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compagno nell'impegno civile
e nel modo di intendere la ricerca

LA PAROLA, L'IMMAGINE, LA TOMBA

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THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE HERO

ANTHONY SNODGRASS

My excuse for returning to a well-worn theme is a certain uneasiness about previous work by archaeologists (myself included) on the subject of hero-worship in early Greece. Nearly a century ago, the foundations of our understanding were laid in Erwin Rohde's *Psyche* [1], a work of many profound insights, some of which have been overlooked or forgotten in more recent scholarship. Rohde saw the ambiguities in the Greek use of the word *hêrôs*; he deduced that, in its earliest and profoundest form, hero-worship must have originated as a form of ancestor-worship; he proved that that earliest form was much older than Homer; and he referred it to " that remote period which is obscured for us by the intervening mass of the Homeric poems " [2].

Perhaps no one who accuses Homer of " obscuring " the earlier past can expect his view to prevail for long in Classical studies. Certainly, few archaeologists have taken their cue from Rohde; and the twentieth century has seen the Golden Age of Homeric fundamentalism, thanks mainly to the discoveries of Schliemann. Nowhere was this faith more warmly cherished than among English-speaking scholars. In 1921 appeared L. R. Farnell's *Greek Hero Cults* [3], a work which placed the Homeric Epic at the centre of its subject. Meanwhile, more by accident than anything else, it was British scholars who were making the discoveries that seemed to support Farnell's case. At the Menelaion near Sparta, they excavated from 1909 the shrine of the heroised Menelaos and Helen; at the Cave of Polis on Ithaka, in 1930, they discovered offerings inscribed as dedications to Odysseus; at a location outside Mycenae, in 1950, they excavated a shrine with dedications naming Agamemnon. Here was a series of major figures from the *Iliad*, proved by archaeology to have been worshipped by the Greeks, and worshipped apparently from an early date. Small wonder that, when the archaeologists (still mainly my fellow-countrymen!) began to produce syntheses of this material evidence, they

[1] *Psyche: Seelencult und Unsterblichkeitsglaube der Griechen*, Freiburg-Leipzig 1894.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 13 (English translation by W. B. Hillis, London 1925, 11).
[3] *Greek Hero Cults and Ideas of Immortality*, Oxford 1921.

built their hypotheses round Farnell's work, from John Cook's paper of 1953 [4] to Nicolas Coldstream's of 1976 [5].

Of course, since as early as the 1870's, other kinds of archaeological evidence besides the cults of ' Homeric ' heroes had begun to be available. These finds were ' archaeological ' in a second sense too, in that they showed the ancient Greeks themselves to have practised a kind of archaeology, largely independent of texts. When Schliemann found an Archaic inscription " I am the Hero's " at one of his Shaft Graves at Mycenae [6], or when Lolling discovered Geometric and later pottery in the dromos of the tholos tomb that he excavated at Menidhi near Athens [7], the chronology of early Greece was too dimly understood for the exact significance of the finds to be appreciated. Only two generations later, when Carl Blegen found and interpreted a whole series of such cults in the Mycenaean cemetery at Prosymna [8], was the phenomenon accurately described. By showing that a period of several centuries had elapsed between the last burial in each tomb and the beginning of cult, Blegen proved that there was no question of the immediate descendants having honoured a newly-deceased member of the family. On the contrary, the tombs must have been discovered in antiquity in much the same way as they are sometimes found today, through the collapse of the chamber roof, or as a chance result of agricultural operations. The discoverers can have had no genuine affinity to the prehistoric dead, and can only have guessed at their identity; no wonder that they used anonymous appellations like ' the Hero '. But one consistent feature of the majority of cases was that the beginning of cult belonged to the later eighth century B.C. — just late enough to be claimed as a manifestation of the influence of the Homeric Epic.

