PERFORMING DEATH

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SOCIAL ANALYSES OF FUNERARY TRADITIONS IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST AND MEDITERRANEAN

edited by

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To my wife Karen

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Other abbreviations occur at the end of some individual contributions and are taken from the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary, the Chicago Hittite Dictionary, and the Pennsylvania Sumerian Dictionary.

ca.	circa
cf.	*confer*, compare
cm	centimeter(s)
col(s).	column(s)
diss.	dissertation
e.g.	*exempli gratia*, for example
esp.	especially
et al.	*et alii*, and others
etc.	*et cetera*, and so forth
fig(s).	figure(s)
ha	hectare(s)
ibid.	*ibidem*, in the same place
i.e.	*id est*, that is
km	kilometer(s)
lit.	literally
m	meter(s)
n(n).	note(s)
n.d.	no date
no(s).	number(s)
obv.	obverse
p(p).	page(s)
pers. comm.	personal communication
pl(s).	plate(s)
rev.	reverse
vs.	versus

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PREFACE

This volume represents a collection of contributions presented by the authors during the Second Annual University of Chicago Oriental Institute Seminar "Performing Death. Social Analyses of Funerary Traditions in the Ancient Mediterranean,"[1] held at the Oriental Institute, February 17–18, 2006. The principal aim of the two-day seminar was to interpret the social relevance resulting from the enactment of funerary rituals within the broad-reaching Mediterranean basin from prehistoric periods to the Roman age. In my role as the seminar's organizer, my efforts were concentrated on creating a panel composed of scholars with diverse backgrounds — anthropologists, historians, archaeologists, art historians, and philologists — and the knowledge and expertise to enrich the discussion through the presentation of case-studies linked to both textual and archaeological evidences from the Mediterranean region. Fundamental to the successful realization of this research process was the active dialogue between scholars of different backgrounds. These communicative exchanges provided the opportunity to integrate different approaches and interpretations concerning the role played by the performance of ancient funerary rituals within a given society and, as a result, helped in defining a coherent outcome towards the interpretation of ancient communities' behaviors. Following these premises, the conference was structured with the first day dedicated to the presentation of case-studies (Session 1: A Powerful Death: Exercising Authority Through the Enactment of Funerary Rituals; Session 2: Memorializing the Ancestors: Death as a Form of Cultural and Social Transmission), while the second day focused on theoretical papers (Session 3: Archaeology of Funerary Rituals: A Theoretical Approach) and the conclusive discussion.

Although the articles collected in this volume follow the order of the papers delivered at the conference, I have decided to not structure the book into three sections following the three-session organization of the seminar, because, as the reader will notice, most of the papers incorporate a similar approach in intermingling different theoretical frameworks related to the relationship between the practice of funerary rituals and the social dynamics of the community of the living in their interpretation of the analyzed case-studies. However, the paper delivered by Brown has been included in a separate conclusive section. In addition, a transcription of the final discussion has been included at the end of the book (see Conclusive Discussion) in order to provide some further insights into the ideas presented at the conference. Based on the assumption that it is very difficult to recreate the dynamics of the seminar in a written book, I hope that this volume captures the sense of an intense two-day "performance" of scholars interested in the difficult target of analyzing and interpreting data related to the practice of ancient funerary rituals.

In conclusion, the success of this seminar would not have been possible without the support of the Director of the Oriental Institute, Gil Stein, to whom I owe my deepest gratitude, as well as all the scholars of this institution. Thanks to them I have been given the extraordinary opportunity of organizing this important seminar, which has been both an exciting challenge and a great honor. I also would like to extend my thanks to Adam Smith and Emily Teeter,

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[1] Due to the fact that a similar written version of their oral presentation has already been published or will be published, Michael Dietler and Stephen Harvey decided to not submit a contribution for the seminar proceedings.

who were the respondents for the first two sessions, and to Jonathan Hall, David Schloen, and Theo Van den Hout, who acted as chairs for the three sessions. I would also like to thank Olivia Boyd, Tom Urban and the Publications Office, Maria Krasinski, Bike Yazicioğlu, Laura Wangerin, Kathryn Grossman, and Justine James for their hard work and practical support in all matters concerning the seminar. I would also like to extend my thanks to the students of the course on Funerary Rituals in the Ancient Near East for their bright and helpful discussions during class, which stimulated new ideas related to the topics that were touched on during the seminar.

1

AN ARCHAEOLOGY OF
FUNERARY RITUALS

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Exactly forty years ago, James Brown organized a path-breaking symposium entitled "The Social Dimensions of Mortuary Practices" at the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, which at that time was held in Pittsburgh. The published proceedings of this conference (Brown 1971) went out of print over a short span of time. As mentioned by James Brown in this volume, this event marked the end of a diffusionist/historical approach to the analysis of burials, which was focused on the burial as an "object," and signaled the beginning of an innovative interpretation of mortuary practices as an arena of social and cultural interaction for the community of the living (Brown this volume). After the publication of that volume, archaeologists began to be more concerned with issues related to the analysis and interpretation of archaeological data related to burial practices, as well as with social aspects embedded in the practice of funerary rituals by ancient communities (see Binford 1972; Chapman 2003; Chapman, Kinnes, and Randsborg 1981; Pader 1982; Parker Pearson 1999; O'Shea 1984). Thus, when I applied for the Oriental Institute's post-doctoral fellowship, I believed that the year 2006 — marking forty years of intellectual development since that significant moment in 1966 — presented an extraordinary opportunity to take inspiration from the momentum generated by those revolutionary archaeologists, by organizing a seminar that would bring together diverse approaches and methods for the analysis of ancient funerary practices, while at the same time setting an agenda for future directions in this specific field. In 1966 Brown and his colleagues had opened archaeology up to a more scientific approach that incorporated the use of comparative parallels to ethnographic case-studies in the analysis of ancient burials. For this seminar I envisioned enlarging the discussion on the interpretation of the practice of funerary rituals in ancient communities to a broader number of scholars, including not only archaeologists and anthropologists, but also historians, philologists, and art historians.

The decision to use the Mediterranean and Near Eastern regions as a focus for comparing different patterns of funerary practices ranging from the Neolithic to the Roman periods is based on the fact that since the first archaeologically documented funerary rituals occurred during the Middle Paleolithic in the southern Levant, this broad area has been characterized by a long-term process of evolution and transformation in the burial practices of the communities that populated it during ancient times. In addition, the aim of this volume is to investigate the intertwining relations that come to play between individuals of a given group in a specific historical context when the performance of funerary rituals is enacted. At the same time we seek to understand the ways in which the individuals' cognitive domain — involving the perception, memorization, and transmission of specific knowledge — is structured through the materialization of the ritual events in praxis. In so doing, the primary object of these investigations is to highlight, from a historical perspective, how the "practice" of these ritualistic activities has actively defined and negotiated the frameworks of social interactions of the actors involved in the creation of the social and cultural values (e.g., hierarchical authority relations, familial and

trans-familial social networks, active remembrance of the dead ancestors, etc.), that are necessary for the constitution of the social collectivity of a given group.[1]

Thus, this introduction to the volume first investigates the fundamental aspects of ritualistic performance with a particular emphasis on the transitional (i.e., *rites de passage*) and social dimensions of funerary rituals. These are viewed as pivotal for the reinforcement of the social collectivity of a given community. The final section focusses on the central themes that emerged during the conference and that point the way to future avenues of research in this field.

INTERPRETING RITUALISTIC PERFORMANCES

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, the analysis and interpretation of ancient and modern rituals has been the aim of both archaeologists and ethnographers interested in defining the role played by these practices within the construction of a common heritage by living communities. The first attempts to interpret ritualistic performances were directed towards the objectification, classification, and distinction of rituals as a fundamental part of religious-sacred thought and behavior in every ancient and modern community. In this interpretation, ritual was viewed as being in direct opposition to the profane activities of the society (Durkheim 1995), as well as being part of a broader social arena in which the religious beliefs of the community were practiced and publicly communicated (Smith 1956). More recently, ritual has been rediscovered from a different perspective. It has been interpreted in a broader social sense, viewed not only as a religious phenomenon, but also as a secular experience, recognizable whenever there is an association between action and symbolic meaning (Bell 1997: 91–171; Douglas 1996: 1–19; Rappaport 1999: 23–68). Thus, a ritual shows its powerful force in those social contexts in which the relationship between meaning and action is interdependent, reinforcing the social collectivity of the community in which it is performed (Halbwachs 1992: 84–119). Following this point of view, ritual action should also be considered as a process that revives the memory and strongly links the present to an archetypal past (Douglas 1996: 105).

R. A. Rappaport, in his detailed and impressive analysis of ritual in the book, *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity*, has tried to summarize the many different aspects of ritual through five predominant features (1999: 32–50), which can be outlined by the following statements:

> 1) "performers of rituals … follow orders established … by others" (32);
> 2) "rituals are performed in specific contexts, for they are repeated at regular intervals determined by time with the clock, or the calendar, … and they often occur in special places" (33);
> 3) ritual is "more or less invariant" (36);
> 4) there can be no ritual without performance (37);
> 5) "ritual actions do not [necessarily] produce practical results" (46).

Within this perspective, formality — meaning adherence to specific rules — and performance appear to be among the most important elements that come to play during the enactment of rituals. As a matter of fact, it is impossible to envision a ritual without automatically as-

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[1] Within this line, I agree with Giddens' statement (1984: 3): "human action occurs as a *durée*, a continuous flow of conduct, as does cognition."

sociating it with the enactment of a performance (see Schechner 1988; Turner 1982; Tambiah 1979). Ritual performances also convey how social relations and perceptions about the world are conceived and communicated by and within a given society (Inomata and Coben 2006: 17). Accordingly, the actual performance embodies the dynamic, active, and communicative expression of the ritual, in which the participants become active agents in the creation of a symbolic language practiced and communicated through the ritualistic experience. This language of action is communicated through the combined use of different media that involve the sensorial perception of the involved individuals necessary to strengthen the communicative power of the message delivered (Kus 1992; Morris this volume), and serves to imprint the experience of the ritual actions in their cognitive facet (McCauley and Lawson 2002). Furthermore, it is during the ritualistic performance that the combination of spoken utterances (associated with liturgical written texts), iconic items, music, perfumes-odors, foods, and actions embody a unique power that dramatically invades the perceptive and mnemonic realm through an incomparable and complex system of sensorial communication (Bloch 1974; Bourdieu 1991: 107–16; Insoll 2004: 1–32; Rappaport 1999: 139–68; Tambiah 1979).

However, the ritual experience also has an important transformative element. In fact, a ritual cannot be considered as a unique form of experience addressed to a "distinctive category of events" (Brady 1999: 244) because it modifies the event itself with the transformation of the ordinary to the extraordinary. Ritualization is a process in which individuals and groups are transformed, linking tradition with the present. In so doing, it not only produces and re-produces the act of socialization of individuals among specific groups, but is also renewed by cultural contacts between different communities and by the necessity of transforming the social scenario in which it is enacted.

And finally, as pointed out by Bell (1997: 235), "rituals do not build community by simply expressing sentiments of collective harmony; they do it by channeling conflict, focusing grievances, socializing participants into more embracing codes of symbolic behavior, negotiating power relations, and … forging images by which the participants can think of themselves as an embracing unity."

FUNERARY RITUAL AS A "*RITE DE PASSAGE*"

While keeping in mind these above-mentioned broad premises about the structure and aim of the ritual, we also need to take into account the work of the early twentieth-century anthropologist, A. Van Gennep (1960), in defining the outcome of an analysis of a ritual. In his general model, the ritual is viewed as a rite of passage that changes the human status and social condition of individuals within their communities. The epistemological analysis of Van Gennep (1960: 1–14) is based on the assumption that the most important rituals characterizing the life of individuals, such as birth, initiation, marriage, and funeral, have a clear tripartite division that involves the individual's process of first, separation; second, transition; and third, incorporation, within his or her community. The importance of this interpretation is associated with the social "movement" of individuals, with a focus on the dynamic processes involved in the enactment of the ritual itself. Although Van Gennep tried to apply this tripartite structure to all the rituals analyzed in his book, *The Rites of Passage*, he also recognized the differences among them and the impossible task of an absolute universality, or an absolute necessity for the pattern of rites of passage (Van Gennep 1960: 11). Along these lines, he, for example, emphasized the importance of separation within an ontology of the funerary experience of a given society (Van Gennep 1960: 146–47).

Van Gennep's attempt to define general rules for the interpretation of rituals has been strongly criticized by several authors as being too deterministic (Parker Pearson 1999: 21–23). But, even though his theoretical approach should not be viewed as consistently fitting with the diverse social contexts to which it is applied, we have to acknowledge that his theory has strongly influenced Western thought in different forms.

Another important point made by Van Gennep following R. Hertz's (1960) almost contemporaneous analysis of funerary rituals in his article on the study of the collective representation of death is the importance of the role of the community of the living in interpreting the world of the dead and connecting to it through the construction of religious beliefs. In fact, the funerary ritual, as with many other expressions of human culture, must also be thought of as a formal representation of the ideological performance, enacted by the community of living beings to portray the inexplicable end of life.

Within this perspective Hertz (1960) interpreted burial customs with a special reference to the phenomenon of the secondary deposition among the Dayak people of Borneo (Indonesia), as a fundamental moment in the construction of the collective conscience of the community. Consequently, this ritualistic experience and the emotions expressed by the living during the ritual practice of secondary burial deposition, such as the experience of mourning, should be studied as "sociological facts" that, following a Durkheimian approach, works for the reintegration of the individuals within the community "through the experience of collective representation and an appeal to communal emotion" (Inomata and Coben 2006: 23).

The excellent analysis by the Italian anthropologist, E. de Martino, concerning the ritual of mourning in southern Italy viewed from a socio-historical perspective in his book *La morte e il pianto rituale* (2000), further illustrates how the mourning that takes place when death is experienced by the community of the living is decisive in restoring the society's cultural dynamics after such a dramatic event. In this way, the ritual becomes the center of a web constructed of signs and symbols upon which a given group can enforce its own religious beliefs (e.g., the worship of the dead ancestors), while renewing the political dimension of the social relationships of the collectivity.

During the last twenty-five years, this social perspective towards funerary practices has been increasingly developed by numerous socio-anthropologists, such as M. Bloch and J. P. Parry (1982), who have interpreted the enactment of funerary practices as social phenomena directly linked to processes of renovation and reinforcement of the social life of a given community. Along these lines, funerary rituals have been included in the broader analysis of ceremonies related to fertility, because, as accurately pointed out by M. Bloch in his concluding remarks on the funerary practices of the Merina of Madagascar in his book, *Placing the Dead: Tombs, Ancestral Villages and Kinship Organization in Madagascar* (1994: 222), "it is the dead as a whole and the tomb which retain this power of life and the ability to transfer it."

Therefore, social elements become key features to take into consideration during the interpretation of funerary rituals, for a ritual shapes ideological frameworks and reinforces the construction of social, cultural, and ethnic identities, clearly marking the line between the performers of the ritual and the others.

The actual practice of funerary rituals is a fundamental moment during which the social cohesion of the living community and/or household is reinforced, and the physical remains of this act, for example, the tomb, stand as a focal point in the social and mnemonic landscape of the society. The creation of these *loci memoriae* support the society in defining elements of continuity in moments of social and cultural change, as has been demonstrated by Bloch's previously mentioned analysis of the use of *tanindrazana* by the Merina in Madagascar (Bloch

1994: 105–74). Therefore, death, from both a mythological and ritualistic perspective, should not be viewed as a static moment concerning the end of life, but rather as a dynamic momentum of creation and consumption of "life" by the community of the living.

Thus, the funerary ritual, as with many other expressions of human culture, should be interpreted as a formal representation of an ideological performance that is practiced by the community of living beings and is concerned with the possibility to "culturalize" the natural end of life. In other words, the construction of the funerary ritual itself is based on the creation of a symbolic language that is built upon different forms of communication by the group to which the individual dead belongs, and in which the elements of the material culture — the objects composing the funerary set, the dead body, the mythological stories, the religious beliefs, the songs and lamentations of the living — can express the need to transform a negative event, such as death, into a positive one (Goody 1962: 28–52), because, as Metcalf and Huntington have pointed out (1991: 108), "the moment of death is related not only to the process of afterlife, but also to the process of living, aging and producing progeny." However, the performance of funerary rituals can also mark a moment of materialization of an ideological discourse about authority performed within a broader scenario in which the social collectivity of a given group (e.g., family, household, state, etc.) is actively involved (see Morris, Pollock, Richardson, and Schwartz this volume). With this perspective in mind, it is also important to restate S. Pollock's intelligent interpretation of third-millennium B.C. funerary practices in southern Mesopotamia (1999: 216–17), in which "death [becomes] a contested realm in which various elements within society competed for control of the dead just as they competed for control of the labor and products of the living." As a consequence, the reconstruction of ancient funerary rituals by scholars should be conducted through a process of interpretation that regards the remains of the materiality of the practice (e.g., the archaeological, textual, and artistic elements) as a means for defining the cognitive impact of the ritual performance in the construction of the social and cultural dimensions of the community of the living (e.g., religious beliefs, cosmologies, ideologies, identities).

For all these reasons, I believe that scholars involved in the study and interpretation of ancient funerary rituals should analyze burial practices in the context in which they are enacted, with a specific emphasis on their relationship to other activities performed by the community of the living, because the actions (ritual) and words (myths) involved in the practice of funerary rituals are merely single tesserae of a larger mosaic of knowledge (Jennings 1982) embedded within the social structure of a given society (Morris 1992: 1–30), pertaining to the social and cultural events of the historicized present (Brady 1999).

Thus, summarizing this interpretation of funerary rituals as a rite of passage for the social life of a given society, it is possible to provide the following reasons as to why funeral rituals are fundamental for the interpretation of both ancient and modern societies.

First, funerary rituals are necessary to separate the world of the living from the realm of the dead, while reinforcing the memory of the departed individuals as a fundamental part of the social relations of the living.

Second, funerary rituals allow social, cultural, and religious identities to be constructed, negotiated, and contested through symbols and metaphors that are part of the materiality of the performance of the ceremonies associated with burial practices.

And third, funerary rituals are a fundamental moment in which the entire community strengthens its social structure and/or dominant ideologies through the manifestation of common beliefs.

PERFORMING DEATH: WHAT FUTURE FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGY OF FUNERARY RITUALS?

Now, with the hindsight gained from experiencing the intense exchange of information which took place during the two-day seminar and the possibility to have thoroughly re-read each of the rich and varied contributions, the numerous common themes that emerged during the conference are particularly clear. More specifically, based on my interpretation of the ideas expressed in the presented papers, I have been able to identify three key topics which in my mind capture the innovative methodological and theoretical essence of the case-studies as a whole. While the first two points are directly related to the actual themes of the seminar's two main sessions — *the sociopolitical value of the funerary rituals* and *the remembrance and memorialization of the dead* —, the last point — *the "absence of the burial" in the archaeological record* — expresses a very innovative element brought to light by S. Richardson and J. Robb by way of their fascinating papers and comments.

ARE BURIAL PRACTICES POLITICAL OR CULTURAL EVENTS?

The social aspect of burial practices was widely presented and debated during the seminar.[2] Most of the contributors have considered the practice of funerary rituals as part of a broader social scenario in which the funerary ritual serves as a means to create, reinforce, and materialize an ideological discourse concerning the power of the ruling elites. The ideological aspect of the practice of funerary rituals appears clear when the analysis of the archaeological data associated with funerary practices is related to an understanding of high-ranked individuals' burial customs as an exercise of political authority.[3] This aspect of the materialization of ideological authorities in the practice of funerary rituals appears as a clear tenet of the analysis here presented by Morris (the Macramallah royal funerary complex of the First Dynasty of Egypt), Naso (tumuli of the Iron Age in Central Italy), Pollini (the noble tradition of the wax mask in Republican Rome), Pollock (the "Royal Cemetery of Ur" in southern Mesopotamia), and Schwartz (the monumental funerary complex at Umm el-Marra in Syria). In addition, the importance of the political dimension of burial practices in ancient societies is even stronger when the social structure of a given community encounters dramatic social, economic, and cultural transformations. In these moments, a society in the throes of change has the need to ground its new social, cultural, and economic structure upon new ideological resources. Thus, the re-structuring of the mortuary dimension can be a useful resource in facilitating the redefinition of the social and cultural frameworks of a community that is changing forms of political and religious authority. The case-studies presented here by Chapman (Early Bronze Age period in Southeast Spain), Chesson (Early Bronze Age in Southern Levant), Cultraro (Early Bronze Age period in the Aegean region), and Naso (Iron Age in Central Italy), clearly epitomize the fact that changes in funerary practices are usually encountered when a given society transforms its own economic (e.g., shift in the use of subsistence resources), political (e.g., centralized powers with the construction of fortified cities), and cultural (e.g., the creation of

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[2] This section has received fundamental insights from both Dietler's paper as well as Adam Smith's comments on the papers presented during the first session titled "A Powerful Death: Exercising Authority Through the Enactment of Funerary Rituals."

[3] Within this perspective, I would definitely agree with A. Smith's response to the papers delivered in the first session (this volume) in which the ideological dimension of a community is directly embedded in the production and consumption of the material culture and inserted into the "world of action" of a given community.

centers for the remembrance of the ancestors) structures (Laneri 2007). It is during these dramatic moments of social transformation that formalized rules of "social *Praxis*" are either newly established or reinforced on the basis of previous knowledge (Cohen 1987: 297–302). Thus, it is through the constitution of rules of social practices as well as forms of mutual knowledge (Giddens 1984: 4–5) that the social relations of the individuals of a given society are produced and re-produced (Cohen 1987: 304–06).[4] Along these lines, it is important to remind ourselves that it is through the exchange of knowledge regarding the biographical, cultural, and social attributes of individuals' personal and social identities that "tie-signs" are created within a specific social context (Goffman 1971: 188–237). Thus, I believe that a dichotomy between culture and politics in the analysis of the performance of funerary rituals is a false one. We should envision ancient funerary rituals as cultural expressions of the social actions of individual human beings within a collectively organized environment because culture ensures meaning and the direction for the social system of a given society. Although these actions can have both an external (rational) and internal (emotional) dimension (Weber 1947: 107–17) and are regulated by the cultural events that have marked the life of the dead (see Robb this volume), it seems unnecessary to separate the cultural life of the individuals from the social practices of the members of the social collectivity. Accordingly, I agree with defining a division between "Politics" and "politics," as was stated by Dietler during the conference (see Concluding Discussion in this volume), in which "Politics" stands for formalized representations of hierarchical relationships, while "politics" envisions the social network established by individuals living in a given community. In so doing, the actual performance of funerary rituals expresses the interconnection between the individual and the group's practical knowledge of the reality of the event as a resource for the explanation of the "phenomenal world" (Frankfort and Frankfort 1946: 17) since death is a concrete event that involves the social, the cultural, and, for the most part, the emotional dimensions of the living individuals. And it is only through an active and practical experience of this event — for example, through the performance of the ritual — that individual human beings are able to overcome the crisis that occurs as a result of death and rejoin the social collectivity by encompassing the dead within the community's contemporary social landscape — for example, through the construction of tombs in specific places as well as post-mortem ritual depositions (Bloch 1994: 105–37). Thus, it is only through the analysis of the evidences of the actual practice in its temporal-historical dimension (Giddens 1984: 3) that we can define both the social and cultural frameworks of the social collectivity of the living. This element is clearly evident not only from the archaeological data, but also from textual evidences, as has been demonstrated by Katz (this volume) in her analysis of the ancient Sumerian texts, and by Rutherford (this volume) in comparing the late thirteenth-century B.C. "sallies wastais ritual" text, that describes the performance of a Hittite royal funerary ritual in Anatolia, with the Homeric description of Patrolocus' funeral enacted by Achilles. However, this experience is not a uniform one and should be distinguished according to cultural and social variables that are associated with distinctive elements of individuals' lives and actions. In this respect, Robb's concept of the "biography of death" epitomizes the differences and variations in burial interments that are constantly encountered by archaeologists, because, as correctly stated by I. Kopytoff (1986: 68), "every person has many biographies" that are defined by the cultural shaping of the individual as well as his or her different social identities (e.g., fa-

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[4] In this context, I would like to refer to Goffman's (1971: 189) concept of "anchored relations" that corresponds to "the establishment of a framework of mutual knowing, which retains, organizes, and applies the experience the ends have of one another."

milial, political, religious, etc.) enacted in the social system of the collectivity (Kopytoff 1986: 87–90). Thus, the archaeological evidences of these burial variations should be interpreted as being linked to the "when," "how," and "why" of a specific individual's death, because, as argued by Robb in his contribution (this volume), "there are appropriate ways to die for people with different biographies, and conversely, the manner of death affects how a particular biography is understood."

MEMORY AND MEMORIALIZATION: REMEMBERING THE DEAD

Burial practices are deeply grounded in a long-standing mnemonic process that links the funerary ritual to a mythological past constructed into the cultural memory of the society itself (Rowlands 1993). Thus, ritualistic performances, as well as the creation of funerary monuments and complexes and the writing of mythological stories, constitute the founding framework for a "collective memory" (Halbwachs 1992) of a given society's culture (*kulturelle Gedächtnis*, Assmann 1992), and, subsequently, reinforce the social boundaries of the community in which these ritualistic performances are enacted. In addition, following M. Halbwachs' analysis of the role played by memory in structuring social collectivities, we should envision two different types of memory: one local ("singular/autobiographical") that is linked to how individuals are structured within a smaller social group through relations of kinship (Halbwachs 1992: 24, 54–83), and a second one, trans-local ("historical"), that transcends the social framework of the family and in which "the past is stored and interpreted by social institutions" (Halbwachs 1992: 24). With this perspective in mind, it is also important to state that these two different mnemonic frameworks are intermingled, because, in certain instances, the ideological and political strategies of the social institutions can embrace a discourse of remembrances, traditions, and ideas connected to those of specific ruling families (Halbwachs 1992: 84–87). As illustrated by Pollini (this volume), the patrician families of Republican Rome used the wax masks of their ancestors during the performance of funerary rituals as a political statement against the plebeian families during a historical phase that necessitated the development of new strategies of social differentiation among Roman families. In a similar way, Pollock (this volume) brought to our attention the fact that the lavish mid-third-millennium B.C. funerary rituals (Early Dynastic IIIa) performed at the Royal Cemetery of the southern Mesopotamian city of Ur, should be interpreted as the "death" of great households (*oikoi*). This was an action of dramatic value that embodied the actual will of certain emerging families to compete for the control of the institutional power through a public performance exercising the power of life and death (A. C. Cohen 2005). Additionally, the act of the memorialization of selected dead is strongly emphasized by the disposal and/or destruction of material culture (e.g., objects, human bodies, animals, food, drinks, etc.), as well as by the construction of monumental structures. As correctly pointed out by Rowlands (1993: 146–47), these ritualistic performances (deposition or sacrifice) do not function as "aide memories" towards the past, but rather as "embodied memories" that serve for the present, and, most of all, for the future.[5] Thus, these acts of memorialization are created through the performance of lavish and apparently destructive funerary rituals (see Pollock this volume), as well as the construction of monumental structures dedicated to the memory of elite individuals (see Schwartz and Morris this volume) who are

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[5] Robb in his contribution to this volume also emphasizes why burials should not be interpreted as "a perma-nent, sacrosanct deposition, but rather as a stage of active memory."

then historicized and institutionalized through the actual materiality of their remembrance by the social collectivity in both the mental (e.g., imagination, mythology, etc.) and physical (e.g., landscape, ritual performances, etc.) domains of a community's individuals (Bradley 1998).[6] Within this perspective, the tomb of the ruler becomes a sort of *axis mundi* of the society's cosmology, because, as mentioned by Bloch in his concluding remarks during the seminar, the ruler encompasses and embraces the whole community and its social system (Winter 1992). To be effective this complex system of remembering, and in certain cases forgetting, the memory of the dead has to be performed through a combination of media that, as demonstrated by the papers presented by Katz and Rutherford, include together with the performative aspects, also visual and textual elements (Bloch 1974; Rowlands 1993). But, it is through the actual performance of the ritual that the cultural transmission of the community's mutual knowledge is reinforced, because, as highlighted by McCauley and Lawson (2002: 38), "the transmission of rituals often rests not on consulting texts but on participants' memories of their ritual actions." The important role played by memory in analyzing the remains of ancient funerary rituals was also emphasized, from different perspectives, by Chesson and Richardson. More specifically, the case of the Early Bronze Age "body libraries" discovered in southern Levant and presented by Chesson (this volume) appears as exemplary in the process of understanding the power embodied by the body of the dead and by its actual transformation/segmentation "in transforming a social person into a non-living entity through structured remembering and forgetting." The post-mortem treatment of the body is also central in Richardson's paper (this volume). In this case the focus is on the bodies of the enemies and their mention in both textual and visual representations of military victories achieved during the mid-late third millennium B.C. (Early Dynastic and Akkadian periods) and the first millennium B.C. (the Neo-Assyrian period) in Mesopotamia. In both cases, the abuse of the corpses of the defeated enemies not only emphasizes a naturalization of the violence committed by the dominants to the dominated, but it also epitomizes the memorialization of the ruler's victory over the others, that, in the case of the mid-late third millennium B.C., is also expressed by the creation of monumental mounds built within the landscape of the conquered enemies.

BURIAL OR NON-BURIAL, THAT IS THE QUESTION!

Archaeologists are constantly concerned about where the ancient inhabitants of a given site buried their dead (e.g., extramural cemeteries, intramural depositions, monumental complexes, etc.), but they never take into account the "invisibility" of those who, for different reasons, did not receive a proper burial. This very interesting point is central to both Richardson's and Robb's papers (this volume), who actively contest the emphasis given to the performance of funerary practices and instead focus their attention on the body and, especially, on the post-mortem treatment of the body. As highlighted in recent literature (see Hamilakis, Pluciennik, and Tarlow 2002), the body of a dead individual embodies active social and cultural values that are strongly effective for the social relations of the associated community. According to the interesting thesis proposed by Robb in this volume, these values are strongly related to the "human biography" of the individuals and are thoroughly bound to the social and cultural practices of the body. Within this perspective, Robb's concept of "human biography" transcends

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[6] For Rowlands (1993: 144) "remembering is … a form of work and is inseparable from the motive to memorialize."

Binford's concept of the *social persona* (1972) through the construction of an individual's life into a sequence of social and cultural practices. These biographies are, in fact, "stories of a particular body" (Robb this volume) that, as also pointed out by Chesson (this volume), are narrated to the community through an active use of the remains of the dead body. Thus, the burial appears as an attempt to normalize, "naturalize," and finalize each "biography" in a given arena of social construction and reproduction through the creation of a "good death." When the "human biography" encounters an "abnormal" death (e.g., suicide, death at war, absence of the body, etc.) and, as a consequence, the lack of a proper burial, the society has to find ways to calm the anxiety of the living caused by ghosts and malevolent spirits, because, as suggested by Bloch (personal communication and concluding discussion), it is fundamental for the stability of the community to revise the memory of the dead who otherwise will come back as negative elements (e.g., ghosts). As a consequence, the body and its spiritual dimension have to be considered as central to the funerary practices of a given society, because, as demonstrated by Richardson and Katz, the lack of a proper funerary ritual will bring about negative consequences for the social integration of the entire community. Along these lines, archaeologists should also be aware that the archaeological evidences of the performance of funerary rituals are only partial and mortuary variables are not only representations of the social order of the community of the living, but rather they represent the re-appropriation of the "human biography" of the dead by the community.

CONCLUSION

Thus, forty years after James Brown's conference at the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, the social domain of ancient burial practices appears to still be central to the archaeological investigation. However, new elements have also been brought in by the scholars who participated in the seminar. The cultural biography of the dead, the use of the body of the dead for the cultural transmission of a mutual knowledge of the society, the "active" role of the agents in the actual "practice" of the performance, the understanding of the intertwining of different media in communicating the ritualistic experience, and the "absence" of the burial are probably the most important themes that were underlined during the seminar. But, as suggested by the title of this volume, the performative aspect of the funerary ritual is still pivotal when the burial is envisioned as an arena in which individuals actively participate in the social actions and practices of the community. Moreover, the remains left by ancient individuals during the enactment of funerary rituals and gathered by modern scholars, represent the materiality of this performance as well as its historical recording. In this perspective, the body and the material culture associated with the cultural and social history of the dead becomes the center of the social practices linked to this complex form of verbal and non-verbal communication. It is through the materiality of these social and cultural practices that the memory of the individual's death acquires a political value that can affect either the local (e.g., family) or the trans-local (e.g., state) level of a given social context. In conclusion, it is my hope that as a result of this seminar scholars involved in the study of ancient funerary practices will strive to further interact with colleagues from different scientific backgrounds in interpreting the evidence-remains of the burial practices as the materialization of social actions viewed in their historical dimension, which is a long-term process of learning and transmitting mutual knowledge about the social system in which the collectivity is embedded.

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2

SACRIFICE FOR THE STATE: FIRST DYNASTY ROYAL FUNERALS AND THE RITES AT MACRAMALLAH'S RECTANGLE

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Of all political rituals enacted in a kingdom, coronations and funerals are typically among the most lavish and highly ritualized. At these two critical junctures, the paradox of the mortality of the body natural and the immortality of the body politic must be faced, reconciled, and triumphed over if order is to return to society. The death of a king invites chaos. This is the quintessential moment for subject territories to rebel, for outsiders to attack, and for power-hungry factions within the state to square off. If the death of a king invites anarchy, the king's funeral and his successor's coronation are designed specifically to restore order and, moreover, to promote this order, publicly, as crucial to the population as a whole.

If the death of a ruler marks a reoccurring and unavoidable cyclical crisis in the life cycle of any state, there are two instances in which it is possible to envision this crisis ratcheted up significantly. The first is when the death of a ruler occurs at a particularly unstable period in that state's history. In the highly influential edited volume *Rituals of Royalty*, Averil Cameron (1987) and Amélie Kuhrt (1987) postulate an inverse correlation (in certain societies at certain times) between pomp and pageantry, on the one hand, and political power and stability on the other. In Babylon, in Byzantium, and in many other states besides, they suggest that rulers amplify the appearance of power in order to convince others of the reality of that vision. This tactic is, in their view, the political equivalent of sympathetic magic, and the extravagant rituals designed to showcase an absolute power that constituted more of a goal than a reality represent the last-ditch acts of threatened monarchs. Much the same strategizing, however, should also be expected when the state is new and is not yet an accepted part of the natural order of things.

With the imposition of a state where none has existed before, life is transformed as new rules and regulations begin to restructure society. In First Dynasty Egypt, the locus of this case study in royal funerary ritual, the effects of the state are starkly visible in the archaeological record. With the advent of the state, for example, traditional settlement patterns were radically altered. From the southern border fortress at Elephantine — with its defences intruding upon the forecourt of a local shrine — to the White Walls of Memphis, new bastions of state ideology were established and promoted. The latter site, as the political capital of the Kingdom of Upper and Lower Egypt, now constituted the core of a completely new primate settlement pattern (Wenke 1997: 41). When no longer politically autonomous, former political centers such as Hierakonpolis and Nagada shrunk in size and often shifted to a new location within the same general area. Indeed, the relocation of settlement closer to the floodplain — observable at Hierakonpolis — offers an interesting parallel to the reduction and shift towards the river of Kerma after its conquest in the New Kingdom (Wilkinson 1996: 87–88; Bonnet 1991: 114). In both cases, new ruling powers may have imposed such shifts in order to render their old rivals more vulnerable.

In the mortuary record, the effects of the state are similar. Old, established elite burial grounds at sites like Nagada, Hierakonpolis, Armant, and Tarkhan, for example, are abandoned in favor of new cemeteries elsewhere that feature entirely different types of tombs (Wilkinson 1996: 86). Likewise, for non-elites, the percentages of people buried in humble tombs skyrocket. Graves become rectangular as a rule, and traditions about the proper orientation for a corpse that had lasted for millennia begin to crumble in some places and are completely superceded in others (Castillos 1982). Thus, before it became naturalized over many successive centuries and dynasties, the state in Egypt, as elsewhere, would have been an entirely new venture, and one that would have completely transformed the lives (and deaths) of its subjects.

The monarchs of the First Dynasty, then, were engaged in the project of trying to naturalize something that was at that point decidedly unnatural. At the same time, royal iconography equating the king with the falcon god Horus suggests that these individuals were actively promoting the ideology that the head of state was a deity incarnate. The crisis of the death of the body natural and the immortality of the body politic is something that even secular, democratic states have to grapple with after an assassination or other unexpected death, but these issues are again amplified exponentially when a dying king must be transformed into a dying god.

CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION AND ROYAL FUNERALS AT ABYDOS

For all these reasons, and for undoubtedly many more besides, one can hardly imagine an ideological performance that would have been more carefully scripted or more highly charged than a royal funeral in First Dynasty Egypt. Happily, archaeological remains shed light on at least three stages in the ceremony (fig. 2.1). Near the valley's edge and in close proximity to the temple of the mortuary god Khentiamentiu, funerary enclosures marked the sacred precincts where rituals were almost certainly enacted in the deceased king's honor. From the enclosures, a processional wadi in all likelihood led the original mourners — as it led countless pilgrims over the following two millennia — southward for a kilometer and a half to the royal tombs at Umm el-Qaʾab.

In his excavations of the royal tombs, W. M. F. Petrie (1900: 18, 1901: 41) was astounded at the many thousands of stone and pottery vessels that had been interred with these kings, to say nothing of the untold quantity of prestige goods that had attracted ancient plunderers to pillage them repeatedly. By the Old Kingdom, it seems that long lines of offering bearers bringing grave goods to the tomb were an essential and public portion of the funerary ritual (e.g., Badawy 1978: 32–33, figs. 42–43), and if one imagines each item discovered in the royal tombs as having been carried originally by a specific person as part of a procession, the visual impact of this portion of the funerary ritual can be fully appreciated. By the time the tomb was fully equipped with material goods, both participants and observers would have possessed tangible evidence of the king's awe-inspiring power, even in death, to command resources from all parts of Egypt and from lands abroad. However, the king's power to, or rather his *rights* to, inter these precious goods for his sole use in the afterlife may have imparted the most important message the new state had to offer.

In her article, "Toward an Archaeology of Body and Soul," Susan Kus (1992: 172) has challenged archaeologists not to ignore the sensuousness of ancient rituals, particularly those that surround death. The wailing of mourners, the rhythmic movements of dancers, the incantations of priests, and billowing clouds of incense are all meticulously catalogued in later depictions of private funerals and were, in all likelihood, part and parcel of these early royal mortuary rituals as well. Certainly, the normally plainspoken Petrie found himself unexpect-

edly transported back to a portion of the funeral of King Semerkhet when he cleared away the entrance to the tomb. In his excavation report he writes, "Here the space was filled to three feet deep with sand saturated with ointment … hundredweights of it must have been poured out here, and the scent was so strong when cutting away this sand that it could be smelt over the entire tomb" (Petrie 1900: 14). Surely, the later trope in religious writing that the presence of a god could be perceived first through the inhalation of his divine scent is of importance here, for the creation of the smell of a god at the funeral would perhaps lead to the impression among the mourners of the king's own transfigured spirit among them.[1] If hundredweights of precious unguents were thus needed to evoke the idea of a divine presence in the assembled crowd (who would no doubt later spread word of this powerful religious experience far and wide), then the expenditure would have been worthwhile to the king-makers and the new king alike.

SACRIFICE FOR THE STATE

The rulers of states, and of early states especially, are notorious for advertising their power through the conspicuous consumption of wealth. Lavish banquets, highly choreographed royal progresses in full regalia, massive monumental palaces and tombs, these are the hallmarks of the state that advertise its rights to the produce and labor of its subjects. The most viscerally affecting form of conspicuous consumption, however — and the only one characteristic primarily of states in their first flush of fluorescence — is the conspicuous consumption of human lives.

In First Dynasty Egypt, retainer sacrifices have been discovered around the funerary enclosures and the royal tombs at Abydos. This tradition, so far as we can ascertain, began with the funeral of the very first king of the First Dynasty, Hor-aha. To honor and accompany this founding father of the unified kingdom, thirty-five people were slain at his tomb and twelve more were laid to rest around the three funerary enclosures that date to his reign (Bestock forthcoming). This experiment appears to have been wildly successful, for at the funeral of Hor-aha's successor, some 318 people were interred around the royal tomb, while another 269 ringed the funerary enclosure. As is apparent from the graph in figure 2.2, which charts the numbers of subsidiary graves constructed around the royal tombs and funerary enclosures, this rite was severely curtailed after a few generations and barely persisted into the Second Dynasty.[2] In this pattern, Egypt exhibits similarities with other early states that experimented with this form of communicating — quite literally — to their subjects the idea that the state was worth dying for.[3]

The taking of innocent human lives (as is implicit in the notion of interring one's servants, wives, officials, or soldiers with oneself in death) requires a massive investment in an ideology that could convince these people that the sacrifice of their lives for the afterlife of another, vastly more vaunted human being would occasion a greater good. Further, this ideology would also have to convince the families and other loved ones of these victims that the intense emo-

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[1] The presence of a god is perceived first by smell in the divine birth narratives of Hatshepsut and Amenhotep III. For a discussion of the distinctive scent of gods, see Hornung 1982: 133–34.

[2] At least one "extra" skeleton in Khasekehemwy's tomb convinced Petrie (1901: 13) that the custom of retainer sacrifice survived in vestigial form until the end of the Second Dynasty.

[3] Large scale retainer sacrifices are typically witnessed when a state suddenly and dramatically expands in geographic domain and coercive power. At such times the conception of the ruler is ripe for reformulation (Childe 1945; Parker Pearson 1999: 18, 166–68). The most impressive archaeologically attested examples of this phenomenon occurred in Shang China, the First Dynasty of Ur in Mesopotamia, and Kerma.

tional and undoubtedly economic loss that they would suffer was also for a greater good. Alternatively or additionally, the state may have had to introduce an idea of ownership and of royal rights of disposal that equated certain people, at least, with the king's property that belonged to him even in death.

At the point at which Egypt's government was investing heavily in the ideology that the king was a god and that the state was worth dying for, royal funerals must have constituted a tremendous spectacle, for within one massive funeral hundreds more would take place. If Kus invites scholars to imagine the sights, sounds, and smells of a funeral (or of hundreds all in one), here the challenge is daunting. Frustratingly, the ruinous combination of rampant plundering and early excavation strategies has hampered our ability to say much at all about the people whose deaths accompanied the king's own, save that these people buried in rows around the tombs and funerary enclosures at Abydos consisted disproportionately of adolescents and young adults at the peak of their fertility or martial ability and also of dwarves, who were always court favorites (Dreyer 1993).

