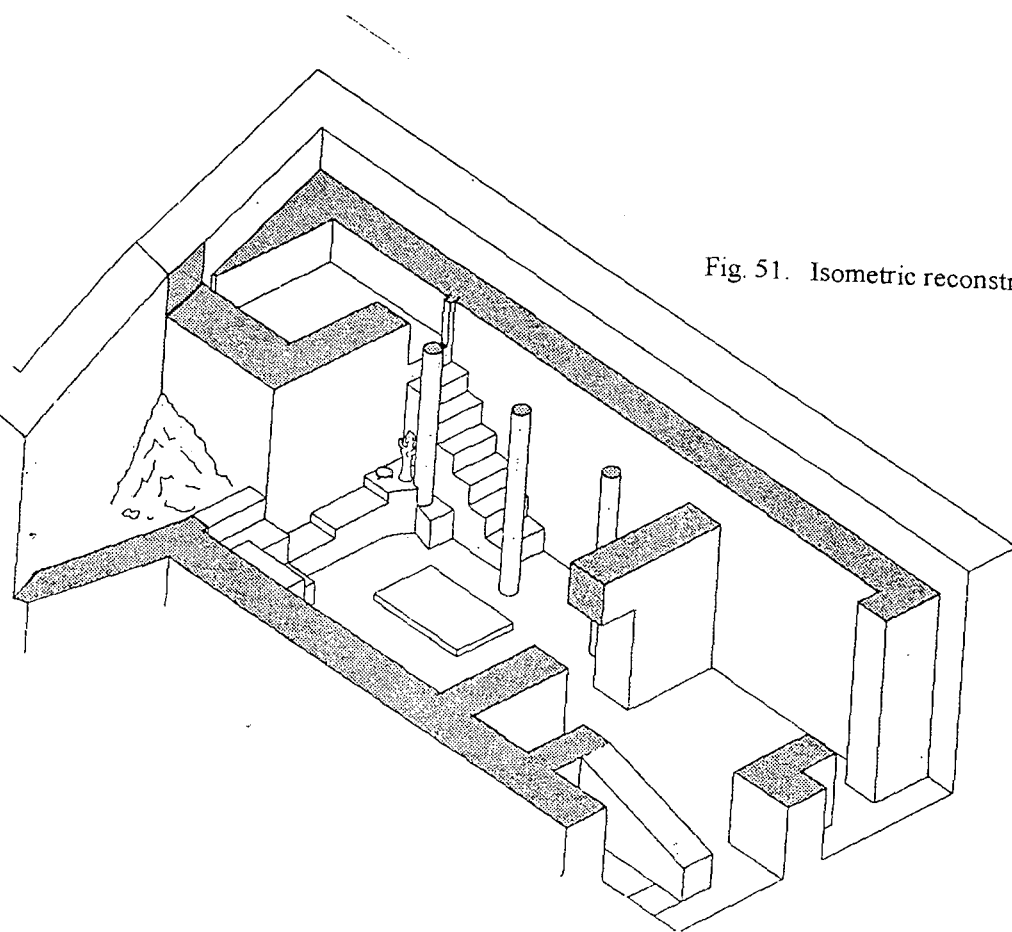
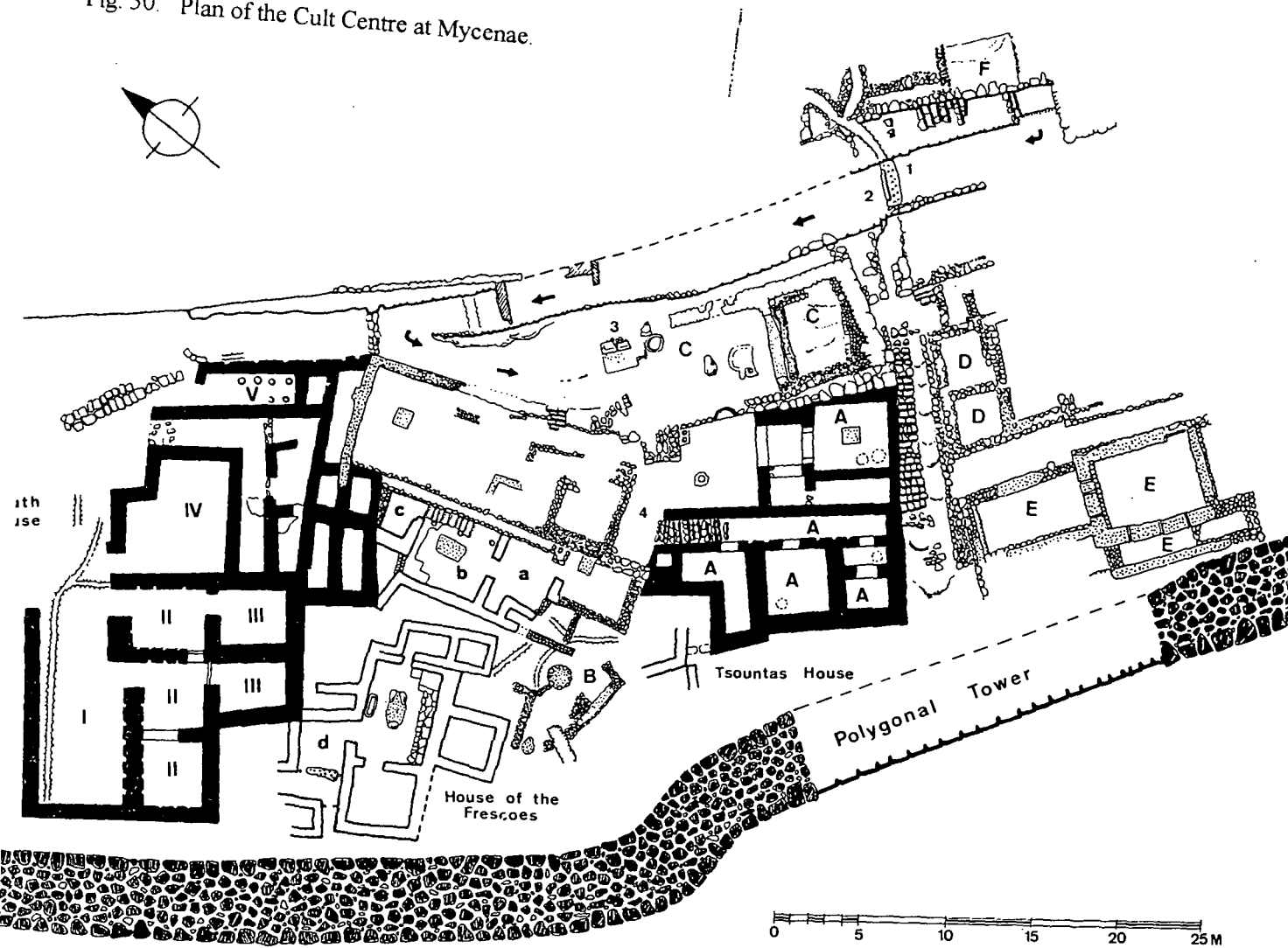


Fig. 51. Isometric reconstruction of the 'Temple' at Mycenae.



Fig. 52. Figure from Room 19, Cult Centre, Mycenae.

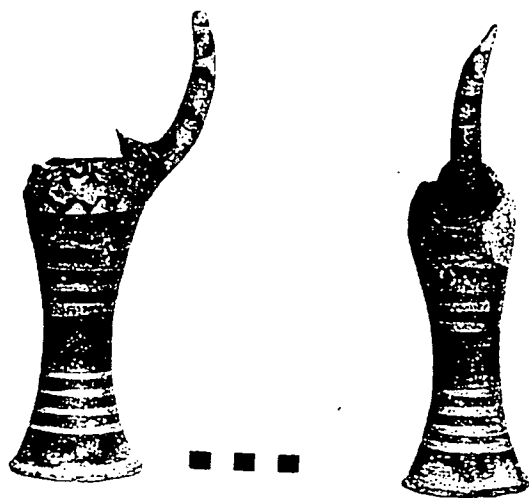
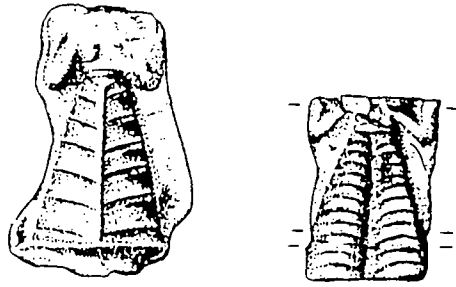


Fig. 53. Figure from Room 19, Cult Centre, Mycenae.