But with a subject like this, which involves the behaviour of ordinary people over a long period, it is preferable to look beyond literature to something more fundamental: the language itself. If we turn to the lexicon for enlightenment, we at once remind ourselves that the word *hêrôs* had, if not two separate meanings, at any rate two separate contexts of use. The commoner of the two was the use of ' hero ' to denote a person who was once alive but has become heroised *only* through death; who is honoured by sacrifice and cult, specifically at his grave where his power is felt to be located; and whose repute and influence are normally confined to the region near the grave, which is a fixed dwelling-place after death. In this sense, ' hero ' makes countless appearance in literary (especially prose) and epigraphic documents. But this is *not* the normal sense of the word

[4] ' The Cult of Agamemnon at Mycenae ', in *Geras A. Keramopoullou*, Athens 1953, pp. 112-118.

[5] ' Hero-cults in the age of Homer ', *JHS* 96, 1976, pp. 8-17.

[6] H. Schliemann, *Mycenae*, London 1978, p. 115; L. H. Jeffery, *The local scripts of Archaic Greece*, Oxford 1961, p. 174, no. 6.

[7] H. G. Lolling et al., *Das Kuppelgrab bei Menidi*, Athens 1880, pp. 5 and 49; P. Wolters, ' Vasen aus Menidi, II ', in *JdI* 14, 1899, pp. 103-135.

[8] ' Post-Mycenaean deposits in Chamber Tombs ', in *ArchEph* 1937, I, pp. 377-390.

in Homer and Hesiod, and the lexicon will therefore probably give this not as the primary but as the secondary meaning, " meaning (b) ". What then is " meaning (a) "? It is the sense familiar to every reader of Homer, for whom a ' hero ' is a hero already in his lifetime; the word is used as a kind of title, awarded not only to warrior and king but (at least in the *Odyssey*) to free men of varied estate. " Meaning (a) " is further distinguished from " meaning (b) " in that Homer does not often show the hero being worshipped after death, at his grave or anywhere else. This is no surprise, if his spirit is located not there, but far away in the Underworld, where it cannot easily act as a local force and a local presence. In later centuries, this " meaning (a) " for *hêrôs* becomes less common, occurring mainly in poetic contexts where the setting is the epoch of Homer's ' living heroes '. A subtle example of the avoidance of meaning (a) is Aristophanes' treatment of the warrior Lamachos: in his lifetime, he is called by unflattering names in the *Acharnians* and *Peace*; after his death, he becomes *Lamachos hêrôs*, in the sense of meaning (b) [9].

Most of this was set out long ago by Rohde, and his insights have been revived in two important recent discussions by Martin West [10] and Gregory Nagy [11]. Nagy has stressed the possibilities of reconciliation between the two meanings discussed above, or at least between the beliefs that lay behind them and the practices to which these beliefs gave rise. Of course the Greeks could have combined the use of both senses in the same living language; but the probable truth is that this awkwardness only briefly arose. Meaning (a) seems to have passed out of normal speech fairly quickly after the time of Homer (or so West has argued from its rather indiscriminate uses in the *Odyssey*). West further suggests that meaning (b) *for the specific word hêrôs* could have grown out of the poetic use of meaning (a). But this does not mean that the beliefs and practices associated with meaning (b) were not by far the older: it merely implies that such early beliefs and practices were coupled with other names and terms for the heroized dead. Rohde's conclusion has been generally accepted, that the worship of the ' mortal gods ', as Hesiod paradoxically called them, was much older than the lifetime of Homer or Hesiod; both poets betray some familiarity with the idea, Hesiod explicitly and Homer by a few almost surreptitious acknowledgments. But they use other words than *herôes* — *hêmitheoi* or *daimones* — for the recipients of these honours.

The case may be illuminated by taking up the familiar parallel between the Greek heroes and the saints of early Christendom. Let us imagine that some important body of early Christian literature, such as the Arthurian legends, had

[9] *Frogs*, line 1039. The subtlety lies in the fact that a mocking allusion to ' meaning (a) ' may be conveyed by the Homeric metre of the line, as A. C. Cassio kindly pointed out to me.

[10] M. L. West (ed.), *Hesiod: the Works and Days*, Oxford 1978, especially pp. 186, 190-191, 370-373.