Given that Petrie saved only the skulls of the retainers and that he disbursed these skulls to more than one institution, few physical anthropologists have studied the human remains. S. O. Y. Keita and A. J. Boyce's (2006) examination of forty-four skulls from around the royal tombs and forty-eight skulls from the burials surrounding the funerary enclosures of Djer and Djet, however, proves how informative such studies may be. Keita and Boyce discovered, rather unexpectedly, that the people buried around the funerary enclosures appear to have enjoyed better health than those arrayed around the royal tombs. Porotic hyperostosis (or porous defects) on a skull can betray nutritional stress, exposure to parasites, or other health problems. Although the difference in the rates and intensity of porotic hyperostosis between the two populations was not dramatic, it was statistically significant and suggested that the two groups did not share the same social and/or occupational advantages.

According to Keita and Boyce, it is possible to interpret the data in at least two different ways. The individuals buried around the funerary enclosure may have been wealthier than those who surrounded the royal tombs and thus have enjoyed better nutrition and health in childhood and later life. On the other hand, if the "osteological paradox" held true, the social statuses of the two groups may have been reversed. The same data, according to the paradox, could also suggest that the families of the people buried around the royal tombs had possessed greater resources to invest in their sick children such that a higher proportion of their progeny recovered from the types of ailments that typically killed in lower social classes (Keita and Boyce 2006: 70). Whichever is truly the case, when focusing on the performance of death, the important point is that large-scale retainer sacrifice happened at Abydos in conjunction with royal funerals and that the differing social statuses of those who gave their lives as part of this ceremony was acknowledged in the spatial patterning of their corpses in death.

Indeed, I would go so far as to posit that the spatial patterning of the retainers in death quite likely reflected the positions of these individuals in the funeral itself and perhaps, in some cases at least, their arrangement with respect to the king at state ceremonies. For this thesis, the burial of Hor-aha and his sacrificed retainers is perhaps the most intriguing to examine. Certainly the split in population between those retainers buried around the king's funerary enclosures and the others buried near his tomb is quite notable. One funerary enclosure, for instance, was surrounded by six graves that belonged to one man, one richly adorned child of indeterminate sex, three women, and a further individual whose corpse has not been exhumed (Galvin 2005). The other two funerary enclosures possessed three subsidiary tombs each, and of the three sexable bodies exhumed from these graves, all were female (Laurel Bestock pers.

comm.). Such females, as apparently made up the bulk of the retainers in the valley, may have been the king's subsidiary wives, concubines, relatives, or maidservants, but it is notable that the sex ratio of the bodies buried around the enclosures is the reverse of that noted in the population associated with the king's tomb at Umm el-Qaʾab.

The layout of Hor-aha's tomb complex, like his sponsorship of three funerary enclosures, is anomalous but fascinating. The king himself possessed three burial chambers — or at least he is presumed to have done so given the large and standardized size of these parallel chambers and the many items found therein that bore his name (Kaiser and Dryer 1982: 219). If this is indeed the case, it is quite probable that these three chambers were meant to correlate to the three funerary enclosures on the valley's edge. Perhaps, as with later statue shrines in pyramid temples, it was felt necessary to worship different facets of the king's persona individually. These facets might have been embodied in the king's three great names;[4] in his trifold political roles as the King of Upper Egypt, the King of Lower Egypt, and the King of a unified Upper and Lower Egypt; or in something else altogether.

Hor-aha's three chambers were oriented to the southwest, and they were followed directly to the northeast by two chambers — at least one of which (B-14) seems to have belonged to a woman named Benerib (*bnr-ib*), or "Sweet-(of)-heart," as the name translates literally (Petrie 1901: 8). Subsidiary graves for Hor-aha's retainers were arrayed farther to the northeast in eleven rows of three tombs each with a single tomb at the very end. So far as it is possible to tell, these retainers were all male and around twenty years of age. None was demonstrably older than twenty-five. The youth of these men and their regimented alignment in straight rows suggests a military guard assembled in marching order, and the seven young lions that apparently brought up the rear recall scenes of lions accompanying the king in New Kingdom war reliefs (Dreyer 1993: 11). Thus, it is tempting to view in this mortuary complex an attempt to preserve for eternity the moment at which the king, at least one particularly favored queen, and his personal bodyguard made their way together to the southwest — toward the realm that lay beyond the sacred cleft in the desert hills at Abydos (Patch 1991: 56–57).

Interestingly, in later complexes at Umm el-Qaʾab, maintaining a clear path to the southwest appears to have been important, perhaps even more so than preserving tradition concerning the categories of individuals that ringed the royal tomb in any given reign. Extant stelae from the burials around Hor-aha's successor's tomb, for example, consist almost solely of women and dwarves rather than men of military age (Petrie 1901, pls. 26–27).[5] While Djer may have preferred to be surrounded by women in death, in this king's complex, as well as in most others of the First Dynasty at Umm el-Qaʾab, the retainer tombs were arranged in such a manner as to leave a spatial break towards the southwest. Petrie (1900: 11) suggested that this gap was due to the need for the mourners to approach the royal tomb from this direction. Any procession from the valley, however, would have arrived from the north. In view of the south-

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[4] For a discussion of the assignments of different cultic niches in pyramid temples to the king's various royal names, see Hawass 1995: 223. In the reign of Hor-aha, the king had two known royal names, though the third of the "three great names" may simply be unattested in surviving material (Emery 1961: 107). Worship of the king in his aspects of the ruler of Upper and Lower Egypt respectively is attested in the Abu Sir papyri (Verner 2002: 48). Laurel Bestock (pers. comm.) believes that Aha's two smaller funerary enclosures belonged to the two

occupants of his largest two subsidiary burials, one of which is thought to belong to a royal woman. This idea also is extremely plausible.

[5] It should be mentioned, however, that the skeletal sample of "tomb" retainers studied by Keita and Boyce comprised twenty-seven men and seventeen women — and these were taken primarily from the group buried around Djer's tomb (Keita and Boyce 2006: 66–67). Thus, it is possible that judging the composition of the retainer population through stelae alone is misguided.

western orientation of Hor-aha and his retainers' tombs, the southwestern break in later com-plexes was perhaps more likely due to a desire to leave a path open so that the spirit of the king would have free passage towards the wadi leading into the high cliffs at Abydos and towards whatever realm lay beyond (Wilkinson 1996: 236).

The placement of the subsidiary graves with respect to the royal tomb was thus clearly thought out ahead of time, with care taken to preserve — for the immediate royal burial, if not for earlier tombs — this southwestern route. It is quite likely, however, that the internal arrangement of the retainers was also a subject of concern. Certainly, Petrie (1900: 8) discov-ered the names of individual members of King Djet's mortuary entourage painted in red ink on the southern walls of their tombs. Such notations functioned presumably, at least in part, to help officiates with the complex logistics of placing 174 dead bodies in their correct, predeter-mined final resting places.

The issue of how these retainers met their deaths and at what point they did so in relation to the interment of the king is of obvious interest for anyone attempting to reconstruct First Dynasty royal funerary ritual. The pinkish stain on the teeth of some retainers at Abydos has convinced physical anthropologist Nancy Lovell that these individuals had been strangled (Galvin 2005: 120). Another possible scenario for their deaths, however, is suggested by the scenes of human sacrifice depicted in figure 2.3.

The two uppermost labels (fig. 2.3a [x, y]) were discovered by Petrie (1901, pl. 3.4, 3.6) in Hor-aha's tomb complex. The context of the other label was Mastaba 3035, one of the most massive archaic mastabas ever created in Egypt (Emery 1938: 36). This tomb, contemporary with the reign of King Den at Saqqara, far overshadowed Den's monument at Abydos, and this fact contributed to Emery's (1961: 75–76) eventual decision that Mastaba 3035 in fact consti-tuted the same king's northern tomb or cenotaph. More commonly this monument is attributed to Hemaka, the official whose name is often found paired with Den's serekh within the tomb.[6]

Both the Abydos and the Saqqara labels depict one person plunging an implement into the chest of another, while the blood from the wound is carefully collected in a bowl. Although the possibly pinioned arms of the victims could indicate their status as prisoners or slaves, the arms may just as well have been tied to prevent the quite natural instinct — even in a willing victim — to protect the body from harm. Above the operation in each case was the legend *rs mḥ šsp*, which probably read something like "receiving (from) the south and the north." In close proximity to the scene of sacrifice, both labels also portray what appear to be sacred im-ages together with the verb "*ms*," apparently referring to their fashioning. On analogy with the year names preserved in the Palermo Stone, it would appear likely that the receiving of items or, indeed, of human lives from the south and the north[7] and the fashioning of certain sacred items were what served to identify two specific years in the reigns of Hor-aha and Djer. What is important from the perspective of this paper, however, is that in both cases, the sacrifice took place in a clearly royal context (as marked by the serekh, palace, and Horus-standard in

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[6] The fact that Hemaka's name is also discovered numer-ous times within Den's tomb at Abydos, within Mastaba 3506, and even in a subsidiary tomb of a female retainer associated with Mastaba 3506 (Emery 1958: 47) is not taken into account. As I argue in a forthcoming arti-cle, the names of the officials to whom the line of First Dynasty Saqqara mastabas are generally attributed are frequently also discovered in the Abydos royal tombs. Given that the titles of these officials demonstrate their

authority over funerary estates — and that their supposed mastabas were larger and generally contained more goods than the royal tombs — the attribution of the Saqqara mastabas to these men is unlikely to be correct.

[7] If sacrificed retainers were indeed received from the south and the north, such different backgrounds might neatly explain the differential incidences of porotic hyperostosis found in the two populations at Abydos.

the Abydos scenes and by the serekh and royal women in the Saqqara scene) as well as in direct proximity to funerary imagery (the *imy-wt* fetish in the Abydos scene and the mummiform figure in its Saqqara equivalent).[8]

Given the contexts of the two labels, it is possible that they depict the ritual slaying of a retainer (as a symbol for "retainers plural") in conjunction with a royal funeral. The subsidiary graves surrounding Djer's tomb and funerary enclosure were designed to hold close to 600 individuals — and the Saqqara label might well have commemorated this mass sacrifice. On the other hand, given the fact that the label was discovered at Saqqara rather than Abydos, there is another intriguing possibility. Rizkallah Macramallah, while undertaking salvage archaeology at Saqqara in 1936, unexpectedly unearthed one of the largest retainer cemeteries known worldwide. In the reign of King Den, it seems that 231 or so individuals had laid down their lives simultaneously for something or someone of extreme importance. Although the Saqqara label — despite its context — likely dates to the reign of King Djer, it may commemorate a ceremony that resembled the one held at Saqqara in honor of King Den a half century or so later.

MACRAMALLAH'S RECTANGLE AND ROYAL RITUAL

In order to help with the project of imagining at least one moment within the ritual of one specific royal funeral, it is useful to turn to Macramallah's rectangle (fig. 2.4), as this strange cemetery is informally known. Here six distinct groups of graves bordered a large central space on at least three sides over an area of 300×120 m.[9] The graves in each of these groups were arranged in one or more orderly rows and, taken as a whole, seem to represent clusters of social actors that had been interred in the positions that they had assumed for a ritual — a ritual that their untimely deaths may have ensured would be perpetuated for all eternity. Unlike the graves of the retainers that surrounded the tombs and funerary enclosures at Abydos, the graves of the Saqqara retainers were only lightly plundered. This state of preservation and Macramallah's careful recording of the finds allow for a clearer insight into the custom of mass sacrifice in royal funerary rituals than the Abydos material permits.

Macramallah's cemetery is located in Wadi Abusir — only a kilometer or so from the great First Dynasty mastabas that line the escarpment overlooking the ancient capital city of Memphis. While the excavator noted that the entire assemblage of graves appeared to date to the reign of King Den (Macramallah 1940: 2),[10] and while he carefully mapped the arrange-

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[8] Recent discussions of the scenes and most relevant bibliography can be found in Crubézy and Midant-Reynes 2000; Baud and Etienne 2000; Menu 2001. The enigmatic "standard" located between Djer's serekh and the mummiform figure in the Saqqara label could certainly be interpreted as a ladder descending into a schematized royal tomb, in which case the funerary aspect of the scene would be further intensified.

[9] According to his large-scale map, Macramallah (1940, pl. 1) does not appear to have excavated in the south, perhaps because later construction associated with the Serapeum had destroyed all evidence (Kaiser 1985: 47, n. 5). On the other hand, Macramallah may have been able to ascertain through surface survey or test excavations that the cemetery did not extend into this area. Recent resistivity work undertaken by the Saqqara Geo-

physical Survey Project revealed no trace of a further extension to the cemetery, although the major goal of this work was to ascertain whether a structure existed within its apparently empty central space (Jeffreys and Tavares 1994: 150).

[10] Kaiser (1985: 47, 48, 50) agreed that the cemetery belonged to Den's reign. However, he cited as the only possible evidence for variant dating at the site a dichotomy in the usage of two types of ceramic cylindrical vessels (Macramallah 1940, pl. 46). Type B had a standard cylindrical shape, while type A presented a rougher (and hence perhaps "degraded") form of the same class of vessel. As Kaiser notes, however, type A is limited to the eastern edge of Group B/C and to Group D. As shall be seen, this same region was by far the poorest in the cemetery. Given the remarkable coherency in the plan of the

ment of these graves in their distinct clusters and in their rows, he refrained from speculation about the obvious artificiality of this arrangement and suggested simply that he had discovered "Un cimetière archaïque de la classe moyenne du peuple à Saqqarah." This notion, improbable as it is, rested until 1985 when Werner Kaiser turned a fresh eye to the report.

Based on the simultaneity of the burials and their orderly arrangement, Kaiser (1985: 53–54) suggested that the cemetery belonged to participants in a royal mortuary ritual, perhaps enacted in the north before Den's body was transported to Abydos. Kaiser's interpretation of the cemetery as the site of an artificially preserved royal ritual is undoubtedly correct. Further, given the fact that no funerary enclosure at Abydos can be confidently assigned to King Den, it is possible that the portion of the funeral that formerly took place at the valley's edge at Abydos had been relocated to Saqqara so that the citizens of the new capital might participate directly or at the very least observe a portion of the solemnities that surrounded the royal funeral.[11]

In the broadest and most basic view, the cemetery seems to have been designed to frame the central and apparently empty area in its midst. It is here that Kaiser envisioned the king's body lying for a while in state, and certainly, given the scale of the sacrifice, one would expect that the retainers would have been slain in the presence of their former sovereign. Whether or not a structure similar to the Abydos royal funerary enclosures was constructed to house the royal body and the priestly rites performed in its honor is more debatable. In the end, Kaiser rejected this notion due to the lack of any archaeological evidence for a mudbrick structure and to the fact that the Abydos enclosure burials were typically arranged in long rows rather than in looser clusters, as at Saqqara (Kaiser 1985: 53–54). While Kaiser's points are valid, it is important to remember that many of the remains of First Dynasty enclosures at Abydos were extremely ephemeral and that retainer burials in distinct clusters (albeit highly regularized subdivided trench clusters) are observed around both the royal tombs and the funerary enclosures at Abydos. Thus, it may have been that the same basic ideas were enacted somewhat differently in the north and in the south.

Whether or not one views Macramallah's rectangle as Den's "missing" enclosure, it would appear safe to assume, as Kaiser does, that the king's body had at one time served as its focus. Further, the arrangement of the graves in orderly rows around the central space suggests a funerial choreography meant to mimic the highly proscribed arrangement of individuals at state ceremonies. If one accepts that the retainers were arrayed around the king's body in death as they would have been in life, however, there is still an issue of orientation with which to grapple. Assuming the cemetery to be more or less complete in its present form, would the resurrected king have been intended to face his retainers, who would then have served as an audience for him as if he were seated upon his throne at court? Or, alternatively, would the king and his retainers have faced the same direction, with the latter arrayed behind the king in a supporting fashion, as if all were assembled together before an imaginary throng at a state festival?

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cemetery and in other artifact categories, it is extremely likely that cylindrical vessel type A was simply a contemporary, less expensive version of type B.

[11] Funerary enclosures belonging to Den's First Dynasty successors also have never been securely identified at Abydos, and so it is possible that these kings also celebrated "enclosure" rites in the north. The drastic reduction in the scale of retainer sacrifices after the reign of

Den, observable from the subsidiary graves surrounding the royal tombs, likely would have been paralleled in the enclosure ceremonies if such were practiced in the north. Considering this reduction in scale, the intensive later use of Wadi Abusir, and the fact that Macramallah's rectangle was only discovered due to salvage work, it is not improbable that equivalent sacrificial cemeteries honoring other kings have eluded discovery.

We will, of course, never know the answer to this question definitively, but long-standing rules of decorum that governed depictions of individuals of differential status might perhaps allow for the latter of the two options to be preferred. At state functions in later Egypt, it was specifically stated that each noble and official was made to stand according to his rank (Urk. IV, p. 1867, lines 5–9), and it would appear likely that such a tradition is fundamental to court ceremony as a genre. Already in Archaic Period and Old Kingdom art, it is apparent that the most important person in a statue grouping was positioned on the right — if only two people were depicted. In a grouping of three or more individuals, however, the most important person was placed at the center of the group with the second most honored individual stationed to his right. This view that the right-hand side was the position of highest respect persisted throughout Egyptian history and is reflected as late as the New Kingdom in the honorary title "fanbearer on the king's right" (Fischer 1984). It is perhaps significant, then, that by far the most prestigious cluster of retainer graves, Group E, would have been located to the right of the king if both the retainers and the king were oriented toward the south.

Because the cemetery was ordered in clusters and because the retainers buried in each of these groups seem to have formed a more or less coherent cohort, which differed from the others in revealing ways, I discuss the cemetery first in its constituent parts. The main clusters consist of Group E to the west, Group F to the east, and Groups A, B/C, and D to the north. A small and highly disturbed collection of graves located between Groups B/C and Group F — namely Kaiser's (1985: 50–51) Group G — is not discussed due to its small size and heterogeneous nature. For the burials in each of the main clusters, I focus upon spatial ordering principles within the group, the possible social and ritual roles of the retainers themselves, and the degree of value that the state evidently placed upon their sacrifice — as measured by the effort expenditure that went into the construction of the graves, by the quality and quantity of the goods interred within them, and by the prevalence of plundering.

By all of these last yardsticks designed to ascertain relative wealth and/or status, the seventy-nine graves arranged in eleven rows that constituted Group E were by far the most impressive.[12] This group contained on average the largest and most deeply cut tombs in the cemetery,[13] and it is significant that virtually all of the tombs in Group E had been plundered. While no cluster of graves had escaped violation, the grave robbers evidently approached their trade pragmatically. As is discussed, certain areas of the cemetery were left largely untouched after a brief sampling strategy demonstrated that they possessed very little of intrinsic value. The fact that only four graves in Group E had been left intact, then, indicates that here the plunderers had struck gold — literally or metaphorically, as the case may be.

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[12] There are occasional discrepancies between Macramallah's plan and grave register. Thus, for my own analysis and in the plan of the cemetery included in figure 2.4, I have made the following very minor adjustments. In Group E, Macramallah's map includes two instances of graves 185 and 187. In row 9, I restore the "missing" grave 158 for 185; in row 11, I restore the "missing" grave 177 for 187. In Group B/C, the easternmost grave in the first row lacks a number; I presume it to be the "missing" grave 99. In the third row of Group B/C, grave 129 is a duplicate. Macramallah could have intended to place the "missing" grave 121 here, but this is better placed in Kaiser's Group G. Group D possesses two grave number 125s; the front row grave 125 I restore as

the "missing" grave 126. The duplicate grave number 14, I restore as the "missing" grave number 142. The duplicate grave 181, I restore as the "missing" grave 131. I have added graves 123 and 124 onto the plan in Group D as these graves were apparently inadvertently omitted from the map. I have also added graves 148 and 100 to the map in Kaiser's Group G for the same reason. The numbers and statistics used in this chapter, with the exception of the average grave sizes, which were calculated by Kaiser (1985), are my own.

[13] Kaiser (1985) gives the average grave sizes for the various groups as follows: E $192 \times 1.1 \times 0.85$ m; F $1.92 \times 1.11 \times 0.85$ m; B/C $1.29 \times 0.82 \times 0.84$ m; D $1.34 \times 0.83 \times 0.78$ m; A $1.24 \times 0.82 \times 0.84$ m.

Certainly even after plundering, the grave goods typically discovered in Group E reveal that the dead in this area were richly equipped. Alabaster and schist stone dishes and tubular vases were common throughout, and large, ceramic storage jars[14] were provided as a matter of course. Further, the presence of jar stoppers occasionally impressed with Den's seal suggests that these individuals had been well provisioned by the court as a perk of agreeing to constitute part of the king's entourage in the next world.

In terms of the demographics of this population, Group E is, significantly, the only cluster in the cemetery in which not a single female could be identified through physical remains. Granted, due to plundering, the corpses were more often disturbed here than elsewhere in the cemetery, but it is still notable that of the twenty-seven sexable bodies, all were male. Likewise, it should be stated that fifty-four bodies of adults were found as opposed to only five young people and one twelve year old child. Thus, so far as it is possible to tell, the great bulk of this population was composed of established men, whose acknowledged societal worth may have been reflected in their privileged positioning vis-à-vis the king and in the size and wealth of their tombs. Perhaps it is also significant, then, that the only individual whose name was preserved in Group E identified himself in part with the hieroglyphic determinative that denoted a person of noble class (Gardiner 1988: 447, no. A50).[15]

The three graves that made up the first row of Group E were by far the largest and most elaborate in the entire cemetery. It is of great interest, then, that the westernmost of these three mudbrick tombs — and the one which would have lain just to the right of the largest central grave in the front row if all were oriented towards the south — contained an inscribed schist vessel that bore the title of a ḥm-servant of a particular ḥwt-estate. This same ḥwt-estate, ḳd-ḥtp, is also witnessed on a label discovered in King Djer's tomb (Petrie 1901: 28–29, 51, pl. 12:3) and on an inscribed stone bowl fragment found in Anedjib's tomb (Petrie 1900: 20, 39, pl. 6:8). In both cases the ḥwt-estate was presented in association with a royal name, although in Djer's tomb the label also bore the name of Sekhemka, a well-known official, who later held authority over the funerary domain of King Djet.[16] Just what ḳd-ḥtp was and how it functioned is unfortunately less clear than is its longevity as an institution. In the Archaic Period, the term "ḥwt" seems most often to have designated an economic foundation that supplied the royal coffers with a particular commodity (Wilkinson 1996: 118, 123–24). The presence of this title in the tomb of one of the retainers sacrificed at Saqqara, then, perhaps suggests that this particular estate furnished not only goods to aid the king in his afterlife but also perhaps personnel.

In Group E, then, one finds a particularly prestigious cluster of tombs located to the west of the cemetery as a whole. These appear to have belonged predominantly to adult men who were deemed to merit graves that rendered them distinct from other inhabitants of the cemetery. While the all-pervasive plundering among the retainer graves at Abydos stymies any possibility of looking for parallel arrangements at that site, retainer sacrifices ringed some of the massive First Dynasty mastabas at Saqqara. Granted, these mastabas were equipped with far fewer retainers than surrounded the royal tombs at Abydos; however, the Saqqara subsidiary burials were less disturbed and better recorded. Thus, the northern mastabas and their associated sacrificed retainers present a unique opportunity to search for parallels to the spatial arrangement of Macramallah's rectangle within roughly the same time period.

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[14] Macramallah's types C–F (1940, pl. 46).

[15] This eighteen year old man, whose name was written on a stone dish, occupied the intact grave number 190. His tomb also included a jar stopper impressed with Den's serekh, twelve pottery vessels, and eight stone vessels (Macramallah 1940: 21, 58). Only one other non-royal personal name was discovered in the cemetery.

[16] For an in-depth study of the career of Sekhemka, see Morris forthcoming.

Mastaba 3506, the only mastaba dated to the reign of King Den that was equipped with human sacrifices, possessed only ten retainer graves and these were arranged only to the north and east of the tomb. In the reign of Queen Merneith, who likely served as regent for her son Den, however, Mastaba 3503 was constructed and equipped with twenty sacrificed retainers — enough to yield some interesting parallels to the retainer graves in Macramallah's rectangle (see fig. 2.5).[17] For example, the sacrificed retainers laid to rest at the western edge of Mastaba 3503 also appear to have been comprised only of adult males.[18] This western group of graves was similarly outfitted with large storage vessels and was disproportionately plundered.[19] Further, there is one other similarity between the two western retainer cemeteries. In both cases it was only people buried to the west that included among their burial equipment models of boats, which were perhaps intended to serve the same purpose as the full-size boats discovered in association with one of the royal funerary enclosures at Abydos, with the large mastabas at Saqqara, and with smaller mastabas at Helwan.[20]

The positioning of the privileged Group E to the west or right of the central space provides us with a clue as to the spatial logic behind the organization of the cemetery and perhaps also the funerary ceremony itself. A closer examination of the cluster also illuminates a second ordering principle — one which held true elsewhere in the cemetery as well — namely that the southernmost rows in a given cluster tended to be a little better off than the rows to the north. For example, meat offerings to the dead were only discovered in Group E, and here only in five graves toward the front of the group (rows 1–3, 5). These animal bones consisted of birds, antelopes, and — in the very first row only — of cattle.[21] The offering of a foreleg of a bull is a central part of funerals memorialized on countless Old Kingdom tomb reliefs, and thus the bones discovered within these front row graves may provide a glimpse into the mortuary rites performed in honor of the most illustrious retainers at a royal funeral service. Similar to animal bones, foreign jars were also only found towards the front of Group E (rows 1–3, 6), as was the case also with copper basins (rows 4, 6), shell ornaments (rows 4–5, 7), traces of fine fabric (rows 5–6), ivory bracelets (row 6), and — with one exception — ivory arrowheads (rows 5–6, 9).

What is interesting then, is that the only archaeologically observable feature that distinguished graves in the northern half of cluster E from those in the southern half (except for the absence of various status markers) is the presence in the former of at least eight instances in which the deceased had been provided with a set of ten cylindrical clay vessels.[22] While it might be proposed that these clay vessels were simply the low budget equivalent of the alabas-

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[17] The retainer graves of Mastaba 3503 are discussed and depicted in Emery's (1954: 143–58, pl. 38) report.

[18] The sex is recorded for all but one of the seven western burials. Emery seems to have forgotten to record the sex of the occupant of subsidiary burial "F," but he takes the model boats found in the grave with the skeleton to be a signal of the occupant's profession (Emery 1954: 148). Presumably, if the skeleton had been sexed female he might have had more difficulty arriving at this conclusion.

[19] Four out of seven of the western graves were plundered, while only three other retainer graves belonging to Mastaba 3503 suffered the same fate.

[20] Model boats were found in Macramallah's graves 224 and 175 and in grave F of Mastaba 3503. Model boats were not found in any other subsidiary grave contexts at Saqqara. For a discussion of boat burials in general, see Wilkinson 1995.

[21] Cattle and ox bones have been recovered from many of the most monumental tombs of the First Dynasty. Examples include Qaa's tomb at Umm el-Qa'ab (Petrie 1900, pl. 60), Tarkhan Mastaba 1060 (Petrie, Wainwright, and Gardiner 1913: 15), and Saqqara Mastabas 3357 (here leg bones are specified; Emery 1939: 78), 3507 (Emery 1958: 79), 3111 (Emery 1949: 98–99), and 3120 (Emery 1949: 123).

[22] Sets of ten cylindrical vessels were found in rows six, eight, nine (two examples), and ten (four examples).

ter cylindrical vessel, the rear rows of cluster E possessed plenty of examples of this type of stone vessel. It is not my intention to flood the reader with details of artifact frequencies within Macramallah's rectangle; I bring up these sets of ten cylindrical clay vessels solely because they are witnessed only in one other group — Group A, which was spatially the closest of the three northern clusters to the central royal space.

In Group A, twelve such sets of ten cylindrical clay vessels were found and the number may have originally been larger before the grave robbers arrived, given the numerous sets of seven, eight, or nine such vessels also discovered in the cluster. In grave Groups B/C and D, which lay behind A to the north, such sets of ten cylindrical clay vessels are largely absent, as are cylindrical vessels as a grave good in any number.[23] Perhaps, then, this highly distinct artifact type betrays a close connection between the identities of the individuals who comprised the last rows of Group E and those who formed the first northern cluster of Group A.

Demographically, the three northern groups (A, B/C, and D) are relatively similar. Children make up anywhere from 7 to 13% of the population, and females vary between 10 and 26%. It is important to note in this respect that women and children were only barely represented in the grave groups that bordered the mysterious central space to the west and east, respectively. One other difference between these northern groups and the groups to the east and west is that young adults between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four made up anywhere from 24 to 29% of the population. This is the same age range as were most of the males buried in apparent marching order behind Hor-aha at Abydos and also many of the individuals buried in conjunction with other kings as well. With regard to Macramallah's cemetery, however, no satisfying candidates for spatially distinct assemblages of Den's young wives or soldiers could be isolated.

Perhaps the far higher percentages of women, young adults, and children in the northern groups may have accounted for the lesser status of these clusters with respect to Groups E and F. The northern graves, for example, were sampled by plunderers and then abandoned, presumably as not worth the effort of uncovering. Particularly unattractive to the thieves was Group D, which was the farthest from the central portion of the rectangle and also the poorest of the grave groups.[24] Denizens of Group D were not interred with the stone or even pottery vessels with which the graves in other groups were typically equipped,[25] and instead of lying in coffins, these individuals had by and large been wrapped in reed mats.[26] Only in the second row of Group B/C were other bodies treated in this manner. Indeed, this last fact provides further evidence for a spatial ordering by rank within clusters as well as between them. The preference for front row (or southern) seating in the northern portion of the cemetery can be observed with respect to the quantities of pottery found in the three clusters as well. For example, 71% of the graves in Group A had six or more ceramic vessels, while this was true of only 11% of the graves in Group B/C and none at all in the northernmost Group D.

In the northern graves, then, were three distinct groupings of individuals, each comprised of men, women, young people of both sexes, and children. The identity of the people who made up the most privileged assemblage (Group A), seems to have been aligned with the oc-

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[23] Two graves in Group B/C possessed sets of ten cylindrical clay vessels, while this type of jar was discovered in lesser numbers only in four other graves. The graves in Group D, for that matter, were entirely without examples.

[24] While 95% of graves in Group E had been plundered, the rates were far lower with respect to the northern clusters. In Group A plundered graves made up 32% of the whole, in Group B/C only 17%, and in Group F a modest 12.5%.

[25] Only three of the twenty-four graves possessed pottery vessels, while stone vessels were found in only two graves.

[26] The ratio of reed mats to wood coffins was 5:1, and in four of the intact tombs the bodies were not provided with any observable protection whatsoever.

cupants of the back few rows of Group E — suggesting perhaps that while these people may not have made the cut to be placed for eternity on the king's right hand, they were nonetheless marked out as special by their grave goods. The lowest status individuals, those whose deaths the state hardly found it worthwhile to compensate, occupied Group D, located farthest from the center. Indeed, if these people had stood during the funerary ceremony in the places that they occupied in death, as I would argue is likely, they would have had difficulty seeing.

The last cluster of note, Group F, is perhaps the most intriguing. The graves dug here were aligned in one straight row that was oriented more or less due north and exhibited none of the imprecise jigs and jogs common to the other rows of graves in the cemetery.[27] Further, Group F was the only group within which the graves exhibited no significant internal variations in size. On average, the graves of Group F were only barely smaller than the majority of those in Group E, and like the latter they appear originally to have been richly equipped. Plunderers had uniformly ransacked the graves in Group F and for good cause, as is suggested by the ivory arrowheads, ivory bracelets, and faience beads that the plunderers had left behind. The graves in Group F, like those in Group E, were also provided frequently with large storage jars — although the stone vessels and coffins found commonly in Group E were almost entirely absent in Group F.

What makes this last group particularly fascinating, however, is the fact that flint implements were discovered in 41% of the graves. Now these flints may have been "blades" and/or "scrapers" (see fig. 2.6), Macramallah does not differentiate in the grave registers. The high percentage of adult males among the sexable bodies and the possibility that they may have been equipped with blades, certainly could lead to speculation that these men constituted the king's bodyguard, arrayed in an orderly row to one side of the ceremony. The problem with this reconstruction, however, is that while five of the six sexable bodies were male, flints were also found in the sole female grave in this group and also here in the grave of a child.

While found infrequently, flints elsewhere in the cemetery were often associated with relatively wealthy tombs.[28] It is thus worthy of note that the single poorest grave group, Group D, possessed no flints at all. Further, the exact same type of flint assemblage of blades and scrapers appears with startling frequency in the most elaborate burials in the country: in monumental tombs whose sponsors without a doubt could have afforded copper implements (and caches of metal tools were indeed often found in the same tombs).[29] The fact these blades and scrap-

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[27] Swellim (1991: 397) suggests that the rigid north–south orientation of Group F shares a common ideological tradition with the similarly oriented Second and Third Dynasty great royal rectangular monuments also known from Middle Saqqara, though attempts by a team from Edinburgh to find the walls of such a structure west of Group F have failed.

[28] Flints were otherwise discovered in five graves in Group E (161, 175, 184, 201, 210), two graves in Group A (7, 25), and three graves in Group B/C (59, 62, 69; the first of these graves contained numerous labels inscribed with the name "Ip-Ka" that mentioned various goods [Macramallah 1940: 16–18, 36]). Macramallah (1940: 3) notes that the flints were one of the very few artifact types in the cemetery as a whole that were generally discovered inside a coffin.

[29] Exactly the same type of flint kit has been discovered, for example, in Tarkhan Mastaba 1060 (Petrie, Wain-

wright, and Gardiner 1913: 16); Giza Mastaba V (Petrie 1907: 1, 6); and in Saqqara Mastabas 3036 (Emery 1949: 76, 79–80), 3506 (Emery 1958: 51), 3507 (Emery 1958: 84–85), 3038 (Emery 1949: 92–94), 3111 (Emery 1949: 98–99), 3505 (Emery 1958: 14–15), 3500 (Emery 1958: 103, 105), 3504 (Emery 1954: 67–68), and 3471 (Emery 1949: 64). My sincere thanks are due to Carolyn Graves-Brown, who is currently finishing a dissertation entitled "The Ideological Significance of Flint in Dynastic Egypt" at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, for informing me that the same types of flints found in Macramallah's rectangle were common specifically in elite and even royal mortuary contexts (including the tombs of most of the First Dynasty kings; see Spencer 1980: 96–98, pl. 76, nos. 709–25) in the Early Dynastic Period and, albeit to a lesser extent, throughout the Old Kingdom. There are no apparent predynastic precursors to these forms. According to Graves-Brown, some of

ers were made of a relatively common material, were not elaborately worked, and yet appear in some of the richest graves of the First Dynasty is curious and suggests that whatever practical purposes the flint tools may have been capable of serving — such as shaving, scraping, or slicing — they were also imbued with a symbolic meaning. They may, for example, have served a ritual purpose, as did the flint tools employed in the opening of the mouth ceremony (C. Graves-Brown pers. comm.). Certainly, if these flints were indeed employed in a rite associated with the royal funeral, we may confidently state that the individuals in Group F — as well as some of the most important retainers in the cemetery as a whole — would have been intimately involved in it.

It was noted earlier that the western Group E and the retainers who lay to the west of Mastaba 3503 shared a number of similarities that included their affluence, male sex, and a predilection for model boats. This same mastaba is also interesting with respect to parallels between its eastern retainers and the eastern Group F in Macramallah's rectangle. As with Group F, the seven sacrificed retainers positioned to the east of Mastaba 3503 also consisted, so far as it is possible to tell, of males and only a single female. Like Group F, there were no young adults present, although the child in Group F is not paralleled in Mastaba 3503. Of greater interest, however, is the fact that the sole knives discovered in the retainer graves, albeit copper ones, were found to the east.[30] Likewise, it should be noted that of the sixty-two sacrificed retainers that surrounded the slightly earlier Mastaba 3504, only those buried on the eastern side had been equipped with flints (Emery 1954: 24–37).

So, then, what can be concluded finally about the portion of First Dynasty royal funerals that involved the sacrifice of retainers? Certainly we can state that these retainers appear — at least in the reign of Den — not to have been a homogenous group, but rather to have included a number of individuals of varying duties and statuses. The deaths of some of these individuals, the state seems almost to have taken for granted, yet others may have agreed to follow their sovereign only so long as their privileged status was acknowledged or even heightened in the king's funeral and immediately afterward in their own. This materialization of status is reflected not only in the size of graves and in their trappings, but also in their positioning with respect to the central area, where the king's body presumably laid for a while in state. Thus in death as in life, the participants in royal funerary ritual — at least those who gave their lives to enhance its power — seem to have been carefully ordered according to rank, social affiliation, and perhaps also according to ritual roles and symbolic associations between their own identities and the meanings ascribed to the cardinal directions.

The difference between the orderly groupings of rows upon rows of socially segregated, obedient retainers from the far more messy arrangements discovered in contemporary organic cemeteries is stark. In "natural" cemeteries, people were buried at different times and in spots presumably dictated by the affiliations they, their families, and their communities held to be important. One could hardly imagine, by contrast, a more fitting metaphor for the ideology of an early state than Macramallah's rectangle, in which the deaths of hundreds of individuals had been orchestrated and indeed carefully choreographed in order to preserve for eternity a ritual that promoted the immortality of the body politic.

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these sets of flints appear from evidence of refits to have been manufactured at the tomb site itself and few show any signs of wear.