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Fig. 54. Plaques of figurines, from Room 19, Cult Centre, Mycenae.



Fig. 55. Foil cut-out, from Shaft Grave III, Mycenae.



Fig. 56. Fresco of the 'Mycenaean Lady' from Tsountas' House.



Fig. 57. Fragment of fresco from Tiryns, showing hand holding figurine.



Fig. 58. Large monochrome adorant figures, from the 'Temple' at Mycenae.



Fig. 59. Coiled terracotta snake from the 'Temple' at Mycenae.

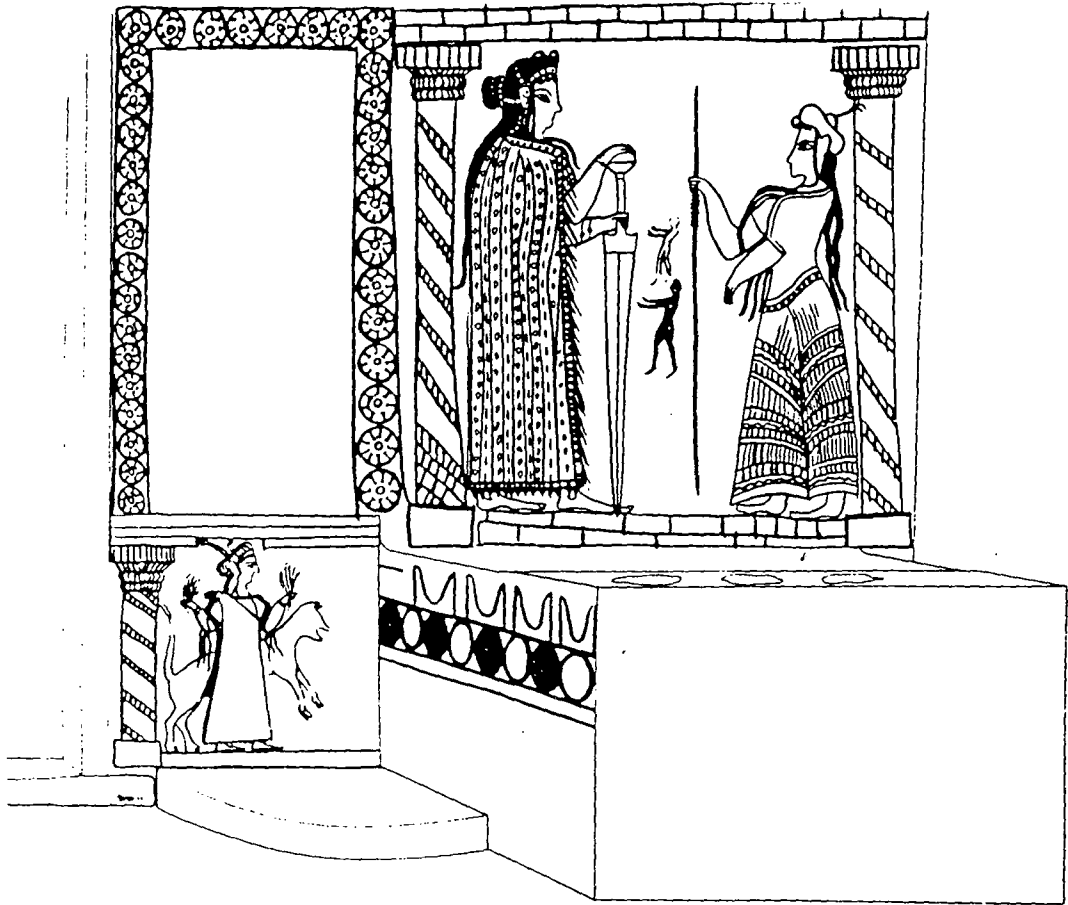


Fig. 60. Fresco scene from Room 31 at Mycenae.



Fig. 61. The 'Lady of Phylakopi': terracotta figure from Room A, West Shrine, Phylakopi.

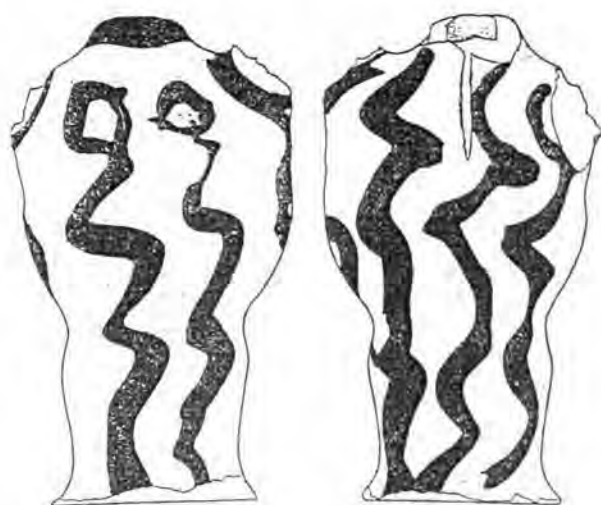
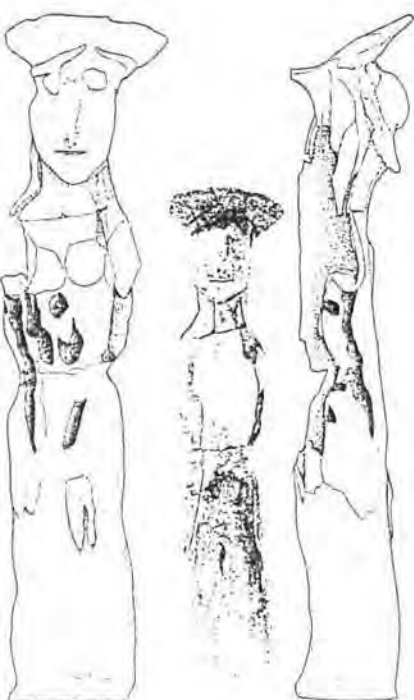
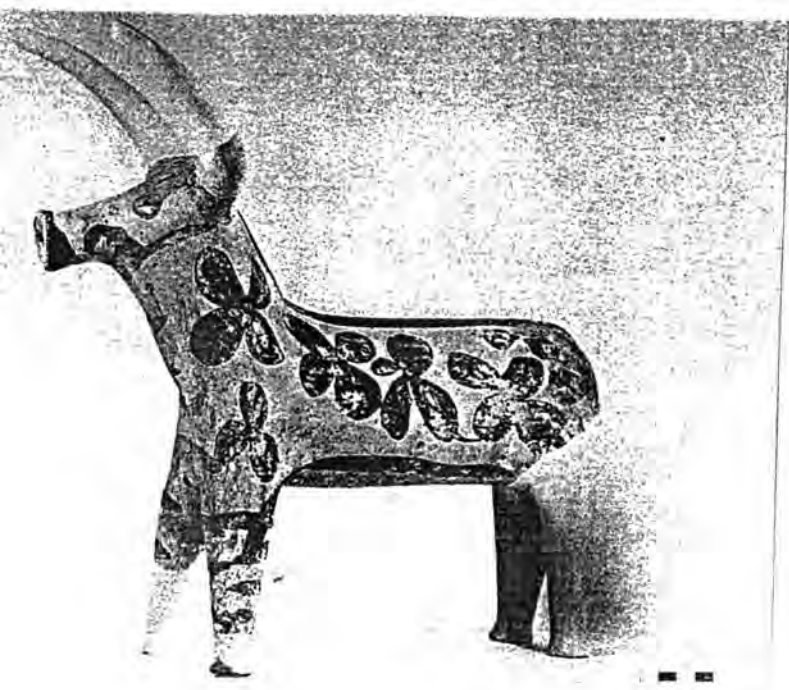


Fig. 63. Terracotta female figure from Room A, West Shrine, Phylakopi.

Terracotta female companion of the 'Lady of Phylakopi'



Fig. 64. Terracotta bovine figures, from the niche in the West Shrine at Phylakopi.