[11] G. Nagy, *The Best of the Achaeans*, Baltimore 1979, especially pp. 114-117, 159-161.

habitually used the word ' saint ', rather than ' knight ', for the main male actors in the narrative. It would then be relatively easy for archaeologists and other scholars to discern that ' St. Lancelot ' or ' St. Tristram ' had not enjoyed the same status in Christian worship as the conventional body of saints — had not, for example, had churches or shrines dedicated to them. They would soon realise that this literary usage had been a temporary, perhaps a localised one, and recognise it as a distraction from the study of the ' real ' saints and their associated monuments. For Greek archaeology, a similar lesson could be applied. Homer's ' living heroes ' may have literary pride of place, enabling them to generate that revival which, in many modern languages, allows the colloquial (or in the Soviet Union the official) use of ' hero ' in a similar sense. But when it comes to the actual behaviour of ancient Greeks, the ' heroes ' of this sense should be seen as a distraction from the older, more enduring and more geographically widespread use of the word in the religious context of heroization after death.

Now that geography has been mentioned, I should say a little more about it. It is of course true that, in the full Classical period, ' hero ' in the sense of meaning (b) was in use wherever Greek was spoken, including Ionia and the colonies. But what was the position in the early stages when, as we have seen, other words may have been preferred to *hêrôs*, but where similar beliefs and practices were, beyond doubt, already widespread? How widely, in this same period, was ' hero ' accepted in its Homeric sense (meaning [a])? To answer the first question, we shall turn in a moment to archaeology. To answer the second, we may choose to adopt a tentative suggestion of West's, following an even more tentative hint by Rohde. This is, that the ' living hero ' was a speciality of Ionian Epic, and as such may have been at first confined, as a usage, to Ionia. Such a state of affairs can have existed only very early on, since by Hesiod's time it had already spread to Boeotia — as is proved by the insertion, in the *Works and Days*, of an ' Age of Heroes ' into the traditional sequence of the four ' metallic ' ages. The very awkwardness of this insertion has suggested to many scholars that the idea was a new, perhaps extraneous, importation. Another interesting thing about the context in the *Works and Days* is that, in this same passage and a very few lines earlier, Hesiod had indicated his familiarity with the traditional practice of treating the dead of a bygone age as ' spirits of the underworld ', in his description of the men of the Golden, and especially of the Silver Age. It is exactly this practice that Rohde held to be the origin of hero-worship.

Is it possible that, before Hesiod, the worship of the transfigured dead was the *only* form of direct contact with the heroic past on the Greek mainland? That it was the advent of the Ionian Epic which brought for the first time the idea of the ' living hero ' (together, perhaps, with the word *hêrôs* itself) into the consciousness of people there? If so, this would have important consequences for our understanding of the archaeology of this early epoch (and indeed for its art, with which I do not propose to deal here). But in recent years this topic has been studied, at least by the Anglo-Saxon archaeologists, always with an eye on the

Epic. We have forgotten Rohde, and instead concentrated on L. R. Farnell's Epic-centred version of Greek hero worship. Let us instead return to the subject with an eye on the older practice of the worship of ancestors and chthonic spirits.

In the past decade or so, the evidence from mainland Greece has become relatively familiar, thanks to the treatment of it by (among others) Nicolas Coldstream [5], Claude Bérard [12] and François de Polignac [13]; while a new view of the importance of the colonial evidence has emerged in Irad Malkin's *Religion and Colonisation in ancient Greece* [14]. The best-attested practice is the institution of cults at Bronze Age tombs. From soon after the middle of the eighth century B.C., this appears in several (but not all) districts of the Greek mainland; rarely in the islands; not at all in Ionia. That distribution is suggestive, for it at once hints at just such a geographical division as was suggested a moment ago. Since there are no inscribed dedications of this earliest phase, we cannot prove the identity attributed to the prehistoric dead, but the circumstances make it almost certain that their importance was a local, or at most a regional one.