[30] Emery 1954: 143–58. The sex of two of the eastern retainers could not be ascertained.
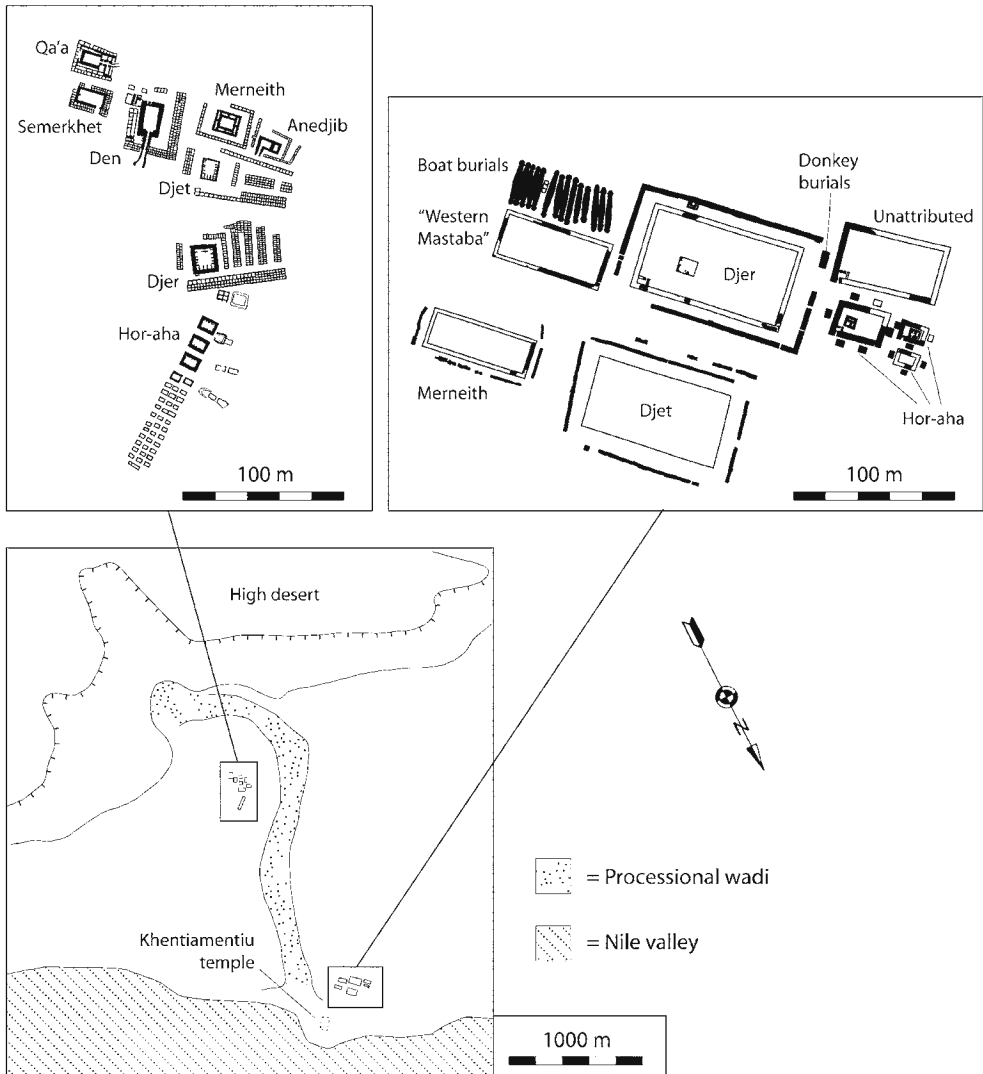
Figure 2.1. First Dynasty Abydos (after Bestock forthcoming, figs. 1, 10)
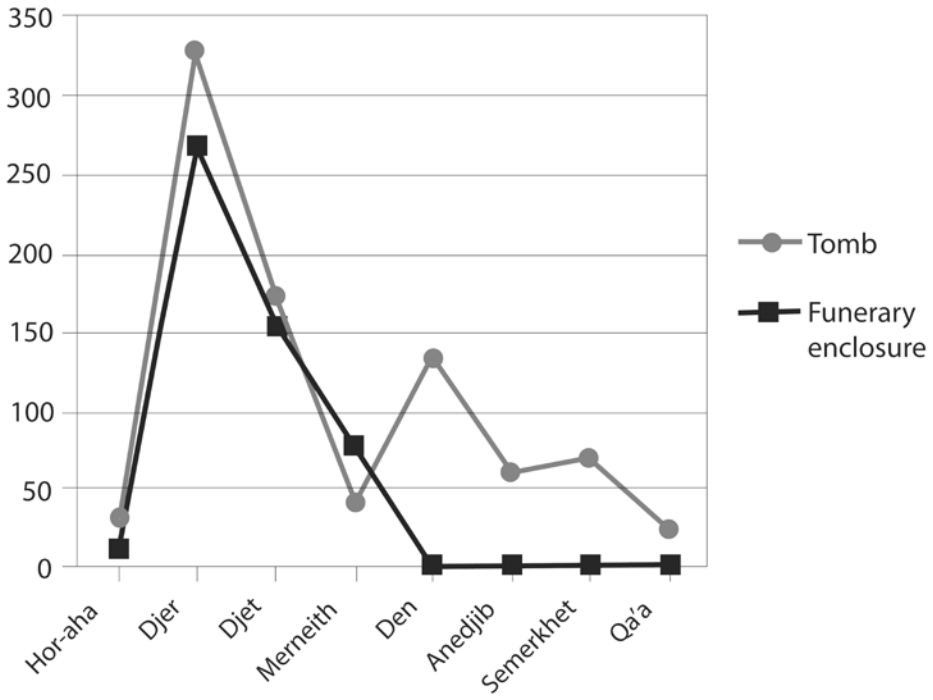
Figure 2.2. Number of Subsidiary Burials at Abydos
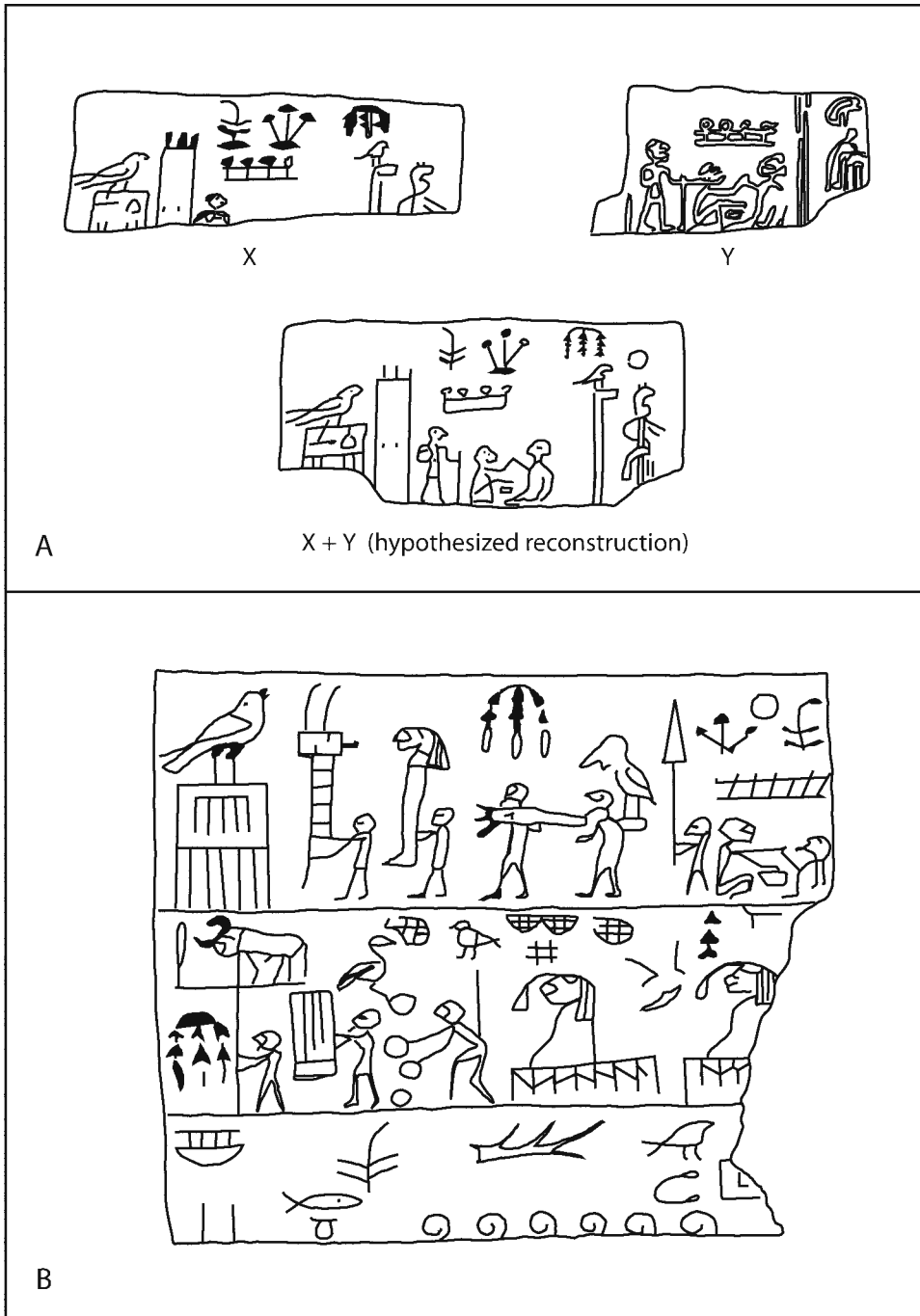
Figure 2.3. Labels Showing Human Sacrifice. (A) Hor-aha's Tomb at Abydos; (B) Mastaba 3035 at Saqqara (after Crubézy and Midant-Reynes 2000: 30; Emery 1938: 35)
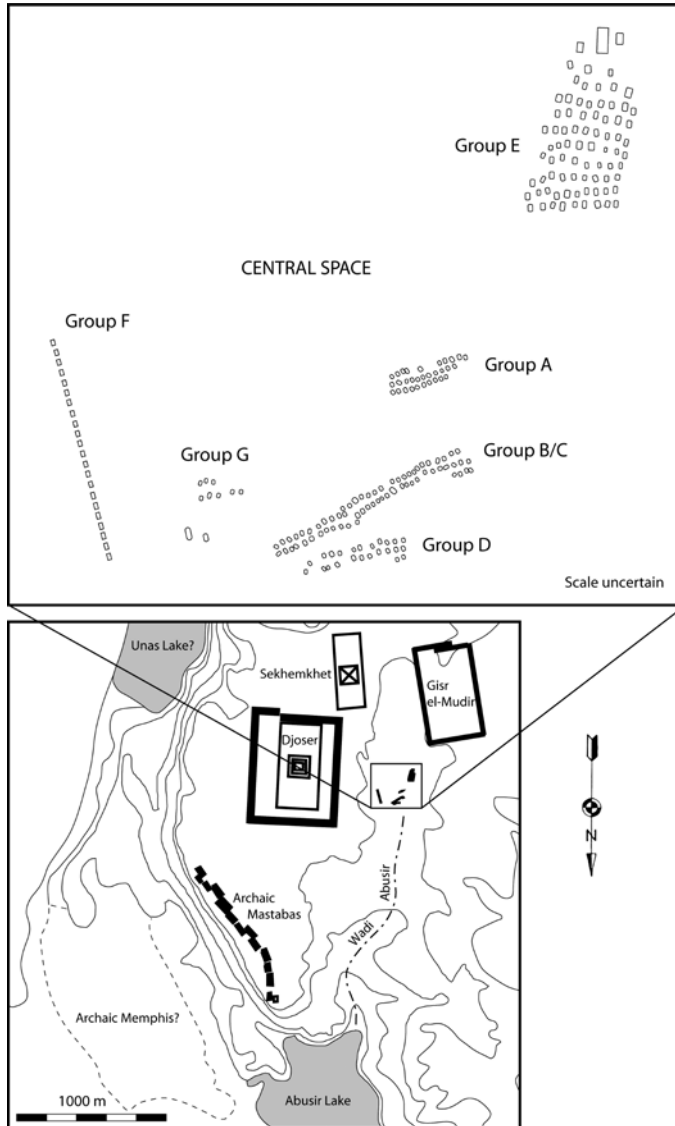
Figure 2.4. Macramallah's Cemetery at Saqqara (after Macramallah 1940, pl. 2; Lehner 1997: 83)
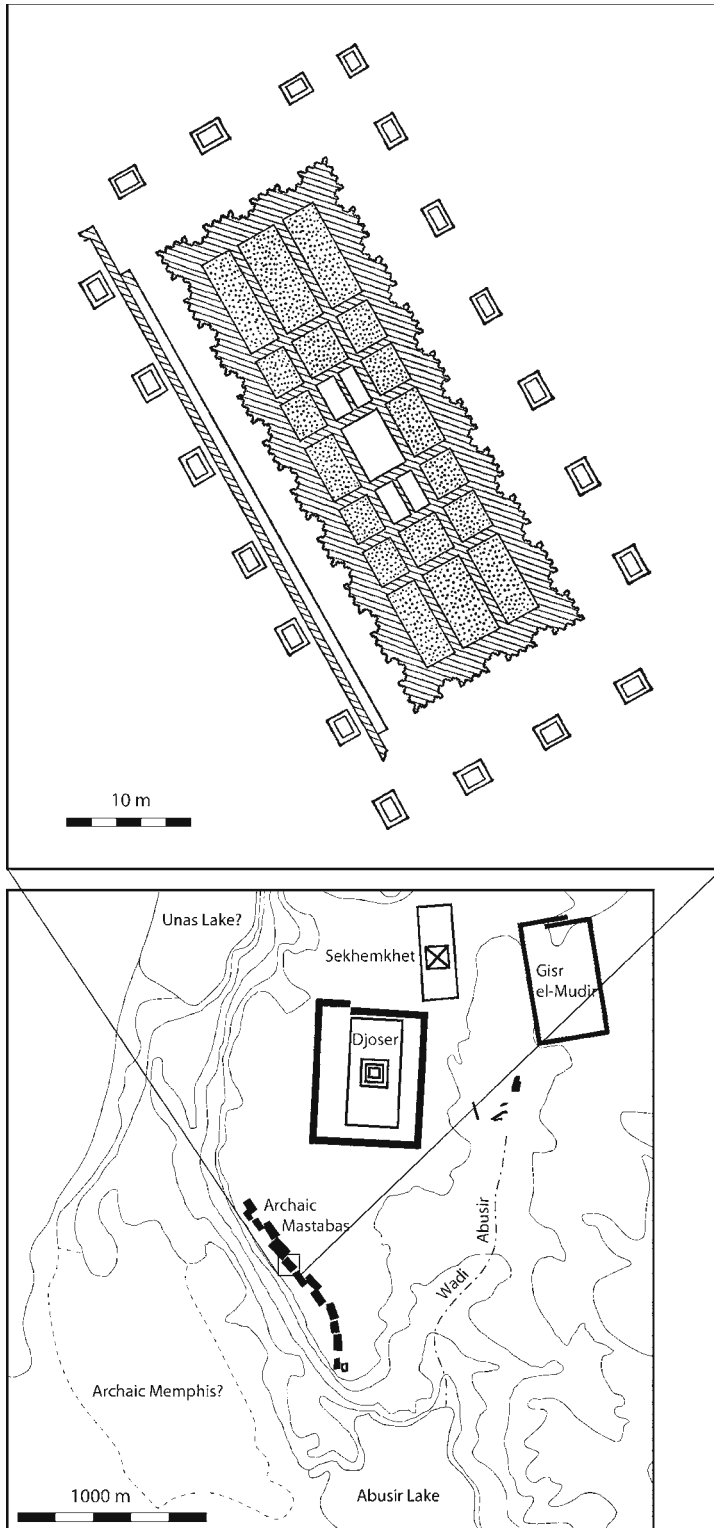
Figure 2.5. Mastaba 3503 (after Emery 1961: 67, fig. 30)
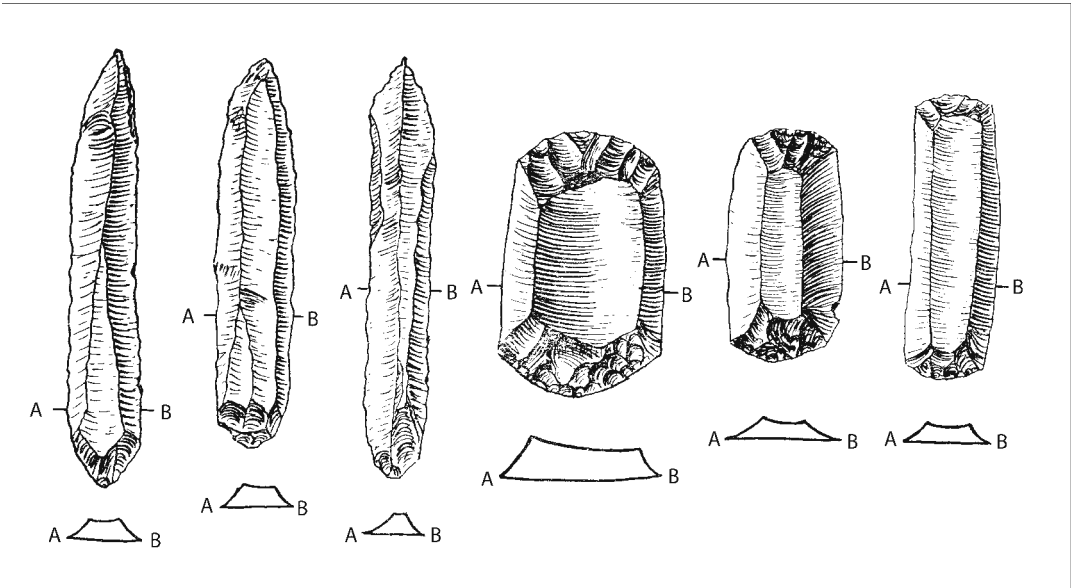
Figure 2.6. Selection of Flints from Macramallah's Cemetery (after Macramallah 1940: 19, fig. 19)

ABBREVIATION

Urk. IV   K. Sethe, *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie*. Reprint of 1914 edition. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1984.

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3

STATUS, IDEOLOGY, AND MEMORY IN THIRD-MILLENNIUM SYRIA: "ROYAL" TOMBS AT UMM EL-MARRA

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In the study of early Near Eastern complex societies, Syria has functioned as a complement to Mesopotamia, the "cradle of civilization," providing evidence of alternate trajectories to complexity and helping to dispel assumptions of Near Eastern urbanism as a uniform phenomenon (Akkermans and Schwartz 2003; Falconer and Savage 1995; Earle 1997: 64; Stein 1998: 15). Complex societies emerged in Syria during the Early Bronze Age (ca. 3000–2000 B.C.), with cities, states, urbanism, monumental architecture, writing, and intensified economic specialization discernible by at least 2500 B.C. (Akkermans and Schwartz 2003: 233–87). At Palace G at Ebla, a particularly graphic illustration of the new social reality, excavations revealed material evidence of an extraordinarily wealthy royal establishment that left thousands of cuneiform tablets detailing that institution's administrative concerns (Matthiae, Pinnock, and Scandone-Matthiae 1995).

As is the case with most developing urban civilizations, Syrian complex societies were characterized by political and social inequality, in which an elite acquired a disproportionate share of political and economic power. While there may be evidence of both exclusionary and corporate configurations of power (Blanton 1998; Porter 2002a–b; Cooper 2006a–b), there is no question that urban societies in Syria were presided over by a relatively small number of individuals. The Ebla texts indicate that Ebla and other polities in third-millennium Syria were dominated by political actors that included kings, queens, and "elders," the latter perhaps representatives of important kin groups (Archi 1988). In Syria, as with other early complex societies, a major challenge for archaeologists and historians is to determine how the dominant powerful individuals or groups acquired power, how they managed to retain it, and why the rest of the populace acquiesced or was compelled to accept the inequalities of the new social reality (Nelson 2002: 74).

One avenue allowing for a consideration of these issues is mortuary evidence, which has long served as a resource for studying past social systems. Archaeological approaches to mortuary data have evolved from a focus on social rank, based on the assumption that status differences in life are reflected in treatment upon death (Binford 1972; Saxe 1970), to the recognition that the lifetime status or accomplishments of the deceased may be substantially misrepresented in death: "funerals are lively, contested events where social roles are manipulated, acquired and discarded" (Parker Pearson 1999: 32). In the latter perspective, the focus is on the survivors and how they reaffirmed and renegotiated individual and group identities through the medium of mortuary ritual (e.g., Gillespie 2001). These differing perspectives may be

conjoined in an integrative approach (Gamble, Walker, and Russell 2001; Chesson 1999) examining social organization and status in addition to considering the ways that survivors used mortuary ritual to construct social identity and accrue power and prestige.

In western Syria, an important consequence of recent work has been the discovery of monumental tombs with lavish contents located in the centers of communities. At sites in the Euphrates River valley like Jerablus Tahtani, Tell Ahmar, Tell Banat, Tell Biʿa, and Mari, funerary data allow for the consideration of changing social realities in the third millennium B.C. (Peltenburg 1999; Porter 2002a–b). Some 40 km west of the Euphrates, the excavations at Tell Umm el-Marra have recently provided a fresh and somewhat unusual infusion of elite mortuary data that allow for new perspectives on social hierarchy and its establishment in Early Bronze Age Syria. In this paper, I present data from Umm el-Marra and argue that the mortuary complex at the site can be understood as a materialization of elite ideology (DeMarrais, Castillo, and Earle 1996; Earle 1997: 143, 150) in which world views associated with central authority were made manifest in the physical world. Further, I argue that this ideology made consistent use of social memory to sanction elite authority, and that memory could be both emphasized and denied in the process of negotiating, contesting, and reinforcing social and political power.[2] In addition to the political aspects of the mortuary complex, I also attempt a brief foray into its interpretation as the site of religious ritual.

At about 25 hectares, Umm el-Marra is the largest Bronze Age site in the Jabbul plain of western Syria (figs. 3.1–2).[3] The mound has been the subject of study by a joint expedition of the Johns Hopkins University and the University of Amsterdam since 1994 (Curvers and Schwartz 1997; Schwartz et al. 2000; Schwartz et al. 2003; Schwartz et al. 2006).[4] In the Jabbul plain, rainfall agriculture is possible in the central and western zones, while the eastern zone is a dry steppe, historically the preserve of nomadic pastoralists. Located between these two environmental regions, Umm el-Marra may have functioned as an intermediary point for the exchange of products, information, and personnel. The site presumably also derived significance from its strategic location on a route leading from the Euphrates valley of Mesopotamia to areas farther west. Occupied throughout the Bronze Age, Umm el-Marra was probably a regional center subservient to major powers like Ebla and Aleppo; it has been tentatively identified as ancient Dub or Tuba, capital of a small kingdom mentioned frequently in the Ebla archives (Matthiae 1979; Catagnoti 1991).

THE UMM EL-MARRA MORTUARY COMPLEX

The tombs and related installations discovered at Umm el-Marra are located on a high point in the center of the site acropolis, a feature ca. 150 × 150 meters in area in the south cen-

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[2] Social memory can be defined as "the construction of a collective notion (not an individual belief) about the way things were in the past" (Van Dyke and Alcock 2003: 2).

[3] The area demarcated by and including the town ramparts is ca. 20 ha; the 25 ha estimate includes an indeterminate area north of the mound presently covered by village houses with indications of mounded topography and surface sherds (see Tefnin 1981/82, fig. 40).

tral part of the site. On the Acropolis Center, six tombs have been excavated thus far,[5] and their stratigraphy and contents indicate that they were built and used in a sequence that spanned two or three centuries, from the twenty-sixth to the twenty-third centuries (Schwartz et al. 2003; Schwartz et al. 2006). The tombs were often built adjacent to one another, with the complex expanding horizontally (fig. 3.3).

The two earliest tombs appear to be Tombs 5 and 6. Although Tomb 5 had been disturbed and its entry on the east blocked with boulders, pottery of the mid-third millennium and the bones of an adult male and an infant were found within.[6] Tomb 6, the largest thus far discovered (ca. 9.6 × 4.8 m), was partly destroyed by Tomb 7 but contained the bones of an adult male partly found inside the remains of a wooden coffin, associated with gold and silver toggle pins and beads of lapis lazuli, gold, and carnelian. To the west, Tomb 3 had been much disturbed and its entry blocked, like Tomb 5. Also like Tomb 5, the remains of one adult and one adolescent were recovered.

In contrast to the disturbed Tombs 3, 5, and 6, Tomb 4 to the south contained a rich body of material deposited in two levels. In the lower level were three adult individuals, including a female interred secondarily. Jewelry of gold and silver, ivory hair ornaments, furniture inlays of ostrich shell (fig. 3.4), miniature basalt tables, and other objects were identified, including a pair of inlay statue eyes from a small square shaft in the tomb's northwest corner (fig. 3.5). The upper, later level of Tomb 4 (fig. 3.6) also contained three bodies: an adult male buried secondarily and the primary burials of a child and an adult female. In this layer were objects like gold toggle pins, silver headbands, a silver torque, and silver vessels. The secondary interments in Tomb 4 may represent bodies moved aside in order to make room for new ones. Alternatively, they may entail individuals who could not be interred until the proper time, for reasons such as ritual restrictions on the acceptable moments to place a body in the tomb or the need to accumulate the necessary resources for a proper (or impressively lavish) ceremony (Bloch 1971).

Next in the chronological sequence, Tomb 1 was preserved intact and contained three layers of bodies. At the top were two young women side by side,[7] each with a baby, accompanied by furnishings of gold, silver, and lapis lazuli. In contrast, the layer below, apparently deposited at the same time, contained two adult males with a much smaller number of objects of silver and bronze, including in one case, a bronze dagger and spearhead, and a baby off to the side. Below them was an adult of ambiguous sex found with a fragmentary silver cup and toggle pins. Finally, the latest tomb, Tomb 7, dating to about the twenty-third century B.C., differs from the preceding tombs in its intrusion into the earlier Tomb 6 and in its multiple chambers, only one of which has so far been excavated, which included the remains of a child or young adolescent.

The mortuary complex included not only tombs but additional installations. These features contained the skeletal remains of animals, particularly equids, and sometimes human infants. Installation A, for example, contained four equids and the skeletal remains of a baby; Installation B contained two equids standing upright in two separate compartments, with the

[5] For a detailed presentation of data from the tombs and discussion of their chronology, see Schwartz et al. 2003; Schwartz et al. 2006.

[6] Aging and sexing of the skeletons in the Umm el-Marra tombs was conducted preliminarily by Barbara Stuart, with the assistance of Elaine Sullivan and Adam Maskevich, and by Bruno Frohlich and Judith Littleton

for Tomb 1. More detailed analysis by Ernest Batey (University of Arkansas) in 2006 has modified some of the preliminary conclusions.

[7] Detailed skeletal analysis indicated that the identification of one of these individuals (Skeleton D) as female, previously questioned (Schwartz et al. 2003: 330), is probably correct (E. Batey pers. comm.).

skulls resting on a ledge next to a spouted jar (fig. 3.7:1). Also in this structure were two sets of three puppies and a human infant. Installation C contained another standing equid, while Installation D (fig. 3.8) had at least six equids, a spouted jar (fig. 3.7:3), and human infant remains, in addition to two equid skulls, a spouted jar (fig. 3.7:2), and a large jar containing the remains of three human infants[8] deposited next to and slightly higher than the feature. One additional equid skeleton was found west of Installation D placed against the east wall of a structure of as yet unknown function. Clearly, the interment of animals, especially equids, as well as infants, accompanied by rituals of pouring implied by the spouted vessels, was an important component of the procedures enacted in the Acropolis Center mortuary complex.

The above data permit the consideration of numerous social issues including such variables as power, identity, and gender, but it should be remembered that analysis of the tomb contents is still in progress and many conclusions on the skeletal, faunal, and artifactual remains may require revision in the future. Further, only two of the tombs excavated thus far had contents that escaped substantial disturbance, so the acquisition of a larger tomb sample, if possible, is desirable.

SOCIAL IDENTITY

A diversity of evidence supports the conclusion that the Umm el-Marra mortuary complex was associated with individuals of high social rank, perhaps the highest in the community. Objects composed of rare and valuable materials like gold, silver, and lapis lazuli are generally associated with the elite in this period (Casanova 2000; Ross 1999).[9] Further, the complex is located in a prominent and conspicuous part of the site: the structures were at least partly aboveground, located in the center of the site, and situated on a high point that would have dominated the rest of the community and provided a persistent visual landmark for all its inhabitants. The privileged position of this necropolis also implies the special character of the persons buried therein, a status underscored by the absence of adult burials in other excavated Bronze Age contexts at Umm el-Marra, suggesting that mature individuals were usually buried off-site.[10] This pattern recalls that of nineteenth-century A.D. Madagascar (M. Bloch pers. comm.), where the tomb of the ruler was placed in the center of the community represented and embodied by that individual. Similarly, in Archaic Greek colonial cities, the founding heroes were buried in the community center while all other individuals were interred extramurally, emphasizing the special status and continuing role of the heroes in the communities they established (Malkin 1987; Ekroth 2002).[11]

It could be argued that the costly grave goods of the Umm el-Marra tombs reflect aspirations to elite status as opposed to a general acceptance of high rank. Funerals may be opportunities for negotiating, contesting, and elevating social status, and wealthy contents of tombs

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[8] According to analysis by E. Batey (pers. comm.), the contents of this jar, previously reported to contain a single infant (Schwartz et al. 2003: 338), included the remains of three individuals.

[9] Costin (1994: 155) notes that jewelry is often a good status marker because it is visible, requires considerable labor to produce, and is often made from rare and valuable materials.

[10] At contemporaneous sites in the Euphrates River valley to the east, non-elite persons were usually buried in sub-

terranean graves in extramural cemeteries, while monumental tombs were often intramural and aboveground (Carter and Parker 1995). Apart from the Acropolis Center mortuary complex, the only funerary interments recognized at Umm el-Marra in the third millennium are one or possibly two (Tefnin 1980: 90) sub-floor infant jar burials identified in the Acropolis East.

[11] Biblical sources also suggest that the kings of Judah were buried in a royal necropolis inside the walls of Jerusalem while other individuals were interred extramurally (Xella 1995: 2068).

do not necessarily imply a lofty social position for the occupants (D'Altroy 2001: 468). While the material remains in the Umm el-Marra tombs — as well as the tombs themselves — doubtless reflect competition, negotiation, and pretensions to power, it is nevertheless probable that the persons buried within and/or their survivors enjoyed a high status in the community, given the central and dominant location of the tombs and their consistent use over several centuries. It is unlikely that the community would have tolerated the burial of a group of lower ranking individuals with pretensions to higher status in such a conspicuous and central location over the long term.

While it is probable that the individuals in the Umm el-Marra tombs were accorded high status in their community, their grave wealth might elicit the question of whether they were provincial poseurs, putting on airs otherwise reserved for elites at the great centers like Ebla and Mari.[12] However, the presence of similar costly and well-crafted tomb objects at other mid-size centers (Banat) as well as smaller sites (Jerablus Tahtani) suggests that the elite individuals at Umm el-Marra were not abnormal in the quality and quantity of luxury materials in their tombs. Indeed, it is likely that the elites of this period at both large and small centers competed with one another in the display of mortuary architecture and funerary wealth. Lisa Cooper (2006b) proposes a model of peer polity interaction in which the elites of early urban Syria emulated one another's behaviors and symbols in order to impress not only the members of their own polities, but also their rivals elsewhere. Presumably the display of funerary objects prior to or during the funeral would provide an opportunity for onlookers to appreciate the resources expended on the occasion, and word would soon spread of opulence or parsimony (Scurlock 1991).

Given their elite status, can further details of the social identity of the tomb occupants be inferred? Considering the chronological sequence, the relatively small number of individuals per tomb, and the diversity of ages represented, it seems appropriate to posit that the tombs contained members of a series of important families or dynasties.[13] If Umm el-Marra was the center of an autonomous polity, those interred in the tombs could be understood as members of the families of local rulers. According to the Ebla texts, Tuba had a king and a queen, as well as an individual with the title "little king" (Archi 1999). It could be protested that the objects in the tombs, while of high quality, are not as elaborate or abundant as those from royal graves from third-millennium Ur in southern Mesopotamia or Qatna in second-millennium western Syria (Zettler and Horne 1998; al-Maqdissi et al. 2003). At Umm el-Marra, no individual is associated with gold objects weighing more than 200 grams, far less than that of the gold artifacts disbursed for the funerals of high-ranking Eblaite persons as detailed in Ebla administrative texts (Archi 2002), some of whom received a total of 1,000 or even 2,000 grams of gold objects in their funerary gifts. However, the relative simplicity of the contents of the Umm el-Marra tombs might be understood as a reflection of Umm el-Marra's status as the center of a small polity of minor influence, as opposed to the great centers of power like Ebla and Mari. It is to be expected that there would be substantial differences between the resources collected and expended at the wealthiest and most politically influential cities and those of lesser status. It is also possible that the individuals in the Umm el-Marra tombs were not independent

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[12] In the second millennium B.C., for example, it is suggested that Near Eastern rulers tried to enhance their status through acquisition and display of luxury items otherwise associated with more powerful rulers (Feldman 2006).

[13] Bioarchaeological analysis of the skeletal materials to determine possible genetic relationships is ongoing but has not yet yielded definitive results.

hegemons but were high-ranking administrators and their families subordinate to rulers based elsewhere, for example, at Ebla or Aleppo.

The Ebla texts also refer to elders of Tuba, as they do for many other towns in later third-millennium Syria (Archi 1988), and it is possible that the interred individuals at Umm el-Marra were not rulers but high-ranking members of important kin groups or of other factions. In this scenario, the individuals could have belonged to groups with different power bases, for example, with religious as opposed to military associations (Sugiyama 2004). Given the proximity of the steppe, one might suggest that some of the high-ranking persons interred at Umm el-Marra were lineage heads of nomadic pastoralist groups whose migratory activities were partly concentrated in this region.[14]

How does one distinguish between tombs belonging to members of an exclusionary ruling group as opposed to diverse factions with different power bases? If symbols of membership in groups of the latter type were associated with specific individuals in the tombs, they might provide data to support a corporate interpretation. The greater number and character of objects found with the women in Umm el-Marra Tomb 4, for example, have engendered the hypothesis that these individuals served as priestesses in a local cult (Dunham 2005; Schwartz et al. 2006). However, social actors can belong to more than one group (e.g., religious specialists may also have political associations, etc.; Yoffee 2005: 37; D'Altroy 2001: 454), and the identification of such group affiliations is not necessarily inferred easily from material remains in tombs. In the case of elders, we might observe that the Ebla texts refer to individual kings and queens in a single community but use the term "elders" in the plural, which suggests that elders and their families should be more numerous per generation than is implied thus far by the tombs at Umm el-Marra.[15]

When considering the question of social identity, it is fitting to recall that it is often difficult to ascertain the role and affiliation of individuals in elite burials even with the availability of written materials. In the case of the Royal Cemetery of Ur in southern Mesopotamia, the wealthiest elite cemetery of the third-millennium Near East, debate has continued for decades on the identity of the tomb occupants, with royalty, religious specialists, and representatives of public households among the posited options (Moorey 1977; Pollock 1991, this volume; Marchesi 2004).

The Ebla texts reveal that the royal palace often donated gifts to be used in the funerals of members of the elite at Ebla and at other places (Archi 2002). Included are various types of personal ornaments, many of which are matched by those found in the tombs at Umm el-Marra, including toggle pins, torques, headbands, frontlets, bracelets, beads, and small vessels of precious metal. The possibility exists, therefore, that some of the objects of precious materials found in the Umm el-Marra tombs were donated by a central authority, either at Umm el-Marra, Ebla or elsewhere, rather than being the personal possessions of the deceased individuals. Why rulers should have thought it appropriate to bestow funerary gifts is not articulated, but such donations may have been intended to reinforce ties of loyalty to the crown as well as to involve the royal establishment in the most important *rites du passage*, underlining its role as patron. The inclusion of such gifts in funerals provides an illustration of the tendency for funerals to reflect, not just the achievements and social status of the deceased individuals, but the intentions and acts of survivors and other members of the society with their own distinct agendas and statements to make.

[14] I am grateful to Thomas McClellan for this suggestion.

[15] We should be aware, however, that the number of individuals in the disturbed Tombs 3, 5, and 6 may have been greater than that currently attested.

ANCESTOR VENERATION — AND DESECRATION

Edgar Peltenburg (1999) has observed that the conspicuous, aboveground character of third-millennium intramural mortuary monuments in Syria implies that these monuments played an important role in the life of their communities after the death of the interred individuals. The illustrious dead and the living stayed in close proximity, with the dead remaining part of the community (Meskell and Joyce 2003: 42). Given the visibility of the high-ranking dead within the living communities, I follow Peltenburg in proposing that the individuals buried in such conspicuous monumental tombs were venerated as ancestors, in rituals that occurred repeatedly and persisted long after the death of the interred persons.[16] At Umm el-Marra, support for this hypothesis includes not only the centrality and visibility of the mausoleums but also indications of offerings brought to tombs after the interment of the individuals within: both Tombs 3 and 4 contain evidence of ceramic and silver vessels and other objects at higher elevations than the majority of materials deposited on the tomb floors.[17] At Ebla, further support for this hypothesis is provided by textual evidence attesting to a tradition of offerings made by the reigning ruler and his wife to deceased kings as well as other evidence of cultic attention devoted to royal ancestors (Fronzaroli 1993; Archi 2001). It is important to note, bearing in mind the occupants of the Umm el-Marra tombs, that examples of ancestor veneration attested in diverse societies have included women and children as well as adult males (McAnany 1995; Bloch 1971).

Presumably the immediate purpose of ancestor veneration was to appease the ghosts of the deceased so that they would assist their living descendants and refrain from harming them. In Mesopotamia and second-millennium Syria (Lewis 1989: 31), it was understood that a failure to perform proper rituals for the dead could result in angry ghosts haunting the living and causing misfortune. Conversely, proper care of the dead could result in blessings conferred by ancestors upon the living. Such blessings would, in the case of rulers, insure not only the well-being of the ruling individuals but also of the dynastic succession and the polity itself (Richardson 1999–2001: 194).

Apart from the religious benefits, it is probable that the elites of Umm el-Marra and other centers in western Syria also found the veneration of elite ancestors useful for the reinforcement and legitimization of their authority and status. When deceased members of high-ranking families are interred in conspicuous monuments and receive continued veneration, surviving members of the elite acquire and maintain prestige through their association with the revered dead (Milner 1984; Lewis and Stout 1998). The past is used to legitimize the social order of the present, whose inequalities are presented as natural and inevitable. Just as there were powerful leaders in the past, so the same should continue to apply in the present (Yoffee 2005: 39).

The mortuary complex at Umm el-Marra can be read, therefore, as a materialization of elite ideology (DeMarrais, Castillo, and Earle 1996).[18] Deceased members of the elite were to be treated as revered ancestors, a principle given physical form through the mortuary monuments constructed in the midst of the community. These conspicuous and long-standing monu-

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[16] See also Porter (2002) for an extensive discussion of the role of ancestor veneration in third-millennium Syria.

[17] In the upper level of Tomb 4, at least three ceramic vessels as well as fragments of bone combs, a miniature bronze chisel, and a silver bowl were discovered at an elevation considerably higher than the floor, where the great majority of finds were located. Five ceramic ves-

sels were found well above the floor in Tomb 3.

[18] "… ideologies are given concrete, physical form. This process is the *materialization of ideology*. We argue that ideology is materialized in the form of ceremonies, symbolic objects, monuments, and writing systems to become an effective source of power" (DeMarrais, Castillo, and Earle 1996: 16).

ments continuously reinforced social hierarchy and served as a means by which the past validated and explained the present. The monuments functioned as symbols of the social order and affirmed that a social order consisting of rulers and ruled was proper and long-lasting.

In other examples of elite ancestor veneration, for example, in Classic Maya or Inca societies, the ceremonial reverence extended toward ancestors was appropriated from pre-existing religious concepts (Curet and Oliver 1998; McAnany 1995, 2001; Lau 2002; Lucero 2003). In earlier periods, all members of the society were understood to share a common ancestor, an idea that served to reinforce communality. When social hierarchies developed, ancestor veneration was reconfigured to legitimize and sanction the power and status of the new elites, who claimed closer proximity to important ancestors. The same pattern might be expected for third-millennium Syria, but more evidence will be required to support or reject such a proposition. If communal beliefs and practices were transformed into elite ideology, it will be appropriate to explore how and why this process occurred; one might propose that individuals striving for power either co-opted — or themselves served as — religious specialists who could assist in the project (McAnany 2001).

While elite ancestor veneration can be used to reinforce authority, some ancestors may not retain their exalted status over the long term. Tombs 3 and 5 at Umm el-Marra are distinct from the other tombs in that they were seriously disturbed, robbed of non-ceramic artifacts, and had their entrances blocked. I have hypothesized (Schwartz et al. 2006) that these phenomena are material manifestations of intentional desecrations meant to put the tombs out of commission, perpetrated by persons who wanted to sever the connection between the living community and the persons buried in the tombs. Presumably such an event occurred as the result of power shifting between conflicting factions, families, or powerful individuals. This is a process that Arlen and Diane Chase have termed "transformational reentry" in their work on Maya elite burials (Chase and Chase 2005). Had these disturbances been the act of ordinary robbers, one would not expect the thieves to have carefully blocked the entrances after they left. Had they been the result of reverential removal of bones for relocation elsewhere, such indiscriminate smashing of pottery or the retention of so much skeletal material would not be expected.[19] While it is usually assumed that disturbance of wealthy graves was an act of avarice on the part of robbers, we should be alert to the possibility of deliberate desecration for political or social reasons.[20]

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[19] An alternative scenario might be posed, however, such as robbers burglarized the tomb, then the tomb entry was blocked by authorities in order to prevent further disturbance. Blocking access to the tomb would impede future rituals of veneration taking place inside the tomb, but perhaps a looted tomb was considered to have been divested of its spiritual power.

[20] Ancient Near Eastern rulers often feared the disturbance or removal of their remains after death, as the funerary inscription of Eshmunazar of Sidon (fifth century B.C.) makes clear:

"… Whoever you are, ruler and (ordinary) man, may he not open this resting-place and may he not search in it for anything, for nothing whatever has been placed into it! May he not take the casket in which I am resting, and may he not carry me away

from this resting-place to another resting place! Even if people goad you, do not listen to their talk, for any ruler and any man who shall open this resting-place or who shall take up the casket in which I am resting or who shall carry me away from this resting-place — may they not have a resting-place with the shades, may they not be buried in a grave, and may they not have son and seed to take their place! …" (Pritchard 1969: 662).

For an example of the robbing of a royal tomb by a later, hostile, dynasty, see the removal of bronze objects from the tomb of Iahdun-lim by the agents of Iasmah-Addu in early second-millennium B.C Mari (Ziegler 2000:17). This is not a case of tomb desecration for ideological reasons, however, but for the purpose of manufacturing weapons from the recycled bronze.

According to James Whitley (2002), who warns of "too many ancestors," archaeologists have been too quick to employ ancestor veneration to explain patterns in their data. While this may be true for prehistoric Europe, ancestor veneration is probably far from the point of over-use for early Near Eastern complex societies, given textual evidence that indicates that ancestor veneration was of substantial importance (Katz this volume). Nevertheless, hypotheses of ancestor veneration should be tested carefully before they can be accepted. A weakness of our present interpretation, for example, is the assumption that the veneration of elite ancestors took place at their tombs. It is not clear from the Ebla texts that such rites were conducted at the ancestral tombs, and the Mesopotamian textual record is similarly vague (Katz this volume; Richardson 1991–2001).[21]

SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The evidence from Umm el-Marra and sites in the Euphrates valley has revealed that the building of ostentatious and conspicuous intramural funerary monuments was common in the third quarter of the third millennium B.C. in western Syria. This period marked the first florescence of urban, complex society in the region, including the advent of hierarchical political systems dominated by kings and associated elites, as noted in detail in the texts from Ebla, Mari, and Beydar. When rulers die, the social order is threatened, all the more so if the ruler has become a symbol of the unity of the polity. This danger is particularly acute when the institution of rulership is relatively new (Morris this volume). One way to counter this challenge is to keep the rulers, and the symbolism associated with them, present among the living even after death (Kertzer 1988: 18). Such a practice smoothes the transition to the next ruler, and the visibility and rituals associated with ancestral rulers assist in legitimizing the existing elite. As a result, elite funerary ostentation, visibility, and ancestor veneration are typically associated with newly emergent or unstable political systems (Metcalf and Huntington 1991; Parker Pearson 1999: 87; Childe 1945). However, once the new political order is well established, the need for funerary ostentation often declines, resulting in "cycles of ostentation" (Morris 1992). Perhaps the decreasing size of the tombs in the Umm el-Marra mortuary complex (from Tomb 6, the largest, to the smaller Tombs 3 and 4, to the smallest Tomb 1) can be understood in this context: as the power of the elite was more solidly established, less energy could be expended on their mortuary monuments.

The disappearance of conspicuous intramural elite tombs in the last quarter of the third millennium is presumably associated with the instability and decentralization that occurred in this period, when many cities were abandoned or lost their centralizing functions (Akkermans and Schwartz 2003: 282–87; Cooper 2006a–b). The causes for this "collapse" have been much debated and include such variables as climatic desiccation, human-induced environmental degradation, and military depredations from the Sargonic dynasts of southern Mesopotamia. Not all urban-based rulership disappeared, as is evinced by the evidence from Ebla, but no ostentatious and conspicuous funerary monuments are associated with the rulers who retained authority. If this pattern is not the result of the vagaries of archaeological discovery, it might be attributed to the rulers' lack of resources, the absence of competition with other kings over

[21] At Emar in the Late Bronze Age, ceremonies during the month of Abî included a ritual conducted "at the gate of the grave" concurrent with the presentation of offerings to *abu* shrines at the palace and in various temples (Fleming 2000: 85–86). Fleming suggests that these activities concern rituals honoring deceased ancestors. If so, this would be provide a rare instance of a text specifying rituals of ancestral veneration transpiring at a tomb.

mortuary display, or a lessened need to legitimize authority, the institutions of rulership having been in place for many centuries.

When large, hierarchical polities reappear in profusion in the early second millennium, evidence for conspicuous funerary ostentation continues to be lacking (cf. the Ebla "royal" tombs, well provisioned but underground below the Western Palace floors; Matthiae 1997a). Despite the need to solidify their rule, the new Amorite rulers of the second millennium employed other means of legitimization. That they did not completely ignore their predecessors is clear from the institution of the *kispum*, a feast held in celebration of deceased rulers,[22] but the construction of conspicuous funerary monuments is only one of a set of choices that the Amorite rulers would have had available for the purposes of legitimizing and strengthening their rule.

GENDER

In the Umm el-Marra tombs, there is little or no gender-specificity with respect to objects and their association with bodies of different sexes. Almost every object type is associated with individuals of either sex (e.g., beads, ivory hair ornaments, toggle pins, headbands, frontlets, bracelets, and shell discs). An important difference between the sexes is manifested, however, in the best-preserved Tombs 1 and 4: adult females have much larger collections of objects, especially those of precious materials, than men. Curiously, this same pattern can be observed in lists of objects meted out by the Ebla palace for use in the funerals of high-ranking individuals, objects that are often the same types as those found in the Umm el-Marra tombs (Archi 2002). One might suggest that such a pattern indicates higher status or power for women, were it not for much additional textual data from Ebla that suggest otherwise: men are the primary actors in the public realm. Women's grave finery may have conveyed associative status (Parker Pearson 1999: 99), intended to communicate the power and wealth of male relatives or families. Perhaps women wore elaborate and attention-getting jewelry — in life and in death — in order to mark their status as "possessions" of men or their availability for that status. Further development of this important issue will be reserved for another context, but it should be noted that the earlier hypothesis of high-ranking women buried above lower ranking men in Tomb 1 (Schwartz et al. 2003) is weakened by the evidence from Tomb 4 that indicates that high-ranking women were generally buried with more grave wealth than high-ranking men.