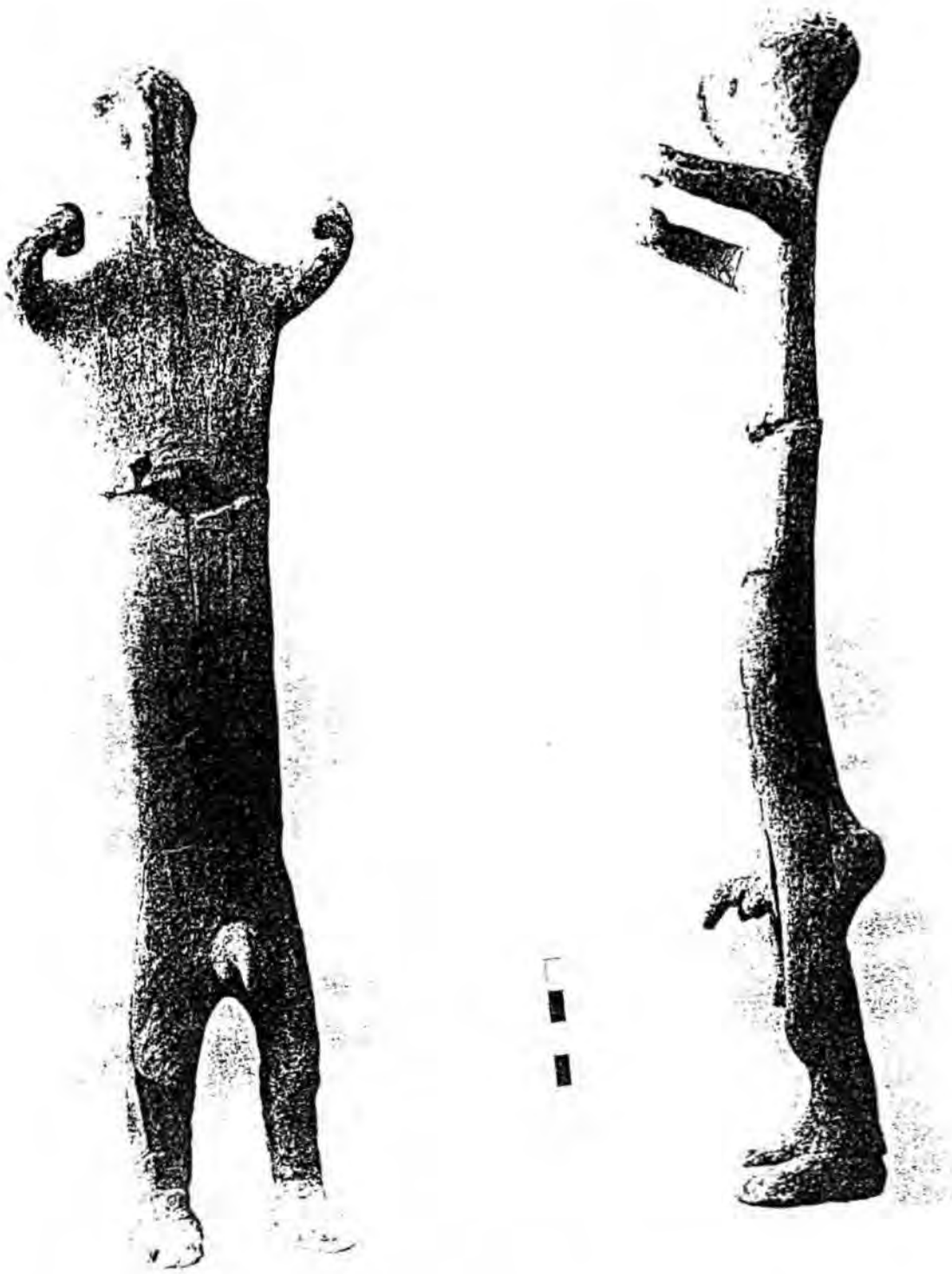


Fig 65. Terracotta male figure, from the West Shrine at Phylakopi



Fig. 66. Terracotta large wheel-made bovine from Dhimini.



Fig. 67. Terracotta goddess figure from room inside the West Gate, Midea.

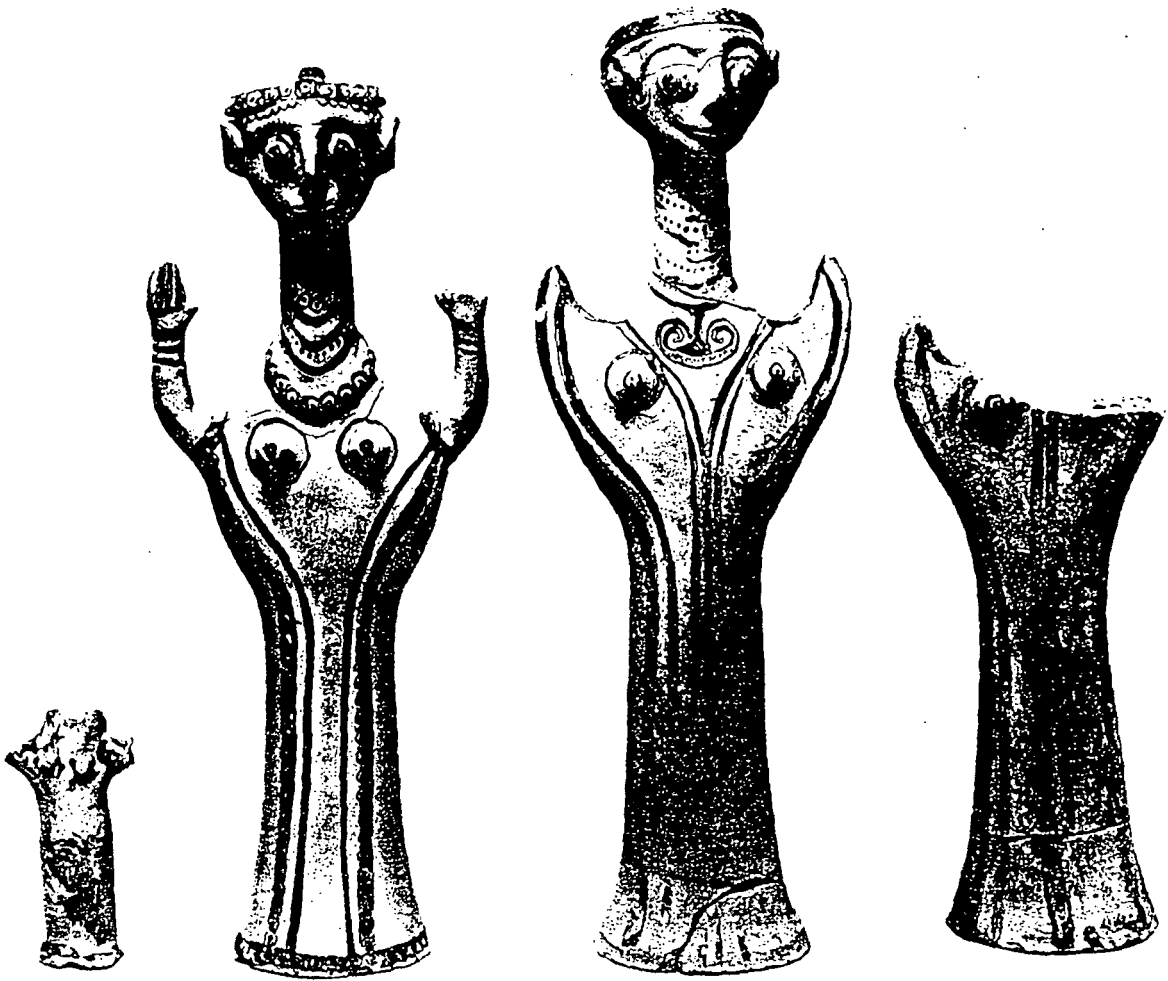


Fig. 68. Terracotta female figures from Room 110, Tiryns Unterburg.



Fig. 69. Male smiting figures of bronze, from Phylakopi.

Table 1 : Graves at Prosymna containing figurines and/or evidence of child burial.

Tomb No.	Bones.	Figurines.	Pottery.	Child burials.	Other items.	Remarks.
Group I XVI (LH III)				Child skeleton in upper stratum. Child body in lower stratum. 3 skulls, all children, in niche on right.	No objects. No objects. 5 small vases.	5 burials in tomb, presumably all of children.
XVII (LH I-III)				No bones. Large terracotta larnax with skeleton of child in rt. side of chamber.	Feeding bottle. Beads.	2 child burials.
Group II XIX (LH III)	No.	5 bovines on left side of chamber.	1 jar, 1 jug, 2 stirrup jars.	1 small bone on rt. side of chamber. Small bones in cist cut in floor on rt. side.	Buttons and sea shells. Many beads and steatite buttons.	2 child burials.
XXI (LH III)				Very small bones to rear of chamber.	No objects.	1 child burial.
Group III XXII	Scanty remains on floor of chamber. No visible bones (against rt. wall)	4 bovines, 1 terracotta chariot. 4 bovines, a second chariot.	1 askos, 1 stirrup jar.	No bones.	2 tiny feeding bottles. 3 feeding bottles.	2 child burials at least in tomb.