A further argument helps to distance these cults from the heroes of Epic. At the Ischia Colloquium over ten years ago, I drew attention to the fact that the *form* of burial in the prehistoric tombs where cult was installed contradicts, in almost every possible way, the burial-practices of Epic [15]. They are inhumations not cremations; multiple not single; in rock-cut chambers or tholoi, not under tumuli. This seems very hard to reconcile with the suggestion that the cult-practice was inspired by Epic, particularly when combined with the fact that these cults do not apparently occur in Ionia. The suggested dichotomy was followed up by Nagy in his book of 1979 [11], and especially by de Polignac in his of 1984 [13], to show that we are dealing here with a largely independent phenomenon, whose causes are not to be sought purely in the sudden popularity of the Ionian Epic.

There are very strong arguments, I now accept, for the view urged at Ischia by Bérard [12], and in discussion by Vernant and others, that these causes have much to do with the rise of the *polis*, and that we are looking at the first stage in that glorification of the hero that was to become so central to the *polis* of Classical times. Malkin has indeed gone so far as to trace this practice to the worship of one particular kind of hero, the *oikistês*, and one particular kind of *polis*, the colony. This takes us on to another and distinct topic which arises first from the archaeological evidence: the worship, not of the prehistoric but of the recent dead.

Here there is evidence from Athens and Corinth, but the *locus classicus* must remain the case of the burials inside the West Gate at Eretria, so eloquently

[12] ' Récupérer la mort du price: héroisation et formation de la cité ', in G. Gnoli and J.-P. Vernant (eds.), *La mort, les morts dans les sociétés anciennes*, Cambridge 1982, pp. 89-105.

[13] *La naissance de la cité grecque: culte, espace et société*, Paris 1984, especially pp. 127-132.

[14] *Studies in Greek and Roman religion* III (ed. H. Versnel), Leiden 1987.

[15] ' Les origines du culte des héros dans la Grèce antique ', in *La mort, les morts...* (above, n. 12), pp. 107-119.

presented at Ischia by Clause Bérard [12]. The fairly secure relative chronology at Eretria is not fully matched in the more spectacular case since discovered at Lefkandi [16] — more spectacular, because it dates from at least 250 years earlier, and involves a huge building. *If* the Lefkandi find is truly an instance of the institution of cult immediately after the burial of a prominent local figure, then its early date virtually assures us of a further point: this practice, as well as the worship of the prehistoric dead, must have evolved independently of the Ionian Epic. But until the doubts are resolved as to the interpretation of the Lefkandi building as a *hêrôön*, it is safer not to rely on this argument.

A third practice attested by archaeology has been brought into the argument, notably by Malkin. It is the occurrence of exceptionally lavish or ' heroic ' burial ceremonies for the newly-deceased. This is a phenomenon of wide, indeed partly of non-Greek, distribution in the eighth and seventh centuries B.C. and, yet again, Homeric influence has been very widely imputed to it. But I prefer to leave it out of the argument, because an extravagant burial is not the same thing as the institution of a lasting cult (and in any case Malkin's account of this particular phenomenon is not free of inaccuracies) [17].

We come now to the fourth and final practice which is thought to be attested in the archaeological record: the early institution of cults to the ' real ', Homeric heroes — a fusion, so far as was possible, between the heroes of meaning (a) and those of meaning (b), by taking the personalities of the one and applying to them the treatment due to the other. But reservations are needed at two points. First, I qualified these cults as being " thought to be attested ", as an acknowledgment of François de Polignac's dissident view that the interpretation of these early instances has been mistaken [18]. He argues that the three best-known of these ' hero-cults ', the Menelaion near Sparta, the Agamemnoneion near Mycenae, and the ' Cave of Odysseus ' at Polis on Ithaka, were quite differently intended at the time of their foundation. At all three sites, a female presence is detectable before or alongside that of the hero. The typical ' Artemis-type ' dedications at the Menelaion (to which we may now add the seventh- and sixth-century inscribed dedications to Helen, found in the excavations of the 1970's) [19] show that a ' Helen ', who may be the deity long ago identified behind her persona, rather than the figure of the *Iliad*, had at least a share in the sanctuary at this early stage, and may have been in complete possession of it. The female figurines at the ' Agamemnoneion ' have a similar message to convey, as have the inscriptions in the cave at Polis which mention the Nymphs, as well as Odysseus. Epigraphical

16 M. R. Popham, E. Touloupa and L. H. Sackett, ' The Hero of Lefkandi ', in *Antiquity* 56, 1982, pp. 169-174.

17 *Op. cit.* (above, n. 14), pp. 261-266.