BURIAL AS RELIGIOUS CEREMONY

As John Robb (this volume) observes, mortuary ritual is not only about politics, despite the archaeological focus on the latter variable.[23] At Umm el-Marra, the tomb contents allow for possible inferences on burial ritual as religious ceremony, but it must be acknowledged that these inferences will largely be preliminary and speculative.

Given Near Eastern textual sources as well as diverse data from other regions, we might expect the tomb contents to include, in addition to the physical remains of the deceased, personal belongings of the deceased, provisions intended for the afterlife, gifts for deities of the

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[22] In contrast to elite veneration of the third millennium that honored specific rulers, the *kispum* celebrated previous kings as a collective body. Porter (2002b) suggests that this trend denotes a shift from exclusionary power at third-millennium sites like Ebla to a more corporate form of authority in the early second-millennium Amorite-ruled polities.

[23] Winter (1999: 230) tellingly observes that ritual and the archaeology of mortuary practice are rarely explicitly connected.

netherworld, or the remains of ritual performances taking place at the tomb (Winter 1999; Katz this volume). The most abundantly attested object type in the Umm el-Marra tombs is pottery, with many scores of vessels included in the tombs that did not suffer serious disturbance.[24] As in other well-furnished Early Bronze Age Syrian tombs (see, e.g., Porter 1995), there is a marked diversity of vessel types and shapes: cups, bowls, small and large jars, and, in Tomb 1, large storage vessels. Both "common" wares and luxury wares are in evidence. The one major category conspicuous in its absence is cooking ware, with the exception of a large bowl from Tomb 4. One presumes that the vessels originally contained foodstuffs and potable liquids, and it might be posited that the vessels were included in order to provide food and drink for the deceased individuals in the afterlife, installed at the time of the funeral or added gradually in later years.[25] Contemporaneous Near Eastern texts underscore the importance of providing deceased ancestors with food and drink for their sustenance in the afterlife. Unfortunately, they usually fail to indicate where such offerings are to be placed, or whether the funeral should include a substantial provision of such materials (Katz this volume).

It is also possible that the ceramic vessels, including vessels for storing, presenting, and consuming food and drink, represent remnants of a funerary banquet or banquets (Forest 1987). Feasting has been recognized as an important mode of social integration as well as exclusion in early complex societies and has often been observed in funerary contexts (Pollock 2003; Bray 2003). In Syro-Mesopotamia, the *kispum* feast attested in the second millennium B.C. was held in honor of ancestors, usually deceased kings; the locus of these feasts is ambiguous (Tsukimoto 1985). The banquet termed the *marzeah* in Ugaritic and biblical sources also appears to have a mortuary connection but is unlikely to have taken place at the tomb (Lewis 1989).

In third-millennium Syria, the discovery of numerous "champagne vessels" in the monumental Tomb 302 at Jerablus Tahtani has been interpreted to reflect a mortuary feast (Peltenburg 1999).[26] Similar evidence has not yet been produced from Umm el-Marra. While the numerous ceramic vessels in the tombs might be interpreted as the remains of a feast, there is no reason to prefer this interpretation over an understanding of the vessels as being intended, along with their contents, for use in the afterlife. Although the segments of animals found in the Umm el-Marra tombs are probably to be understood as joints of meat, it is difficult to judge whether these are the remains of a feast or provisions for the afterlife; certainly, the inclusion of entire animals in tombs cannot be understood as banquet leftovers.[27] The only substantial hint of funerary feasting at Umm el-Marra is supplied by the oversized cooking ware bowl in the southeast corner of Tomb 4, suggestive of communal consumption (Bunimovitz and Greenberg 2004).

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[24] Even Tomb 3, which was much disturbed, contained sixty-two reconstructable vessels.

[25] In two cases, vessels placed directly on or near the body might supply further support for the provision of the deceased with food or drink for the afterlife: in the lower level of Tomb 4, Skeleton E, although disturbed, had a small cup lying next to the mouth of the skull, and Skeleton B in the upper level of the same tomb had a small ribbed conical cup lying smashed on the chest.

[26] Evidence of feasting has also been inferred in the lavishly furnished royal hypogeum of mid-second-millennium B.C. Qatna (al-Maqdissi et al. 2003). However, an-

imal bones found beneath stone benches in room 1 might also be understood as joints of meat placed in the tomb for the consumption or use of the deceased individuals.

[27] The faunal remains in the Umm el-Marra tombs were analyzed by Jill Weber, who reports that there are no cut marks visible on the whole animals (sheep/goat in Tomb 6, bovid in Tomb 3), making it unlikely that they were eaten. Cut marks are visible on the joints of meat, but the marks appear to be from dismemberment, not filleting. Animals represented in the tombs include sheep/goat (usually the most common type), cattle, dog, equid, goose, duck, hare, pig, fox, weasel, frog, and shrew.

The ceramic vessels from Tombs 5, 3, 4, and 1 and a small number of silver vessels from Tomb 4 include examples of spouted jars, which corroborates the importance of the pouring of liquids and, presumably, of libations in tombs inferred elsewhere (Winter 1999; Porter 2002b: 21). Among the spouted vessels found in Tomb 3 and in both levels of Tomb 4 are one example each of a squat spouted jar with a corrugated shoulder and a spouted jar with a tall ridged neck, a rim with an interior groove to accommodate a lid,[28] and a long spout (fig. 3.7:4–5). Although they could have contained materials intended for consumption in the afterlife, it is tempting to see these vessels as a set used for the pouring of liquids in funerary rituals. Winter (1999) has proposed diverse uses for spouted vessels in funerary contexts in Mesopotamia, including libation, washing of the corpse, and ritual hand washing.[29] The latter entailed the pouring of water over the hands of funerary participants into a smaller vessel catching the water, a ceremony that may have been intended to purify the funerary participants after their contact with death.[30]

The spouted vessels found in association with the equid sacrificial installations (fig. 3.7:1–3) also suggest the importance of the ritual pouring of liquids. Whether this consisted of libations of potable liquids, the collection and pouring out of the animals' blood, or another use remains to be determined. It might be noted that the ceremonies of equid sacrifice associated with the conclusion of treaties in early second-millennium B.C. Syria were accompanied by drinking an unspecified beverage from a cup (Lafont 2001: 266).

In Tombs 4 and 1 are found numerous examples of small ceramic "Syrian bottles," often thought to have served as containers for perfumes, oils, or unguents (Mazzoni 1994). In Mesopotamia, funerary ritual may include the anointing of the corpse with oil (Gadotti 2005: 291) as well as applying sweet oil to the hands of the funeral participants (Katz this volume). The association of Syrian bottles with the bodies in Tomb 1 may add support to an interpretation of their having been used for anointing the corpse, although the Syrian bottles in Tomb 4 are not found directly on the bodies. If the Syrian bottles, spouted vessels, or other receptacles are to be interpreted as vestiges of funerary ritual, they were presumably left at the grave and not used for subsequent purposes by the survivors due to ritual or religious reasons.

Apart from pottery, objects found in the tombs include bronze weapons and ornaments, basalt miniature tables and a grinding implement, ornaments of shell and stone, cockle shells containing kohl, a pair of shell and stone eye inlays, and objects of precious materials such as gold, silver, and lapis lazuli. The objects of precious materials are primarily items of personal adornment (e.g., bracelets, torques, beads, pendants, headbands, toggle pins). Such objects may have been possessions of the deceased individuals in life, items specifically reserved for funerals, or objects intended as gifts to netherworld deities. At present, it is difficult to select which of these options, if not others, seems most apt. In several cases, the ornaments were worn on the body (e.g., the pendants, cylinder seal, and beads on Skeleton A in Tomb 1), but in others the ornaments were found in a group adjacent to the body (e.g., Skeleton B in Tomb 1, Skeletons B and F in Tomb 4).

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[28] A Syrian bottle with the same kind of rim was found in the upper layer of Tomb 4 (Schwartz et al. 2006, fig. 27:4).

[29] Mesopotamian texts often refer to the importance of survivors pouring water as part of their duties in caring for their deceased relatives, although it is not specified whether this act takes place in the tomb (Bayliss 1973). See also the use of oil for ritual purification of members

of the family after the death of a relative, attested in the Ebla texts (Biga 2003: 351, 353).

[30] One squat spouted jar with a corrugated shoulder from the lower level of Tomb 4 contained a small cup inside, as did several jars without spouts, indicating that the two vessel types were used together, perhaps in ceremonies of ritual hand washing.

In addition to jewelry of precious materials, the Umm el-Marra tombs also contained small numbers of silver vessels: one example in Tomb 1 (lowest level) and seven in Tomb 4 (upper level; figs. 3.9, 3.10:1–7). In Tomb 4, five of the vessels were deposited together with a large number of ceramic vessels in the northwest part of the tomb, while a silver (fig. 3.10:3) and a bronze bowl (fig. 3.10:8) were found by themselves in the area between Skeletons B and C,[31] a silver bowl was located in the soil above Skeleton C, and a goblet and two silver cup fragments were situated below Skeleton C. It appears, therefore, that the vessels were not placed in the tomb as a discrete set and, in the majority of cases, they were installed in the tomb together with pottery vessels.[32] It is curious that the silver vessels found in Tomb 4 are so small — perhaps only small quantities of precious liquids (perfumes, oils?) were being used with them.

Other objects found in the Umm el-Marra tombs pose similar questions of interpretation and function. The three miniature basalt tables in the lower level of Tomb 4 associated with Skeletons E and F might be understood as implements for grinding cosmetics, perhaps intended to provide a luxurious existence in the afterlife. Bronze weapons found in Tombs 1, 4, and 6 may be personal possessions, markers of manhood (although a spearhead was possibly associated with the female Skeleton B in the upper level of Tomb 4), provision for life in the underworld, or some combination of the above. Three bronze pegs were deposited in the upper level of Tomb 4 at some distance from the skeletons, and Sally Dunham has suggested the possibility that they are linchpins, perhaps substitutes for wheeled vehicles intended to convey the deceased in the afterlife (Schwartz et al. 2006).

Apart from portable artifacts in the tombs, one can observe that evidence from Tombs 1, 4, and 6 indicates that adults in primary interments were provided with rectangular coffins or receptacles for the body made of organic or other materials, sometimes coated with lime plaster. The secondary burials in both levels of Tomb 4 also bear indications that the bones had originally been placed in a box or container of organic materials. When evidence survived, as in Tombs 1 and 4, the bodies of primary interments were oriented approximately east–west, with the head facing west. In each well-preserved primary interment (Tomb 1 Skeletons A–D, Tomb 4 Skeletons A–B), the legs were flexed, as well as one or both of the arms.

It is to be hoped that the acquisition of more data from the Umm el-Marra mortuary complex as well as further analysis of data already collected will help to refine and expand our understanding of the rituals performed at that complex. However, the discernment of meaning and religious belief from material remains will always pose special challenges, and we are likely to understand only a fraction of the funerary behaviors and meanings involved in the creation and maintenance of the Umm el-Marra complex.

EQUID INSTALLATIONS AND INFANT INTERMENTS

The striking incidence of installations with the skeletons of equids, other animals, and human infants provides further evidence of the richness and peculiarity of the mortuary behavior at Umm el-Marra. While texts have already indicated the symbolic and social significance of equids in mid-third-millennium Syro-Mesopotamia (Archi 1998; Oates, Oates, and McDonald 2001: 286), the Umm el-Marra data provide an unexpected material manifestation of this phenomenon. Presumably the interment of these animals and infants was associated with the ceremonies conducted in honor of the people buried in the adjoining tombs. The animals might

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[31] The silver bowl rested on the tomb floor facing up, while the bronze bowl faced down.

[32] See Salje 1996 on the possibility of drinking sets of metal vessels identified in Mesopotamian tombs.

have been employed for sacrificial offerings to deities or ancestors, or they may have been understood as transportation in the afterlife. One may also note the sacrifice of equids at the conclusion of treaties in early second-millennium Syria (Lafont 2001), which, while not from a funerary context, indicates the continuing ritual role of equids in Syrian society.

Whatever their intended function, it is likely that the ritual importance of equids was connected to their association with the elite and their role as animals of prestige (Schwartz et al. 2006).[33] Their sacrifice would have provided an illustration of the wealth, power, and elite status of the associated deceased individuals and their survivors. The presence of the equid installations at Umm el-Marra provides us with an opportunity to consider the symbolic role of animals in early Syrian complex society, as opposed to the usual archaeological focus on their role as a source of food (Zeder 2003) or labor.

The inclusion of babies in features otherwise comprised of animals also requires explanation. It may be that it was deemed appropriate to include the bodies of infants together with sacrificed animals as part of the rituals honoring the high-ranking humans buried in the nearby tombs. The infants may have died of natural or other causes and then were inserted in the installations. Given the apparently sacrificial nature of the animal interments, there is also the possibility that the infants had been ritually killed. The killing of persons to accompany the burials of elite persons is often practiced in early complex societies, especially in newly emerging states like Shang China and First Dynasty Egypt, at least in part as a dramatization of the power of the new social order. Why infants and not individuals of more advanced ages were interred here remains to be ascertained. Perhaps they were understood as particularly efficient messengers to the supernatural world, as was the case with the Inca, where sacrificed children acquired power for the living by forging a stronger link with the spirit world (Kamp 2001). According to Stavrakopoulou (2004: 294), child sacrifice in biblical contexts was sometimes undertaken as a way to ensure assistance from deceased royal ancestors.

UMM EL-MARRA AS MORTUARY CENTER

Recently, Anne Porter (2005) has raised the possibility that Tell Banat, despite its monumental tombs and public buildings, was not a political center but instead served as a specialized mortuary site for elites based elsewhere. Can the same interpretation be advanced for Umm el-Marra? The textual evidence from Ebla may indicate that some kings of Ebla were buried, not at Ebla itself, but at another location (Archi 2001: 5), although the archaeological evidence has disclosed a possible royal hypogeum deep below the Ebla Palace G (Matthiae 1997b). Members of the elite might have been interred at some distance from their place of residence for reasons that could be social (e.g., a familial place of origin), political (e.g., burial at the spot where highly respected earlier members of the elite were interred), or religious (e.g., a location with particular sacred resonance), among others. The fact that the Umm el-Marra acropolis is dominated by a mortuary complex in the third quarter of the third millennium, as opposed to a palace or temple, might support the identification of the site as a specialized center for elite mortuary interment. However, the number of sites of diverse size and character with similar elite intramu-

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[33] An extensive discussion of the equid installations is in preparation by Jill Weber, who has proposed that the equids are donkey-onager hybrids (Schwartz et al. 2006: 633–34). With respect to the two sets of three puppies each interred in Installation B, one is reminded of the proposal to sacrifice puppies instead of donkeys at the conclusion of a treaty, attested in the Mari documents of the early second millennium B.C. (Charpin 1993: 182–86).

ral tombs (e.g., Jerablus Tahtani, Ahmar, Banat, Biʿa, Mari) suggests that the practice of inter-ring high-ranking individuals in intramural tombs was not restricted to specialized sites but was relatively common in the mid–late third millennium B.C. in western Syria.

A MIDDLE BRONZE AGE MONUMENT: THE PERSISTENCE OF MEMORY

Although tombs were no longer built in the Acropolis Center at Umm el-Marra by the end of the third millennium, the special character of the area is again evident in the early second millennium B.C., the Middle Bronze Age, after a period of instability if not the total desertion of the entire site (Schwartz et al. 2003). In the early second millennium, a very large and un-usual round stone platform termed Monument 1, subsequently much disturbed, was built above the area of the third-millennium tombs (figs. 3.11–12).[34]

The function of Monument 1 is uncertain, with little non-ceramic artifactual material as-sociated with it except for a fragmentary agate double-eye bead found in debris just to the north of the structure (fig. 3.13). However, the monument's unusual character, scale, central location, and proximity to the third-millennium mortuary complex indicate its special status and probable communal and ritual significance. The construction of a monumental edifice above the Early Bronze tombs in the Umm el-Marra Acropolis Center implies a persistence, or perhaps revival, of memory of the special character of this part of the site. It is not unlikely that the Middle Bronze Age rulers were referring to earlier predecessors to help legitimate their authority.[35] Alternatively, they may have intended to expunge the memory of the third-millen-nium rulers by sealing off the area of their tombs: "the more total the aspirations of the new regime, the more imperiously will it seek to introduce an era of forced forgetting" (Connerton 1989: 12).[36]

CONCLUSIONS

The evidence from Umm el-Marra thus far suggests that funerals and tombs provided an important milieu for newly emerging elites of mid–late third-millennium Syria to represent and reinforce their authority. The physical presence of earlier ancestors in the center of the community and the rituals venerating them provided legitimacy for their descendants, while the utilization of social memory helped to sanction elite control and naturalize social hierar-chy. Together with evidence of ancestor veneration is its opposite, the intentional desecration and sealing up of certain tombs, presumably as the result of political changes and animosities within the elite sphere. We may infer, therefore, that elite power was not monolithic at Umm el-Marra but could be characterized by conflict and competition.

After the tombs fell out of use, the mortuary complex itself became an object of memory, or the obliteration of memory, when Monument 1 was built on top of it in the early second mil-lennium B.C. In this period, the Acropolis Center was again a sacred landscape, although its meaning and attendant rituals had probably changed.

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[34] If the curving edge of the feature as currently exposed can serve as a guide, the monument would have a diam-eter of ca. 37 meters.

[35] As a possible analog, one can cite the reverence shown by the Greeks of the Iron Age toward tombs of the Mycenaean period (Antonaccio 1995).

[36] It is also possible that the builders of Monument 1 made use of a high point on the site and were not con-cerned with (or aware of) the significance of earlier structures.

I have no doubt oversimplified the actions and ideas of the people in question and may have attributed more shrewdness and intentionality to the Syrian Bronze Age elites than they deserve. I might be overly cynical about their motivations as well. We tend to think of ancient rulers, as René Girard (1987: 54) disapprovingly remarked, as "glorified gang-leader[s], supported by pomp and decorum, capable of dissimulating [their] origin with deft propaganda concerning 'divine right.'" The reality may well have been much more nuanced and driven by historical specificities. It is also difficult to gauge how successful the dissemination of elite ideologies really was; rituals and ideologies of resistance may also exist (Kertzer 1988: 2), but they are more difficult to discern in the archaeological record than wealth-laden funerary monuments.
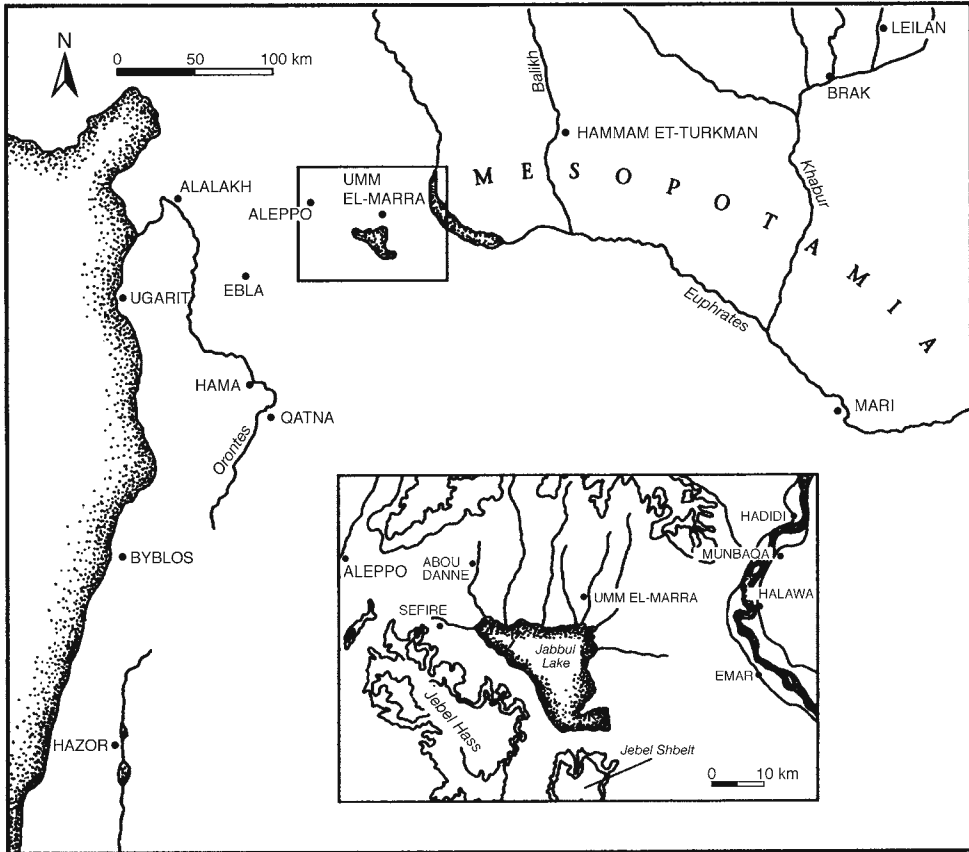
Figure 3.1. Syria, with Jabbul Plain Inset
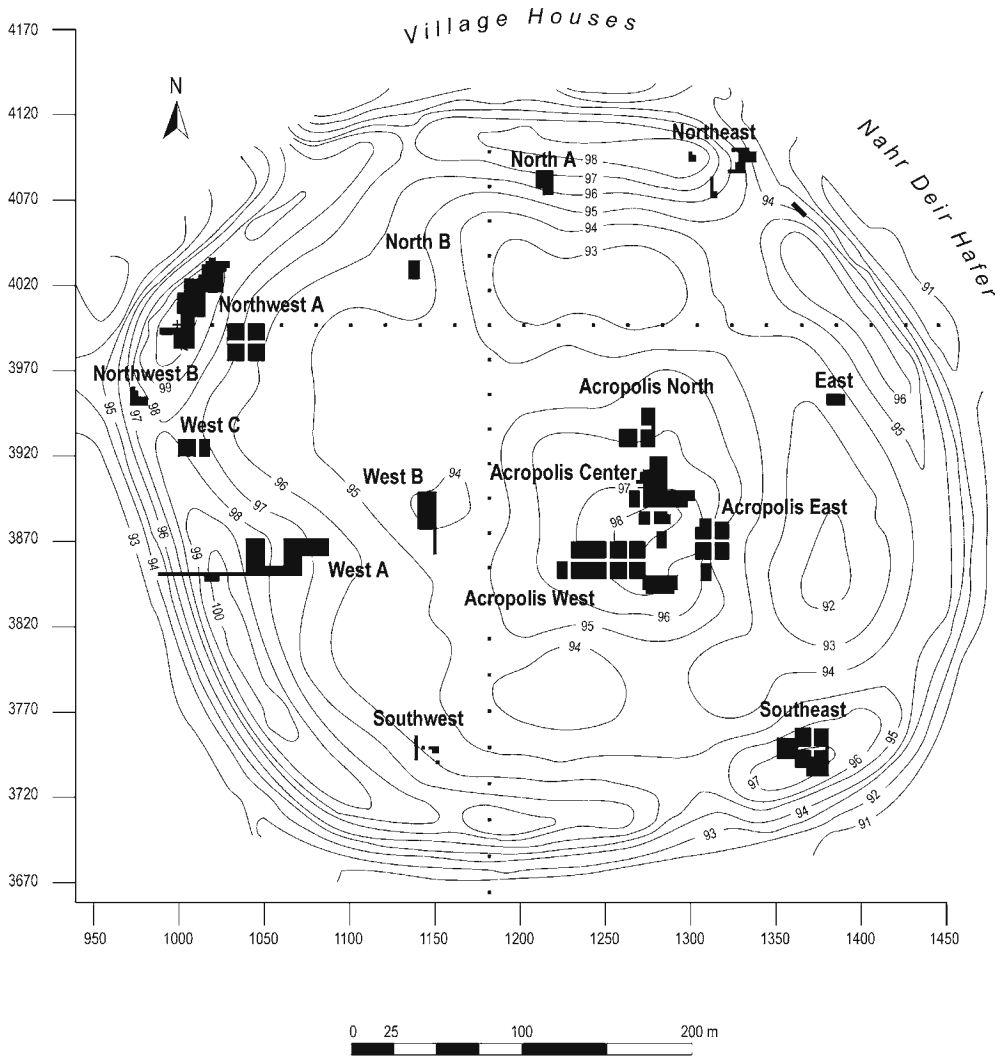
Figure 3.2. Umm el-Marra
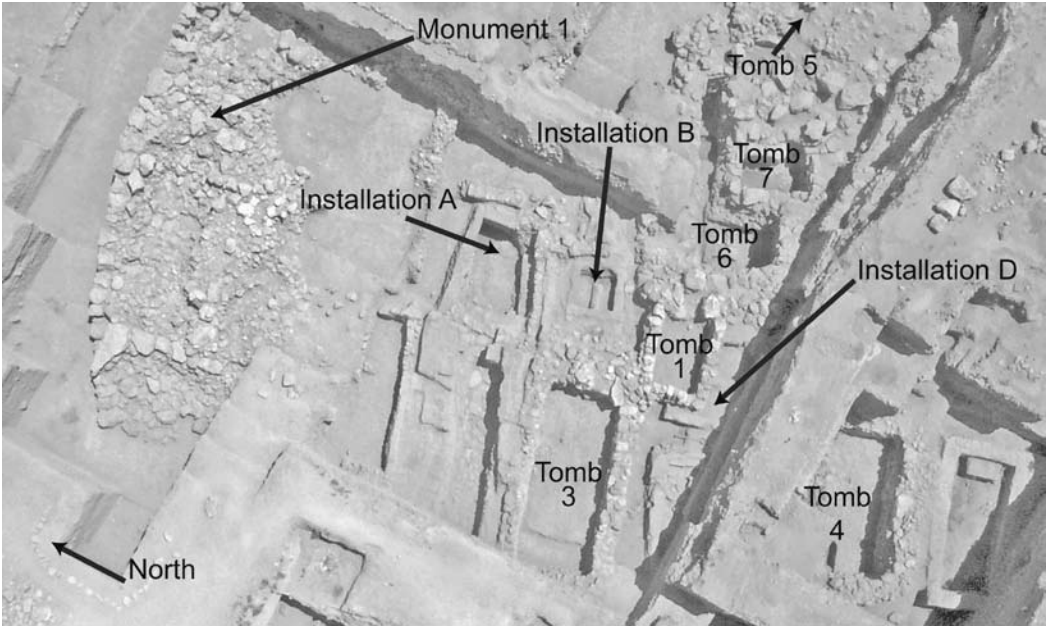
Figure 3.3. Acropolis Center Excavations, Umm el-Marra
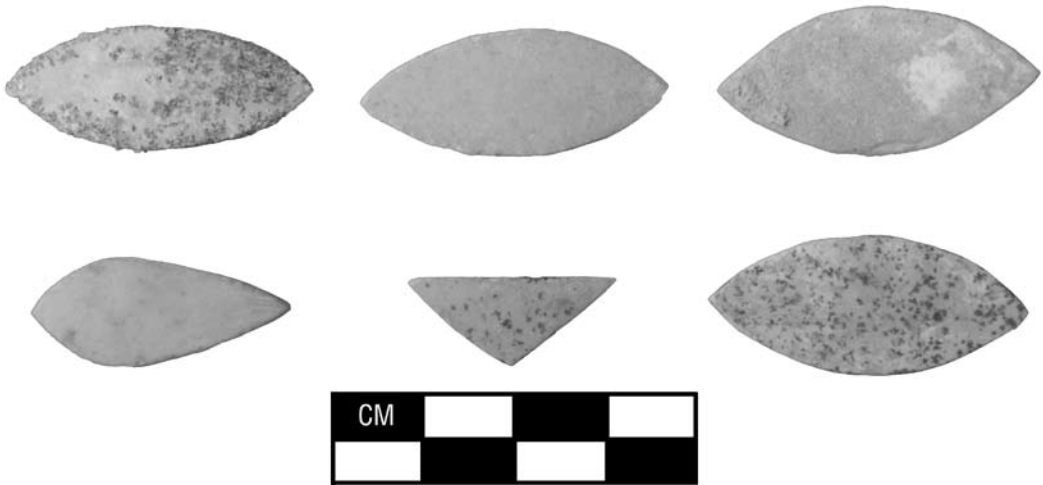
Figure 3.4. Ostrich Shell Inlays, Tomb 4 Lower Level
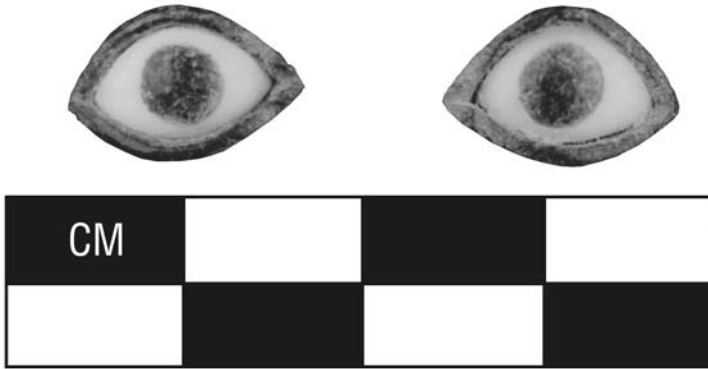
Figure 3.5. Inlay Statue Eyes, Tomb 4 Lower Level

Figure 3.6. Tomb 4 Upper Level (note vessels at higher elevation, lower left).
Test Trench at Lower Right
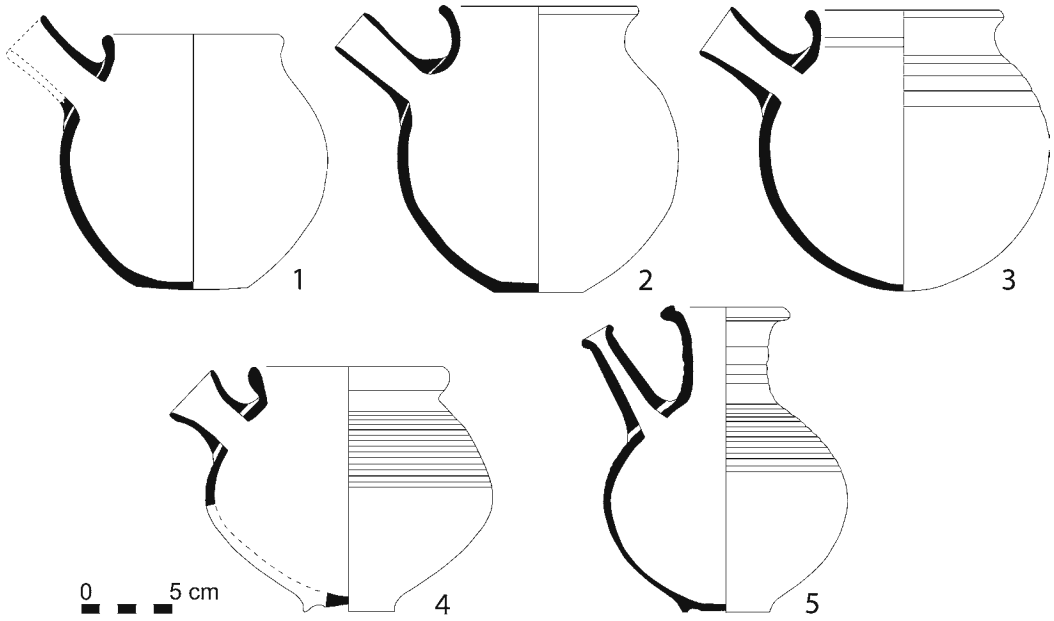
Figure 3.7. Spouted Vessels from Installation B (1), above Installation D (2), Installation D (3), and Tomb 4 Upper Level (4–5)

Figure 3.8. Installation D, Looking East

Figure 3.9. Silver Vessels from Tomb 4 Upper Level
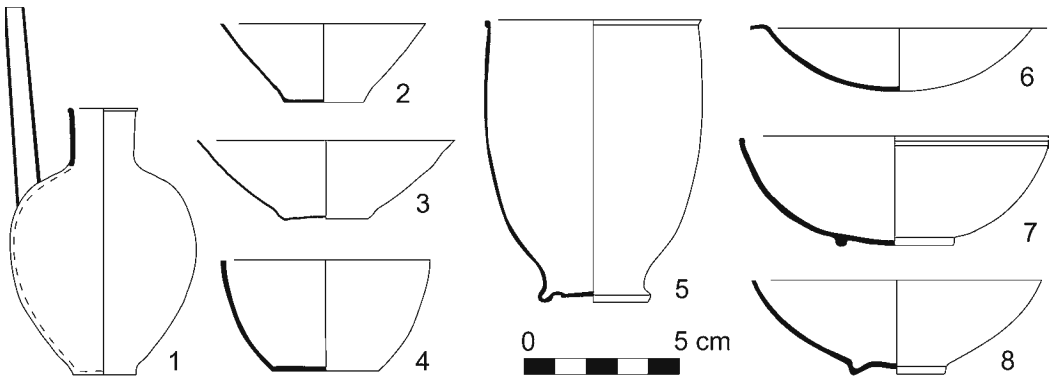
Figure 3.10. Silver (1–7) and Bronze (8) Vessels from Tomb 4 Upper Level

Figure 3.11. Monument 1, Looking Southwest. Portions to South (upper left)
Previously Excavated and Removed

Figure 3.12. Monument 1, Looking East
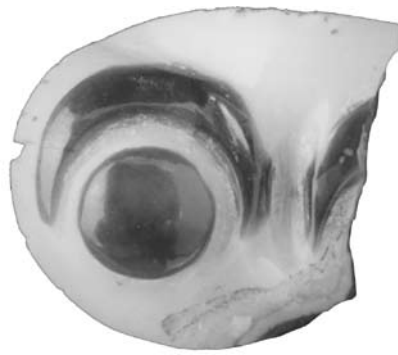
Figure 3.13. Agate Double-eye Bead Found North of Monument 1

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4

MORTUARY RITUALS, SOCIAL RELATIONS, AND IDENTITY IN SOUTHEAST SPAIN IN THE LATE THIRD TO EARLY SECOND MILLENNIA B.C.

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RITUALS, MORTUARY RITUALS, AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ANALYSES

We can sometimes learn a lot from the terminology used by disciplines such as archaeology, especially in relation to their intellectual development. Some terms are very much of their time but persist in usage because they have become embedded in thought or institutionalized. Other terms take on different meanings or find different contexts as the intellectual climate changes. An example of the first would be the Three Age system: few would argue that the term "Neolithic" now serves any purpose in guiding detailed research, given the questions we ask about early agricultural societies, but it is still used for broad, classificatory purposes (e.g., Neolithic Britain/Europe). Reference to "mortuary rituals" or "mortuary practices" is rather different; in the case of the former, the rituals that have been studied in the main relate to the disposal of the body and what this can tell us about past societies, while "mortuary practices" is a term used in archaeology since the 1960s to refer to more or less the same activities, avoiding the restriction to just "burial practices" (one way of disposing of the dead body) while downplaying the "ritual" side. "Mortuary practices" also have taken on a slightly different meaning with the advent of practice theory or structuration theory in archaeology since the 1980s, the emphasis now being on the social practices involved in dealing with death and how these might change through time.

The study of ritual in archaeology is one of those topics that has gone through cycles of popularity, perhaps in relation to the popularity of more materialist or idealist philosophies and theories. Nilsson Stutz (2003: 18–55) traces the development of different theoretical approaches to the study of ritual in anthropology and how these have influenced archaeology: the Durkheimian focus on ritual's function in maintaining "communal solidarity" through the expression of social ideals was followed by "neo-functionalist" approaches that argued for a role of ritual in maintaining societal adaptation to its environment. Next, Nilsson Stutz outlines the structuralist approaches that emphasized the history, contents, and meanings of the rituals themselves and how their symbolic communication was central to the reproduction of social relations. Finally, Nilsson Stutz turns to approaches that pay less attention to the meanings of the rituals and more to their practice(s) and how such practice(s) is/are determined by, but determining of, the structure of rituals and, like other social practices, of society as a whole. Equation of these different approaches with different stages in the intellectual development of archaeology is inevitably crude, but broadly Nilsson Stutz ties in functionalist approaches to processual archaeology, and structuralist and practice theory approaches to post-processual archaeology.

I do not wish to engage here in a detailed discussion of this intellectual history of ritual, nor of how anthropological "leads" have been followed by archaeologists of different theoretical persuasions. All I would propose is that attitudes towards the study of ritual in archaeology have ranged widely, from being thought to be unfeasible (Hawkes 1954), epiphenomenal (Binford's 1968 reference to "palaeopsychology"), and possible without ethnographic/historical sources (Howey and O'Shea 2006) to inevitable given the presence of ritual as practice in everyday lives (Bradley 2005). The current focus on ritual as practice and performance, materialized in archaeological evidence, and a central part of cultural transmission, rather than a search for meaning and past beliefs, owes an explicit debt to non-archaeological authors such as Bloch (1989), Bell (1992, 1997), Humphrey and Laidlaw (1994), Connerton (1989), and Sahlins (1976, 2000).

When it comes to the study of the rituals associated with death, this focus on practice, both in terms of action and in terms of the underlying ideas of practice/structuration theory (e.g., Bourdieu 1977; Giddens 1984), brings a different meaning to the term "mortuary practices" (as pointed out above), while it is also asserted that processual archaeology "did not notice that problematizing how ritual works should be the fundamental step in analysing mortuary practices" (Nilsson Stutz 2003: 119). According to this critique, processual approaches to mortuary analysis (e.g., Brown 1971; Binford 1971) bypassed ritual in the pursuit of reconstructions of social structure. The argument here is that this "dash for structure" meant that these archaeologists "failed to take into account consideration that ritual can distort, idealize, manipulate, and mask the 'reality' of social relationships" (Nilsson Stutz 2003: 119). Mortuary rituals and burials may be used, as Bloch and Parry (1982: 35) put it, "to construct an idealised material map of the permanent social order."

This argument has been part of archaeological discourse for the last two decades (e.g., Hodder 1980, 1982; Parker Pearson 1982), so much so that it appears to have become axiomatic in any study of the disposal of the dead. It is also worth noting that an emphasis on the study of this disposal in the context of other evidence for past social relations has also been evident, if not widely practiced, over a similar period of time (e.g., Parker Pearson 1984). My approach in this paper depends upon the basic argument that the process of archaeological inference of past social relations from the material traces of social practices is more dialectical (Lull 2000b: 579) than linear. By this I mean that we do not simply develop direct inferences of past social relations from the preserved traces of past mortuary rituals. Instead we move back and forth on one side between the culture and biology of the dead (e.g., how far are our inferences on social differences based on graves, grave goods, etc., supported by biological differences of age, sex, diet, and health as seen in the dead themselves) and on the other between the material traces of the living and the dead (e.g., how far are the range and intensity of differences seen in mortuary practices matched by differences in the social relations of production seen in settlements and everyday life?). In this way of working, any groupings identified in analyses of the culture and biology of the dead are what Lull (2000b) calls "social hypotheses" rather than social facts.

For archaeologists there is an issue of scale, whether in time or space. If we take the unit of analysis for mortuary practices as being the cemetery, and as such, as representative of a community (although this is clearly not always the case), we have to situate our "social hypotheses" within the larger, regional scale of the social networks and systems within which the local communities exist and reproduce. This enables us to deal with questions as to the extent to which local mortuary rituals are expressive of wider social relations and identities. The search for meaningful patterns, using both cultural and biological data, by quantitative analyses of cemeteries which may contain several hundred burials deposited over hundreds of years, makes the assumption that the symbolism of social relations and identities through this length of time remains unchanged (Chapman 2005). As O'Shea (1984: 14) has put it, "a short use-life minimises the potential for diachronic change,

but may provide an insufficient sample for meaningful analysis, whereas the large cemetery, ideal for social analysis, often has the greatest potential for diachronic distortion." Furthermore, if we are to evaluate "social hypotheses" from mortuary practices against archaeological evidence for social relations of production in settlements, then we need to be using comparable chronological scales.

This approach is important for two reasons. First, it enables archaeologists to deal effectively with the ritual "screen" though which we try to perceive the social relations and interest groups (i.e., structure and identity) of past communities. The actual material traces of those mortuary rituals are often limited to the final stage of interment, but there is still potential for the inference of mortuary and other ritual practices, involving both the dead and the living, from material remains in the archaeological record (e.g., Bradley 2005). Secondly, this dialectical approach is particularly important in contexts in which there is hereditary or institutionalized inequality, what archaeologists have variously called chiefdom, stratified, or state societies. Archaeological evidence lends itself well to inferences on production and consumption, on who was producing what and for whom, or who was being supported by, and in turn exploiting or appropriating the labor of, others. Such societies have been a focus of interest among archaeologists since the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when the conspicuous consumption of wealth in burials was revealed in both the east (e.g., the shaft graves of Mycenae) and west (e.g., the Argaric Bronze Age burials of southeast Spain) Mediterranean basins. In both areas there was, and is, also good evidence for activities of production and consumption within settlements. I would argue that we have still to exploit fully the potential of such evidence from both funerary and domestic contexts in the inference of both social structure and identity in the past. The rest of this paper tries to show how this potential is being exploited in southeast Spain.

DEATH AND LIFE IN THE BRONZE AGE OF SOUTHEAST SPAIN

Major changes took place in settlement location, architecture and layout, material culture, and the disposal of the dead in southeast Spain at ca. 2250 B.C., initially focusing on the Vera basin but then expanding over an area of nearly 50,000 square km of what are today the provinces of Almería, Granada, Jaén, and Murcia (see Chapman 1990, 2003). In archaeological terminology these changes mark the transition from third-millennium B.C. Copper Age groups to the Argaric group of the Early Bronze Age. Debate centers on the nature of Argaric society and the extent of political authority, between those who regard it as being comparable to so-called tribal or chiefdom societies and those who make a case for the existence of an early state society (as debated in Lull and Risch 1995; Gilman 2001; Chapman in press). Instead of debating this broader issue, I focus on how the burial evidence has been studied and then show how social hypotheses based on this evidence are being evaluated against data on production and consumption from settlement contexts.