Tomb No.	Bones.	Figurines.	Pottery.	Child burials.	Other items.	Remarks.
WI (LH I-III)	3 skeletons in a heap in chamber.	1 Naturalistic and 2 other females. 1 chair.	49 vases.	No small bones.	2 tiny feeding bottles, buttons, beads, 1 ivory needle.	1 child burial.
I (LH I-III).				Some very small teeth in rt. side of dromos. No small bones.	1 feeding bottle on chamber floor, just inside door.	2 child burials.
Group IV XXX (LH I-III)				One small frag. of tooth and no other bones in niche in dromos.		1 child burial.
XXIX (LH II-III)	In cist VII a few bones and 1 skull.	1 Proto-Phi female, 1 miniature bier. 2 Naturalistic females, 1 bovine.	9 vases (incl. cups and alabastra).		Bronze dagger in rear part of chamber.	Weapon apart from figurines.
XXVIII (LH I-III)	2 skulls, large leg bones in centre of chamber.	2 Psi figurines.	4 cups, 2 goblets, 6 jugs, 2 amphorae, 2 alabastra, 1 stirrup jar, base of pot.	Very small bones in cist VI at back of chamber.		1 child burial.
					1 short, broad dagger in large cist.	Dagger apart from figs.

Tomb No.	Bones.	Figurines.	Pottery.	Child burials.	Other items.	Remarks.
XXV (MH-LH III)					Feeding bottle in west chamber. Feeding bottle in north chamber.	2 child burials.
XXVII (LH III)	Disorderly heap of bones and 4 skulls to rt. of chamber.	1 female (Phi), 1 fragment of female (Phi).	1 kylix, 3 jugs, a goblet, a bird-shaped askos, small spouted cup, pottery fragments.		Feeding bottle in large double cist in outer rt. corner of chamber. Small knife in dromos. 1 heavy rivet in cist 1.	1 child burial. These items are apart from figurines.
XXXII (LH I-III)	Against inner rt. and adjoining rear walls many bones. In cist V many bones (incl. 3 skulls).	1 Psi figurine. 1 tiny figurine.	1 group of 3 pots, 2 cups, kylix, second group of 6 small vases, 2 kylikes, 2 jugs, stirrup jar, loaf-shaped jar, squat jug. Tea cup, squat alabastron.		Terracotta buttons, 3 steatite buttons, bone pin.	

Tomb No.	Bones.	Figurines.	Pottery.	Child burials.	Other items.	Remarks.
XXXIII (LH III)		16 Phi figurines, 1 Phi in dromos.	3 tiny shallow saucers, 1 handle-less cup, several tiny vessels - bell-shaped cup, stemmed cup, 3-legged cup, pitcher, jug.	2 small leg bones beside rt. hand wall and particles of decayed bones - excavator refers to 'several child burials'.	Very many blue glass beads. Frag. of feeding bottle to right of door. 1 saw and 1 chisel in side chamber.	4 child burials. Not associated with figs.
XXXIV (LH III)					Feeding bottle in cist IV in rt. side of chamber.	1 child burial.
XXXV (LH III)		1 Phi female. 4 Phi figurines (1 a kourotrophos).		In cist II frags. of two skulls and small bones. In cist III, excavator says 'remains had disintegrated'. In cist IV small skeleton.	Miniature vessels. 5 small shells. Small jug.	2 child burials. 1 child burial. 1 child burial.
XXXVI (constructed in LH II, mainly used in LH III).		5 female figs. in centre: 2 under jug, 3 towards rear, 1 on rt. side (5 Phi, 1 Psi).	Small alabastron close by.	In centre of floor frags. of small bones.	Feeding bottle in side chamber on rt. side. Broad bronze knife close to back wall.	2 child burials. Not associated with figs.

Tomb No.	Bones.	Figurines.	Pottery.	Child burials.	Other items.	Remarks.
Group V XXXVII (LH III)	Mass of bones all over left side of chamber.	1 bovine figurine.	8 vessels in fragmentary state.		Feeding bottle in middle of chamber. Bronze sword with gold rivets and wood and ivory handle.	1 child burial.
XXXVIII (LH III)	Remains of skeleton on floor inside door. Heap of bones in S.E. corner of chamber.	1 bovine figurine. 3 Psi figurines. 1 female and 2 bovines.	5 kylikes, very large amphora, large jug, askos, unpainted cup. 3 kylikes, 2 cups, 2 jugs, 1 stirrup jar, 1 bird-like askos.	Remains of child – 2 small teeth and rotten bits of skull in N.E. corner.	Cleaver and bronze knife. Black sealstone, 6 carnelian beads, 158 beads and pendants of glass paste, bone pendant. Piece of tubular casing of bronze, 2 bronze arrowheads.	1 child burial.
Group VI XLIX (LH I-III)	5 burials in lower stratum.	 1 broken figurine on floor of chamber.	Stirrup jar, 2 kylikes, small alabastron.	Some 'small bones' in upper stratum in chamber.	Bronze arrowhead in lower stratum of chamber. 2 bronze arrowheads in cist IV.	1 child burial. Neither set of weaponry is associated with the figurine.

Tomb No.	Bones.	Figurines.	Pottery.	Child burial.	Other items.	Remarks.
Group VII XLII (LH III)		4 Psi females	Frag. of tiny alabastron, one- handled cup, tall slender amphora.	Group of small bones with small skull in outer left corner of chamber.	Middle left of chamber, heavy bronze dagger, bronze arrowheads. Extreme inner part of tomb on rt. Short, broad, bronze dagger.	These weapons are not associated with the figurines.
Group VIII. VIII (LH III)	Large heap of bones in right of niche at back of chamber.	1 Phi female	4 shallow cups, 3 jugs, 2 cups, a kylix, 2 alabastra, tiny spouted jug, coarse vessel. 1 kylix, 1 small pyxis, 1 large jug.	Small, broken, decomposed bones in cist I. 'Bones of skeleton too small to be that of adult' in cist II.	1 feeding bottle. Beads of glass paste, 2 lentoid sealstones, 7 pendants, 1 spool, 4 buttons. 1 feeding bottle at back of chamber with skeleton. 1 large crystal bead.	4 child burials at least in this tomb.

Tomb No.	Bones.	Figurines.	Pottery.	Child burial.	Other items.	Remarks.
Group IX II (LH II-III)				Bones of at least 2 skeletons, none of them adult size, in cist in left front part of chamber.	Pieces of thin gold leaf.	1 child burial.
III (poss. Late LHII – III)	On right side of tomb near back, complete contracted skeleton. One or two heaps of bones on left side of chamber; bones show clear signs of burning. Second heap towards middle of chamber (at least 7 skulls).	Fragmentary bovine. 2 Psi figurines, a small distance from this heap. Fragmentary bovine.	3 alabastra, 2 amphorae, shallow cup with side spout, part of rim of palace-style jar. 16 vases.		Bronze arrowhead, steatite button, bronze knife. Many blue glass paste beads, beads of carnelian and amethyst, gold chain, gold-plated rivet heads, bronze arrow heads, bronze dagger, steatite buttons. 1 feeding bottle.	1 child burial. 1 child burial.

Tomb No.	Bones.	Figurines.	Pottery.	Child burial.	Other items.	Remarks.
XLIII (LH III)	Disconnected bones and skull in central part of chamber. Inner right side of chamber heap of bones.	1 Psi figurine. 5 Phi figurines.	5 amphorae, 2 jugs, 2 kylikes, 4 stirrup jars, 1 bell-shaped basin, 1 alabastron. 7 jugs, 4 amphorae, 4 kylikes, 2 stirrup jars, alabastron, 2 shallow cups, small beaker.	'Some very small bones, certainly of children'. Niche on left: sm. skull and a few decaying bones from child skeleton.	Feeding bottle, knife, dagger with flanged hilt, 3 daggers, bronze arrowhead, 9 rivets, beads of carnelian, crystal, amber, glass paste, bits of silver, ivory, obsidian. Feeding bottle in small heap on left side of tomb.	3 child burials at least in this tomb.
IV (LH III)	Heap of bones in inner rt. corner.	5 bovine figurines.	Stirrup jar, pottery fragments.	Many small bones, incl. 2 skulls of children and 3rd of an infant, in shallow cist III to right of chamber.		3 child burials. (5 bovines might be associated with child burials).
Group X X (LH III).	Heap of bones near centre of tomb.	8 Psi figurines.	7 small pots (2 stirrup jars, 2 jars, a cup, 2 jars).	Fragmentary bones scattered about floor – some very small.	2 tiny bronze rivets, 3 spear heads, long knife, cleaver, pair of tweezers, arrowhead, whetstone, carbonised remains of wood, bronze basin.	1 child burial (excavator says 8 figs. near child bones).