18 *Op. cit.* (above, n. 13), pp. 130-131.

19 H. W. Catling, ' Excavations at the Menelaion, Sparta, 1973-76 ', in *Archaeological Reports* 23 (1976-77), pp. 24-42, especially pp. 36-37, figs. 25-29.

proof of a connection with Menelaos, Agamemnon or Odysseus is not found until Classical or Hellenistic times. Some may say that this argument of de Polignac's is pressed too far; and account needs to be taken of other cases, such as the possible *hêrôön* at Sounion of Phrontis, the steersman of Menelaos, where the offerings, such as they are, are both early and typically ' male ' [20]. But it is right that the tenuousness of the evidence for these widely-accepted ' Homeric cults ' should be brought out.

There is a second area where qualification is needed: the assimilation of the two kinds of hero could only be achieved ' so far as was possible '. For the equation with the grave-cults to be complete, the tomb of the hero should have been the centre of cult. The excavations at the Menelaion have shown that the initiators of the cult, whatever their successors professed, had not succeeded in locating a genuine prehistoric grave. The Agamemnon cult near Mycenae was not, and cannot have been presented as being, located at his tomb; nor of course could the cult in the Polis cave. At Sounion, no definite prehistoric grave has been identified. The whole suggestion of finding a grave, at least for the major heroes, may be irrelevant, since we know that they could be worshipped in two or more places at once (as was Agamemnon, at Amyklai as well as near Mycenae), and that their cults could also be transferred from one place to another. All this was presumably because these heroes were of more than local importance: they were Panhellenic property. Even if the sites at Sparta, Mycenae and Sunion were genuine centres of hero-worship from the first, all three of them begin detectably later than the other practices that we have surveyed, and begin at a moment when it is easier to believe that the fame of the Ionian Epic had spread to all parts of the Greek world.

We may finally return for a moment to the cults at prehistoric graves, the prime category of archaeological evidence. Are they all susceptible of a similar explanation, wherever in Greece they occur? Hitherto, we have all tended to assume that they were, whatever our choice of explanation may have been. That view is about to be challenged in a paper by my former pupil James Whitley, forthcoming in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies* for 1988. He argues that the Argolid does indeed present a classic case of the employment of such cults to underline the territorial integrity, of the emergent *polis*, and that both Argos and Mycenae used them in this way. But he claims that, for Attica, this interpretation fails. The cults are found only away from the city, and are mostly located in that small group of sites outside Athens where settlement had been established for several centuries before the eighth: Eleusis, Acharnai, Thorikos. He sees their purpose as having been not centripetal, as in the Argolid, but centrifugal: an attempt by the local aristocracies to support separatist claims, against the emergent

20 Ch. Picard, ' L'Héroön de Phrontis au Sunion ', in *RA*, VI série, juillet-septembre 1940, pp. 5-28; H. Abramson, ' A hero shrine for Phrontis at Sunion? ', in *California Studies in Classical Antiquity* 12, 1979, pp. 1-19.

polis, by stressing their association with the rural residences where they had been established for generations past.

But there remains a third area where these grave-cults are especially prominent, Messenia. It is the most difficult case to accommodate to any of the explanations offered for the cults, whether as instruments of *polis* demarcation, or as separatist gestures according to Whitley's view of Attica, or as markers for territorial claims by individual free landowners, according to my own original view. There is another distinctive feature about the Messenian cults: beginning at about the time of the Spartan conquest, they continue and indeed increase in frequency in Archaic and Classical times, more strongly than in the rest of Greece. If they were the work of the Spartan overlords, then it is strange that no such cults have been found on the territory of Lakonia itself. If they are private, or positively separatist, gestures, then it is surprising that the Spartans tolerated or overlooked them. I have no new explanation of the Messenian cults to offer; but since they continue into the Classical period, it is possible that one day a helpful inscription will be found among the offerings in a new Mycenaean tomb.