During the third millennium B.C. the disposal of the dead that is preserved in the archaeological record took place by collective inhumation in megalithic tombs located outside of settlements. Although our knowledge of the mortuary practices relies on variable evidence from excavations carried out mainly in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Leisner and Leisner 1943), it is sufficient to support the inference of interment of kin-based groups, with individual recognition largely denied in favor of the group (e.g., degrees of disarticulation of the dead, non-association of artifacts with particular individuals) and rituals taking place in defined areas outside (e.g., in forecourt areas, small enclosed spaces on the outside of tomb mounds, and/or associated with individual/pairs/lines of standing stones) as well as inside the tombs (for discussion, see Chapman 1990: 178–95; Micó 1993). There is no evidence at present for any ritual activity associated with the dead inside the settlements and no evidence on the disposal of people not included in the

megalithic tombs. Such monumental tombs and their external rituals were visible, especially when the tombs were grouped into cemeteries (as at Los Millares), located on prominent points in the landscape, and eternal (even though some tombs may have gone out of use and been sealed, the settlements with which they were associated were occupied for a period of up to eight hundred years), and as such a part of the identity and social memory of local communities (see Chesson this volume). Differences in the size and artifactual contents of these tombs are interpreted in terms of the activities of competing groups such as lineages.

It is not possible to relate particular tombs and their dead to households within the settlements. Where domestic structures have been excavated, there is little evidence to suggest major differences in access to production or the instruments of production and no evidence for such differences in storage capacity between households. In the cases of metallurgy and flint-working, there is evidence for production within specialized areas (Chapman 2003: 126) and it has been proposed that craft specialization was present for flint-working (Ramos 1998) although not for metallurgy (Montero 1993). In the case of the latter, specialized production areas may have as much to do with the needs, and indeed dangers, of the activity. Even if craft specialization is inferred, this need not imply that third-millennium Copper Age societies were somehow more "complex" or had hereditary inequalities, as Perlès (1992) and Vitelli (Perlès and Vitelli 1996) have argued persuasively for early agricultural societies in Greece.

The emergence of the Argaric group in ca. 2250 B.C. is marked by a shift from this collective inhumation in megalithic tombs outside of settlements to intra-mural, individual (sometimes double and even triple) disposal in artificial caves, pottery urns, stone cists, and pits. The containers for the dead are no longer visible and eternal parts of the cultural landscape outside of settlements, but hidden beneath the floors and behind the walls of domestic structures (although there are examples of Argaric interments in megalithic tombs; see Chapman 1990: 196), or, as in the Copper Age, disposed of in ways which have left no material traces (Chapman 1990: 200). There is no evidence for the rituals of the dead apart from final interment and that, as in the Copper Age, was hidden from public view. But with the exception of double (and possibly triple) burials in the same container (Castro et al. 1993/94; Lull 2000b), interment was in one stage and there was no subsequent processing of body parts and bones after decomposition.

The concentration of items of high social value with a comparatively small number of Argaric burials has provoked inferences of "chiefs," or some kind of stratified society, since their discovery in the 1880s. While early studies focused on wealthy, individual burials, Lull (1983) proposed the existence of a series of ranked social groups, with evidence of ascribed status as seen in wealthy child burials. The quantitative analyses of grave goods and their containers by Lull and Estévez (1986) considered a 20% sample of Argaric burials on a regional scale. They proposed the existence of five levels of Argaric society. Of these, Groups 1–2 had the grave goods of the highest social value, with such symbols of authority as copper halberds and swords, silver diadems, and gold ornaments in Group 1 and silver ornaments in Group 2. Group 3 had associations of copper awls and daggers (with females) and copper axes and daggers (with males). Group 4 graves had only a single metal artifact or a pot and Group 5 tombs had no grave goods at all. Burials of Groups 1 and 2 were overwhelmingly "wealthier" than Groups 3–5 and were put together as representative of a "dominant class" (Lull and Estévez 1986: 451), including males, females, and children. Their "social hypothesis" was of the existence of a class society. The presence of weapons was taken as evidence of the presence of institutionalized force or coercion. The social value attributed to items such as halberds, swords, and diadems is also shown by their rarity (respectively 1.4%, 0.3%, and 0.3% of the total number of Argaric artifacts) and by their exclusive deposition with burials (for the differential deposition of artifacts in domestic and funerary contexts in the Argaric, see the re-

cent publications on Peñalosa and Cerro de la Encina: Contreras 2000; Aranda Jiménez 2001). The standardization in burial containers and in the types and production of grave goods across the full area occupied by the Argaric supported their proposal of a regional, hierarchical social system.

While this analysis focused on large numbers of burials on a regional scale, it had the potential for what O'Shea (1984: 14) called "diachronic distortion," in that all burials within a seven hundred year period (ca. 2250–1500 B.C.) were treated as being part of the same analytical unit. We did not know the extent to which social groupings remained constant through time, nor did we know how far changes took place in the symbolism of such groupings. The solution was to begin a program of extensive AMS C14 dating on human bone, initially from stratified sites such as Gatas (Castro et al. 1999b) and Fuente Álamo (Schubart, Pingel, and Arteaga Matute 2000), where the burials were deposited in the sequence of occupation structures and deposits, and later from selected burials containing specific grave good associations from other excavations from Almería in the south to Murcia in the north.

A number of observations followed from this dating program, when set within the wider context of conventional radiocarbon dating of the Argaric group across the whole region of southeast Spain (Castro et al. 1993/94; Lull 2000b; Chapman 2005). First it is now possible to divide up the Argaric group into at least three main periods: ca. 2250–1950 B.C., 1950–1700 B.C., and 1700–1550 B.C. Secondly, the full range of burial containers was used pretty much throughout the Argaric period, although a much larger sample of dating is required to evaluate their relative frequencies at any one time and there are regional differences in such frequencies. Rather than being limited to successive chronological horizons, these containers were available for use in mortuary rituals and were one aspect of the marking out of social identity. Thirdly, there are differences in the representation of burials by age at different periods. For example, adult burials are predominant before ca. 1900 B.C., while infant, child, and juvenile burials are more frequent ca. 1700–1550 B.C. Once again this pattern could be an artifact of the dating sample, or it could be telling us something about social inclusion in intramural burial at different periods of the Argaric.

Fourthly, while some grave goods such as copper halberds and pottery chalices have restricted chronologies, perhaps to only a couple of hundred years, many others were available for social selection for five to seven hundred years. In the case of the wealthiest male burials, the association with halberds lasted from ca. 2000 to 1800 B.C., or six to seven generations, and then was replaced by swords and axes. The hypothesis is that the social differences remained the same, but the goods used to symbolize these differences changed through time. This is further supported by recent analyses (Lull et al. 2005) of child and infant burials at the type site of El Argar, where differences in wealth consumption are marked from one month and Lull and Estévez's five levels of Argaric society are clearly distinguished from six years of age. Ritual consumption, in the form of grave goods, increases for the top level during adulthood, with the deposition of halberds, swords, silver diadems, etc.

This combination of direct dating on human burials (rather than on charcoal associated with those burials) and relative dating within settlement deposits is giving us a finer-scale chronology. This allows us to begin to tackle O'Shea's problem of "diachronic distortion" in large-scale burial analyses and gives us a clearer insight into local and regional variation in the symbolic expression of social identity and authority in death. This kind of analysis is rare within Mediterranean archaeology, let alone in other regions of the later prehistoric world (e.g., Savage 2005 on an independent absolute chronology for Predynastic Egyptian cemeteries, and, most recently Weber et al.'s 2005 study of a third-millennium B.C. hunter-gatherer cemetery in Lake Baikal, Siberia).

There is no space to go into further detail on the analyses of Argaric burials here. The point of this discussion is that the "social hypothesis" based on increasingly finer-scale study suggests that there was a regional, hierarchical social, and political system in which identity as part of a small number of levels, or social classes, was consistently marked out through seven hundred years, but the material expression of that identity sometimes varied when it came to ritual consumption. We also have to imagine that there was variation in the extent to which different age groups were afforded archaeologically visible disposal at different periods of time. Excavations in the upland regions of southeast Spain, such as at Cerro de la Encina (Aranda and Molina 2006) and Peñalosa (Contreras et al. 1995), also use patterning in grave goods to make the same social hypothesis, although the details of the number of classes differ.

How does this "social hypothesis" fare when compared with the evidence of production and consumption in the Argaric group? The best evidence for production and consumption is studied at two scales, within and between settlements. Within settlements we can begin to compare the expression of social identity and ritual consumption in burials with evidence of productive activity within the same structures and areas of the settlement. This is, of course, based upon the assumption that the dead inside such structures had lived there during life. There seems no reason to doubt this assumption (which must be subject all the same to evaluation by independent scientific methods), although the converse, that all the people who lived inside these structures were interred within them, does not necessarily follow.

Within the most extensively excavated hilltop settlement at Fuente Álamo (Risch 2002: 267–74), in the north of the Vera basin, there is a correlation between the deposition of the greatest weight of metalwork in intra-mural tombs and their location on the summit and eastern slopes of the settlement. Here two tombs (numbers 1 and 9) out of just over one hundred contained 53% of the weight of metal deposited with the dead at this site, while the areas of the summit and the eastern slope as a whole had 92% of the metal by weight (Risch 2002: 271, fig 7.10). The summit and eastern slopes are also productive areas (e.g., metalworking) and have evidence for storage (a water cistern, possible grain stores, large pottery vessels) and consumption (the concentration of pottery forms, such as the "chalice," for the consumption of food and drink), but few habitation spaces. On the southern slope there was specialization in cereal processing (two-thirds of the total amount of such production on the site as a whole) and little evidence for habitation, burial, or storage, while the western slope was intensively occupied but had little evidence for productive activities and the households here do not appear to have been self-sufficient. Thus it is proposed that metal production and consumption were under the control of a small, dominant class living on the summit and extending on to the upper eastern slopes, with the production of food being carried out almost exclusively on the southern slope by members of households living on the western slope, both for their own consumption and for the consumption of the dominant class. This was a relationship of exploitation and appropriation. The deposition of authority symbols and grave goods of the highest social value with the dead was concentrated in the area occupied by this dominant class.

At a larger scale, an argument has been constructed for unequal access to intensified production within the Vera basin, where both Fuente Álamo and Gatas were located, on its northern and southern limits respectively (Castro et al. 1999a; Castro et al. 1999b). First, there was an inverse relationship between Argaric site size and the extent of available dry and wet farming land, which was in the low-lying areas of the basin, away from the foothill settlements. In other words, the larger sites, with the greater needs for such production, were located farther away from its source and there was unequal access to agricultural production between the primary producers on the valley bottom and the consumers on the hilltop settlements that surrounded the Vera basin. Secondly, there is evidence from settlements such as Fuente Álamo and Gatas (Castro et al. 1999; Risch

2002; Chapman 2003: 137–38) of the storage of grain and instruments of production such as grinding stones and flint sickle blades. The placement of grinding stones in an active state of use in some structures at Fuente Álamo, Gatas, and Cabezo Negro shows that more than ten people could have worked alongside each other in some spaces. In occupation level B of trench 39 at Fuente Álamo, there were twenty-five such grinding stones placed in piles in three main clusters over an area of 10.5 square meters (Risch 2002: 211–16). The numbers of grinding stones per site were far in excess of those needed to support the needs of domestic production and even the entire populations living in these settlements. For Fuente Álamo, Risch (2002: 234–35) calculates that the use of the grinding stones could have produced sufficient flour to support more than 2,500 people in phase III and 1,150 people in phase IV, as compared to the estimated population of ca. 300–400 for the site. This is all the more surprising, given that these stones came from secondary sources in the riverbeds of the basin, close to low-lying settlements (where they were rare) and areas of primary agricultural production.

What is inferred for the Vera basin in the Argaric is a regional, political system in which the processing of cereals into food, as well as possibly textile production (for which the raw material, flax, must have been cultivated along low-lying water courses, given its water requirements during germination and growth, while the frequency of loom weights on hilltop settlements indicates textile production away from these areas) was centralized and under the control of those living in the foothill settlements. Given both increased population size and the focus on extensive cultivation, human labor is argued to have been increased to support the appropriation of surplus. The Argaric is argued to have been a "system of vertical production" (Risch 1998: 148) in which surplus production, as defined in terms of appropriation of the production of others, is channelled into local political and economic activities.

This example from southeast Spain shows how a social hypothesis is developed on the basis of analysis of the material traces of mortuary rituals and then evaluated by examination of evidence for production and consumption on a site and a regional basis. In this context, the hypothesis that there was a class-based society in which mortuary rituals were used, in some recognizable form, to represent the identity of individuals as members of such classes and the authority of a dominant class, requires that methods be developed to recognize the kinds of inequalities in access to production and consumption that we would expect to see in such a society. The fact that the archaeologically visible dead were disposed of within settlements establishes the physical and (by inference) residential relationship which supports our use of such methods within Argaric settlements, which then have to be linked into a wider social, economic, and political network of such settlements within a regional landscape. Thus evaluation of social hypotheses based on burials takes place at different scales, whether in space or time (e.g., comparing evidence for production and consumption in the Argaric with the preceding Copper Age groups), as well as between different categories of archaeological evidence.

IMPLICATIONS

Both the burial and the production evidence for the Argaric group from ca. 2250–1550 B.C. support the inference of a system of regional political authority that was based upon the unequal appropriation of surplus and wealth. This appears as a marked break from the preceding Copper Age groups, despite recent attempts to raise their social and political profiles (e.g., Cámara Serrano 2001). Whatever the Argaric political system is labeled (Chapman in press), I think that it should be included within comparative studies of regional political systems across the Mediterranean in the second and first millennia B.C. The methodology employed, which focuses on the materializa-

tion of authority relations and social identity within mortuary rituals and in relations of production and consumption within and between settlements, is one which I commend to colleagues working in other regions of the Mediterranean. Also I note the potential for finer-scale analyses of mortuary rituals in the archaeological record to reveal differences in the symbolic representation of social relations. Above all else we need to remember that our inferences from past mortuary rituals are only social hypotheses. Unless we situate death within life, our interpretations may at best be incomplete and at worst in error.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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5

COMBINED EFFORTS TILL DEATH: FUNERARY RITUAL AND SOCIAL STATEMENTS IN THE AEGEAN EARLY BRONZE AGE*

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INTRODUCTION

In the last two decades the increase of intensive field research and analytic studies have changed the general picture of the Early Bronze Age in the Aegean area, conventionally named the Early Helladic (EH) period.[1] This period, which according the recent radiocarbon chronology is dated between 3100/3000 (EH I) and 2050/2000 B.C. (EH III),[2] poses a major contrast to the preceding Late Neolithic horizon in almost every aspect of material culture and in socio-economic features of local communities.

This paper is concerned with the mortuary practices and the social structure of the Early Helladic communities on mainland Greece. Early Helladic tombs, though occasionally the subject of general analyses (Pullen 1990, 1994; Forsén 1992; Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 15–22), have attracted scarce attention because cemeteries of this period are very a few and rarely contain very much in terms of grave goods, with the exceptions of the large funerary complexes at Steno on Lefkas and Manika on Euboia, which are quite richly furnished.

The large number of known Early Helladic cemeteries or single burials are dated to the Early Helladic II phase (2640/2450–2200/1250 B.C.), while Early Helladic III tombs and those of the preceding Early Helladic I period are rare and with scarce evidence (fig. 5.1). For these reasons, any tentative general analysis of Early Helladic mortuary practice must begin from the examination of the Early Helladic II evidence, which shows the emergence of a certain level of organizational (political, social, and economic) complexity as well.

The first remarkable transformation arises from the nature and the structure of Early Helladic settlements. The settlements of modest, monocellullar houses predominant throughout the Late and Final Neolithic Period gave way to agglomerative villages of multi-roomed rectilinear houses that were almost certainly characterized by different modes of household production, kin, community organization, and strategies of wealth accumulation. Particularly in the Argolid there is a comparable increase in the number of sites. Some scholars have claimed that it was the need for a reliable water supply that determined site location in the northeast Peloponnese in the Final Neolithic and across the Early Helladic I–II (Van Andel and Runnels 1987; Johnson 1996).

[1] Numerous studies can be mentioned, in particular those general researches on Early Helladic Greece: Alram-Stern 2004; Pullen 1985; Renard 1995.

[2] For the recently published surveys of the Early Bronze Age chronology, see Alram-Stern 2004: 151–216; Coleman 1992; Manning 1995; Rutter 1993: 106–07.

If these communities were in fact environmentally constrained and circumscribed, this factor would surely explain why they did not split into smaller units and consequently developed some form of centralized organization to regulate access to resources.

However, it is not necessary to invoke only environmental circumscription as an explanation for the Early Helladic I–II settlement pattern in the Peloponnese. In the investigated cases in Argolid and Laconia, the settlement pattern has two different trends: nucleated sites in the lowland and dispersed sites in the hinterlands.[3] This is not a temporal phenomenon, as some scholars have suggested (Wiencke 1989: 498–99; Mee 2001: 12), but may be a reflection of different agricultural regimes. The large agglomerations are clearly concentrated in the areas of the traditional Neolithic agricultural settlements, whereas the discrete, dispersed hamlets are the results of a new colonization of areas not previously occupied.

If the hamlets dispersed in the hinterlands represent small rural communities, the large nucleated towns in the Early Helladic I–II Peloponnese are the first examples of proto-urban centers, roughly speaking. Monumental architecture, in the form of the so-called "Corridor Houses," is attested at Lerna, Akovitika, Zygouries, and Kolonna at Aegina[4] (fig. 5.2a). The *Rundbau* at Tiryns may be interpreted as a massive communal granary (fig. 5.2b; Kilian 1986), and clay sealings at Akovitika, Asine, Corinth, and Lerna clearly indicate a certain level of administrative activity (Pullen 1994: 48–50; Renard 1995: 288–95).

Nucleated settlements, as expected, would clearly have created a complex network of affiliations and alliances which may have been exploited by some emerging households. Closely related to such households are the circulation of exotic and luxury goods, such as Urfirnis pottery, metal artifacts, and marble vases produced in the Cyclades.[5] This picture indicates that there were supra-regional contacts and it seems that a higher level of social organization, marked by institutionalized inequality, would have been almost inevitable in the case of the large nucleated proto-urban settlements (Konsola 1986).

Based on this general framework, the analysis of the Early Helladic mortuary practice becomes a remarkable tool to better explain the political and settlement hierarchies, as well as levels of socioeconomic differentiation. As I clarify further below, the changing patterns of mortuary expenditure and symbolic forms expressed in tomb architecture and grave goods are the visible interface of a increasing centrality of funerary rituals as an occasion for prestige competition and the negotiation of social identities at both local and regional levels.

THE SPATIAL DIMENSIONS OF THE MORTUARY PRACTICE

One of the most relevant differences between Late Neolithic and Early Helladic I mortuary practices and those of both earlier and later periods is the consistent use of extramural cemeteries, namely burial grounds that were spatially separated from the settlements or, more generally, from the areas of the living communities.

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[3] For the Southern Argolid, see Jameson, Runnels, and Van Andel 1994: 358–62. For the Argive Plain, see Kilian 1986: 69–70. For Laconia, see Mee 2001.

[4] Wiencke 1989: 496–97, 503–05; Renard 1995: 177–79, 182–89.

[5] The topic of trade in the Early Helladic period has been subject of much recent scholarly debate and discussion. The analysis of the archaeological record does not give salient contribution in order to describe and differenti-

ate the wide range of mode of exchanges including trade activity for profit, reciprocity, and redistribution. On this point, see Van Andel and Runnels 1987; Cosmopoulos 1991; Wiencke 1989: 500–01; Rutter 1993: 119–22. For the circulation of mainland pottery in the Early Helladic II, see Rutter 1993: 122. The circulation of Cycladic items in mainland Greece has been the focus of some general studies from Sampson 1993; Broodbank 2000: 305–09.

Numerous Early Helladic I burials of adults and children were located adjacent to or within contemporaneous or abandoned buildings, as attested at the extensively investigated sites of Asine (Pullen 1990). Nevertheless, large extramural cemeteries of rock-cut shaft tombs were in use at Manika in Euboia, where the Early Helladic II–III necropolis occupies 5–6 hectares with 5,000 tombs (fig. 5.4; Sampson 1987). At Ayios Kosmas (Attica), there were two cemeteries of stone-lined/built cist graves, but the absence of burial offerings from the South Cemetery does not permit the assumption that they were contemporary (fig. 5.3; Mylonas 1959: 115).

Therefore, the Early Helladic I practice of extramural burial was not without local precedents; one could claim some significant examples in the mainland Late Neolithic period. In Thessaly at Platia Magoula and at Soufli Magoula, both dated to the Tsangli-Larissa phase, the cemetery was located some way outside the settlement and was used exclusively for cremation burials (Gallis 1996: 172–73). Similar large extramural cemeteries are known in other parts of Greece, such as at Kephala on Kea and at Tharrounia in Euboia, both dated to the Late Neolithic phase (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 6–8; Fowler 2004: 78–90).

It is important to note that exceptions to the patterns of extramural burial have been observed in some sites of Peloponnese. Intramural graves include adult and child burials. At Berbati, Pelikata on Ithaka Island, and Strephi (Elis), adults were buried in pithos graves located in intramural spaces (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 15). In the Unterburg at Tiryns, in an Early Helladic II context, a woman was buried into a domestic area; similar evidence is reported in the Early Helladic settlement at Ayios Stephanos (south Laconia), where the adults are women (Cultraro 1998: 107). In the Kadmeion hill at Thebes, in an Early Helladic II–III context, adults where buried in the intramural graves, whereas at Kouphovouno skeletons of adults were found in two pit graves located in the settlement (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 15).

As for child graves, intramural burials have been frequently noted in Early Helladic II settlements at Asine, Tiryns, Tsoungiza, Voidokilia, Askitario, Ayios Stephanos, Kouphovouno, Eutresis, Thebes, Athens, Kolonna at Aegina, and Kirrha (Cultraro 1998: 107–10).

The intramural graves are rarely preserved examples of alternative mortuary treatments, that is, of modes of disposal accorded to individuals who were typically excluded from the formal cemetery on the basis of age, sex, manner of death, or other social factors. This explanation finds support from the analysis of skeletal remains, which identifies a preponderance of juvenile and adult female individuals (Cultraro 1998: 110–12). However, the limitations of the present archaeological documentation make it difficult to clarify the circumstances associated with the nature of the domestic areas, in other words, whether or not these settlement units were definitively abandoned when the burial was located. Only in the case of the Unterburg at Tiryns the evidence suggests that the adult female might be buried in an abandoned habitation floor.

Apart from these cases of single intramural burials, the main mortuary practice in Early Helladic mainland Greece is the emergence of formal cemeteries and distinct burial areas located within a few hundred meters of adjoining residential sites. These changes in mortuary practice, including either the use of segregated burials in domestic areas or the shift to extramural cemetery, must have been articulated with a much broader complex of ideological and socioeconimic statements that probably were simultaneously developed. For example, according to the model elaborated in the Chalcolithic society in Cyprus (Bogucki 1993; Webb 1995; Keswani 2004: 10–13), the practice of plow agriculture, the shift of more stable agricultural communities, and attendant changes in patterns of wealth accumulation would have had important ideological ramifications, particularly with regard to perceptions of the value, permanence, and heritable transmission of movable and immovable property (fig. 5.5). Houses,

land, and other items were now probably passed down through multi-generational family groups. Additionally, some related ethnographic accounts of mortuary ritual closely support (Woodburn 1982) the establishment of formal burial grounds in extramural areas, where the group identity is expressed through the construction and maintenance of mortuary landscape of the ancestors; this may have been viewed as a ritualized expression of social structure.

TOMB AND ARCHITECTURE VARIABILITY

One of the salient aspects of the mortuary practice in the Early Helladic mainland Greece is the considerable variability in the funerary architecture. Apart from the simple pits used in the intramural graves, there are three main conventional funerary structures: the stone-lined/ built cist tomb, the chamber tomb, and the tumulus-type (fig. 5.6). The causes of this variability have long been a subject of debate among some scholars who have emphasized either the cultural transformations or possible population movements from northern Greece or elsewhere (Caskey 1986; Forsén 1992). It is important to note that the widespread variability of the Early Helladic funerary architecture shows many common traits with the variation observed from area to area in the preceding Late Neolithic period.

The cist grave constructed of stone slabs is a type mainly attested in Attica, at the Ayios Kosmas, Markopoulos, and Tsepi cemeteries (fig. 5.6a; Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 16–17, figs. 3.4, 3.11). This funerary type has close affinities with the cist tombs largely known in the Cyclades since the Late Neolithic period and into the Early Cycladic I–II (Barber 1987: 76–80). This latter circumstance suggests that the stone-built cist graves on mainland Greece are an adoption of a Cycladic type by local communities. The large group of Cycladic imported objects or of Cycladizating tradition found in the Attic cemeteries mentioned above also offers strong support to this interpretation (Broodbank 2000: 276–79; Sampson 1988: 113–19).

Early Helladic rock-cut tombs show a large distribution in the regions of Central Greece (Boeotia, North Attica, Euboia) and in the northern coastal area of Peloponnese (Cultraro 2000). The tombs consist of a dromos and a circular chamber, that, in some cases (Manika, Corinth) can have a second annex (fig. 5.6b). The origin of this funerary type is widely debated (Alram-Stern 2004: 286–89; Cultraro 2000), and the proposal of a possible connection with the Catacomb Tombs attested in the Caspian Sea and Ural Mountain region during the Early Bronze Age (Zanotti-Rhine 1974) should be re-examined in light of the recent studies on the population movements from this area towards Greece. By contrast, the evidence of rock-cut shaft tombs during the Middle and Late Chalcolitic periods at Cyprus can become a relevant topic of discussion in order to interpret the increase of this funerary type in Central Greece during the Early Helladic I–II, probably with the mediation role played by the Cyclades in the transmission of this architectural model towards the mainland (Cultraro 2000: 485–92).

The last and third funerary type is the tumulus tomb, which shows a specific distribution in the western Peloponnese (Messenia and Elis) and in the Ionian Islands (the R cemetery at Steno on Lefkas; figs. 5.6c, 5.7; Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 17). The tumulus tomb-type is without local precedents, and this circumstance has ultimately contributed to the hypothesis that this funerary typology is the result of population movements coming from the lower Balkans (Müller 1989: 35).

The possible introduction of newcomers from south Albania in the Peloponnese is an argument that finds a strong support in the other cognitive and behavioral transformations in burial practices noted in these areas where tumulus tombs were introduced. Most of the tumuli in the R cemetery on Lefkas contained a *Brennplatz* which W. Dörpfeld interpreted as the remains

of a pyre (Dörpfeld 1927: 220–21). Moreover, there were burnt bones and partial cremations in the tumulus at Olympia (Forsén 1992: 88); ashes and traces of fires are reported from the stone-lined/built cist grave at Elis (Koumouzelis 1981: 270).

Both the migration model and the theory of the local dynamic transformations stimulated from external contacts inspire important questions for the interpretation of burial evidence in the Early Helladic Greece.

- First of all, to what extent do the new forms of mortuary practice noted represent customs of the immigrants' cultural heritage, and to what extent do they represent new ideologies and modes of practice developed by heterogeneous communities interacting within an increasingly complex society?
- Secondly, what do these practices and differentiated tomb architecture, in their initial stage and as they evolved over time, inform us about social structure, strategies, and belief systems of the Early Helladic communities?

These questions must be addressed throughout the analysis of specific aspects of mortuary practice, such as the ritual treatment of the dead, the changing patterns of funerary expenditure, and material symbolism expressed in tomb architecture and grave goods.

RITUAL TREATMENT OF THE DEAD

The main pattern of ritual treatment of the dead is the inhumation. Whereas we have a large number of explored tombs, it seems that both primary and secondary inhumation were practiced. At Ayios Kosmas, while some stone-built cist graves were probably the repositories of sequential primary interments, others contained one or more secondary burials, and some were apparently used for several simultaneous secondary burials (fig. 5.6a; Mylonas 1959: 118–19).

Similar evidence is reported from the cemetery at Marathon: in grave 3 the last buried skeletons were intentionally disarticulated, whereas at a lower level there were two individuals *in situ*, but the skulls had been removed (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 18). In this case it is possible that the corpses were interred with skulls intact and at some later date, probably after the flesh had decomposed, the tomb was re-opened and the skulls were deliberately separated from the bodies.

Secondary treatment of adults appears to have been practiced in cemeteries with rock-cut shaft tombs (Cultraro 2000: 482). At Manika some pits have been interpreted as ossuaries for secondary burials (Sampson 1985: 218–19). At Vouliagmeni/Perachora a rock-cut chamber tomb may be a deposit of post-depositional processes (Chatzipouliou-Kalliri 1983; Alram-Stern 2004: 584–85).

At Manika and in the Avlonaki ossuary in Euboia, some incisions by cutting are observed on the bones of some skeletons. This evidence has been interpreted as a ritual practice in order to sever the tendons so that the legs could be drawn up against the chest and to depose the dead in a contracted position (Fountoulakis 1987). However, the absence of further indications of the paleosteological picture does not permit the conclusion that either this special treatment was reserved to selected individuals on the basis of age, sex, manner of death, and other social factors, or that it was a ritual system with its ideological significance.

The evidence from the most important Early Helladic cemeteries suggests that a program of secondary treatment placing special emphasis on the manipulation of the bones was a very common ritual practice. It was not exclusively related to a specific funerary architecture nor to a local or regional diversity (Braningan 1987). Moreover, it is important to note that in the

contemporaneous funerary practices in the Cyclades, the dead were buried in a contracted position and there is no evidence of secondary inhumation or intentional manipulation of human bones (Doumas 1977: 54–58).

While inhumation was the preferred mortuary practice in Early Helladic mainland Greece, some sites show indications of the use of cremation. The *Brennplätze* in the R cemetery on Lefkas are a remarkable example of this practice (fig. 5.7). Evidence from tomb R4 suggests the following sequence for the cremation practice (Dörpfeld 1927: 227; Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 18): The deceased was laid on the pyre and surrounded by grave offerings. After the cremation, a large part of the human remains and grave goods were stored in a pithos and the rest was left on the pyre; finally the earth-and-stone tumulus was built. In other burials of the same cemetery, some skeletons were found in articulated or in contracted position, and this evidence may be explained as the result of a partial cremation.

Repeated and continuous use of chamber tombs or stone-built cist graves is rare and it is strictly in contrast with the collective mortuary practice well-documented in the contemporaneous Cycladic cemeteries. In some chamber tomb cemeteries in Euboia (i.e., Lithares and Loukisia) and in Boeotia (Lithares, Hypaton) most of the graves contained a number between one and three depositions, while at Manika the maximum is six inhumations (Cultraro 2000: 482–83; Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 19).

This reconstruction supports the explanations of the Early Helladic cemeteries as formal funerary areas reserved to members — both adults and children — of a specific community. Moreover, the cemeteries at Manika and at Ayios Kosmas, thanks to the information about the skeletal remains,[6] give a relevant example of the multi-stage ritual program that presumes no sex or age differences among the individuals buried into the same funerary space. The explanation that these tombs are an expression of a kin group identity finds support in the spatial distribution of the graves and, as it is clarified further, in the burial assemblage.

VARIATIONS AND CONVERGENCES IN BURIAL ASSEMBLAGE

The practice of burying the dead with personal ornaments and other types of grave goods was not uncommon throughout the Late Neolithic period on mainland Greece (Fowler 2004: 90–94), but it seems to have undergone a major expansion and transformation in its social and ideological significance during the Early Helladic period.

The position of the grave offerings is closely related to the tomb form. In the chamber tomb cemeteries in Euboia and in Boeotia the offerings were placed into the funerary chamber, but there is no fixed position. The grave offerings encompass pottery, stone vases, stone figurines, personal ornaments (silver pins, bronze tweezers, bone tubes), and, more rarely, copper artifacts. The better documented case is the cemetery at Manika, where the tombs are not particularly rich and they differ in the number and quality of objects deposed in each chamber tomb. Some of the mortuary features recorded at Manika illustrate differences in the grave offerings system; for instance, graves attributed to female adults include beaked jugs, marble pyxides, and personal ornaments (decorated bone tubes and pins), while men received frying pans, marble figurines, and copper tools (Sampson 1985: 227–33, 1987: 22–23, 1988: 58).

A similar grave offerings pattern involves the intramural burials. At Berbati a man was buried together with a dagger, while a plate was placed in an intramural burial at Ayios

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[6] For Manika, see Fountoulakis 1987; for Ayios Kosmas,
see J. L. Angel, *Appendix* in Mylonas 1959, pp. 169–79.

Stephanos; a clay cup is reported from Kouphovouno (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 18). Among the children's graves explored at Asine there was a token; miniature pottery was found in an infant burial at Lerna (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 20).

Some remarkable differences are noted in comparison of the two of the largest Early Helladic cemeteries in mainland Greece. At Manika the pottery assemblage had indubitable traces of use and it was evidently not produced specifically for the burial ceremonies (Sampson 1985: 227–33). However, the pottery includes shapes which do not occur in the cultural material of the contemporaneous settlement, although the finest pottery was found only in the cemetery. By contrast, a different case is documented at Ayios Kosmas, where the pottery assemblages from the North Cemetery appear to be unfired and of inferior quality, unlike those found in the settlement (Mylonas 1959: 68–71).

A further analysis of ceramic type from different Early Helladic cemeteries in the Peloponnese revealed no significant differences in frequencies of shapes or of used and unused vessels between this mortuary pottery group and that from domestic contexts. It is also noted that the occurrence of pottery associated with serving and storage appears in both the settlement and cemetery contexts at Manika, although the pottery assemblage used in food-processing is infrequently found in the funerary area (Sampson 1988: 64–68).

In contrast, the copper-based artifacts reported from funerary contexts far surpass the finds from contemporaneous domestic strata in both quantity and diversity. This circumstance does not imply that metal goods were not used by living, but it suggests that copper-based items were deliberately accumulated for mortuary consumption. K. Branigan (1975: 42–43) has noted that some knives and daggers found in the R tumulus at Steno on Lefkas display evidence of use (fig. 5.8), while other items (pins and weapons) show casting defects, suggesting that were probably made for symbolic purposes rather than actual use. In a few instances at Manika, valuable marble vases even appear to have been ceremonially damaged or "killed," rendering them useless to the living (Sampson 1988: 58).

We can therefore conclude that in Early Helladic cemeteries the grave goods were not merely accorded to a selected, privileged minority of the dead. However, it is difficult to determine whether the objects deposited were the personal possessions of the deceased or gifts accumulated by their survivors; most likely they were a combination of both. The offering of gifts to the dead may have been regarded as an essential practice of ensuring the favor of the ancestors. It would also presumably have been considered as a relevant ritual system giving considerable prestige to the heirs who exhibited prestigious items, and, in the case of the copper-based and precious metal objects, they ostentatiously removed costly goods from circulation.

MORTUARY VARIABILITY AND SYMBOLISM OF PRESTIGE: THE CASE OF THE R TUMULUS AT STENO

It is extremely difficult to assess differences in wealth and status treatments among individuals in tombs with multiple burials because of the continuous reuse of the funerary space. Moreover, the interpretation of mortuary variability is further complicated by the scarcity of specific osteological studies of the human skeletal remains from most tombs. Therefore, only a few general statements can be offered on this subject.

As for age-based treatment, it appears that children and infants were generally provided with fewer objects than adults and in some cases (Asine, Manika, Ayios Stephanos, and Eutresis) there were no goods. However, some did receive a number of items and occasionally

other valuables as well. The child burial in Tomb 168 at Manika received about ten clay vases (some of them miniaturized) and five marble miniature plates; a marble schematic figurine was also found (Sampson 1988: 32–33). In Tomb 100 three infants (one four year old and two six year olds) were arranged with two clay miniature vases, a unique zoomorphic clay vase, and a marble cup (Marangou 1992: 102–03). Finally, in Tomb 134 two children were buried into a pithos and the grave offerings included three small bone pins which imitated metal ornaments attributed to adults (Sampson 1988: 28).

Distinguishing gender-based differences among adult male and female individuals is especially questionable. In the absence of skeletal evidence one tries to speculate about these indicators believed as "appropriate" to the female world (e.g., spindle whorls, needles, dress ornaments), versus those related to the male activity (certain metal tools, such as axes and weapons). In any case, they are assumptions of binary categories strongly influenced by our own cultural biases. Many ceramic goods and metal objects, such as knives, tweezers, pins, and rings, could well have been "gender natural," and it makes difficult to interpret intact single burials.

However, considering the importance of osteological data for interpreting expressions of individual identity (Meskell 2000), we can consider the presence of weapons as a full or "ideal" indicator of status goods for some men. The R tumulus at Steno on Lefkas is a good point of departure in this perspective (fig. 5.7). Seven graves (R2, R5, R6, R7, R9, R17, and R24) have been identified as Dörpfeld's *Hauptgräber* related to male "weapon-bearing" adults (Branigan 1975: 42–43). Weapons include daggers, spearheads, and swords; the different combination of objects suggests a reconstruction of the distinctive articulation of the warriors' class buried in the R tumulus cemetery at Steno. Grave R24 had six gold rings, a spearhead, and a sword, while graves R7 and R17 contained two (a dagger and a knife) and three weapons (two long daggers and a knife; fig. 5.8:2–4), respectively. Moreover, in both graves gold hilt-sheathings were found, suggesting a close relationship between bronze weapons and gold-work. There a no reason to doubt that these latter graves (R7, R17, and R24) can be plausibly identified as "chieftains' burials," and this interpretation finds support from the gold hilt-sheathings that may be regarded as symbols of power and emblems of leadership (fig. 5.7b; Renfrew 1972: 383; Branigan 1975: 43).

If grave R24 can be identified as burial of a high-ranking man, probably a chieftain, the remaining graves (R2, R5, R6, and R9) seem to be the funerary area related to "retainers" (Branigan 1975: 45). Two features need to be stressed. First, these tombs are clustered at the eastern side of the necropolis and they are also located around the richest grave (R7), that is, its putative chieftain grave (Branigan 1975: 45). Secondly, all tombs are related to male adults who were buried with a panoply consistent of spearhead and dagger.

With regard to the female burials, four of them (R1, R4, pyre R15b, and R17A) contained silver and gold ornaments (gold necklace, gold earring, and silver bangle; fig. 5.8:2). Like the male burials, the female graves are characterized by the selective presence of personal objects and materials of high status. Moreover, it is worth noting that two female tombs (R1 and R26) are the largest tumuli of the necropolis, suggesting the probable link between energy investment in tomb construction and the emerge of "status-consciousness" elite (fig. 5.7).

Further indicators support Branigan's argument that the tumuli cemetery at Steno reflects differences in society and in sociopolitical organization. The first element is represented by the mortuary variability. The primary graves, Dörpfeld's *Hauptgräber*, were accompanied by other tomb forms. Six of the main tumuli (R1, R3, R4, R6, R11, and R12) contained, besides the central grave, up to three other burials with single depositions. The majority of these

burials, called by Dörpfeld *Beigräber*, were children's graves, while only three adults were definitely identified. In addition, the German scholar explored another seventeen burials in nineteen *Nebengräber*, located outside the original perimeters of the tumuli and sometimes the graves are placed in a pebbled extension of the cairn. The majority of *Nebengräber* (with the exception of two children) are related to eleven adults. Among the adults two "older men" were identified in grave R2B and two old women in graves 13D and 13C (Dörpfeld 1927: 226, 234).

Five different types of graves were used at Steno. Among the *Hauptgräber,* the standard type is the pithos grave, while the stone-lined/built cist was exceptionally used. It is of relevant importance that the slab graves occur mainly in the smallest of the tumuli of Dörpfeld's *Hauptgräber* (R27). Pithos and stone-built graves are largely used for both children and adults buried in *Beigräber*, while cist tombs occur among the adult burials in *Nebengräber*, as opposed to a small number of pithos graves (Souyoudzoglou-Haywood 1999: 22).

According to this different funerary typology, there is little doubt that the tumulus was the most exclusive funerary form and that the individuals buried in either *Nebengräber* or *Beigräber* were of lower status or wealth than those in *Hauptgräber* (fig. 5.10). It is also evident that mortuary expenditure, as measured both by energy investment in tomb construction and material, is greater in *Hauptgräber* than that in other categories, where the inferior position of the buried individuals is emphasized by the use of the stone-built cist rather than pithos grave, and by the poor quality of the grave goods (one to three pots).

In terms of reconstruction of group identity, the spatial organization of adult graves (both females and males) and the large number of related children burials in *Beigräber* indicate that the highly stratified society at Steno was structured by blood and kinship ties. The introduction of child graves into the funerary space reserved to the ranked "weapon-bearing" elite attests to the emergence of "status-consciousness" in a socially selected group who stressed sustained and inheritable power. The R26A grave associated with a fourteen year old youth, who was buried with a wealthy woman in the largest tumulus of the necropolis (fig. 5.6c), suggests that age-class was a primary indicator of access to the adult funerary area. If one can establish alleged blood ties between the adult woman and the youth buried together in R26A, there is the possibility that the social groups at Steno lent greater importance to the matrilineal rather than patrilineal descent. Moreover, the analysis of the grave offerings tends to support this reconstruction: the special treatment of the grave goods, which include a pot, a whetstone, and forty-eight arrowheads (maybe originally collected in a quiver of perishable material), emphasizes the close relationship between puberty and hunt activity into the "chiefdom" society as a symbolic metaphor of the celebration of male maturation rites.[7]

The above analysis leads to the conclusion that the social group buried at Steno was a ranked warrior elite based on kinship ties and probably on inheritable power. Moreover, the different mortuary expenditure and variable quality of grave goods in the main funerary types suggests that the elite group, buried in *Hauptgräber*, was accompanied with other adult individuals who appear to be much poorer, and in whom we can identify workers or retainers related to the chieftains on the basis of working connections rather than blood ties.

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[7] Renfrew (1972: 344) interpreted grave 26A at Steno as the burial of a hunter, stressing the presence of forty-eight arrowheads among the grave goods. For the analysis of boar hunting as royal prerogative of the youth aristocracy in Mycenaean society, see Cultraro 2004.

"WEAPON BEARERS" AND "ALCOHOL DRINKERS":
AN OUTLOOK ON SOCIAL PRACTICES

As clarified above, the most distinctive characteristic of the ranked group buried in the tumulus necropolis at Steno appears to be the use and the exhibition of articulated panoplies. Detailed quantitative and qualitative analyses of R tumulus cemetery reveal that the most exceptional copper or bronze assemblages, closely associated with individuals of high rank, are primarily distinguished by the presence of specific weapons that were unattainable by other members of the community (fig. 5.8:1–4). The association of spearheads and long daggers aligns the Early Helladic cemeteries with those in the Early Bronze II Cyclades, where similar weapons are used as indicators of the local highest status members (Broodbank 2000: 253, fig. 83).