Tomb No.	Bones.	Figurines.	Pottery.	Child burial.	Other items.	Remarks.
Group XII XLVIII (LH III)			A few fragments of a shallow cup.	Crumbling skull and a few frags. of small bones on floor, inner right quarter of chamber.		1 child burial.
XLV (LH I-III)	Heap of bones swept up against rear wall (8 skulls).	1 Psi figurine.	1 large, 1 tiny + 4 other jugs, 4 shallow cups, 3 stirrup jars, 3 alabastra, frags. of stemmed goblet, 3-legged dish, squat jug.	Child's skull deposited in cist in chamber floor.	1 pendant, 2 steatite buttons.	1 child burial.
XLVI (LH III)	In cist underneath heap of bones, very many bones (incl. 10 skulls).	1 bovine.	3 shallow cups, 2 jugs, 1 amphora, 1 tall jug, 1 stirrup jar.		Steatite sealstone, 2 terracotta buttons. Small bronze knife in N.E. corner of chamber.	Knife not associated with figurine in cist.
LI (LH III)				Along lateral wall to left of door was the skeleton of a child, in bad state of preservation.		1 child burial.

Tomb No.	Bones.	Figurines.	Pottery.	Other Burials.	Other Items.
524 LHIII	Along N.E. wall a large pile of bones & 6 skulls (nos. VII – XII) In a layer of black earth – blackened bones + 3 blackened skulls (XIII, XV, XVI) + 1 white skull (XIV).	2 small females (phi) with skull VII. 1 female to S. of skull VII (phi) 3 females with skull X (phi) female (phi) to N. of skulls XIII and XIV. Psi female above pit in W. of chamber. Phi in dromos.	Cup, mottled jug Small jug, stirrup jar. Duck rhyton, basket-shaped vase. Painted and unpainted pottery (mainly kylikes and stirrup jars)	Pit in S. with bones and 2 skulls + duck rhyton. Pit in N. with bones, 2 skulls and pottery (including pieces of a feeding bottle).	7 steatite spindle whorls along N.E. wall, 110 black glass beads, fragment of bone pin. 3 carnelian beads, blue glass bead, glass paste ornament.
531 LHIII		bovine in dromos	Much pottery (possibly removed from chamber) including 3 stirrup jars, shallow bowl, deep bowls, frags. of alabastron, mug, jug, pieces of coarse ware, 2 kraters.	Remains of 2 skeletons in chamber.	
513 LHIII	Skeleton towards S. of chamber (last interment)	2 driven oxen either side of door and quite close to last interment.		Along E. wall heap of decayed bones. Skeleton in W. of tomb.	15 steatite spindle whorls, from sifting of earth glass beads, carnelian seal stone, gold ring, ivory discs.
514 LHIII	2 pits with 2 adult burials in dromos (removed from chamber).	Head of female in dromos.	Misc. items.	Female skeleton in pit at E. side of chamber. Heap of bones & 7 skulls in S. of chamber.	

Tomb No.	Bones.	Figurines.	Pottery.	Other Burials.	Other Items.
519 LHIII. All skeletons in this tomb cleared to side for later burials which never took place.	Near S.E. corner 3 skulls, very broken. In S.E. corner skull + bones.	Bovine 6 psi bovines.	Askos. Vase.	N.E. angle of chamber leg bones. Bones along S. wall. S.W. angle a skull. Skeleton at N. end of dromos.	Ivory rosette.
525 LHIII	2 burials on E. side of chamber. Skeleton in W. part of chamber.	1 phi with burial I. Head with polos. 1 naturalistic figurine.	2 amphorac.	Burial in N.W. angle. Bones in S.W. corner. Skulls beside E. door jamb.	
527 LHIII	1.70m. from beginning of dromos 4 skeletons. Skeleton against E. side of chamber.	1 phi. 1 bovine. Bovine horn+ 3 legs. 1 phi. 1 bovine.	2 jugs, feeding bottle, alabastron, basket-shaped vase. 3 jugs, feeding bottle.	1 skeleton in pit in S.W. angle. 1 heap of bones (at least 3 skeletons) on E. side of chamber. Another 2 skeletons in E. of chamber. 2 burials in centre of chamber.	

Table 3 : Tsountas' Tombs

Tomb No.	Bones.	Figurines.	Pottery.	Other Items.
1.	1 skeleton.	Very small bovine.	Pieces of large vessel with lattice decoration.	Bronze buckle/clasp, bronze nail, 50 small shells, small strip of bronze.
4.	Pieces of bone in front of blocking wall..	Fragments of 3 females.	Fragments.	
5.	A few bones in the first chamber. Many bones in the second chamber – at least 5 burials.	4 female figurines. 15 female figurines.	Small pieces of pottery, 1 vessel.	First chamber: bronze vessel, 4 stone seals, ivory comb, bone needle, small ivory model of a sphinx, bronze mirror, bronze needle, bronze dagger. Second chamber: 4 or 5 pieces of gold leaf, 3 pieces of ivory plaques, bronze tweezers.
11	A few bones.	1 female next to body.	Small vessels, fragments of vessels.	164 glass beads, sealstone of agate, 130 glass beads, 7 circular glass plaques, a gold rosette, 3 very small gold beads. Near the bones, 2 stone seals, pieces of lead wire, a silver ring.
21.	Bones in a pit.	4 figurines (2 from pit).		4 or 5 beads.
30.	Skeleton of small child.	Female figurine, throne.	A small vessel.	Countless glass buttons.
35.	None recovered.	Female with protruding eyes.	Stirrup jar in dromos, 2 vessels in corner.	Octopus ornaments.
36.	None recovered.	Female figurines, bovine figurines (no specific number given).		Small ornaments of glass.
40.	None recovered.	Large wheel-made figure. 2 other figurines.		
41.	None recovered.	1 kourotrophos. 2 other figurines.		
46.	None recovered.	One small 3-legged table.		2 small bronze discs in dromos.
65.		Terracotta bovine.	Spouted vessel.	Bronze dagger, glass seal.

Tomb No.	Bones.	Figurines.	Pottery.	Other Items.
70.	A few bones, both in chamber and in niche.	Female figurine (phi).	Circular bowl, pyxis, narrow-necked jar.	30 ornaments of blue glass paste, 6 stone buttons, 5 sealstones. This tomb also contained the well-known warrior stela.
76.	None recovered.	1 small figurine.		12 small gold ornaments, 36 small sealstones, handle and small pieces of silver bowl, ring of gold leaf, button, 2 bronze spear points, 3 stone buttons, 30 small ornaments of glass paste, stone spouted vessel.
79.	None recovered.	2 animal figurines joined at the back, boat, 2 females supporting a child, female figurine (tau).	Vessel with handle.	Bronze disc/mirror, 3 seals, amber beads, beads of semi-precious stone, 2 gold nail heads, 2 very small gold ornaments, 3 or 4 fragments of gold leaf.
80.	None recovered.	5 phi figurines, kourotrophos, 1 unusual psi.	Stirrup jar, spouted vessel, 2-handled jug.	
89.	None recovered.	5 phi females.	5 pyxides, 2 stirrup jars, 2 shallow cups with handles, jug, bowl with handle, deep cup, bowl shaped like basket.	Loom weights, small item of stone.
91.	Bones + 3 skulls in chamber.	Female figurine in a seated position. Psi female.	Pilgrim flask, small 2-handled vase, large 2-handled vase.	6 gold rings, 5 circular gold pieces, many gold beads, 180 small gold ornaments, 61 small gold attachments, many beads of glass paste, piece of entwined gold, very small bird of electrum, strips of gold repousse, rock crystal beads, 16 gold ornaments, 8 gold rosettes, 2 bronze swords, 21 small gold ornaments, 120 beads of glass paste, 10 ornaments of glass paste, 2 beads, 2 sealstones, sealstone of agate, animal bones and teeth, 2 bronze discs/mirrors, 12 bronze beads.
98.	None recovered.	3 phi females.	Pottery sherds, 2 small vessels.	2 or 3 beads of glass, 2 or 3 seals, iron dagger, bronze dagger.
101.	None recovered.	Upper part of exceptionally large phi figurine, second figurine.	Vessels.	