The message of this paper is in any case a general, not a specific one. It is that the phenomenon of the installation of cult at prehistoric tombs is to be understood in a way quite independent of the influence of Homeric Epic, and that the other phenomena considered here may also be less susceptible to this influence than we have come to believe. The grave-cults were not directed at the prominent names made famous by Homer; indeed, they were probably not directed at named individuals at all, but at the anonymous members of an alleged ancestral group; a group perhaps not even called by the term *hêrôes* at first; a group that was of interest only to the local community that claimed descent from them. Only in the other practices that arose out of, or alongside, the prehistoric grave-cults may we even tentatively see the incipient influence of Epic — the heroization of recently deceased leaders like King Teleklos of Sparta [21], or the anonymous prince at Eretria, or the *oikistai* of the early colonies; and perhaps some of the grandiose burial-rites at actual funerals. Eventually, of course, Homeric heroes did come to benefit from similar honours, however questionable may be the earliest alleged instances of this. But the popular understanding of the word *hêrôs* in Classical times is a sure pointer to the popular beliefs of an earlier age; and these beliefs were at a level too deep to have been shaped by mere literary influence.

[21] Pausanias III, 15, 10.

FIGURES DE L'INVISIBLE: STRATEGIES TEXTUELLES ET STRATEGIES ICONIQUES

Françoise Frontisi-Ducroux

Dans l'imaginaire des Grecs la face mortifère de la Gorgone est définie comme la vision interdite: nul ne peut la contempler sans succomber dans l'instant. Or cette face est partout présente dans l'environnement quotidien. De surcroît sa frontalité constante la rend inévitable aux regards. Il est impossible de ne pas la voir, impossible d'échapper au face à face avec ce masque qui figure l'horreur chaotique du néant.

Cette étude se propose d'analyser les façons diverses dont le langage textuel et le langage iconographique abordent, traitent, résolvent ou éludent le paradoxe de la représentation de ce qui constitue la forme extrême du non-visible.

1. La description interdite

Aucun texte grec ne donne une description complète de la Gorgone. C'est chez Apollodore, très tardivement donc, que l'on trouve le plus de précisions: « Ces créatures avaient », dit-il, « la tête entourée des replis écailleux de serpents, des dents grandes comme celles des sangliers, des mains de bronze et des ailes d'or, avec quoi elles volaient. Et elles pétrifiaient ceux qui les voyaient » εἶχον δὲ αἱ Γοργόνες κεφαλὰς μὲν περικεσπειραμένας φολίσι δρακόντων, ὀδόντας δὲ μεγάλους ὡς συῶν, καὶ χεῖρας χαλκᾶς, καὶ πτέρυγας χρυσᾶς, δι' ὧν ἐπέτοντο. Τοὺς δὲ ἰδόντας λίθους ἐποίουν [1].

On remarque que la caractéristique majeure de ces monstres, le regard mortel, n'est évoqué que par son effet, la pétrification; l'organe lui-même, l'oeil fulgurant, n'est ici ni décrit, ni même mentionné.

C'est là une constante de toutes les évocations de Gorgo. Chez les auteurs anciens, en effet, la Gorgone et ses soeurs, la tête coupée de Méduse, et le gor-

[1] Apd., II, 4, 2.

M. Taddei, Introduzione.

In his introductory speech the author briefly outlines the aspects of Death in the iconography of ancient India, a country where not only the very presence of graves is an exception, but death seems to be ignored or ' denied '. The Brahmanical tradition appears to be interested in the description of death only in such cosmological myths as those of Durgā Mahiṣāsuramardinī and Narasiṃha, in which the pivot is represented by the killing of a demon. It is in the Buddhist literature and imagery that we find the death of the Wise, an achievement reached at the end of a long process of inner ripening. The role of Gandharan art in this connection is briefly discussed.