There is growing evidence that daggers had existed in the Aegean as early as the Final Neolithic, but once again it is only in the Early Helladic II period that they start to display a symbolic dimension (Nakou 1995). It is also likely that the use of the triangular dagger as expression of the "weapon-bearer" elite has its origin in the imitation of a Cycladic military and symbolic model (Renfrew 1972: 319–20). In the Early Bronze I–II Cyclades, the status domain of the male warrior emerges in the appearance of a rare class of marble figurines known as "hunter-warrior type," and in the deposition of daggers with silver rivets and a silver surface as grave goods (Broodbank 2000: 253, fig. 283). It is very likely that both evidences are the surviving relics of an ideology of warfare, which is common between the island communities for whom the fine line between diving and trading from piracy is often invisible (Renfrew 1972: 398).

Similar to the Cycladic social power model, where the use of silvery surface on the copper daggers to creates illusory silver weapons, the variation in size of a few copper knives or other daggers found at Manika (Sampson 1985: 305–06, 1988: 73–75) suggests that these weapons were basic prestige symbols rather than private paraphernalia of a hereditary elite.

If long daggers or bronze spearheads can be classified as indicators of wealth and social status, other categories of objects reinforce the differentiation in status paraphernalia between the elite group and the rest of the local communities. Elaborate ceramic containers used for drinking and pouring activity, such as askoi and sauceboats (fig. 5.11:6), are widely distributed among *Hauptgräber*, suggesting the exclusive association with the "weapon-bearers" burials (fig. 5.10; Souyoudzoglou-Haywood 1999: 25–27, pl. 50).

The same evidence is reported from the rock-cut tombs cemetery at Manika, where the most impressive pottery assemblage of the "richest" burials provides many significant examples of drinking and pouring vessels (Sampson 1985: 224, 1988: 58–63, table 2).

If we compare the mortuary displays of Manika with those reported from Steno, there is a strong argument that the diversification and elaboration of the ceramic assemblage in the Early Helladic II–III periods may be viewed as evidence for the emergence of a "drinking complex" that could be referred to selected members of the communities. These pottery assemblages, which mainly include one-handled tankards and beak-spouted jugs (fig. 5.11), may be related to the consumption of alcoholic beverages that were produced under elite supervision and probably consumed on occasions of elite-sponsored hospitality and largesse (Cultraro 2001: 69–73).

At Manika this fine table set is commonly defined by the appearance of a loose cluster of drinking and pouring shapes with monochrome black through to red-brown burnished surfaces, a clear derivation of metallic prototypes (Sampson 1993). J. Rutter (1979) has demonstrated

beyond doubt that in the late Early Helladic II a horizon of drinking shapes of western Anatolia derivation spread across the Aegean as far as its western seaboards, assuredly the material traces of Anatolian social drinking practices. If the connection with the Anatolian world is correct, the explosion in the range and number of drinking vessels during the late Early Helladic II might be related to either the start or the elaboration of wine consumption. This latter reconstruction finds support in the archaeobotanic data recorded in different sites of the mainland Greece, which show the increasing consumption of *vitis sylvestris* during the Early Bronze II (Hansen 1988; Alram-Stern 2004: 222). Moreover, the frequency of vine-leaf impressions on some clay pots from the Early Bronze II Cyclades implies that these plants had a certain level of familiarity among the maritime communities of the Aegean Sea. It is very likely that islanders from the Cyclades were responsible for the introduction and consumption of wine or other alcoholic liquids in mainland Greece.

YOUNG SOCIAL REFERENTS OF DRINK CONSUMPTION

We have suggested that the pouring vessels found in some elite graves at Steno and, less frequently at Manika, emphasize the increased importance of formalized drinking ceremonies. However, drinking vessels and elaborate pouring shapes constitute individual sets of ceramics found in some child burials. One or more vases, sauceboats, goblets, and feeding vessels (of small and even miniature size) are sometimes related to child graves (Marangou 1992: 245–46). This funerary practice continues into the succeeding Middle Helladic period and is important because child graves rarely contain funerary objects.

Two examples are known from the Early Helladic settlement at Ayios Stephanos: in both cases they are intramural burials and two bowls accompanied a newborn baby and a six or seven year old child (Taylour 1972: 209, pl. 40a). Similar evidence is reported from the cemetery at Ayios Kosmas: a miniature sauceboat was deposited behind the child in tomb 21A, and a miniature perforated marble (pouring vessel?) accompanied the infant in tomb 24 (Mylonas 1959: 102–03, fig. 165). At Lerna a rich intramural child burial was identified along the western wall of the House of the Tiles (Caskey 1955: 33); the child was accompanied with several miniature vases, among them goblets and an askos. Similar evidence is reported elsewhere; at Asine two intramural child graves dating to Early Helladic III contained three bowls each, and one of these was intentionally inverted (Frödin and Persson 1938: 339), just as a miniature bowl found in the tombs from Ayios Stephanos (Taylour 1972: 209).

In all these cases, we observe a close relationship between some children, to whom was reserved a more articulated mortuary ritual rather than other intramural graves, and the composition of a drinking set pottery. It seems that young members of the Early Helladic local elite symbolically participated in the drinking ceremonies, emphasizing the position of the individual within the social milieu.

FIT FOR THE CHIEFTAINS: ANIMAL OFFERINGS
AND CUISINE OF SACRIFICE

One form of mortuary expenditure that seems to have remained fairly constant in some of the major Early Helladic cemeteries is the sacrifice of domestic livestock, including mainly sheep, goat, and pig, whose bones were recorded inside the burial chamber with the grave offerings. In many cemeteries references to faunal remains are remarkably lacking, perhaps because very little attention was devoted to analyzing any of the bones recovered, human or otherwise.

At Steno on Lefkas carcasses and parts of animals, predominantly pig and sheep, were reported from the pyres and around the tumulus in *Hauptgräber* complex.[8] Animal bone remains were also found at Manika on Euboia; the faunal assemblage includes a dog in one case and sheep in the majority of the graves (Sampson 1985: 222). In many cases the deceased may have received offerings of "joints of meat" with the flesh intact, according to Dörpfeld (1927: 237–38), who observed cut marks on the shafts of some animal bones recorded from the tumuli at Steno. This evidence is immediately suggestive of butchering practices. Also, the preservation of bony material inside the bone shafts suggests that the marrow had not been removed. Presumably, according to the faunal evidence, the remainder of the animals sacrificed to the dead were consumed among the living guests at the funeral.

In both cemeteries above analyzed, faunal remains belong to sheep or goat; pig are reported in a slightly smaller percentage at Manika. Ox and cattle are roughly absent and, considering the increasing scale of expenditure in consumption of animal meat, the lack of this domestic species seems peculiar. A probable interpretation is that some selected animals were diverted to the consumption of funeral participants and to the provisioning of the deceased. In this perspective, one may conclude that the bull was perceived as an animal of specific symbolic meanings. This reconstruction finds support in the evidence from the "Sanctuary of the Bulls" at Lithares (Boeotia), where sixteen animal figurines were concentrated in a house of the Early Helladic II settlement (fig. 5.12:3; Tzavella-Evjen 1984: 21–22, 169–70, 213–14).

The large amount of bull or oxen figurines found in the Early Helladic domestic contexts, such as Tsoungiza (Pullen 1992: 50, fig. 1) and Corinth (Phelps 1987), show some slashes or slits on their body (fig. 5.12:2). W. Phelps (1987) considers several of these figurines to be reproductions of slaughtered and gutted animals, but this interpretation contrasts with the absence of oxen sacrificed or butchered in funerary practices or in domestic rituals. Probably, the oxen are reserved as draft animals, almost certainly to pull a plow, as a terra-cotta figurine fragment of a yoked pair of oxen from Tsoungiza suggests (Pullen 1992; Rutter 1993: 117, fig. 4).

The evidence above suggests the conclusion that bulls or oxen were perceived as an animal of specific symbolic meaning, probably related to domestic cult practices. The large amount of bull figurines in the Early Helladic contexts can be interpreted as the reproduction of the animal that was substituted and symbolically offered in the course of specific ritual activity. The analysis of the faunal remains from Lithares (Tzavella-Evjen 1984: 95) confirms that cattle were slaughtered probably among selective groups of the community, suggesting that livestock was owned by small kin groups or households rather than communally. Moreover, the importance of the cattle in this ceremonial context is supported from the evidence of a large number of adult animals. This latter picture then confirms that these adult animals were slaughtered at the end of a boom-and-bust cycle of herd growth, when they were not yet able to be exploited as draft animals.

Turning to the funerary evidence, there is among the grave offerings large numbers of sheep and goats. The symbolic connection between these animals and the collective feasting sphere might be reinforced by the analysis of a particular pottery class from Tiryns. Protomes of a ram's head and occasionally of a bull's head decorate the ends of sauceboat spouts or, less frequently, the ends of tubular spouts on closed vessels (fig. 5.12:1; Weisshaar 1986). Similar zoomorphic protomes are also found attached at the base of the handle on squat globular askoi

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[8] Dörpfeld 1927: 225, 227, 232–33, 237–38, 240, 243, 246.

and jug, which may be interpreted as the Early Helladic II antecedents of later Aegean zoomorphic rhyta (Rutter 1993: 118, figs. 5–8).

The ceramic assemblage to which the protomes are applied is comprised of "tableware" appropriate for the presentation and consumption of food and/or drink. The use of these vases for ritual purposes is further indicated by the evidence of Perachora-Vouliagmeni, on the Gulf of Corinth, where in a small Early Helladic structure, identified as a shrine, a plastic vase in the form of ram was found on its floor (Rutter 1993: 117, note 92).

In consideration of the combined evidence of faunal remains, Early Helladic II representational art and ceramics, one can argue that some animals, such as rams and goats. are symbolically perceived as animals which, in specific contexts, could be reserved for feasting and ritual purposes. The close connection between domestic (Tiryns) and funerary (Manika and Steno) contexts in the symbolism of the same animals is further reinforced from the reconstruction of the ritual sphere that seems to be significantly related to individuals of high social rank.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

There can be no doubt that differences in wealth and social status developed within and between communities in mainland Greece during the Early Helladic II–III periods. The combination of weaponry, ceramics, and associated symbolism portrays a society in which the most relevant characteristic is a hereditary elite dominating a rigidly stratified social structure.

The increasing energy investment in tomb construction, like the increasing elaboration of mortuary ritual in general, would seem to reflect rising levels of prestige competition and competitive elaboration within the community for the construction of social status.

The emergence of fortified settlements at Lerna, Kolonna on Aegina, in other sites in Attica (Koropi, Kitsa, and Markopoulos), and in Boeotia (Eutresis and Thebes) is a phenomenon strictly related to the more complex spatial organization of the major pre-existing communities on the one hand, and to the emergence of new and more competitive groups, such as the "weapons bearers" on the other.

In this perspective the archaeological evidence from settlement contexts also offers close evidence for sociopolitical hierarchy. As some scholars have noted (Pullen 1994; Rutter 1993), despite of the modest excavations of Early Helladic settlements, the major centers, such as Lerna and Tiryns in Argolis, give clear indications of the developments of settlement hierarchies, tributary networks, elite residential architecture, and monumental public buildings, such as the *Rundbau* granary at Tiryns (fig. 5.2b; Kilian 1986). All these aspects are the material correlates of political complexity that are generally associated with hereditary elites (Wright 1984).

The display of prestige goods (bronze weapons and silver or gold jewelry), of foreign items (silver personal ornaments from Steno interpreted as imports from the Cyclades), and other valuables on ceremonial occasions (including mortuary ritual) had the potential not only to augment but also to qualitatively differentiate the status of their bearers with a symbolism that was lacking either in previous or in contemporaneous locally produced goods. It is very likely that political leaders, such as the potent "weapons-bearer" elite buried at Steno, controlled access to foreign prestige goods and they further enhanced their authority by the strategic distribution of certain items to supporters and allies. However, the dynamics of mortuary competitions, its stimulating effect on copper production, and then the demand for exotic items may well have set the stage for the transformations in local economic and power relations that characterized the succeeding Middle Helladic period.
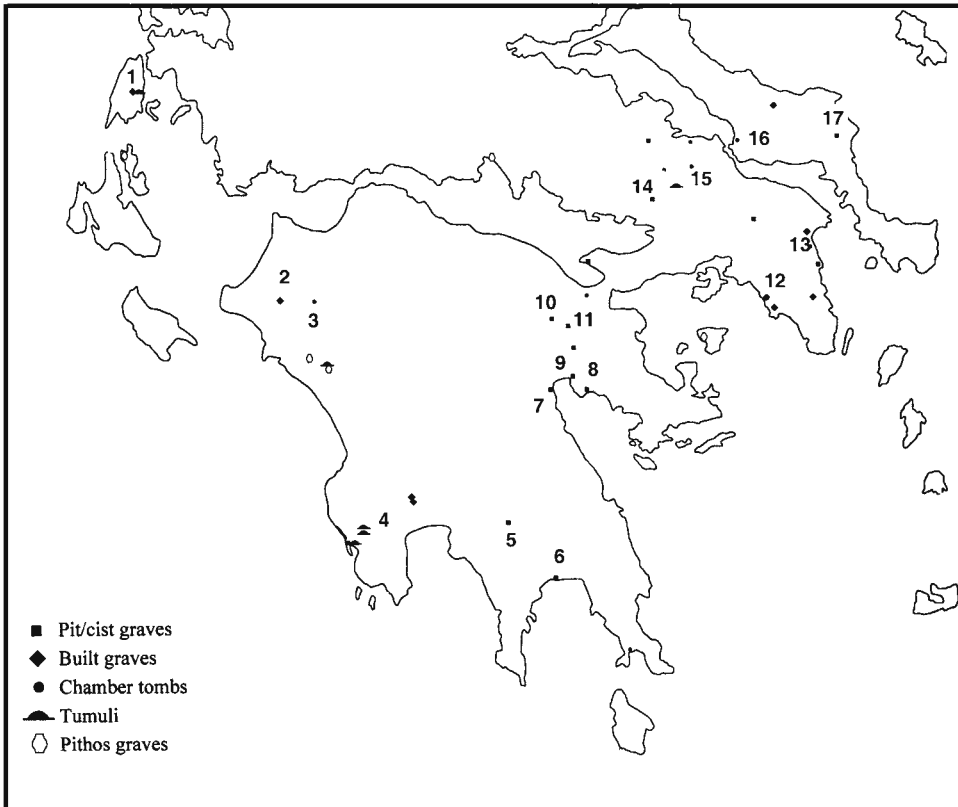
Figure 5.1. Map of Early Helladic Graves on Mainland Greece with the Sites Mentioned in the Text:
1. Lefkas: Nidri; 2. Elis; 3. Olympia; 4. Voidokoilia; 5. Kouphovouno; 6. Ayios Stephanos;
7. Lerna; 8. Asine; 9. Tiryns; 10. Tsoungiza; 11. Zygouries; 12. Ayios Kosmas:
13. Marathon: Tsepi; 14. Eutresis; 15. Thebes; 16. Manika; 17. Avlonari
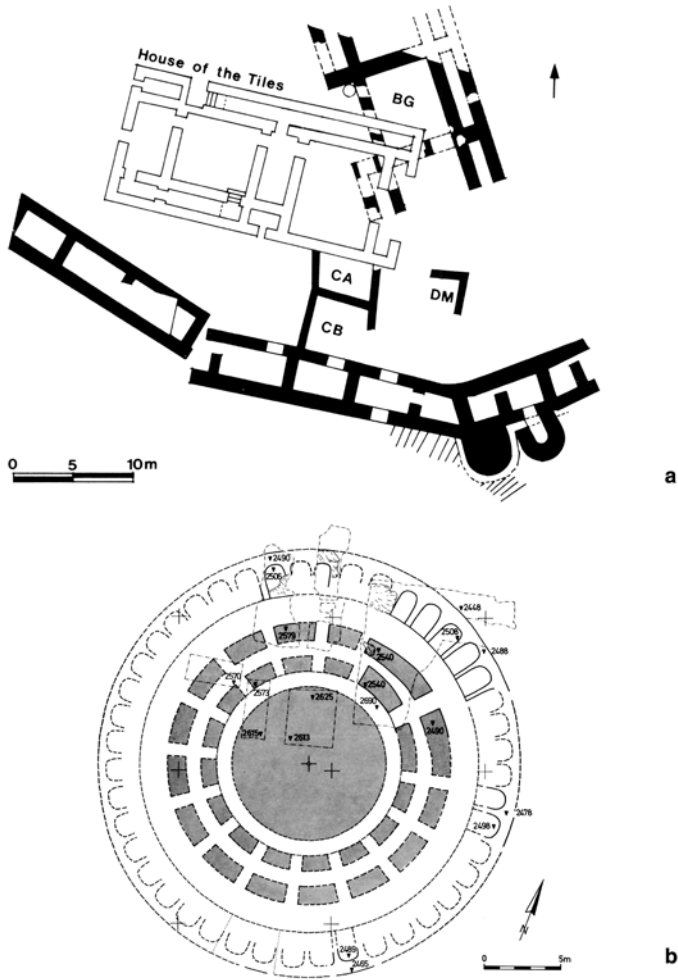
Figure 5.2. (*a*) Lerna, Fortifications and House of the Tiles (after Konsola 1986); (*b*) Tiryns, The Circular Building (*Rundbau*) (after Kilian 1986)

Figure 5.3. Manika, Euboea: (*a*) Plan of the Early Helladic Settlement and Cemetery;
(*b*) Plan of the Cemetery (after Sampson 1988)

Figure 5.4. Ayios Kosmas; Plan of the North Cemetery (after Mylonas 1959)
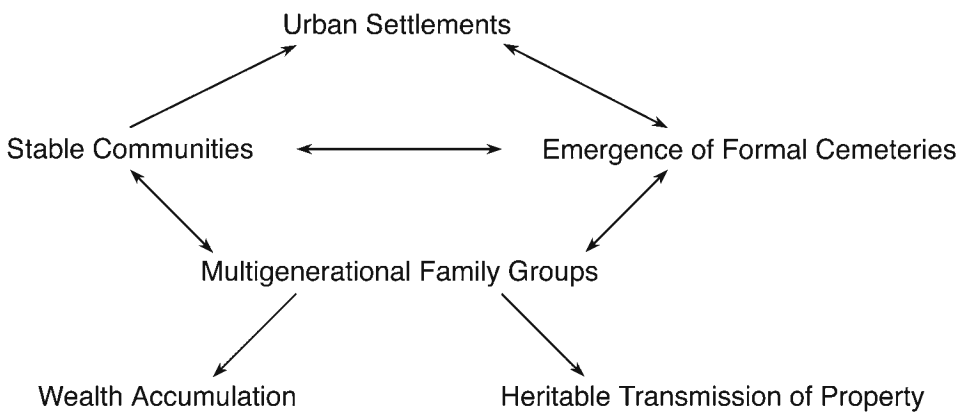
Figure 5.5. Socioeconimic Changes and Primary Factors in the
Early Helladic I–II Society on Mainland Greece
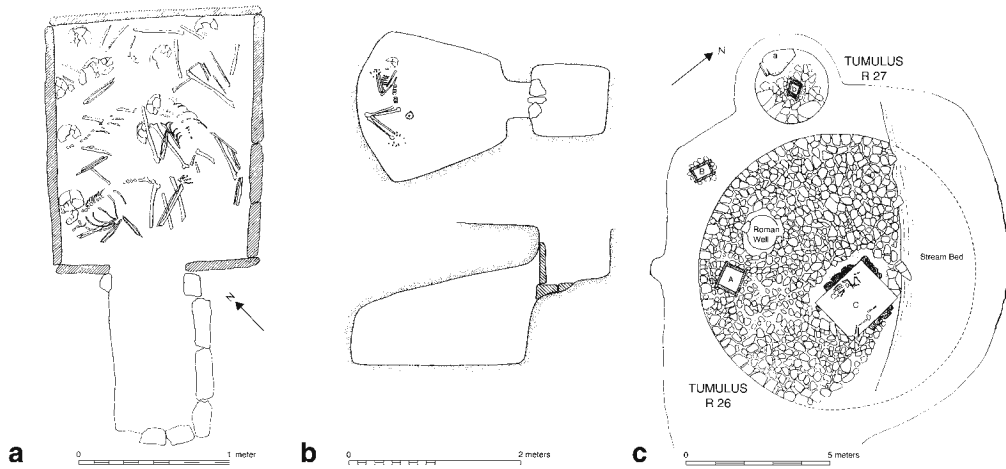
Figure 5.6. The Main Funerary Structure of Early Helladic Greece: (*a*) Ayios Kosmas, Cist Grave;
(*b*) Manika, Rock-cut Tomb; (*c*) Nidri on Lefkas, Tumuli R26 and R27
(adapted from Cavanagh and Mee 1998)
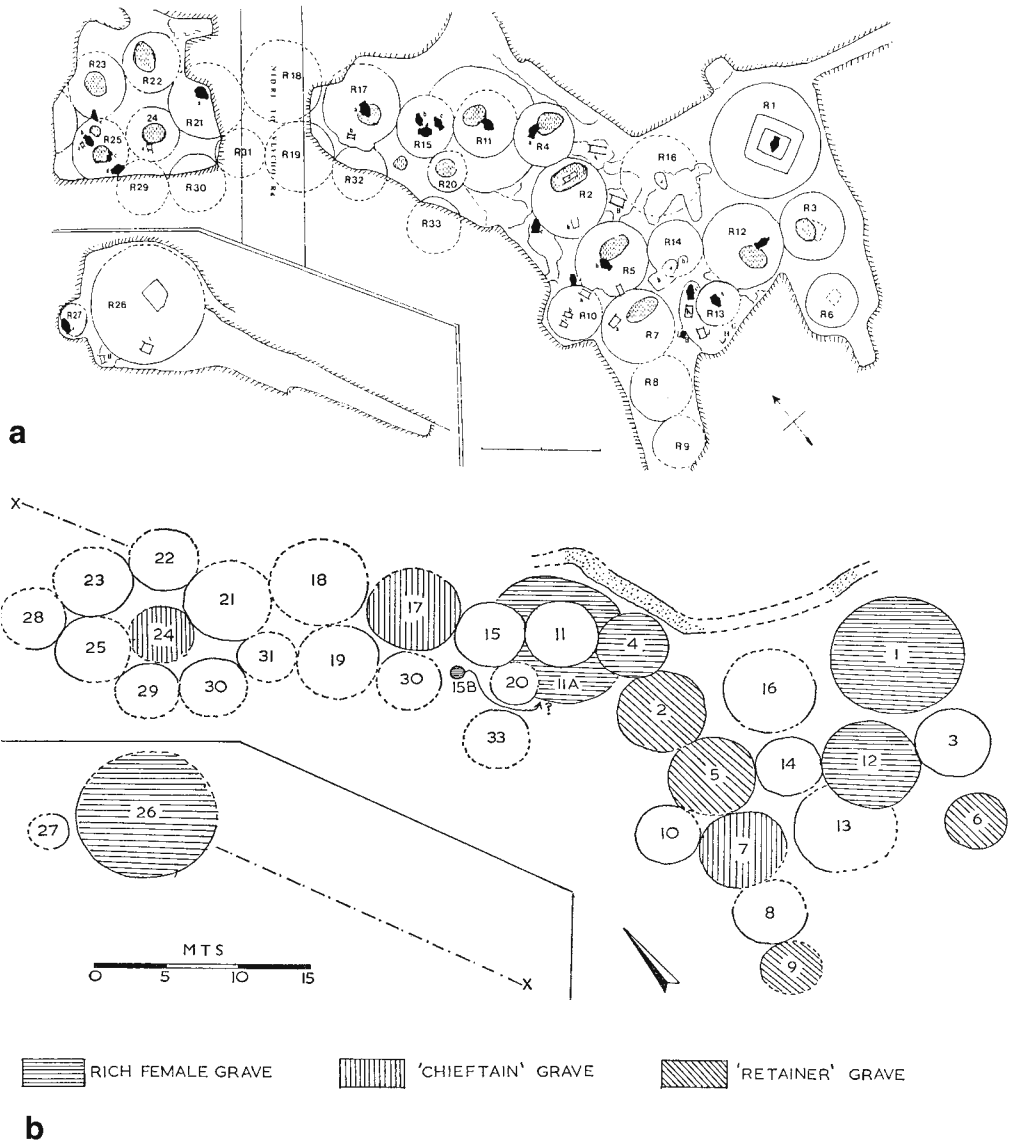
Figure 5.7. Nidri on Lefkas: (*a*) Plan of the Tumulus Cemetery (after Dörpfeld 1927); (*b*) The Distribution of the Wealthy Distinctive Graves According to the Branigan's Reconstruction (after Branigan 1975)
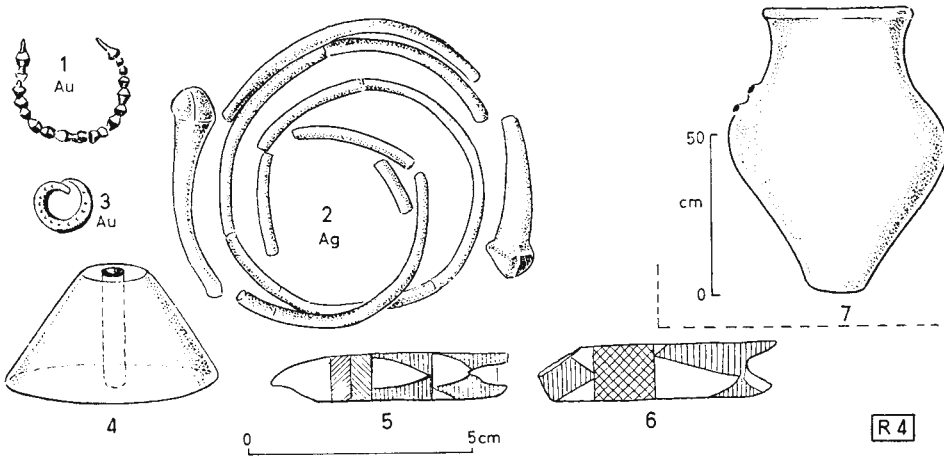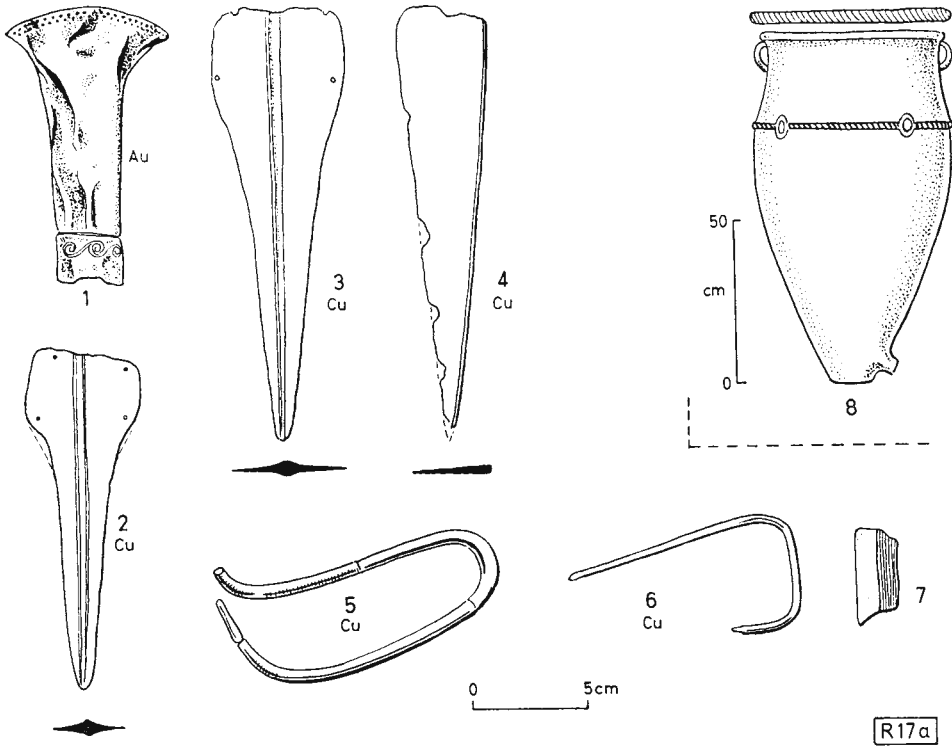
Figure 5.8. Nidri on Lefkas: Grave Goods of Tumulus R17a and R4 (after Renfrew 1972)
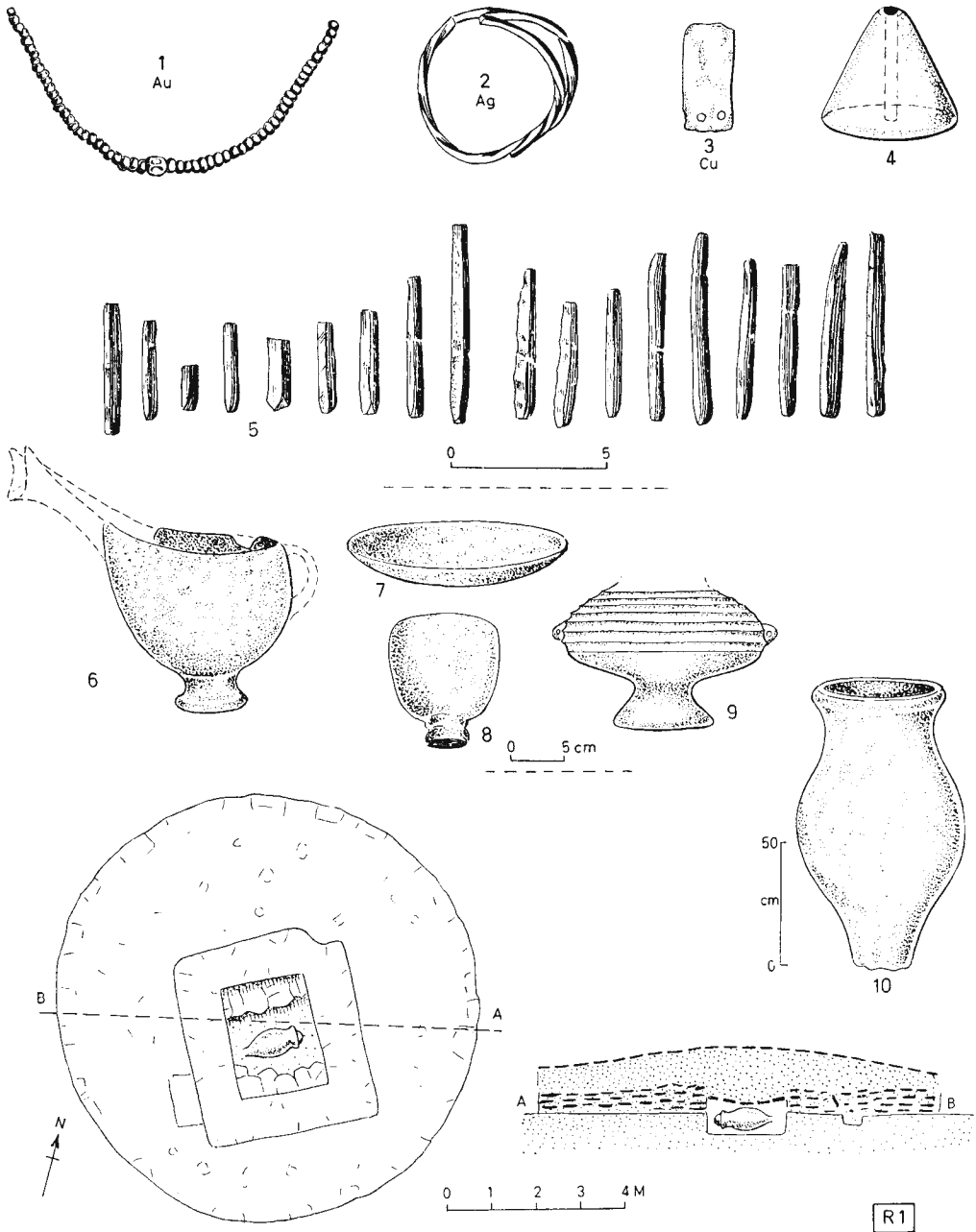
Figure 5.9. Nidri on Lefkas: Grave Goods of Tumulus R1 (after Renfrew 1972)

MASSIMO CULTRARO
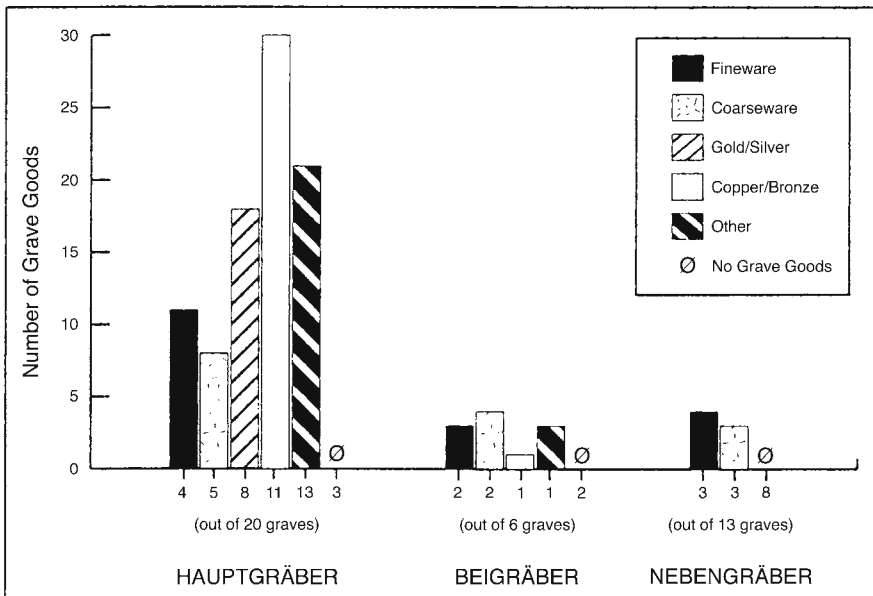
Figure 5.10. Nidri on Lefkas: Distribution of the Grave Goods among the Main Funerary Assemblages (after Souyoudzoglou-Haywood 1999)
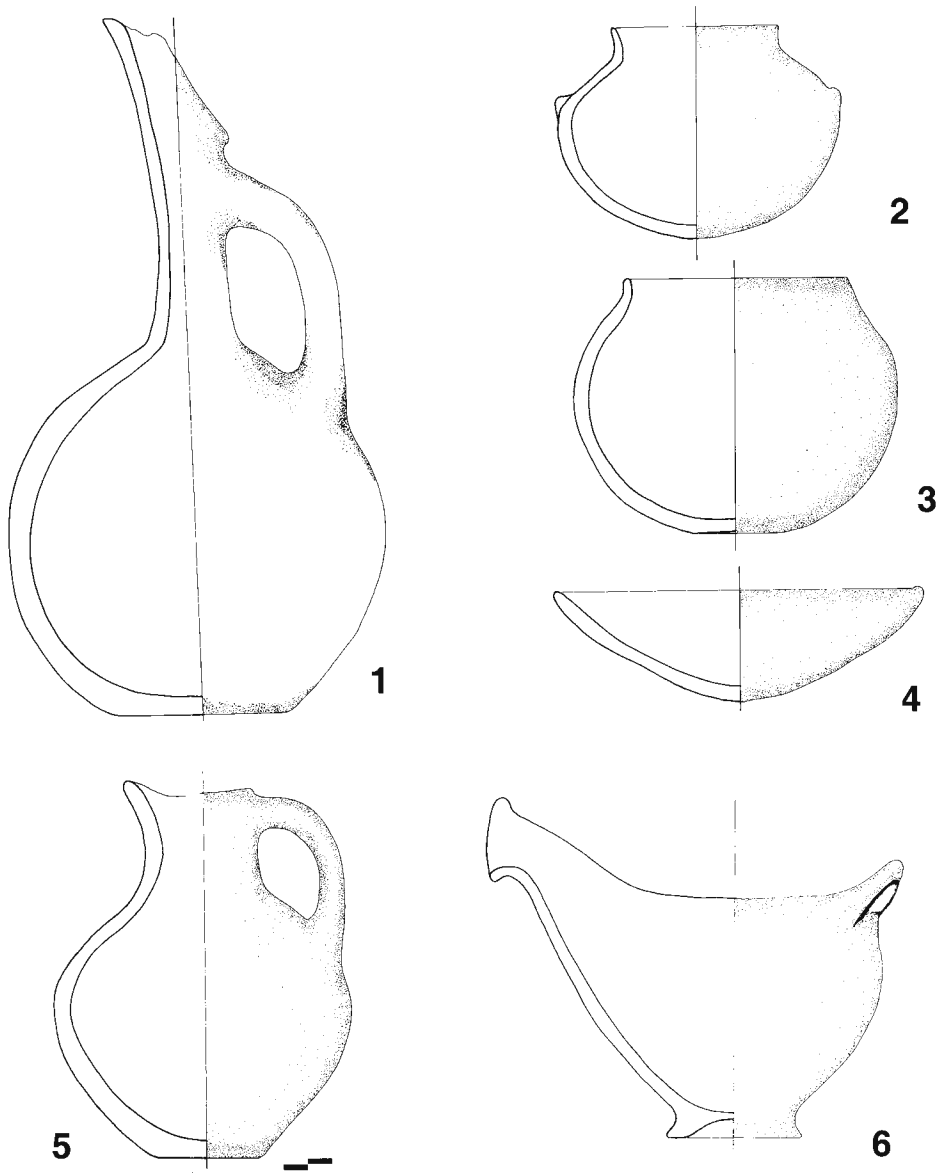
Figure 5.11. Manika: "Drinking Pottery Assemblage" from the Cemetery
(adapted from Sampson 1988)
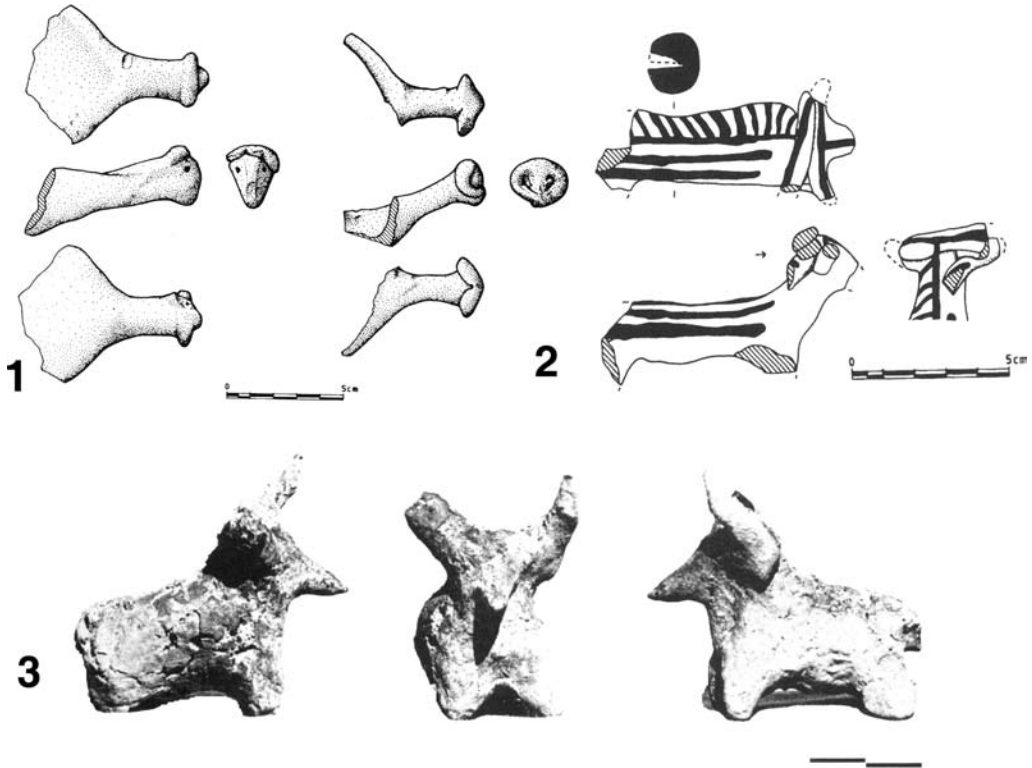
Figure 5.12. (1) Sauceboat Spout Fragments Terminating in Bull's and Ram's Head, from Tiryns (after Weisshaar 1986); (2) Terra-cotta Figurine of a Yoked Pair of Oxen, from Tsoungiza (after Pullen 1992); (3) Terra-cotta Bull Figurine, from Lithares (after Tzavella-Evjen 1984)

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6

REMEMBERING AND FORGETTING IN EARLY BRONZE AGE MORTUARY PRACTICES ON THE SOUTHEASTERN DEAD SEA PLAIN, JORDAN

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INTRODUCTION

The political fallout from the March 2006 death of Slobodan Milosevic highlights the enormous range of ideas that people from different cultures hold about death and how politics, identity, and social memories are inextricably linked to mortuary practices. M. Bloch, in his presentation at this seminar, asserted that regardless of the particulars of a society's belief system, religious observances, burial practices, and acts of commemoration, people throughout the world must work to transform the social body and person who has died into something else, and this process involves the distillation of the living peoples' memories through a complex process of remembering and forgetting. The transformative work of distilling a social person into a non-living entity often involves commemorative rites, expressions of mourning, religious observations, sanctioned processing of the physical bodies of the dead and the living, as well as remembering certain aspects of that person and his or her life while forgetting others. In the case of Milosevic much of this distillation is taking place on a global geopolitical scale with enormous political implications for individuals, communities, ethnic groups, and nations. With a case of such global importance, it is easy to see why many archaeologists assert that even dead bodies possess agency (e.g., Robb this volume; Tarlow 2001; Williams 2004), because even in the state of not-living they continue to affect emotions, thoughts, memories, and actions among the living.

Recent literature on agency, practice theory, and archaeological practice encompasses a wide range of theoretical and methodological approaches in archaeology, including utilizing theoretical frameworks of *chaîne opératoire*, structuration, intentionality, phenomenology, citations, life histories of places and material culture, landscapes, and place-making (Dobres and Robb 2000, 2005; Joyce and Lopiparo 2005). Despite this diversity, Dobres and Robb (2005) argue that they all hold two concerns in common: social reproduction and materiality. In exploring social reproduction and materiality, the incorporation of practice theory into archaeological knowledge production has contributed a diverse set of methodological and theoretical case studies. In this paper I dedicate my time to discussing three recent theoretical strands of this overarching project that lend particular strength to my analysis and interpretations of mortuary practices in a group of prehistoric settlements and cemeteries on the southeastern Dead Sea Plain: (1) landscape and place-making/sense of place; (2) structured agency and structuration; and (3) embodiment and lived experience. For each of these approaches, we can consult the published literature and find particularly powerful and sophisticated analyses of mortuary practices (e.g., Arnold 2001; Fowler 2001; Gillespie 2001; Hastorf 2003; Joyce 2003; Meskell 1999; Thomas 2000; Williams 2004). All three approaches are obviously related by intersec-

tions between social memories, peoples' perceptions of living in physical spaces, the material-
ity of living in a human body, and the values that we attach to place, bodies, and identities in
any given context. Moreover, the utilization of any or all of these approaches requires that the
researcher be theoretically nimble, especially regarding the necessity to analyze data at mul-
tiple temporal and spatial scales (Dobres and Robb 2005). For mortuary practices, this type of
analysis entails the examination of data including the spatial scale of individuals (the dead and
the living) to communities, factions, cultural groups, and even regions, as well as the temporal
scale of moments, days, and months to generations and centuries.