Chart A: to show overall picture of figurine placement in tombs.

<u>Site.</u>	<u>No. of tombs.</u>	<u>Tombs with figurines.</u>	<u>No of figurines.</u>	<u>Ratio of female figs. to bovines.</u>	<u>Tombs with figs. clearly associated with child burial.</u>	<u>Figs. exclusively associated with weapons.</u>	<u>No. of figurines in clusters.</u>
Tiryns	18	4	12	12 : 0	1 (2 figs.)	0	6
Prosymna	53	21	99	69 : 30	17 (77 figs.)	3 (bovines)	72
Mycenae (Wace)	24	11	48	38 : 9	4 (13 figs.)	0	25
Mycenae (Tsountas)	103	20	(65)	58 : 4	unclear	1 (a bovine)	52
Argos	25	10	36	29 : 7	3 (7 figs.)	0	15
Dendra	14	5	18	17 : 1	0	0	13
Asine	8	-	-	-	-	-	-
Berbati	7	1	4	4 : 0	1 (4 figs.)	0	4
Pylos	8	4	6	6 : 0	3 (5 figs.)	0	0
Perati	192	15	33	14 : 16 + 3 birds	11 (22 figs.)	0	0
Athens	41	3	4	4 : 0	3 (4 figs.)	0	0

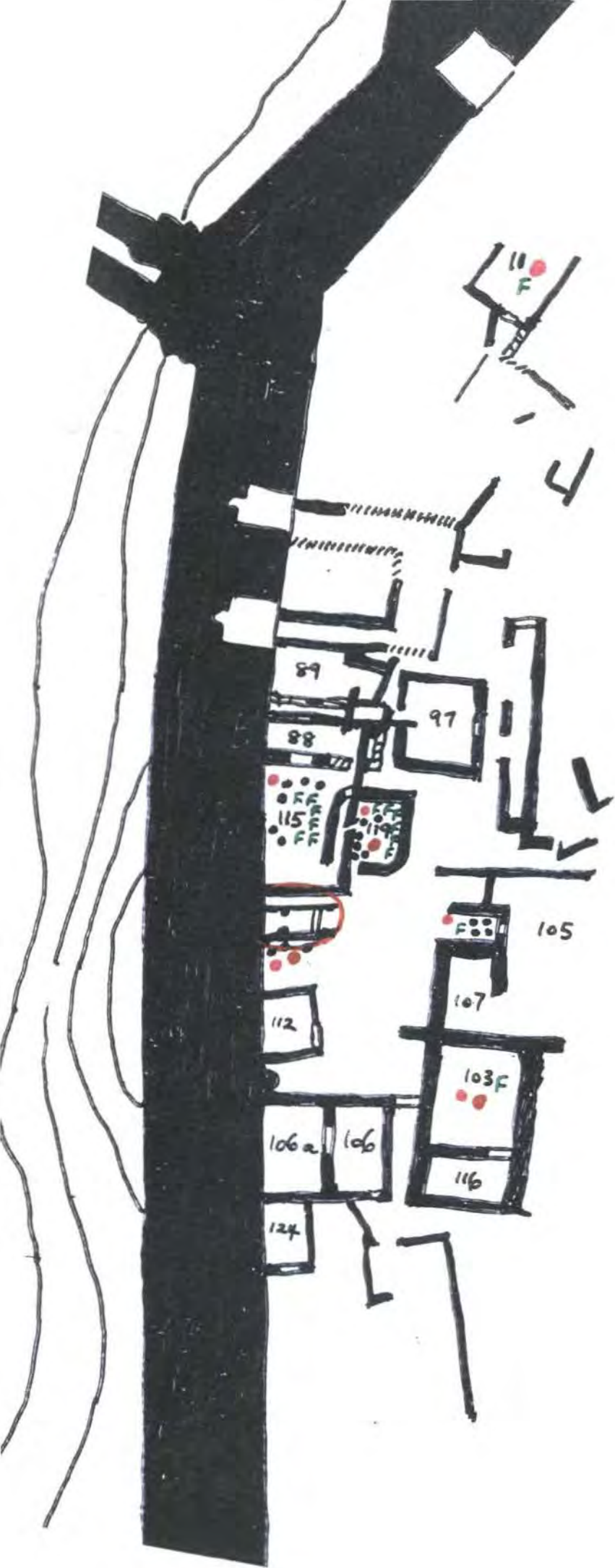
Table 4 : Unterburg at Tiryns – figurine distribution in rooms

Period	Room/Area	Fireplace	Figurines	Other noteworthy finds
LH IIIA (late).	LXII 43/82 (area near rooms 217, 218).	Yes.	Bovine, fragments of bovines.	Whetstone, several vessels (among which quite a large stirrup jar), a clay lamp, 2 grinding stones, fragment of stone vessel, bronze needle, a stone bead, a steatite bead.
LH IIIA (late).	217 (underneath 214).		Phi near the west wall.	Steatite bead, lead balance.
LH IIIA (late).	218 (underneath 215).		Bovine, phi (in N.W. corner).	Stone pedestal, bronze table, steatite beads, chalcedony seal showing person involved in cult act.
LH IIIB (early-middle).	215.	Ash layer in centre.	Phi idol beside S. wall (earlier period), bovine.	Clay lamp in N.W. corner, part of lead kettle (earlier period), clay lamp in E. wall, skeleton (20-25 year old woman) in N.W. corner.
LH IIIB.	214.	Two, one in centre and one in north.	4 bovines with linear decoration (one with rider) at foot of stone threshold (apotropaic function?), psi figurine at hearth, two bovines (next to pithos), a psi figurine + 2 bovines (next to northern hearth).	Sherds of stone equipment, a glass bead at hearth, lead kettle (LH IIIB late) at west wall, pithos cauldron in S.W. corner (older house period) + stone tiles, stone pedestal in front of west wall, clay lamp (in corridor leading into room), clay mould for spear point, in courtyard next to R 214 a grinding stone, a whetstone and several figurine fragments.
LH IIIB (early-middle).	190.	Yes, in west part.	2 bovines (spine decorated), 1 psi figurine in proximity of hearth.	2 steatite beads, a spindle whorl, 2 whetstones, 2 pieces of a bronze knife. A niche in the S.W. corner (for the figurines?)
LH IIIB.	191 (Bau VI). LXI 41/89. LXII 43/77 LXI 44/128 (not marked on map).	Yes, in centre.	Fragments of large wheel-made figurine found in several different areas.	2 kernoi.
LH IIIB.	121, 122, 123 (Bau VI)		5 figurines, hand of large figure, fragments of figurines.	
LH IIIB.	123.	Round, plastered hearth, fireplace in north.		Pedestal, round-shaped vessel, possible plastered house altar, horns of consecration, kylikes.
LH IIIB (middle).	209.	No.	Bovine (in centre of room).	3 steatite beads, lots of pieces of lead, handle of a large bronze vessel, whetstone, pieces of octopus larnax, collared amphora, two-handled bowl.

Period	Room/Area	Fireplace	Figurines	Other noteworthy finds
LH IIIB (middle).	210.	Heaps of ash (in southern part).	Bovine, tau figurine (next to ash).	2-handled cooking pot (N.E. corner), box oven (E. wall), steatite button, pan, bronze knife (next to ash).
LH IIIB.	210.		Psi figurines.	
LH IIIB2.	Courtyard of Bau VI (LXI 41/94).		3 figurines.	Pottery.
LH IIIB2.	Courtyard to Bau VI.	Yes.	8 small figurines, 7 bovines.	Broken vessels, rhyton fragments.
LH IIIB2.	Courtyard to north of Bau VI.	Yes.	2 psi figurines, 3 tau, 2 phi, 6 bovines, 2 chariots.	Stirrup jar, whetstone.
LH IIIA2 - LHIIIC.	Niche in W. Curtain.		4 phi figurines, 1 bovine (of LH IIIA). Figures greatly increased in numbers and variation of type in LH IIIB. 13 Figurines – according to Kilian these can be linked with cult room. 7 – in the west curtain wall 239 psi figurines altogether.	LH IIIB cult equipment. 2 bull rhytons.
LH IIIB2.	Bau III, room 3.		1 bovine, 1 wheelmade bovine.	
LH IIIB2.	LXI 43 – LXII44.		7 bovines, 2 tau, 3 phi, a bird, parts of a chair.	Movable hearth, fresco fragment (Kilian thinks that this area is a bronze workshop due to the rich finds of bronze scraps + pieces of lead vessels).
LH IIIB (late).	221a.		Bovine.	Grinding stone, bone bodkin (Kilian thinks that this indicates daily use of room); ivory figure of eight shield.
LH IIIB (mid – late).	9.	Yes.	Bovine (at entrance), tau figurine in small niche in N.W. wall.	Box oven.
LH IIIB (late).	Chamber 14 (West Curtain).		Phi (at entrance from R226).	Much pottery on floor, clay lamp (at entrance). N.B. there were no figurines from the LH IIIC. Period).
LH IIIB (mid - late).	Bau VII.	Yes, in south.	Bovine (in east wall), psi figurine at entrance.	Large lead caudron, whetstone (next to hearth), 9 glass beads, several fragments of lead vessel, ivory comb, Levantine bird figure of bone.