Iconography is also a source of data concerning the actual funerary rites in ancient India — a few examples are given and a special stress is placed on the meaning of the stūpa, as a funerary monument and *at the same time*, as an *axis mundi*.

A. M. Snodgrass, The Archaeology of the Hero.

Here is a subject that has recently become fashionable to the point of excess. I return to it because I think that the course of study has taken a wrong direction. Anglo-Saxon scholarship, both philological and archaeological, has since the time of L. R. Farnell's *Greek Hero Cults* in 1921 pursued the connection between Greek hero-worship and the Homeric poems. But earlier still, in E. Rohde's *Psyche* of 1894, one can find a different, even contradictory line of interpretation, linked to the age-old practice of ancestor-worship, and I think it is the sounder one. Both lexicography and archaeology attest to two quite separate attitudes to the idea of the hero: Homer, on the one hand, uses the word *hêrôs* to describe living men in a bygone age, most of them warriors and many of them famous long before his time; later Greek (especially prose) writers on the contrary apply the term to people who are obscure, or of purely local interest, who often lived in the recent past, but whose essential feature is that they are dead: only through death can they become heroes. Archaeology likewise can make a clear distinction between the cults, practised in various sacred localities, of the famous heroes of epic, and the anonymous cult-offerings at tombs, mainly of prehistoric date, where the dead had been buried with rites utterly unlike those described in epic. Is it likely that the inspiration of the Homeric poems, adopted as an explanation of the former type of cult, also explains the latter (and much commoner) practice?

The paper argues that the tomb-cults, as well as being commoner, are also the older, more traditional and more geographically widespread form of hero-worship. They represent, in fact, the archaeological evidence that Rohde lacked

for his hypothesis of early ancestor-worship, somewhat transformed. The paper ends by hinting at the internal heterogeneity, at least along geographical lines, of the tomb-cults.

F. Frontisi-Ducroux, Figures de l'invisible: stratégies textuelles et stratégies iconiques.

The deadly face of Gorgo, from which all must avert their gazes, seems also to have been a topic to be largely avoided in speech. There are many references to Gorgo in our texts, but no exhaustive descriptions or detailed visualization. Paradoxicaly, however, Gorgo's mask is a favourite figure of Greek art and represented visually almost everywhere in the various contexts of daily life. In seeming to violate the primary taboo on viewing the Gorgo, the artists, nevertheless, especially the vase-painters, found ways to indicate the fundamental invisibility of this face.

C. Darbo-Peschanski, La vie des morts. Représentations et fonctions de la mort et des morts dans *les histoires* d'Hérodote.

In Herodotus' *Inquiries*, death is resolutely shown and understood as an active principle. Hence the elliptic form of the narrative: the text never describes the actors dying. On the contrary, it insists on the funeral rites: indeed if cultural habits discriminate people from each other, the funeral rites help to make the world a steady mosaic where every one has its proper place.

It also stresses the murders as offences against justice. That is to say against the part of destiny and appointment imparted to the members of each society, or as a compensation for the disorder thus created.

So death appears as a power which can ever make and unmake the order of things, impelling thus the life of the world.

S. Georgoudi, La mer, la mort et le discours des épigrammes funéraires.

According to many sepulchral epigrams of the *Greek Anthology*, death at sea is represented as most mournful fate of all. As a particularly dreadful agent of death, the sea has its own, specific, ways of killing the shipwrecked. Plunged into the depths of the awful liquid element, swallowed up by the roaring waves or cast on to the inhospitable shore, the dead person is condemned to the most horrible destiny: mutilated, disfigured or shrunken and deprived of funeral rites, he loses his name, his integrity, his individuality.