Because of the spatial limits of this paper, I can not exhaustively cover the theoretical and
methodological frameworks in archaeology for each of these approaches. More importantly,
they are well described and debated in the recent literature (e.g., Anschuetz, Wilshusen, and
Scheick 1999; Knapp and Ashmore 1999; Dobres and Robb 2000, 2005; Joyce 2005). Instead
I focus on demonstrating how I have found these approaches so effective in my own research
by briefly examining mortuary practices from the southeastern Dead Sea Plain during the Early
Bronze Age period (EBA), roughly encompassing the third millennium B.C.E.

NEW PLACES FOR THE LIVING AND THE DEAD IN EARLY BRONZE AGE SOUTHERN LEVANT

The Early Bronze Age I–IV of the southern Levant (roughly encompassing modern Israel,
Jordan, and Palestinian Authority in the time period of ca. 3600–2000 B.C.E.) is a truly dynam-
ic period in which people designed a new type of community in which to live, one walled with
impressive fortification walls and towers. Several surveys demonstrate that while the coun-
tryside was by no means abandoned, many people moved their families into these bounded
settlements and we see signs of increasing social differentiation (Amiran and Gophna 1989;
Broschi and Gophna 1984; Esse 1991; Falconer and Savage 1995; Gophna and Portugali 1988;
Harrison 1997; Helms 1989; Joffe 1993; Palumbo 1990; Rast and Schaub 1974; Schaub 1992;
Steele 1990). In almost every walled community excavated, researchers found large, non-resi-
dential storage facilities, which relate to multiple lines of evidence suggesting intensified pro-
duction of agricultural and pastoral products, as well as establishment of orchards for grapes
and olives, all accompanied by expanded irrigation structures and irrigated fields (Greenberg
2002; Philip 2001, 2003). Previously I have argued that the creation of walled communities
emerged simultaneously with the development of a Lévi-Straussian House Society (Chesson
1999, 2003, in press).

In thinking about inventing and building new types of places and communities, I have
found Peter Whitridge's (2004) work particularly powerful, especially connections between
place and human communities. I am intrigued by the convergence of all of these Early Bronze
Age developments — invention of diverse types of walled towns, increasing social differ-
entiation, intensification of agricultural and pastoral production, extensive use of irrigation
technologies, widespread establishment of grape and olive orchards, development of administra-
tive complexes for surplus storage, and the emergence of houses. These people invented a
new kind of place to live and profoundly altered their living and working landscapes (Philip
2003). Large walled sites, often visible from each other, extensive terracing with orchards, the
expansion outward of pasturage to accommodate the intensification of agricultural production,
and irrigated field systems and check dams in wadis/river channels, would have transformed
the places in which these people lived and worked, radically changing the way people moved

through and experienced the landscape in their daily lives (Anschuetz, Wilhusen, and Scheick 1999; Bender 1998; Knapp and Ashmore 1999; Whitridge 2004). They inscribed this new way of life into the very ground through which they moved: durable and visible settlements, terrace systems, roadways, irrigation systems along with enduring new ways of considering property, resources and usufructure, status, and the role of the dead in the living community (Chesson in press).

Analysis of mortuary data suggests that during Early Bronze I–III we see an increase in social differentiation, especially of groups (Chesson 1999, 2001a–b). We also witness a shift in mortuary practices from the previous period, with a very interesting development: cemeteries become the rare exception rather than the rule, and despite a century of survey and excavation we find very little evidence throughout the overall region for mortuary practices in association with walled town life at all (Ilan 2002). Rafael Greenberg (pers. comm.) jokingly summarizes that this lack of data reflects the biblical notion that people lived for hundreds of years and so all the Early Bronze II town folk lived for 600 years and did not die until the end of the Early Bronze IV, a period for which we have little information from settlements but an enormous corpus of mortuary data from cemeteries. All jokes aside, this asymmetry in our database highlights an intriguing puzzle and problem for archaeologists. That these people are generally not burying their dead in cemeteries, I think, probably stems from their ideas about the relationship between the dead and the living communities in the Early Bronze Age, but this is an entirely different discussion for another time. I now turn to explore ideas of landscape, social memory, identity, and lived experience from the mortuary data we do have from this period.

EARLY BRONZE AGE ON THE SOUTHEASTERN DEAD SEA PLAIN, JORDAN

In turning to Early Bronze Age mortuary practices on the southeastern Dead Sea Plain in Jordan (fig. 6.1), our data set includes excavated contexts from two walled settlements and several cemeteries. The Expedition to the Dead Sea Plain began work in the 1970s and worked over several survey and excavation seasons until 1990, expanding on previous excavations at Bab edh-Dhraʿ conducted in the 1960s (Schaub and Rast 1989), while also excavating significant areas at the townsite of Numeira and the cemeteries of Feifa and Khanazir. The project directors, Tom Schaub and Walt Rast, identified five major Early Bronze sites: the two walled towns of Bab edh-Dhraʿ and Numeira and four cemeteries at Feifa, Khirbet Khanazir, Safi/Naqa, and Bab edh-Dhraʿ (Rast and Schaub 1974). The distance between the northern- and southernmost sites is only 45 kilometers; Numeira and Bab edh-Dhraʿ are located only 13 kilometers apart. On a clear day inhabitants would have been able to stand on the fortifications of their towns and see the walls and houses of the neighboring town in the distance, watching people move between these towns through irrigated and terraced field systems and nearby cemeteries.

The earliest occupational remains on the southeast Dead Sea Plain are represented by the Early Bronze IA cemeteries at Feifa, Safi/Naqa, and Bab edh-Dhraʿ, where people traveled to these sites, set up temporary camp sites, and buried their dead as secondary burials in hundreds of rock-cut shaft (Bab edh-Dhraʿ) or cobble- and slab-built cist tombs (Feifa and Safi/Naqa), accompanied by ceramic, wood, and stone grave goods, in approximately 3150 B.C.E. (Rast 1979; Rast and Schaub 2003; Schaub and Rast 1989). In the Early Bronze IB and early Early Bronze II (ca. 2950–2800 B.C.E.) people established a village adjacent to the cemetery of shaft tombs at Bab edh-Dhraʿ. During this earliest period of settlement on the plain, they reused earlier Early Bronze IA shaft tombs for burials, often with both primary and secondary burials.

They also built a new type of burial structure at Bab edh-Dhraʿ: an above ground, mudbrick, circular charnel house. They also continued to bury their dead at Safi/Naqa in large, slab-built tombs with secondary burials; Feifa by this time was no longer used as a cemetery. In the Early Bronze II/III, the village at Bab edh-Dhraʿ grew in size to 4 hectares and the inhabitants built a massive fortification wall with towers to encompass the site. The excavators also found ample evidence of living structures surrounding the walled town; it is clear that many people lived outside as well as inside the walls of the town (Rast and Schaub 2003). People also established the smaller, walled town of Numeira to the south (Coogan 1984). During this period, burial practices were restricted to Bab edh-Dhraʿ, where the excavators found and excavated ten above ground, rectangular charnel houses, or body libraries (Chesson 1999; Schaub and Rast 1989), filled predominately with secondary burials and ceramic, wood, stone, and metal grave goods, constructed in the earlier Early Bronze IA/IB cemetery.[1] By the end of the Early Bronze III (ca. 2300 B.C.E.), Numeira was abandoned and we see a break in occupation at Bab edh-Dhraʿ, where the Early Bronze IV people built a small village on the ruins of the Early Bronze II/III town. The Early Bronze IV people continued to bury their dead in the cemetery at Bab edh-Dhraʿ, however a much larger cemetery, Khirbet Khanazir, was established 45 kilometers to the south of Bab edh-Dhraʿ. At both Khanazir and Bab edh-Dhraʿ, the Early Bronze IV people are burying their dead in primary and secondary burials in stone-lined shaft tombs (Schaub and Rast 1989; McDonald 1995).

This very dense and generalized occupational history of the southeastern Dead Sea Plain highlights one of the most important aspects of the Early Bronze Age in this region: each time the nature and scale of occupation in this region shifted, so too did the mortuary practices (Rast 1999; cf. Morris this volume). Bab edh-Dhraʿ also offers one of only two instances where researchers have located and excavated a walled town and an associated cemetery (the other example being Jericho). I turn now to synthesize much of this data and demonstrate how we can gain insights into Early Bronze Age mortuary practices and communities on the southeastern Dead Sea Plain by employing landscape perspectives, practice theory, and phenomenological approaches.

EARLY BRONZE AGE LANDSCAPES OF THE LIVING AND DEAD

In the last two decades, there has been an increasing interest by ethnographers, archaeologists, and historians in landscapes and their relationships to identity, political structures, language, history, and commemoration (Anschuetz, Wilhusen, and Scheick 1999; Basso 1996; Bender 1998, 2001; Bradley 2000; Casey 1996; Cosgrove 1985; Cosgrove and Daniels 1989; Feld and Basso 1996; Johnson 2005; Knapp and Ashmore 1999; Tilley 1994; Whitridge 2004). The study of place and identity holds an important place in anthropological and archaeological research, especially in tracing the historical development of a culture and its identity and past. Whitridge (2004: 220–21) aptly summarizes the links between places, people, and experiences of community: "community comes into being through enculturation of people to a local history embedded in places." In Whitridge's (2004) fascinating analysis of Inuit landscapes, placemaking, and identities, he (2004: 243) states that landscapes are "shaped by ongoing histories of place-making, the hybrid conjoining of heterogeneous semantic fields — imaginar-

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[1] An eleventh charnel house at Bab edh-Dhraʿ was excavated (R. T. Schaub pers. comm.), but to the author's knowledge the data have never been analyzed or published in any form.

ies — with the material world." In other words, people lived in, moved through, and shaped landscapes that were meaningful, layered, and mixed mosaics of ideas and things remembered and forgotten.

In turning to the Early Bronze Age example here, there were many new elements to living in a fortified settlement, including the negotiation of living in a densely populated place; organizing one's daily schedule to include trips into and out of the massive walls to herd, farm, hunt, or trade; increasing social differentiation especially at the group level; and integrating the city's bureaucratic framework into daily life, including issues of sanitation, payment of tithes or taxes into communal storage, and entrusting oneself and one's family to the city's governance structures. The Early Bronze Age viewscapes (Owoc 2005) on the southeastern Dead Sea Plain included walled towns (visible from each other), abandoned and current cemeteries, extensive terracing with orchards, expansion outward of pasturage to accommodate the intensification of agricultural production, new tracks and roadways, irrigated field systems and check dams in wadis placed at the base of the western escarpment of the Kerak Plateau, abandoned Chalcolithic and Neolithic sites, and the Dead Sea (fig. 6.2). These new Early Bronze Age places would have transformed the landscape, radically changing the way people moved through and experienced their environment in their daily lives. With the invention of fortified towns in the Early Bronze Age, peoples' daily lives changed, as well as their identities: suddenly it made a difference to one's personhood depending on whether you were a city-dweller, a nomad, or someone who lived on the margins of both groups. People shifted their ideas about identity with the creation of a new way of life and a new type of place, and these new conceptions influenced the development of Early Bronze Age society and inscribed these societal forms on the social and physical landscapes.

In considering Early Bronze mortuary practices through this lens, the key is the creation and transformation of landscapes for the living and the dead over time. In a 2005 presentation on houses in the European Neolithic, Dusan Boric (in press) stated that in his research area, the dead were the first people to become sedentary. It struck me as funny, but also apropos for the earliest Early Bronze Age occupants of the southeastern Dead Sea Plain. During the Early Bronze IA people traveled to the southeastern Dead Sea Plain to bury their dead in secondary ceremonies; we have no evidence for permanent settlement in the Early Bronze Age before the Early Bronze IB/early Early Bronze II (ca. 2900 B.C.E.). We do not know where they came from, although it is tempting (and not necessarily unreasonable, I think) to imagine them descending 1,000 meters from the Kerak Plateau, making their way down switchbacks, leading donkeys laden with skeletal remains, pottery, wooden objects, mats, mace-heads, and stone vessels to bury their dead down by the Dead Sea. They deposited the segmented remains of their dead in shaft tomb chambers, following a set of guidelines for segmenting and sorting the remains and grave goods. Skeletal remains were placed on reed mats in the center of the chamber, skulls were lined up (often facing the opening) along the left edge of the mat, long bones and other postcranial remains were heaped onto the center of the mat, and grave goods were stacked to the right of the opening often lining the back and side edges of the chamber (Rast 1999; Schaub and Rast 1989). A short distance to the south, people also established very large cemeteries at Safi/Naqa and Feifa, placing the secondary remains of their dead in rock-lined cist tombs.

Sometime around 3000 B.C.E. people settled down in a small village next to the Bab edh-Dhraʿ cemetery and began farming (McCreery 2003) and raising livestock (Rast and Schaub 2003). I do not believe that their choice to settle next to the cemetery can be interpreted as simple coincidence; in fact they continued to utilize the cemetery. During this initial sedentary

phase, though, their mortuary practices demonstrate more fluidity and variability. In some cases they continued to deposit their dead in shaft tombs, but these were primary burials with fully articulated (and non-segmented) bodies. In other cases, they constructed above ground circular tombs from mudbrick (circular charnel houses) in which we find evidence of primary and secondary mortuary practices (Chesson 2001b; Rast 1999; Schaub and Rast 1989). People also continued to use the Safi cemetery, but in at least two cases constructed very large semi-subterranean shaft tombs (Najjar pers. comm.).

When the Early Bronze Age people constructed their fortification walls and gates around the heavily terraced town of Bab edh-Dhraʿ ca. 2900 B.C.E., they abandoned the subterranean mortuary contexts for aboveground rectangular charnel houses in the cemetery (Rast and Schaub 2003; Schaub and Rast 1989). They placed the remains of the deceased in the charnel houses, or body libraries, in secondary mortuary ceremonies. In many ways, the rectangular charnel houses resemble the rectangular architecture in and surrounding the walled town, thus mirroring the houses inhabited by the living. While these body libraries were not contained within a fortification or series of retaining walls, it is not a big jump to consider that we may be dealing with adjacent communities for the living and the dead (Chesson 1999, 2003; Rast 1999; Schaub and Rast 1989).

Around 2300 B.C.E. the walled communities of Numeira and Bab edh-Dhraʿ were abandoned and after a short gap people rebuilt a small, unwalled village on the ruins of Bab edh-Dhraʿ (Rast and Schaub 2003). They returned to the practice of subterranean shaft tombs, although they lined the shafts with stones. Farther to the south at Khirbet Khanazir they built roofless structures in the middle of which they constructed stone-lined shaft tombs in which excavators found the disarticulated remains of the dead. Khanazir contains eighty-five of these structures spread out over a large, chocolatey-brown escarpment rising from the floor of the Dead Sea Plain, giving the impression of a town for the dead overlooking the valley floor (R. T. Schaub pers. comm.; McDonald 1995).

We must view Early Bronze mortuary practices in light of the immense social, economic, and political transformations of Early Bronze society with the establishment and eventual abandonment of walled settlements, as well as the large-scale anthropogenic re-working of the physical environment with large fortified towns, terracing, irrigated fields, new roadways, and cemeteries. Interestingly, there is also a noted shift in the settlement and abandonment of these fortified towns from the Early Bronze I to Early Bronze III. In several cases (for example, Megiddo and Tell es-Saʿidiyeh) Early Bronze I or II walled towns were established, abandoned, and sometimes reinhabited. In some cases, such as Saʿidiyeh and Tell el-Handaquq South, people abandoned the Early Bronze II walled town and settled Early Bronze III Handaquq South, a mere 12 kilometers away. These reshaped landscapes contained abandoned (or dead?) villages and towns that would have been familiar to the people in the region (in a type of horizontal stratigraphy; cf. Greenberg 2003). In considering landscapes, social remembering and forgetting, and mortuary practices, these abandoned settlements and cemeteries most likely played an important role in anchoring the changes in the physical and social landscapes of Early Bronze Age society, and perhaps even provided the dead with an enduring place inscribed on the landscape for all to see.

Throughout the course of the Early Bronze, there was a vertical movement of where people placed the remains of the dead, from subterranean (shaft tombs) to aboveground (charnel houses) and then to a combination of both (Khanazir-style burial contexts). I find significant the movement from subterranean to aboveground cemeteries. I interpret the visibility and location of the Early Bronze II–III body libraries as indicators of a changed relationship between

the inhabitants of the walled town and the community of their dead. Ideas of visibility and durability are particularly apropos in this context due to the enormous degree of reshaping places where people worked, lived, traveled, and buried their dead. Moreover, in creating enduring, visible monuments to the dead, the Early Bronze Age people literally inscribed their histories, identities, claims, and rights across the very fields, hills, and river valleys in which they worked, played, and lived.

As many researchers have noted, landscapes can be found at many scales, including that of the body itself (e.g., Whitridge 2004). The segmentation of the Early Bronze Age body in secondary mortuary practices and the careful placement in the shaft tombs (and presumably within charnel houses) in collective contexts represents the process of transforming a social person into something else through carefully orchestrated and sanctioned acts of remembering and forgetting (M. Bloch, in his presentation at this seminar; Taylor 1993). While we have no information regarding the primary mortuary rituals — including the context or process of defleshing — we have the evidence of a very structured process of disassembling and segmenting the Early Bronze dead among the shaft and cist tombs and charnel houses at Bab edh-Dhraʿ, Safi/Naqa, and Feifa. Transformative mortuary practices, and their eschatological and cosmological significances, have been documented in many ethnographic contexts (e.g., Bloch and Parry 1982; Hertz 1960; Metcalf and Huntington 1991; Taylor 1993). While the specific reasoning and meanings attached to the Early Bronze practices cannot be excavated, we can envision them as part of the distillation process of a dead person into a social memory by the living, and of the transformation of the individual to a member of a different type of collective.

Early Bronze Age people on the southeastern Dead Sea Plain inscribed their world view and identity onto landscapes at multiple scales. This inscription of durable and enduring ideas about life and death in their world is very evident in their secondary mortuary practices on the level of cemetery, collective burial contexts, and segmented bodies. The segmentation of bodies and their collective burial brings us neatly to the next topic to be discussed: structured agency and practice theory in the analysis of commemorative practices.

STRUCTURED AGENCY, COMMEMORATION, AND IDENTITY

Williams (2004) has encouraged archaeologists to focus attention on the materiality of the deceased's remains, as the dead body possesses agency as simultaneously a person and an object. He (2004: 264) notes that the vast majority of mortuary analyses concentrate on the actions of the mourners and that this approach "underestimates the complex engagements between people (both living and dead) and material culture in the production and transformation of social practices and structures." In his analysis of the Anglo-Saxon cremation practices and the creation of a secondary body to achieve an ancestral state, Williams demonstrates that the dead do hold the power to affect the emotions, thoughts, memories, and actions of the living (see also Tarlow 2001). The idea that the dead possess agency is not a new one (Robb this volume) and certainly seems to find support in the current political fallout with Milosevic's death.

In two synthetic articles on practice theory in archaeology, Joyce and Lopiparo (2005) and Dobres and Robb (2005) explore the problematics and benefits utilizing the methodological and theoretical frameworks of *chaine operatoire*, structuration, degrees of intentionality, phenomenology, citations, life histories of places and material culture in a diverse collection of case studies (including, but not limited to, Arnold 2001; Dobres and Robb 2000 and references therein; Fowler 2001; Gillespie 2001; Hastorf 2003; Hegman and Kulow 2005; Hendon 2004;

Joyce 2003; Meskell 2001; Owoc 2005; Pauketat and Alt 2005; Raharijaona and Kus 2001; Silliman 2001; Tarlow 2001; Thomas 2000; Williams 2004). Both sets of authors urge archaeologists to develop specific methodological approaches to applications of practice theory in archaeology. Dobres and Robb (2005) argue that archaeologists must develop explicit methodologies of "doing agency" (which they term "middle range interpretive methodologies") to provide archaeologists with an interpretive bridge to moving between material analysis and social theory. Meanwhile Joyce and Lopiparo (2005) encourage archaeologists who utilize practice theory-based analyses to see structure and agency as inextricably bound, and to avoid basing their analytical frameworks into a false dichotomy of the two. They argue that we must approach practice theory with an emphasis on structured agency, moving between microscale and macroscale contexts without severing the complex web of connectivity between structure and agency.

I have found several of these "practical tools" especially useful in examining and analyzing mortuary practices on the southeastern Dead Sea Plain. In particular, Hastorf's (2003) study of Middle Formative Andean mortuary practices offers a thoughtful and pragmatic case study of balancing notions of agency, intentionality, and patterns of collective structures. In this case study, Hastorf (2003: 307) notes that "the point of practice theory is not only to explain change over time through … individual slippage, but also to understand the continuity and cohesion that occurs through the maintenance of certain cultural practices." I find it particularly useful to utilize practice theory to analyze Early Bronze Age mortuary practices, because the co-mingled and collective remains make it impossible for us to identify individuals as discrete actors, and these practices emphasize the notion of structured agency and the necessity to move between microscale and macroscale levels of analysis. The Early Bronze mortuary practices, contexts, and remains from this region offer a rich and intriguing data set with which to utilize a practice theory perspective, especially relating to life histories of people, their bodies, shaft tombs, charnel houses, and the shifting mortuary practices across space and through time. Due to space and time constraints, I limit my discussion to two examples: the first drawn from the Early Bronze IA shaft tombs and the second from the Early Bronze II–III charnel houses. In both examples I want to consider the repetitive and structured sequence of actions in these secondary mortuary practices as a vehicle for considering structured agency.

In cemetery excavations in the 1960s led by Paul Lapp (Schaub and Rast 1989) and those from the Expedition to the Dead Sea Plain project in the 1970s and 1980s, researchers excavated forty-two shaft tombs (with ninety-nine chambers) dating to the Early Bronze IA (table 6.1; Bentley 1987, 1991; Fröhlich and Ortner 1982; Ortner 1979, 1981, 1982; Rast 1999; Rast and Schaub 1974, 1978, 1980, 1981; Schaub 1981; Schaub and Rast 1984, 1989). This very rich database is associated with the pre-settlement period at the site, although excavators found evidence of campsites that they interpret as accommodations for the mourners when they traveled to the cemetery to bury their dead (Rast and Schaub 2003: 63). The Early Bronze IA people presumably used donkeys to transport the remains of their dead and the appropriate grave goods to the Bab edh-Dhraʿ cemetery. They dug vertical shafts of approximately 2–5 meters in depth and excavated anywhere from one to five small chambers off the base of each shaft.[2] They placed the skeletal remains on a reed mat located in the center of the chamber and

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[2] Publications do not state whether the shaft tomb chambers were all excavated at once, or if they were added as necessary through the generations. It is clear, however, that they were reopened and reused, with some

Early Bronze IA tombs being opened and remodeled in the Early Bronze IB. In discussions with the excavator, he indicated that particular attention was paid to excavating in the shafts to assess the site formation processes and

stacked grave goods along the edges of the mat and the chamber walls. If they were using the tomb for the first time, then they placed the mat down first, and then lined up the skulls on the left edge of the mat (often facing the entrance) and placed the post-cranial bones in an ordered pile on the center of the mat. During this process, they may have removed some objects and remains before sealing the chamber with a large, flat stone. The plan of Tomb A114N (fig. 6.3) illustrates the structured deposition of skulls, long bones, and miscellaneous skeletal elements, as well as grave goods within the tomb chamber. This pattern of segmentation, of skull piles to the left of the entrance, bone pile in the center, mat under the skeletal remains, and grave goods to the right of the entrance lining the edge of the chamber, is repeated throughout the corpus of Early Bronze IA shaft tombs, with rare exceptions. We can imagine that this process may have been accompanied by ritual ceremonies, involving a large group of participants and/or observers.

Ceramic vessels were found in chambers throughout the cemetery, generally placed along the right wall of a chamber. Numbers of vessels per chamber range from sixty to one, and one of the few discernable (but not very meaningful, I believe) patterns visible in the Early Bronze IA cemetery is of higher numbers of vessels associated with larger tomb areas and with larger numbers of interred individuals. Preliminary analysis of vessel types, sizes, or numbers across space in the cemetery shows no patterns. Other special classes of artifacts include mace-heads, stone vessels, wooden vessels, and other wooden objects, like staffs or tools. Mace-heads and stone vessels tend to co-occur in some areas of the cemetery. Mace-heads are always found in association with stone vessels, though stone vessels do appear without mace-heads.[3] Beads and pottery vessels are the most common artifacts found in Early Bronze IA shaft tombs. Beads, presumably from costume ornaments and clothing, are constructed from locally available materials, including local shell, bone, and stones, as well as materials whose sources are located far from the Dead Sea, including carnelian, ostrich eggshell, faience, gold, lapis lazuli, conus shells, and alabaster. Beads were found inside of the pottery vessels (especially one small jar form), distributed across the area containing the grave goods, clustered around the bone piles, and with the skulls. While they may differ slightly in numbers of beads and range of materials, all tomb groups include chambers with non-local and local beads.

Based on preliminary publications of sex or age designations, there is no spatial patterning of location in the cemetery or within tombs based on sex or age.[4] Approximately 23% (59 of 256) of the Early Bronze IA population has been identified as male or female, and in some instances also aged by physical anthropologists, and an additional 24.6% (63 of 256) has been

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the construction of the shaft and chambers. R. T. Shaub (pers. comm.) felt that the shafts and the chambers were excavated in most cases in one event. If this were the case, we can suggest that these tombs were "built to order" with no renovations or expansion of chamber numbers. Thus these shaft tombs share an interesting trait with the charnel houses, and by extension to the intentions of the builders and users. Could it be that the builders knew (or had a general idea) of each unique tomb "needing" to hold a certain number of individuals? With Bentley's (1987, 1991) analysis supporting genetic relatedness among the occupants of chambers in a shaft tombs, these built-to-order tombs suggest that the Early Bronze Age people held a very structured and well-defined idea of whose skeletal remains and how many people's remains and goods would be deposited in the tombs. Ideas about

relatedness and who would be buried where most likely was linked to genetic relatedness (Bentley 1987), but also probably involved a web of economic, social, and political connections.

[3] This co-occurrence of mace-heads and stone vessels is one of the only robust patterns identified in preliminary analysis of the material culture in these tombs. While we have identified this relationship, it is difficult to ascertain what it might mean in a context that was reused, and for which we cannot identify specific objects placed (or removed) in any single depositional moment.

[4] Final analysis of the Early Bronze IA skeletal remains by Ortner and Fröhlich at the Smithsonian is nearing its final stages, and we expect publication in the near future (R. T. Schaub pers. comm.).

aged as subadults (approximately sixteen years of age or younger, including neonates; table 6.2). While still preliminary in nature, analysis of the aged and sexed individuals in association with different classes of objects also demonstrated no patterns of association. Men, women, and children of all ages were buried with the full range of artifact classes and materials, reinforcing the pattern of ambiguity that we see in terms of who is buried with whom, and with what types of objects. While no robust or obvious distributional patterns of the co-occurrence of types of peoples with types of material culture have been found, Bentley's (1987) analysis of dental morphology demonstrated that people buried within a shaft tomb (containing one to five chambers) were more likely related to each other genetically than to others buried in different shaft tombs.

From the perspective of a practice theory approach, data from these mortuary practices offer an excellent example of structured agency, in which people follow a guideline of how to bury their dead in terms of mapping out the segmented remains. However, it is equally significant that there seems to be no discernable (at least to the modern analyst) pattern of what types of grave goods accompany what types of people into the tomb (these guidelines may be masked by the co-mingled nature of the materials, or it may in fact be an accurate interpretation). In considering that this cemetery was used at least for three generations, we can approach this data by considering the *chaine operatoire* ("how to bury a person or non-person at Bab edh-Dhra'") or life history perspective (by documenting the construction and use of the tombs and cemetery) and consider the nature of individual and collective agency in burying the dead collectively in very structured ways. We may also examine the issue of intentionality, innovation, or the exercise of individual and collective agency. For example, in placing different types of goods with certain interments (or removing some elements), individual or group actions imbued with emotion, intentionality, and powerful meanings may be invisible in the data set with which we work.[5] In all these cases, we gain insight into the complex interplay between the inseparable workings of structure and agency. Ultimately we can explore how Early Bronze people may have worked to transform their dead through these commemorative practices into some different type of entity with these structured and repeated sequences of remembering and forgetting.

In turning to the Early Bronze II–III charnel houses, or body libraries (Chesson 1999), in the cemetery at Bab edh-Dhra', we are dealing with the mortuary practices associated (presumably) with the inhabitants of the walled community. Eight of these charnel houses have been published (Schaub and Rast 1989), while the material culture and skeletal remains of charnel houses A22 and A55 are currently being analyzed in preparation for final publication[6] (table 6.3). All the Early Bronze II–III charnel houses were rectangular, mudbrick structures with stone thresholds, and sometimes with cobbled flooring. In a few cases, excavators found evidence for shelving and all charnel houses were filled with disarticulated skeletal remains from secondary burials.[7] The charnel houses fall roughly into two groups based on their size, with

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[5] A small number of human figurines were found in a restricted number of tombs, and further detailed analysis of this assemblage will explore these issues.

[6] Eight of the charnel houses have been published in Schaub and Rast's 1989 volume, but this report does not include a systematic skeletal analysis of the remains that were lost in a shed collapse in the 1970s in Jerusalem. Skeletal analysis of remains from charnel houses A22 and A55 is currently underway, and these will be

published in conjunction with an archaeological analysis of the material culture associated with these individuals. It is probable that the MNI in these two cases will be increased with analysis by the physical anthropologists conducting the research, and it is believed by the team at this point that the preliminary MNIs listed for the other charnel houses would likely have been larger had they not relied solely on skull counts.

[7] In one case (A22) there was a series of fully articulated skeletons in what appears to be the final use of the charnel

the smaller structures measuring approximately 15 square meters, and the larger ones measuring anywhere from 35 to 121 square meters. In all cases, there is no evidence for renovating the body libraries to make them larger: they were built to size and not changed throughout the potentially several hundred years of use.[8] Previously I have argued that these differently sized charnel houses represent Greater and Lesser Houses, along a House Society model (*sensu* McKinnon 1991; Chesson 1999, 2003, in press).[9]

In the eight larger charnel houses, preliminary MNIs (based only on skull counts) range from forty-six to 200 individuals. In the smaller charnel houses, preliminary MNIs were not recorded or published. Ceramic vessels were the most common grave gift accompanying the dead in these structures. In the smallest charnel houses, twenty and thirty vessels were found; in the larger body libraries, pottery vessel counts range from forty-six to 783. In addition to ceramics, beads were the next most common item placed with the skeletal remains: the larger charnel houses contained beads of non-local materials, including metal, ostrich egg, faience, alabaster, carnelian, lapis, crystal, and bone, while the smaller charnel houses contained stone and bone beads of local materials. Finally the excavators found mace-heads, metal weapons, and slate palettes (all presumably possessing some links to access to ritual knowledge and/or non-local resources and serving in some sense as prestige goods) in some of the larger charnel houses. In the case of larger charnel houses, we have clear evidence for increased access to non-local materials, to prestige items connected with trade and exchange with foreign neighbors such as Egypt and Mesopotamia, and to weapons signifying power and authority in the community. The differences in access to non-local materials and prestige goods supports arguments for differential access of Houses to material culture through exchange networks.

The state of preservation of these charnel houses is not as good as most of the shaft tombs due to their aboveground setting. However, we can see from excavations that they were carefully built, generally with more effort and resources than their settlement counterparts, with carefully bonded brickwork, slab-lined entrances and thresholds, and cobbled floors in some cases (fig. 6.4). Their doorways were not tall enough for people to enter the structure without stooping or crawling on their knees, and I imagine that inside would have been very dark, odoriferous, and packed with shelving, grave goods, and skeletal remains. They were built to size and only in the case of A22 modified with an interior, low mudbrick partition wall bisecting the interior space. We assume, from the stratigraphic evidence of shelving, that people placed the remains of their dead on shelves within these charnel houses. Remains of matting and cloth suggest that skeletal remains may have been wrapped in cloth and placed on mats on these shelving units or on the floor (fig. 6.5). Further radiocarbon analysis will be conducted in the near future to attempt to anchor use-lives of the body libraries within a clearer range than the roughly 800 year period implied by the ceramic chronology. Since the cemetery was adjacent to the town, people could have visited the remains of their dead easily, and I imagine that there may have been community-wide commemorative ceremonies involving one or more charnel houses and their respective living counterparts over the many generations and centuries of use.

house, before the building may have been intentionally burned. This interpretation is still unproven and merely a conjecture, requiring further analysis of the excavation notes and the skeletal remains.

[8] Analysis of radiocarbon analysis of samples from all charnel houses is planned in the near future as the publication editors (Schaub and Chesson) finish the final publication for Numeira and turn their full attentions to the cemetery volume.

[9] It might be interesting to rethink this interpretation, if we consider that some of the people living at the daughter town of Numeira may have been buried at the Bab edh-Dhraʿ cemetery in the charnel houses; could we be seeing Lesser Houses (or expanding Greater Houses) whose main population lived at Numeira?

I believe that these body libraries held the remains of the dead from the walled town of Bab edh-Dhraʿ, and possibly also the daughter townsite of Numeira. A rich body of ethnographic data investigating the connections between secondary burials, ancestor worship, social memory, and identity exists from past and present societies throughout the world (see Chesson 2001b for a brief, and certainly incomplete, review of this literature). Secondary burials lend an occasion for individuals and groups to reassert and renegotiate their identities, commemorate their dead, and to reassert their visions for the future in the community (e.g., Feeley-Harnik 1989; George 1996; Kan 1989; Metcalf and Huntington 1991; Schiller 1997; Weiner 1976). The positioning of the body libraries in the cemetery adjacent to the town, but always visible from the town walls, would have been a constant reminder to people of the positions and linkages between the communities factions (Brumfiel 1992) such as kin groups, Houses, and other groups connected through webs of social, economic, ritual, and political obligations. In quiet, small-scale everyday practices, and in inclusive, community-wide, ritually significant occasions, the charnel house's very presence, visibility, and repeated use reinforced the transformative practices of remembering and forgetting the dead, calling to mind Ken George's (1996) claim that "commemorative tradition can … provide a community with a comforting sense of its own continuity and place in the world."

Because of the mixed nature of the deposits it is difficult to discuss with specificity the nature of the structured deposits in the charnel houses. With the collapse of the roofs and the deterioration of the walls of the charnel houses, and in some cases the extensive (intentional?) burning of the buildings, excavators were unable to identify discrete depositions of skeletal remains and grave goods. While acknowledging the problematic nature of interpreting Early Bronze II–III commemorative rites by analogy of the practices of the Early Bronze IA people, there are some clear similarities and suggestions of continuity in the disarticulation of human remains and the placement of grave goods, particularly prestige items, within the body libraries. While the specific meanings and shades of identities may differ between the two periods, both groups used similar sequences of repeated practices and followed a set of structured guidelines to process and transform their dead. I do not believe that it is coincidental that people in both periods were buried collectively, that there seems to have been an underlying current of grouping by kinship (at least in the Early Bronze IA tombs), and that through time they elaborated on the contexts and nature of mortuary practices as people settled into the region and built a large, enclosed community. Recalling the previous discussion of landscapes on bodies, settlements, cemeteries, and naturalized geography, considerations of structured agency in mortuary practices augments our perception and understanding of the profoundly important role that Early Bronze Age commemorative rites played in negotiating, asserting, and challenging their ideas the past, present, and future of life in these new towns.

LIVING AND DYING IN THE EARLY BRONZE AGE SOUTHEASTERN DEAD SEA PLAIN

In approaching these data from the perspective of analyses of lived experience, embodiment, and performance, we further enrich our reconstructions of the society and their mortuary practices. Joyce's (2005) recent comprehensive overview of these themes synthesizes the wealth of archaeological studies exploring "the body as a metaphor for society, as instrument of lived experience, and as surface of inscription" (Joyce 2005: 140). Joyce describes the diverse approaches to analyzing the materiality of bodies in the past, with many contemporary

social theorists challenging the simplified assertion that bodies and their ornamentation serve a communicative function (citing Wobst 1977), such as displaying a person's group identity and status (Joyce 2005: 142, citing Robb 1998). Recent archaeological approaches to lived experience and embodiment interrogates assumptions about costume, adornment, and identity; for archaeological analyses of mortuary practices, this reevaluation holds particularly powerful implications (cf. Fowler 2001; Joyce 2001, 2003; Meskell 1999, 2001; Robb this volume; Tarlow 2001; Williams 2004).

Several researchers (Robb this volume; Tarlow 2001; Williams 2004) have urged archaeologists analyzing mortuary practices to consider both the mourners and the dead. I want to explore briefly what it meant to be a person living and dying in a material body at Bab edh-Dhraʿ. From preliminary results of current bioarchaeological analyses, in considering lived experience in the daily lives and deaths of the Early Bronze Age people of the plain, skeletal indices indicate a large change in activity patterns, mortality, disease, and interpersonal relations when comparing the Early Bronze IA pre-sedentary people, and those that dwelled within or just outside the walls of the Early Bronze II–III community at Bab edh-Dhraʿ (and perhaps also at Numeira; Ortner and Frohlich n.d.; Ullinger pers. comm.). In preliminary comparisons of these collections, Ullinger states that the skeletons of Early Bronze II–III town dwellers show more degenerative diseases, such as osteoarthritis, eburnation (of knees), and fused toes (from repetitive positions, perhaps). We do not know exactly where or how the Early Bronze IA people lived (they have always been presumed to be nomadic, since little research into the previous Chalcolithic or contemporary Early Bronze IA period in the immediate region has offered a potential "home" for these people). If they were nomadic or transhumant, with varying levels of mobility tied to rights to and availability of pasturage and water, then it is understandable that we might see a shift in the types of daily activities that members of an sedentary agropastoral community might have experienced. Population density and stresses might also have been more intensively experienced in the highly terraced and tightly clustered residential areas that have been excavated in Bab edh-Dhraʿ (and probably also in Numeira; cf. Kuijt 2000), and disease could have played a large factor in the community. Certainly, the emotional toll of high infant and child mortality rates would have influenced daily life in the settlement and the frequency of repeated use of the cemetery.

It is too early in the analysis of Early Bronze II–III body libraries to determine whether town dwellers lived longer than their pre-town forebears (50% of whom had died by the age of twenty-one years; Ortner and Frohlich n.d.) or experienced more illness in their lives. What is clear, however, is that death was a part of daily life, before, during, and after the occupation of Bab edh-Dhraʿ and Numeira. These communities were confronted daily by high infant and child mortality rates (roughly 40%), evidenced archaeologically in secondary commemorative rituals with shaft tombs and charnel houses. Commemorative ceremonies, primary mortuary rites, and the "work" of distilling a person's memory through remembering and forgetting were frequently interwoven into the rhythms of life throughout the Early Bronze Age as a whole. Whether people were immediately involved and participating in primary or secondary mortuary rituals, they probably were acquainted with someone who was. The webs of relationships in these towns were intricate, but not massive in scale. In turn, people experienced the loss of loved ones, children, elderly, neighbors, friends, acquaintances, and rivals frequently, and the emotional impact of working through one's own grief or witnessing others working through the same issues would have influenced the ideas about death, mourning, and surviving the dead.

In analyzing and interpreting data from Early Bronze Age secondary commemorative rituals, it has been helpful to me to consider Ken George's study of modern headhunting ritu-

als in Sulawesi, in which he describes that "Like all ritual crowds, these choral and liturgical gatherings are ephemeral social bodies. Yet in the transitoriness we can catch a glimpse of the community's enduring forms of organization" (George 1996: 192). The scale of secondary rituals, their communal nature, and the frequency of repetition of memorializing ceremonies would have provided Early Bronze Age community members with ample opportunities to assert, negotiate, reaffirm, and sunder social, political, and economic relationships and structures at the individual and group levels. George (1996: 200) describes that

> Posed against the indeterminant, the contingent, the incoherent, and the open-ended, the ritual forms an enclosure where procedure and will can produce designed effects, as for example in the tension and resolution of mourning … And although we may associate commemoration with recollection and looking backward, it is also prospective — it offers a structure of anticipation. Memory — as a form of sociality and as a form of something remembered — is kept in motion.

It is this extraordinary combination of looking forward, of gazing back, and on experiencing the present that is combined in commemorative rituals described by George that I find so evocative of how the practice of mourning and secondary rites might have been experienced by the Early Bronze Age people of the southeastern Dead Sea Plain (fig. 6.6).

In thinking about the experience of living and dying in a body, one interesting question for lived experience of the dead and living is this: what happened to people when they died? Why do we have segmented skeletal remains from secondary mortuary practices in the vast majority of cases, and what could these types of meanings have attached to them? These few exceptions are associated with shifts in settlement systems; could these transitional mortuary practices be linked to negotiations on social, political, ritual, and economic structures within a community settling down (in the Early Bronze IB–early Early Bronze II) or in the abandonment of the town (late Early Bronze III–early Early Bronze IV)? Could the metaphor of travel for the Early Bronze IA people, who did not live in the area but buried their dead in the valley, have been important? For the town dwellers, could their storage of the dead in a group of body libraries a few hundred meters from the walled town hold significance for place-making communities of the living as well as the dead? Could the metaphors of the body and its segmentation in death signify key Early Bronze Age perceptions about what it meant to be human and alive, or to be dead and something else entirely (ancestor, perhaps)? The only cases of primary mortuary practices are associated with periods of transition in occupation in the cemeteries of Bab edh-Dhra' and Safi/Naqa. In these cases we see primary interment in traditional contexts (new construction or reuse of Early Bronze IA shaft tombs) or in new, innovative mortuary contexts (circular charnel houses at Bab edh-Dhra' and the large slab tombs at Safi/Naqa). The exceptional nature of these cases reminds us of Ilan's assertion that to be buried in primary or secondary rituals during the Early Bronze Age was exceptional. What does this say for experiencing death and the decay of the dead for these communities?