Period	Room/Area	Fireplace	Figurines	Other noteworthy finds
Late LH III B – early LH III C.	76.		Psi figurine (at entrance to small trapezium-shaped room in S.E. corner).	Box oven in N.E. corner, a grinding stone, lead weight.
Late LH III B – early LH III C.	Bau XII.			2 clay model boats, animal rhyton, part of jug, parts of 2 skyphoi.
LH III C (early).	119.	Yes, in south.	2 fragments of female figurines, small bovine, 6 small female figurines, 5 bovines, arm of large figure with upraised hands.	Stirrup jar.
LH III C.	Courtyard west of 119.		6 female figurines, 4 bovines.	Large stone block (stand for large figure?).
LH III C (early).	117.		Arms of large figure, 3 psi figurines.	Cult bench against city wall, niche built into bench and covered in 3 layers of plaster, splashes of red paint on floor.
LH III C (early).	76 (LXI 42 – 44).		Psi figurine (next to door into trapezium-shaped room 77).	Box oven in N.E. corner opposite door, grinding stone, lead weight.
LH III C.	103, Area between 110 – 112.	Yes. Yes.	Psi figurine. 3 bovines.	Whetstone.
LH III C.	110.		4 large wheelmade figures with upraised hands. 1 more coarse figure (not wheel-turned), 2 large wheelmade psi figurines, fragment of bovine, animal rhyton (outside S. wall).	Cult bench (well made), miniature vessels, steatite bead.
LH III C (entwickelt).	Bau VIa		4 bovines, 1 miniature tau (at entrance).	Miniature tripod.
LH III C.	110a.		Psi figurine.	Cult bench, pottery.

DIAGRAM B Findspots of LH III
figurines and cultic equipment
in Tiryns Unterburg.



LX

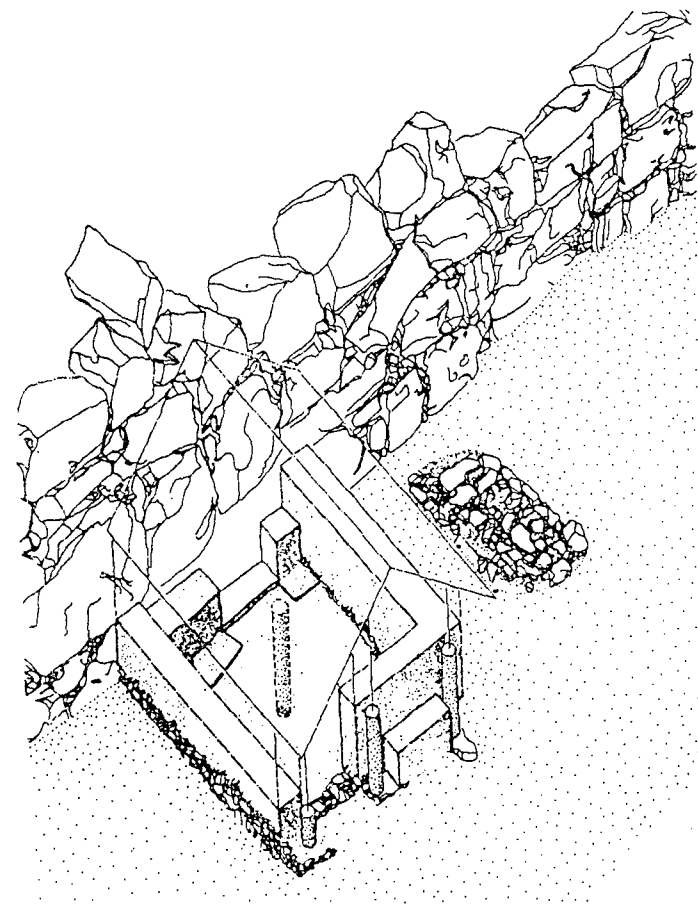
LXI

LXII

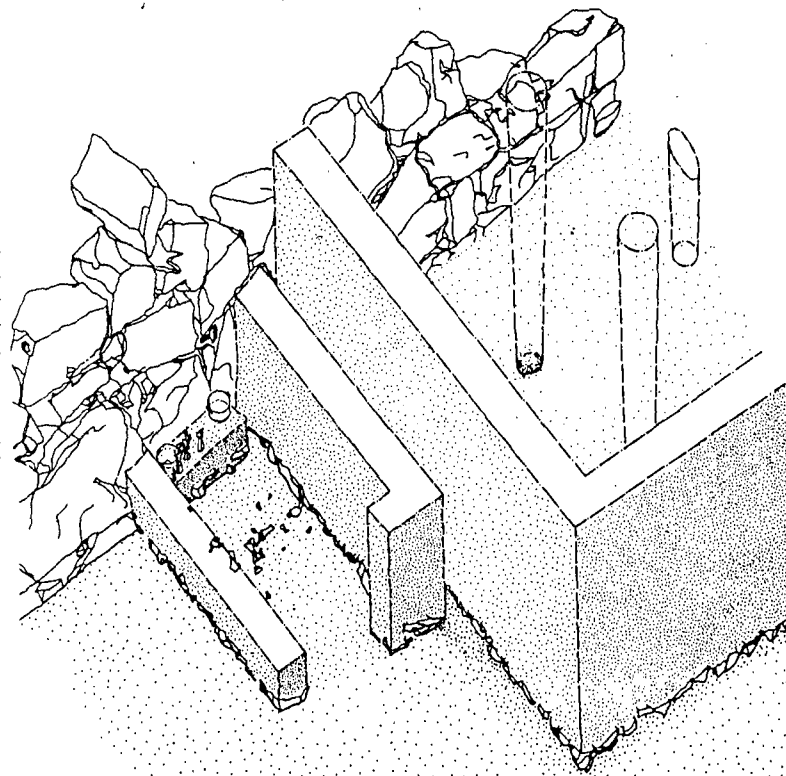
LXIII

DIAGRAM C Findspots of LH IIIC figurines and cultic equipment (Tiryns Unterburg LXI and LXII 39 -42).