J. Svenbro, L'épitaphe de Mnésithéos: sur la lecture de l'inscription funeraire.

The remarks on the relation *sêma/nóēsis* by Gregory Nagy (*Arethusa* 16, 1983) provide the take-off point for this paper: if the *sêma* (" sign; grave ") is incomplete without *nóēsis* (" intellection "), as Nagy argues from a linguistic point of view, the reader should be e s s e n t i a l to the funerary inscription. In general,

the role of the reader is only implicitly defined by funerary inscriptions. However, in the case of Mnesitheos' gravestone (1210 Peek; 128 Pfohl; Eretria, Euboea, first half of Vth century B.C.), the role of the reader is explicitly defined or inscribed in the epigram itself, which makes use of two parallel verbs for the act of reading: *ananémesthai* and *légein*. The reader is supposed to " distribute ", orally, the contents of the inscription to the passers-by (vv. 1-2); he is supposed to " read it aloud " to them from the stele (vv. 5-6). Thus, the reader becomes the distributor of the *kléos*, or " acoustic renown ", of the deceased. For reasons of dialect and epigraphy, an alternative to v. 6 *hátis ereî* (" who [i.e. the stele] will say ") is proposed: *hoû tis ereî* (" where one will read ").

G. Hoffmann, Les jeunes filles et la mort: quelques stèles à épigramme.

The present article reconsiders four gravestones with inscription which belong to the attic classical production and show a maiden. Our purpose is to introduce the problem of articulation between what is seen and what is written (or said) and to bring out a basis for further investigation: if the *korè* is praised by the epigram like a daughter, she is depicted by the stone like a *parthenos*. So it conveys a strength which must help the family to overcome the trial of death.

A. M. D'Onofrio, Aspetti e problemi del monumento funerario attico arcaico.

A main change is observable in attic funerary *semata* at the beginning of the archaic age: the indifferentiated, rough stelai which stood — without any particular orientation — on the top of the mounds, developed into decorated and figured ones and into statues, enriched with the dedication written by.

Such monuments involved a new position along the street and facing it, in order to convey the message about the social identity of the dead. From the fragmentary documentation available about their contexts, it seems that the *mnemata*, exclusive of wealthy members of society, stood and often grouped them in family plots rather than marking individual tombs, and maked them very impressive.

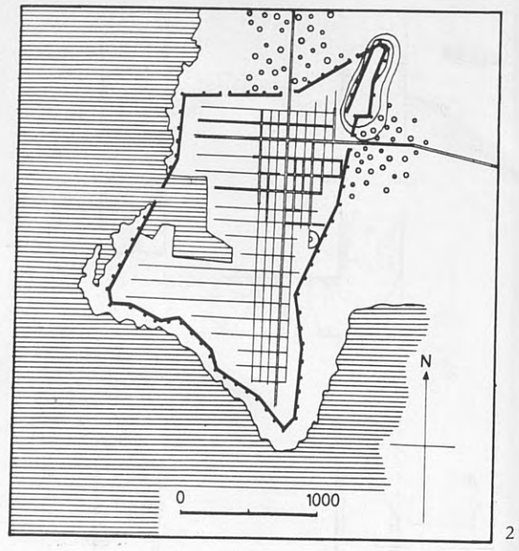
The analysis of the subjects chosen for figured representations, shows — beside the traditional image of the ageless, heroic *kouros* — athletes, warriors and a rich series of ephebical figures revealing a political articulation based on a new organization of status, role and age-classes. Anyway, the aristocratic committence of all these monuments is claimed by the standard virtues of the *agathoi, sophrones, pistoi andres* celebrated by inscriptions, moulded upon the contemporary elegy. So we get the main features of the idealized, ' archetvpal ' male protagonists of the Attic 6th cent. B.C.; women, on the contrary, are rarely glorified by monuments, and generally as *korai* (the potential *kouridie alochos* borrowed from the homeric tradition); only towards the end of the period they are represented as mothers (an anticipation of the classical pattern of the hoplite's mother).

F. Lissarrague, La stèle avant la lettre.

Many inscriptions appear on Attic vases which may be related more or less directly to the images themselves. This essay explores in brief those inscriptions which are written not on the general field of the vase but on objects represented



1



2



3

1. Pianta di Antiochia. 2. Pianta di Laodicea. 3. Pianta di Apamea.

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