Room 110



Room 110 a

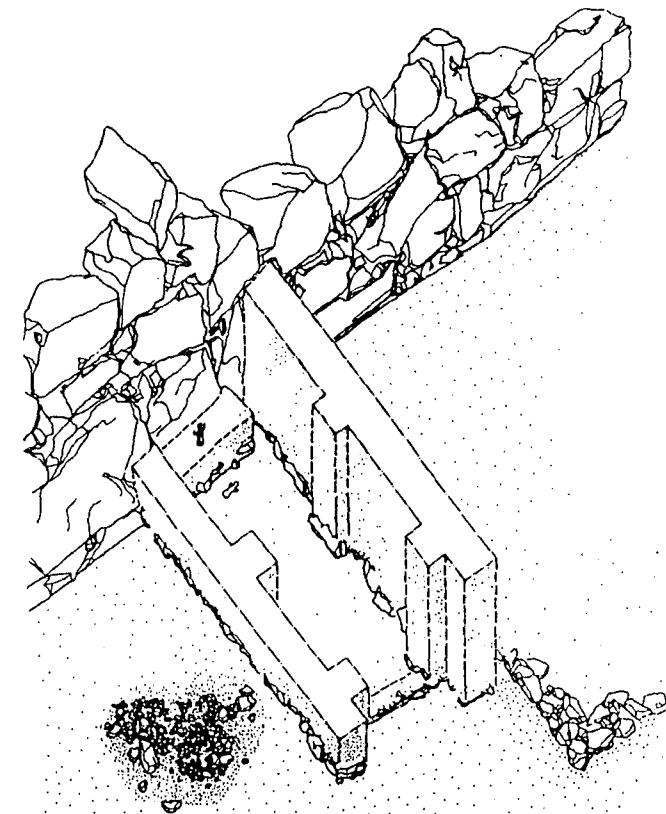
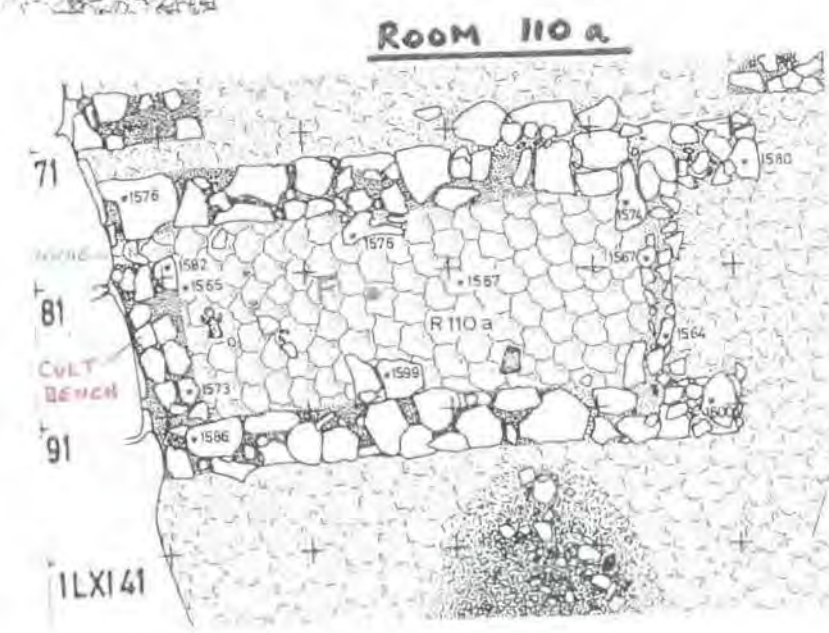
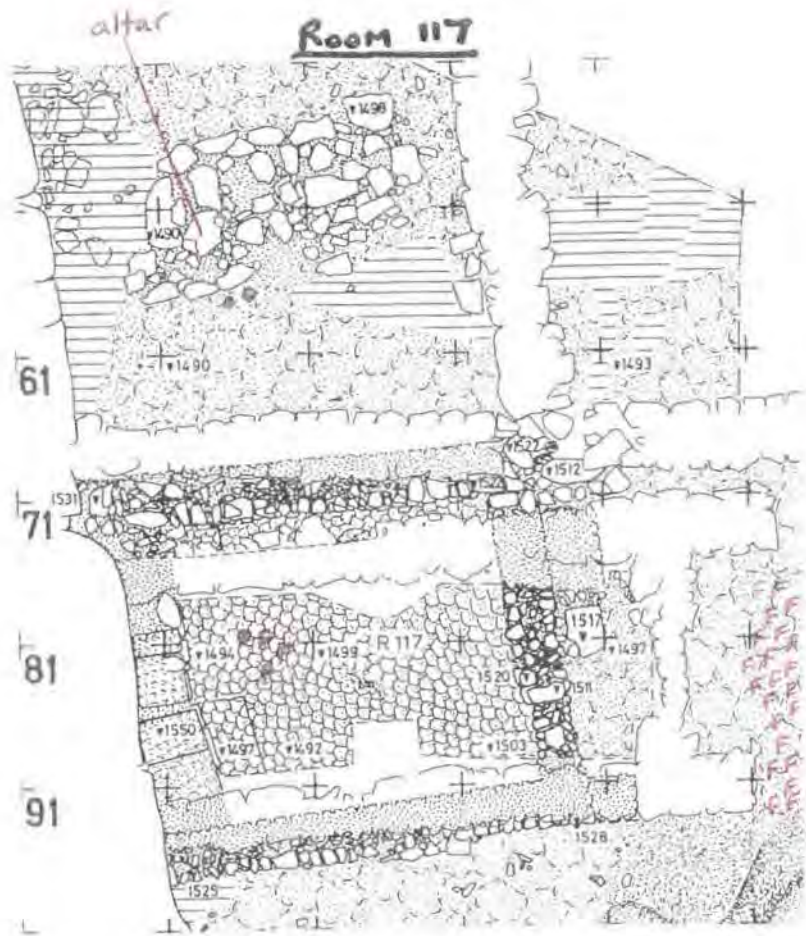


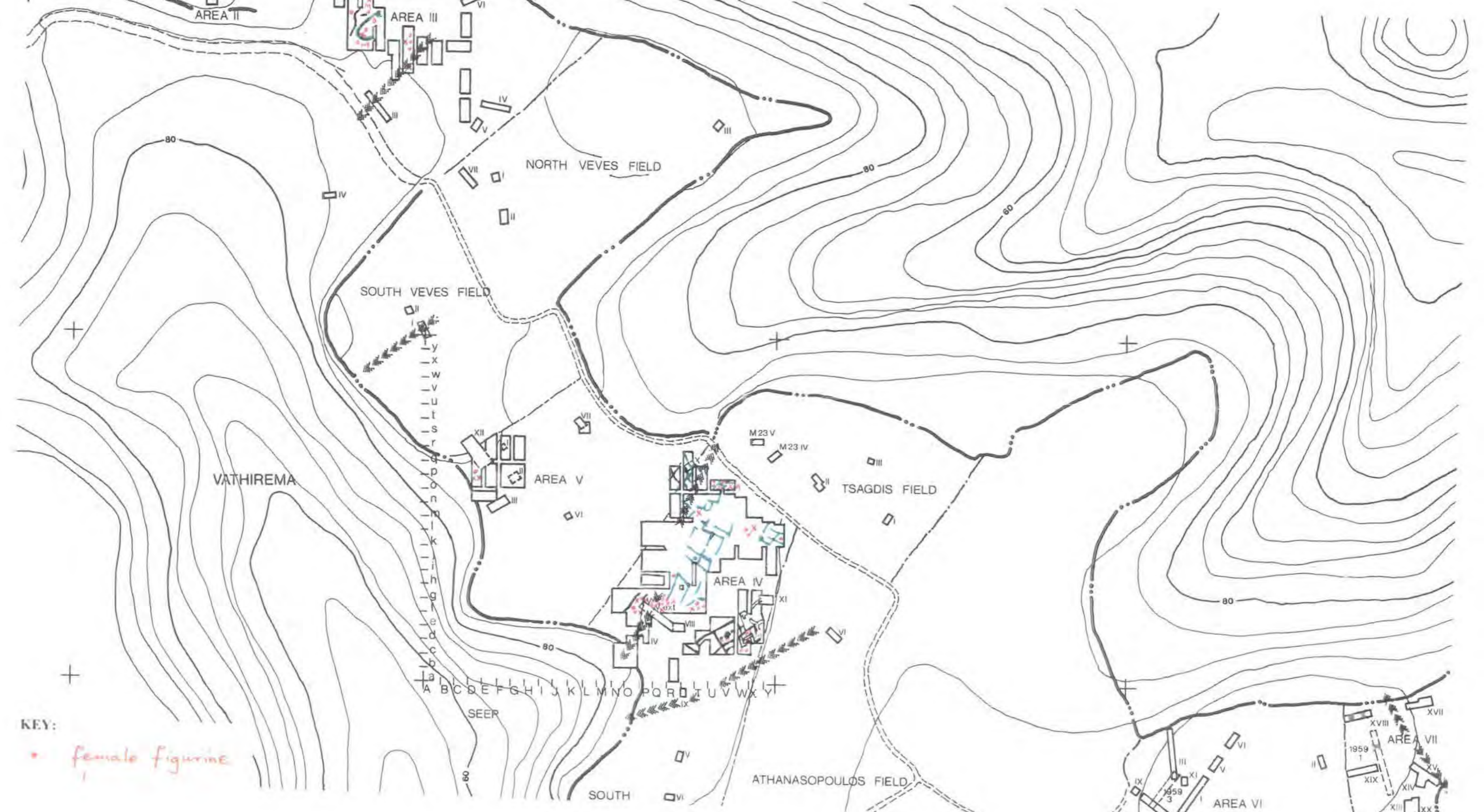
DIAGRAM D Isometric reconstructions of the LH IIIC cult room
in Tiryns Unterburg (after Kilian).



Key

- figurines
- figures / fragments of figures
- other cultic items
- niche





KEY:
• female figurine