While most of these questions cannot be answered easily, or at all, I argue here that the segmentation of the body, and the placement of certain parts of the dead along with grave goods played a critical role in transforming a social person into a non-living entity through structured remembering and forgetting. Importantly commemorative rites combine structured acts of remembering and forgetting by groups and by individuals, and as George notes, involves both "procedure and will" working toward the distillation of a person's legacy to loved ones, acquaintances, and the greater community. Practice theory in its myriad incarnations provides archaeologists with potent tools for approaching questions of how people "performed

death" in the past, and it offers enormous potential for exploring the crucial work of distilling memories with nuanced simultaneous attention to things and people (not) forgotten.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TABLES

CATEGORIES OF INFORMATION

Area m^2: Square meters of area in chamber
CV: Number of ceramic vessels (in group)
CV/Ch: Number of ceramic vessels per chamber in group
CV/Ind: Number of ceramic vessels per individual in the chamber
Fem: Number of identified females
FG: Number of figurines (in group)
FG/Ch: Number of figurines per chamber in group
FG/Ind: Number of figurines per individual in the chamber
Group: Tombs excavated in group identified by excavators
Males: Number of identified males
Mean m^2: Average chamber area in square meters
MH: Number of mace-heads (in group)
MH/Ch: Number of mace-heads per chamber in group
MH/Ind: Number of mace-heads per individual in the chamber
MNI: Minimum number of individuals
MNI Males: Number of identified males in group
MNI Fem: Number of identified females in group
MNI S/A: Number of identified subadults in group
MNI Unid: Number of unsexed individuals in group
No. Ch.: Number of chambers in group
S/A: Number of identified subadults
SV: Number of stone vessels (in group)
SV/Ch: Number of stone vessels per chamber in group
SV/Ind: Number of stone vessels per individual in the chamber
Tomb: Name of tomb and chamber
Tombs: Numbered tombs excavated by group
Unid: Number of unsexed individuals

ABBREVIATIONS

Ch.	Chamber
E	East
EB	Early Bronze
N	North
N/A	Not Applicable
S	South
W	West

Table 6.1. Preliminary Published Data on Tomb Size, Skeletal Remains, and Numbers of Select Objects in Sample (Group IV) Early Bronze IA Tombs. Bab edh-Dhraʿ, Jordan

Tomb	Area m²	MNI	Males	Fem	S/A	Unid	CV	CV/Ind	MH	MH/Ind	FG	FG/Ind	SV	SV/Ind
A65S	4.6	1	0	0	0	1	17	17	0	0	0	0	0	0
A65E	3.2	2	0	0	0	2	12	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
A65W	3.1	5	0	0	1	4	14	2.8	1	0.2	0	0	1	0.2
A67E	1.2	4	0	0	0	4	10	2.5	0	0	0	0	0	0
A67N	2.6	4	0	0	1	3	10	2.5	1	0.25	0	0	1	0.25
A68E	?	Y	?	?	?	?	28	?	2	?	0	?	2	?
A68N	3.2	2	0	0	1	1	23	11.5	0	0	0	0	1	0.5
A68S	4.8	3	0	0	0	3	19	6.333	0	0	0	0	1	0.333
A68SE	4	2	0	0	0	2	23	11.5	1	0.5	0	0	1	0.5
A68W	4.8	5	0	0	0	5	24	4.8	0	0	0	0	2	0.4
A69	2.4	5	0	0	2	3	25	5	0	0	0	0	1	0.2
A70	3	4	0	0	0	4	6	1.5	0	0	0	0	1	0.25
A71S	4.2	6	0	0	1	5	46	7.667	1	0.167	0	0	0	0
A71N	4	3	0	0	1	2	33	11	0	0	0	0	1	0.333
A71W	4	10	0	0	0	10	59	5.9	0	0	0	0	0	0
A72NE	3.4	2	1	1	0	0	24	12	0	0	0	0	1	0.5
A72NW	2.9	3	1	0	1	1	60	20	2	0.667	0	0	1	0.333
A72S	2.4	3	0	0	0	3	45	15	1	0.333	0	0	0	0
A75	8.4	4	0	0	0	4	28	7	0	0	0	0	1	0.25
A76E	3.2	3	0	0	1	2	20	6.667	1	0.333	0	0	1	0.333
A76W	3.4	3	0	0	0	3	18	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
A77	3.2	1	0	0	0	1	31	31	0	0	0	0	0	0
A78NW	4	4	0	2	2	0	21	5.25	0	0	0	0	0	0
A78NE	1.9	2	0	0	1	1	28	14	0	0	0	0	0	0
A78SW	3.2	4	0	0	2	2	21	5.25	1	0.25	2	0.5	0	0
A78SE	?	?	?	?	?	?	29	?	1	?	2	?	0	?
A79N	2.9	5	1	1	3	0	12	2.4	1	0.2	0	0	1	0.2
A79S	3.2	3	1	1	1	0	14	4.667	1	0.333	0	0	1	0.333
A79W	2.9	4	1	1	1	1	41	10.25	1	0.25	0	0	1	0.25
A79E	2.6	2	0	0	1	1	27	13.5	0	0	0	0	1	0.5
A80N	3.2	2	0	0	0	2	27	13.5	0	0	0	0	0	0
A80S	2.6	4	1	1	2	0	22	5.5	0	0	0	0	0	0
A80E	2.6	2	1	1	0	0	6	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
A80W	2.9	5	1	1	1	2	53	10.6	0	0	0	0	0	0
A100S	2.3	7	0	0	4	3	8	1.143	0	0	0	0	0	0
A100E	3.6	10	3	1	6	0	48	4.8	0	0	3	0.3	0	0
A100W	2.9	4	1	2	1	0	23	5.75	0	0	0	0	0	0
A101N	?	1	0	0	0	1	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
A101E	?	1	0	0	0	1	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
A101S	?	2	0	0	1	1	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
A102E	?	3	3	0	0	0	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
A102S	?	1	0	0	0	1	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
A103S	?	1	1	0	0	0	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
A105NE	?	1	0	1	0	0	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
A105SE	?	1	1	0	0	0	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
A105NW	?	1	0	1	0	0	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?

Table 6.1. Preliminary Published Data on Tomb Size, Skeletal Remains, and Numbers of Select Objects in Sample (Group IV) Early Bronze IA Tombs. Bab edh-Dhraʿ, Jordan (*cont.*)

Tomb	Area m²	MNI	Males	Fem	S/A	Unid	CV	CV/Ind	MH	MH/Ind	FG	FG/Ind	SV	SV/Ind
A106S	?	1	0	1	0	0	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
Group IV Average	3.337	3.244	0.378	0.333	0.778	1.756	25.81	8.379	0.405	0.1	0.189	0.023	0.541	0.162
Group IV Total	116.8	146	17	15	35	79	955	N/A	15	N/A	7	N/A	20	N/A
EB IA Mean	3.14048	3.25	0.3412	0.3059	0.765	1.821	23.35	8.592	0.324	0.096	0.25	0.085	0.62	0.234
EB IA Total	197.85	273	29	26	65	153	1728	N/A	23	N/A	18	N/A	44	N/A

[*] Object found in shaft, not in chamber

Please Note: Significant amounts of data (MNIs and numbers of objects) are unpublished for several tombs and therefore could not be included in the overall study sample and figures for Early Bronze IA overall averages and totals.

Sources: Bentley 1987, 1991; Fröhlich and Ortner 1982; Rast and Schaub 1974, 1978, 1980, 1981; Schaub 1981a; Schaub and Rast 1984, 1989.

Table 6.2. Summary of Contents of Early Bronze IA Shaft Tombs by Excavated Cluster of Tombs (Group) and Chambers (Ch.). Bab edh-Dhraʿ, Jordan

Group	Tombs	No. Ch	Mean m²	MNI	MNI Male	MNI Fem	MNI S/A	MNI Unid	CV	CV/Ch	MH	MH/Ch	FG	FG/Ch	SV	SV/Ch
I	A81 (E, S, W, N), A82 (E, SE, SW), A85, A86 (SW, SE, NE), A89NW, A91, A92, A120	15	3.26	34	2	3	3	26	272	18	4	0.3	0	0	11	0.7
II	A83	1	5	3	0	1	2	0	24	24	0	0	0	0	0	0
III	A5 (E, S), A6 (E, N), A7 (E, S)	6	3.48	16	0	0	2	14	166	28	0	0	8	1.3	5	0.8
IV	A65 (S, E, W), A67 (N, E), A68 (W, N, S, E, SE), A69, A70, A71 (S, N, W), A72 (NE, NW, S), A75, A76 (E, W), A77, A78 (SE, NW, NE, SW), A79 (N, S, W, E), A80 (N, S, W, E), A100 (S, E, W), A101 (N, S, E), A102 (E, S), A103S, A105 (NE, SE, NW), A106S	56	3.34	146	17	15	35	79	955	17	15	0.3	7	0.1	20	0.4
V	A1, A3, A12	3	3.15	11	0	0	0	11	56	19	0	0	0	0	0	0
VI	A45	1	1.5	3	0	0	1	2	21	21	0	0	0	0	0	0
VII	A9, A10, A110 (SE, NE, NW), A111W, A114N	7	3.12	38	9	6	17	6	173	25	3	0.4	3	0.4	7	1
VIII	C1, C2, C3, C5, C6, C9, C10 (E, W), C11	9	2.75	22	1	1	5	15	61	6.8	3	0.3	0	0	3	0.3
Total	48 Tombs	98	N/A	273	29	26	65	153	1728	N/A	25	N/A	18	N/A	46	N/A

Sources: Bentley 1987, 1991; Fröhlich and Ortner 1982; Rast 1999; Rast and Schaub 1974, 1978, 1980, 1981; Schaub 1981a; Schaub and Rast 1984, 1989

Table 6.3. Summary of Early Bronze II–III Charnel Houses and Contents, Including Preliminary MNIs and Grave Goods. Bab edh-Dhraʿ, Jordan

CH	M²	MNIᵃ	#Ves	MtW	Mh	SmP	Fig	MoP	CBC	SBSP	CarP	MetB	OstB	FaiB	AlaB	CarB	LapB	CryB	CalB	ShB	SBB	Gold
A55	13.4	60	170+																			
INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION PUBLISHED CURRENTLY																						
LESSER CHARNEL HOUSES																						
A42	15.1	Unk	30																			
C4	15.5	Unk	20						1												27	
GREATER CHARNEL HOUSES																						
A8	35.3	Unk	121	Y				1														
A44	36.8	41	142	1(r)									1?	28		3			4	37	9	
A20ᵇ	46.1	Unk	46	Y								3	1	3		6			4	9	6	
A41	53.6	42	231	2		2				2				2		2		2		1+	4	1
A21	65.6	53	516	1(r)	1(a)	1			1	1	1	4		61		40			4	56	76	
A51	67.3	200	783	7		4						2		13+	1	49	1+		2	5+	81	
A22ᶜ	120.9	170	450+	2		1						Y										Y

ᵃ All MNIs are preliminary and based on the counting of skulls. The skeletal remains of A55 and A22 are currently under analysis by bioanthropologists and we expect the MNI count to increase (S. Sheridan and J. Ullinger pers. comm.)

ᵇ Channel House A20 had been looted and therefore the number of vessels does not correlate to size of structure, as in all other cases

ᶜ Costume elements not completely published: reported as several pieces of gold leaf jewelry and one necklace of gold beads and spacers

Sources: Rast and Schaub 1978, 1980; Schaub and Rast 1989

CATEGORIES OF OBJECTS

MtW	Metal Weapons	Mh	Mace-head	SmP	Stone Palette
Fig	Figurine	CBC	Carved Bone Cylinder	PlIB	Pierced/Incised Bone Object
MotP	Mother of Pearl Pendant	SBSP	Stone, Bone, or Shell Pendant	CarP	Carnelian Pendant
MetB	Metal Bead	OstB	Ostrich Egg Bead	FaiB	Faience Bead
AlaB	Alabaster Bead	CarB	Carnelian Bead	LapB	Lapis Lazuli Bead
CryB	Crystal Bead	CalB	Calcite Bead	ShB	Shell Bead
SBB	Stone or Bone Bead	Gold	Gold Bead or Foil		

CLASSIFICATION OF OBJECTS

Unk	Unknown Quantity	Y	Present, Quantity Unknown	(r)	Rivet on Metal Weapon
(a)	Material of Mace-head is alabaster	+	Includes at least the number indicated and probably more		
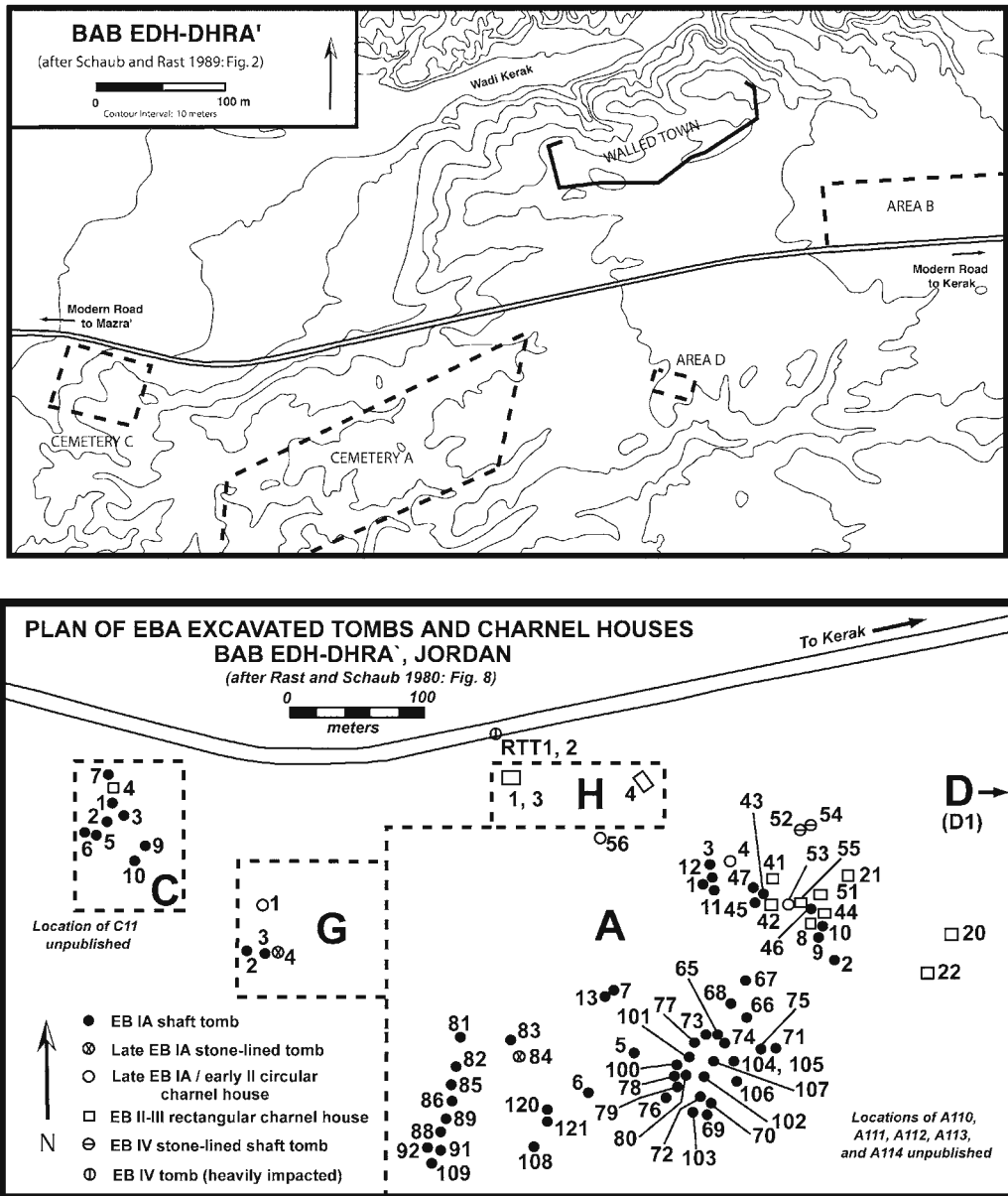
Figure 6.1. Map of Early Bronze Age Cemetery and Settlement Sites on the Southeastern Dead Sea Plain
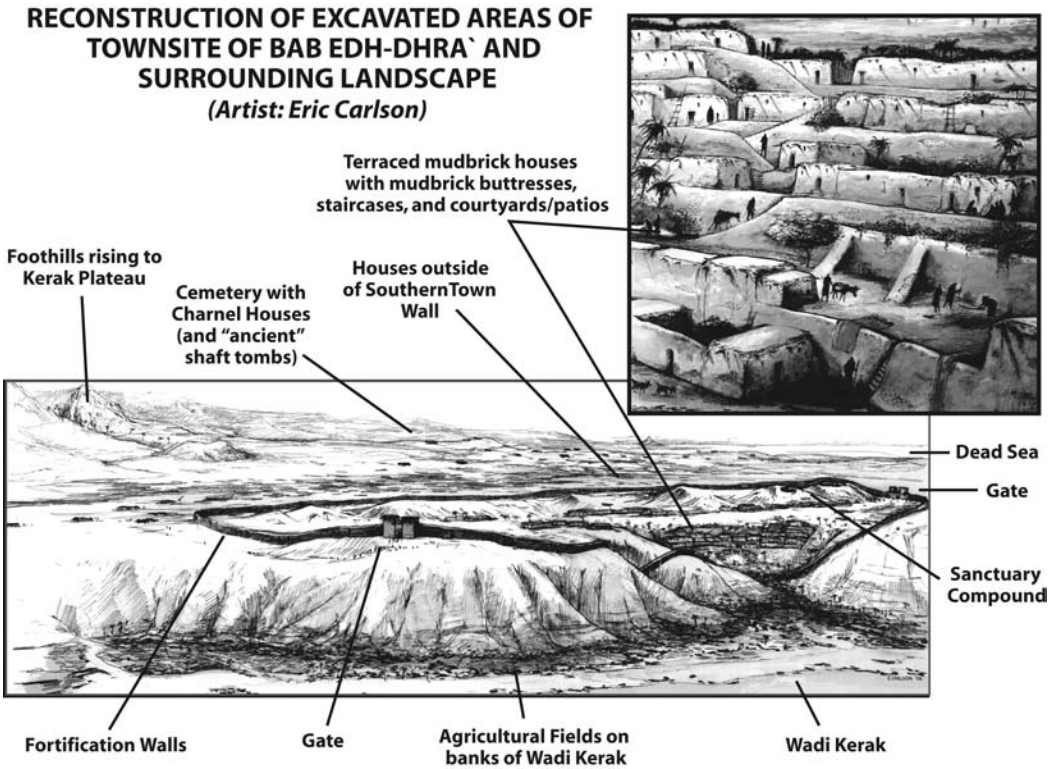
Figure 6.2. Reconstruction of the Walled Town of Bab edh-Dhra' (looking from the north across Wadi Kerak) and the Surrounding Landscape (artist Eric Carlson; reconstructions used with permission of artist)
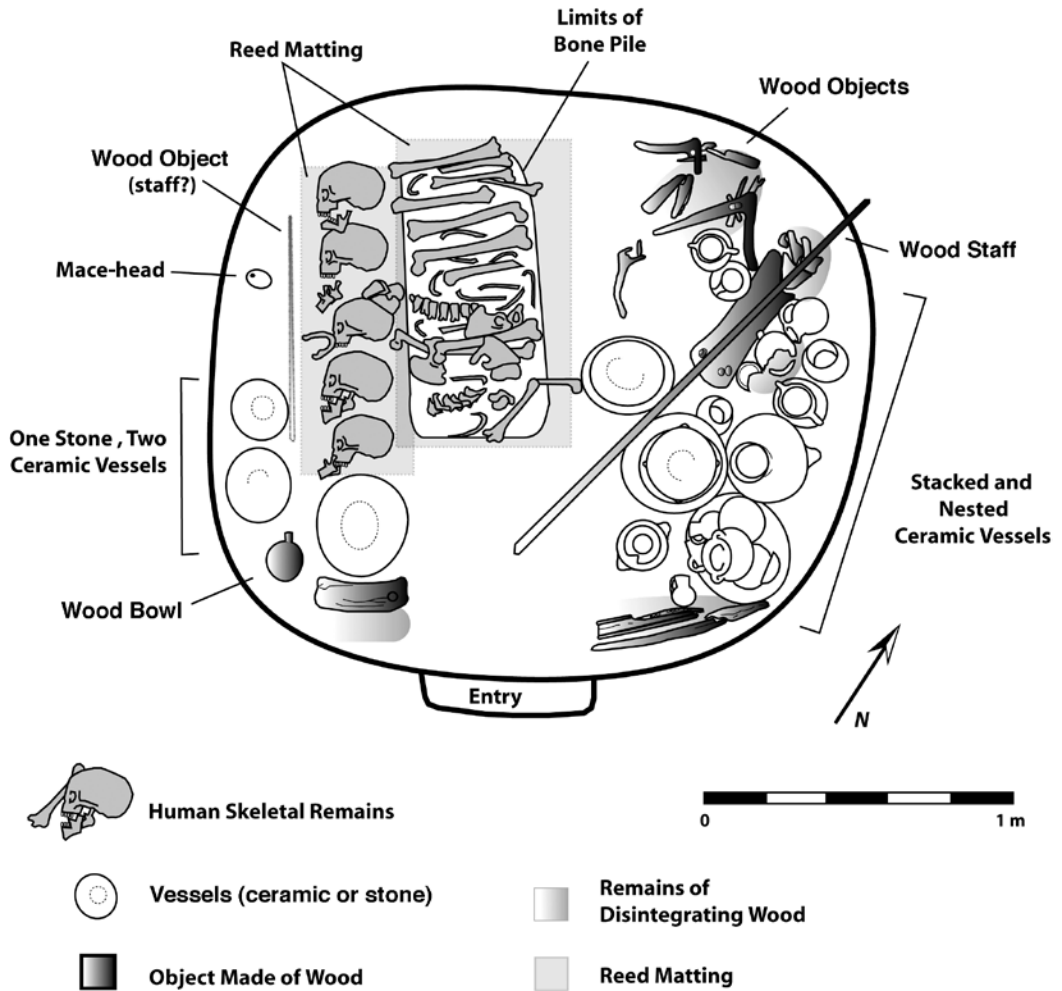
Figure 6.3. Schematic Plan of Early Bronze IA Shaft Tomb A114N. Bab edh-Dhraʿ, Jordan
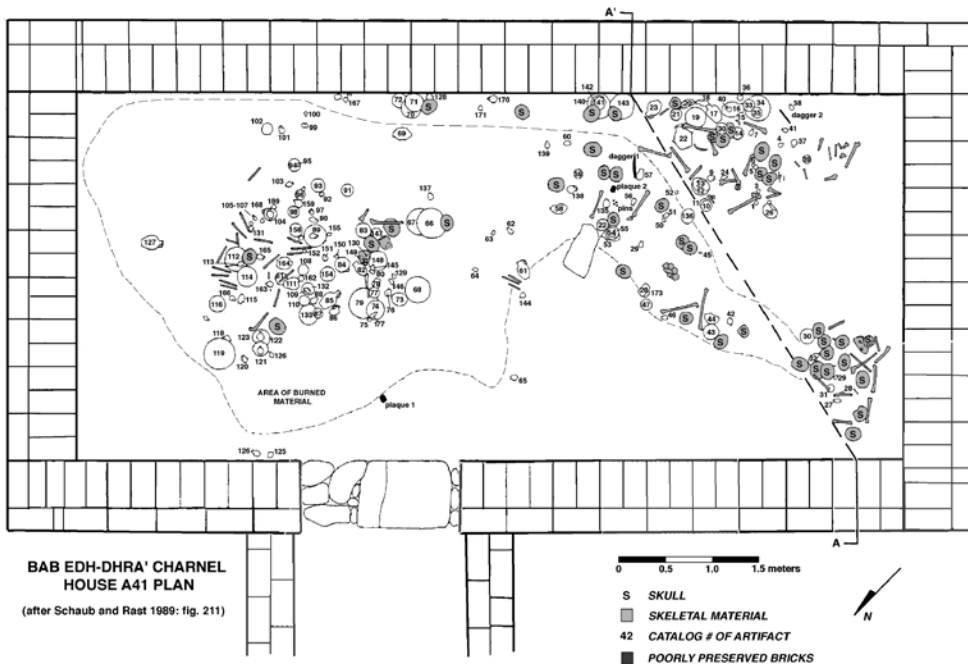
Figure 6.4. Plan of Charnel House A41. Bab edh-Dhraʿ, Jordan

Figure 6.5. Reconstruction of Early Bronze II–III Charnel House at Bab edh-Dhra', Jordan (artist Eric Carlson; reconstructions used with permission of artist)
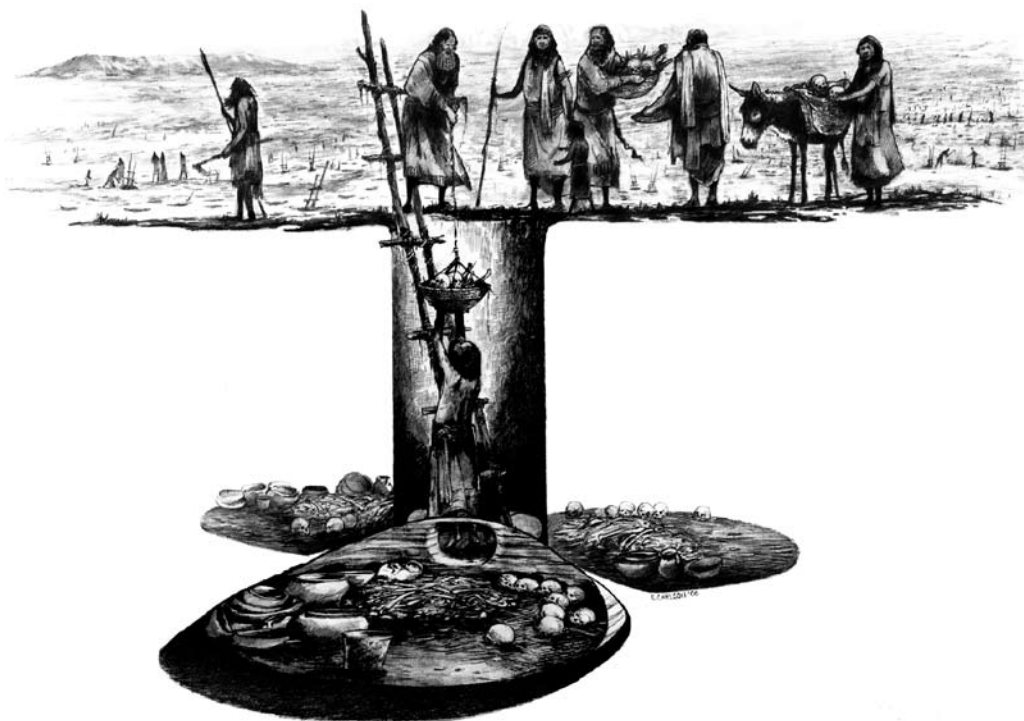
Figure 6.6. Reconstruction of Early Bronze IA Shaft Tomb at Bab edh-Dhra', Jordan (artist Eric Carlson; reconstructions used with permission of artist)

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7

ETRUSCAN STYLE OF DYING: FUNERARY ARCHITECTURE, TOMB GROUPS, AND SOCIAL RANGE AT CAERE AND ITS HINTERLAND DURING THE SEVENTH–SIXTH CENTURIES B.C.

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CENTRAL ITALY BEFORE THE ETRUSCANS

Firstly, I would like to make clear that in this paper I have kept with the traditional chronology elaborated by H. Müller-Karpe (1959) and other scholars (according to which the Iron Age is dated to the ninth–eighth centuries B.C.), despite new proposals based on dendrochronology and scientific dating systems, which have suggested dates that are rather earlier (on absolute chronology: Bietti Sestieri 1997, 1998; Pare 2000; Delpino 2003; Bartoloni and Delpino 2005; for relationships to Near East: Gilboa and Sharon 2003). This is because the current debate between prehistoric archaeologists, who have already accepted the new chronologies, and classical archaeologists, who are defending the traditional dates, is still ongoing (Bartoloni and Delpino 2005). For the moment, I prefer to follow the traditional chronology. Keeping to that, at the beginning of the eighth century B.C. the middle part of the Tyrrhenian coast, corresponding to modern-day southern Tuscany, northern and southern Latium, and northern Campania, was one of the most, if not the most, developed regions in all of Italy. Fertile land, as well as natural resources like metals, salt, and timber, played an important role and offered the material conditions for this growth. In particular, Etruria, the land to the north of the Tiber that marked the natural boundary with Latium Vetus, was experiencing an important moment of transition from village to city. As pointed out by many scholars, the development of the so-called proto-urban centers in Etruria had its origins in the later final Bronze Age (fig. 7.1). The people, who by then were settled in scattered settlements not larger than 5 hectares, began to abandon these small sites to occupy huge *plateaux*, the size of which can vary from 125 to 200 hectares (Tarquinia: Mandolesi 1999; Central Italy: Pacciarelli 2000). This process took off at the beginning of the early Iron Age (early ninth century B.C.). Large concentrations of populations occupied sites such as Vulci, Tarquinia, Caere, and Veii, where later Etruscan cities flourished. Formal burial was almost exclusively confined to cemeteries outside the settlement area. Some graves with their rich tomb groups reflect very clearly the high rank of the so-called princes or princesses (Bartoloni 2002, 2003). In the eighth century B.C., the number of wealthy graves becomes surprisingly high in comparison to the previous age, although it is impossible at the moment to know the percentage of these tombs as a whole.

The *aristoi* of the second half of the eighth century B.C. had enormous wealth (Iaia 1999; Veio, graves Casale del Fosso 871–72: Drago Troccoli 2005). Iron, copper, and other minerals like alum, and the so-called "invisible goods," were among the important natural resources of Etruria. These, along with the knowledge of skilled craftsmen like metallurgists (Giardino

1995; Pare 2000), can explain both the wealth and the overseas relations of Etruria. The *aristoi* felt the need to display their incredible wealth (presumably not only in the graves as we can see, but in their daily lives, as well) and therefore they began to look for cultural models to represent this wealth. The best available models were from the Eastern Mediterranean region, which were brought to the West via trade along commercial routes first established by the Phoenicians (Rathje 1984; Martelli 1991; Botto 1995, 2002, 2005). The presence of Greeks, namely Euboeans, is definitively later than the Phoenicians and can be dated from the second quarter of the eighth century B.C. (Delpino 1997; Ridgway 2000a–b, 2002; Bartoloni 2005; Rizzo 2005a; Cataldi 2006; d'Agostino 2006, forthcoming). However, by the first half of the seventh century, Greek mythology was already widely circulated throughout Etruria. The buc-chero olpe with the scene of Metaia and Taitale, the Etruscan names for the Greek Médeia and Daidalos, proves that in the late Orientalizing period around 630 B.C. Greek mythological fig-ures had already been accepted into Etruscan culture, in particular at Caere (Rizzo and Martelli 1993; Martelli 2001).

THE ORIENTALIZING PERIOD

The beginning of the Orientalizing period in Etruria is dated to the last quarter of the eighth century B.C., thanks to important finds such as the Bocchoris situla and the related tomb group from Tarquinia (Ridgway 1999). This period is characterized by a greater distribution of luxury goods imported from the Eastern Mediterranean via complex sea trading routes, trans-ported by people of various languages and origins (Cristofani and Martelli 1994; von Hase 1995; Niemeyer 1996, with papers of various values; Principi 2000; Torelli 2000; Prayon and Röllig 2000; Bonfante and Karageorghis 2001; Riva and Vella forthcoming). Etruscan cit-ies like Vulci, Tarquinia, Caere, or Veii are still in need of exploration; but where excavated, small settlements clearly show that by the first half of the seventh century B.C. (during the Early and Middle Orientalizing periods), deep transformations had occurred in society, which from an archaeological point of view are discernable in the shift from huts with thatched roofs to houses with tile-covered roofs (Rasmus Brandt and Karlsson 2001; the earliest tiles, dated to the middle of the seventh century B.C., were probably introduced to the Italian peninsula from Sicily and they reproduced Corinthian models).

In the individual graves dated to the second quarter of the seventh century B.C., the Etrus-can love of luxury, termed *triphé*, was satisfied through oriental imports (*keimelia*). Carved ivories of North Syrian style, glass and faience vases (Wehgartner 1999), exotic materials like Tridacna Squamosa shells and ostrich eggs (Rathje 1986), gold jewelry decorated with the granulation technique (Nestler and Formigli 1993), and bronze ribbed bowls (Sciacca 2005) were first imported and then produced in Etruria by oriental craftsmen and their Etruscan ap-prentices. The granulated jewelry with Etruscan inscriptions, like a fibula from Castelluccio di Pienza near Sienna, are a product of the mobility of skilled workers of Near Eastern origin, who might be responsible for the introduction of these new techniques to Italy, as well as other artistic forms. For instance, anthropomorphic sculpture has its origins in this period; the Tomb of the Statues near Caere, dated to the first quarter of the seventh century B.C., has been attrib-uted to northern Syrian craftsmen (fig. 7.2; Colonna 1986a; *contra* Martelli 1991).

CAERE

The growth of some centers, such as Caere, was sudden and explosive. In the Banditaccia necropolis at Caere only a few generations separated the pozzo graves from chamber tombs contained in huge tumuli, the diameter of which can reach up to 60 meters (Zifferero 1991).

La Banditaccia plateau's centuries-old use as a cemetery, which measures more than 150 hectares, has produced impressive evidence in the form of thousands of tombs; it is one of the largest known archives for research into the social history of a city within the Mediterranean region. The tombs at Caere are more difficult to interpret than well-known cases in other regions, such as the Phrygian cemetery at Gordion or the Lydian necropolis at Bin Tepe near Sardis, because they were not only reserved for the royal and upper classes, but rather several social ranks can be identified. Unfortunately, the Etruscan graves in Caere have been explored many times in the past; it is quite rare to find an intact burial and in most graves only few of the original tomb group remains are found (Moretti Sgubini 2001; Rizzo 2005b). Therefore, in order to achieve a general interpretation of the social history of Caere, we are forced to use the most common available evidence: tomb architecture (Prayon 1975 with previous literature; Linington 1980; Colonna 1986b; Naso 1996a, 2001; Colonna and Di Paolo Colonna 1997; Zifferero 2000).

The tumulus was introduced to the Etruscan funerary landscape already during the Iron Age (Naso forthcoming d). However, in Caere we can identify most of the earlier, if not the earliest, monumental examples dating from the Orientalizing period onwards. At Caere the tumuli, on top of their rock-cut bases, are decorated with the first stone moldings in the history of Italian architecture. Because the changes in the funerary depositions did not have intermediate steps and the execution of the monuments is sophisticated, it has been supposed that tumuli and stone moldings had origins overseas. Since northern Syria is the only region currently offering some real parallels for the moldings, even if not monumental in scale, it has been hypothesized that both tumuli and stone moldings were introduced to Etruria by a Near Eastern architect, perhaps from northern Syria (fig. 7.3; Colonna 1986b; Naso 1996b, 1998).

A monumental barrow can contain many chamber tombs: the Great Tumulus II includes four tombs dating from the end of eighth–early seventh century B.C. to the first half of the sixth century B.C. (fig. 7.4). The chronological correspondence between this monument and the adoption of the family name (*nomen gentilicium*) in Etruria is exact (Colonna 1977). Even if inscriptions are lacking in this tumulus, we can be sure that this monument was a family burial, reserved for the use of the same family over time. Each tomb was reserved for one generation, but the huge monument, measuring more than 40 m in diameter, was originally built just for one or two persons who were buried in the only sepulchral chamber of the earliest grave, the tomb of the Hut with the Thatched Roof. When this tomb was officially explored, it had already been violated and therefore we are not sure about the number of deceased it originally contained (Dik 1981: 50). The remains of the tomb groups definitely belong to more than one burial. In such graves one can expect both a male and female sepulture, appropriate for a married couple. I like to stress the spatial position of the Great Tumulus II: It forms a pair with the adjacent Great Tumulus I, which measures 31 m in diameter and contains two chamber tombs, the earliest of which dates to the first half of the seventh century B.C. In the spatial organization of the necropolis several pairs of tumuli are documented. Perhaps the best examples are the tumuli of the Colonel and Mengarelli, the latter of which is named after the excavator of the Banditaccia necropolis (fig. 7.5). Both tumuli are situated only a few hundred meters from the Great Tumuli I and II and also date to the first half of the seventh century B.C. The tumulus

of the Colonel, measuring 37 m in diameter, contains four tombs, while the tumulus of Mengarelli, which measures 43 m in diameter, contains just one. The earliest tomb of the tumulus of the Colonel is quite similar in form and date to the tomb of the Hut with the Thatched Roof. In both cases I wish to emphasize the continuous use of the same monument by the same family over at least four generations, if not more.

The second mentioned pair of tumuli is surrounded by many small and medium size tumuli, measuring 10–15 m and also dating to the seventh century B.C. In terms of the particular spatial arrangement of these tumuli, one can make at least two considerations. Firstly, even with the lack of epigraphical evidence in all cases, the pairs of great tumuli probably belonged to members of the same family, brothers as well as cousins. Secondly, the tumuli of small dimensions presumably reflect the existence of minor *gentes* that were in some way connected with the major groups. They were rich enough to build their own graves, but the tumuli contain just one chamber tomb. The main character of the monumental tumuli is therefore a continuous use of the same tomb over several generations. For the smaller barrows one can presume that the same chamber was used by many generations of the same family, but unfortunately, the tomb groups of this sector of the Banditaccia necropolis are still unpublished as a whole, so we cannot systematically verify through comparisons with other data our hypothesis, based on the tomb architecture. In terms of the relationships between major and minor groups, I like to think about connections similar to the complex links seen in early Rome between *gentes patriciae*, *sodales,* and *clientes*, which played an important role in early Roman society (Richard 1990).

THE HINTERLAND OF CAERE

From an archaeological point of view the influence of Caere on the surrounding territory is particularly clear through the tomb architecture. The best documented example is currently the necropolis of Pian della Conserva on the Tolfa Hills, north of Caere (fig. 7.6). The hilly district, being the natural boundary between the territories of Caere and Tarquinia, had a very intensive occupation in the Bronze Age, particularly in the final phase (eleventh–tenth century B.C.; di Gennaro 1998; Pacciarelli 2000: 128–32; for single finds: d'Ercole and Trucco 1995a–b; Torelli 2000: 535–36; Naso forthcoming a). Following a lack of archaeological data corresponding to the beginning of the early Iron age, the hinterland was again occupied in the second phase of the early Iron age (eighth century B.C.; Persiani 1992: 329–30, n. 5; Boenzi 1998; Zifferero 2003: 10; for single finds: Iorio 1993; Groppelli and Iorio 1994). Finally, in the seventh century B.C., the territory shows clear traces of intensive land use thanks to the presence of many chamber tomb cemeteries (Zifferero 2005; Acconcia et al. 2005).

More than one hundred chamber tombs were investigated in the necropolis at Pian della Conserva, the architecture of which dates from the end of the seventh century B.C. to the middle of the sixth century B.C., and can be divided into three groups (Naso forthcoming c, with previous literature). In the first group, which includes just 10% of the total number of tombs, Caeretan patterns are followed so strictly that we believe these chambers were executed by skilled workers from Caere (fig. 7.7). The funerary benches are real and different bed models for men and women and they are distinguished as well as at Caere. The children's couches and the small windows with right *proiecturae* are typical elements of the funerary architecture developed at Caere; in Pian della Conserva such elements are present only in tomb 17. The second and third groups, both corresponding more or less to 45% of the total number of tombs, show a major (second group) and a minor (third group) influence from the Caeretan chamber tombs. The tombs of the second group have some Caeretan elements like a male bed associ-

ated with another, normally low bed that is unknown at Caere. It is possible to infer that a local solution for the female couch was developed, different from the usual practice seen at Caere (fig. 7.8). The second group is probably of local origin, but with a Caeretan influence. The third group is completely different: the interiors of the chambers are cut with little care and the funerary beds do not have any form or decoration. It is possible to classify the third group of tombs at Pian della Conserva as completely local (fig. 7.9).

The differences in the tomb architecture probably reflect the social rank of the settlement's inhabitants. The few tombs belonging to the first group are the burials of the society's elite, coming directly from Caere. This is revealed by an inscribed bucchero bowl found in tomb 17, which dates to the end of the sixth century B.C. and mentions the vase and tomb owner's family name, *mi plavtes* (fig. 7.10; Rix 1991, Cr 2.67). The Etruscan family name *plavte* has Italic origins and until now only is documented in the same period at Caere in the form *plavtana* (Rix 1991, Cr 2.49–2.50). On the contrary, the tombs of the second and third groups belonged to social classes of lower ranks, which one can again imagine as being similar to the Roman *clientes*. To verify the possible existence of groups in Etruscan society similar to the Roman *clientes,* it is interesting to compare some characteristics of the Roman *clientes* known from the literary sources with the archaeological evidence.

We can mention the defeat of the Roman army against Veii during the Cremera River Battle of 472 B.C. Greek and Roman historians quote the large number of casualties incurred to the *gens* Fabia, which lost 300 of its members (Richard 1990). It is commonly admitted that is impossible for a *gens* to have 300 male members; the high number is explained as being due to the additional presence of *clientes* and *sodales* of the Fabii. The existence of such armies in Etruria is archaeologically documented by a find made at the beginning of the twentieth century at Vetulonia. At least 125 hardly damaged bronze helmets were found there. The helmets from Vetulonia are actually divided between the Naturhistorisches Museum in Vienna (at least 114 helmets) and the National Archaeological Museum in Florence (at least eleven helmets). Nineteen helmets are inscribed only with the same Etruscan word, *haspnas'*. The ending *–nas'* shows that it is a family name in genitive. It therefore be said that the helmets belonged to a gentilice army of the gens *haspna* brought by *clientes*. The possible presence of mercenaries is not to be excluded. At the end of sixth–beginning of fifth century B.C., the helmets were offered to the gods, probably as war booty (Egg 1986: 207, n. 223, with previous literature; Martelli 1995 with further references; Torelli 1992, 1997: 112; Pairault-Massa 2000; Cygielman and Rafanelli 2002: 67, fig. 32; Giuntoli 1998).

In this way we have textual and archaeological evidence proving the existence of family armies in Central Italy — both in Rome and Etruria — during the sixth century B.C. Both the defeat of the Fabii and the helmets of Vetulonia mark the end of the gentilitial period.

FINAL REMARKS

The results of the examination of tomb architecture in a minor land settlement in the territory of Caere, that in future research must be expanded to include other necropoleis, are comparable with the general archaeological evidence of the late sixth century B.C. This was an age of huge social tensions, as we learn from the history of Rome and other Italic peoples; it is enough to quote the fall of the monarchy in Rome.

In Etruscan tomb architecture, new burial forms were introduced. During the second half of the sixth century the early tumuli were abandoned, not only because it was difficult to insert their round plan in the new regulatory plannings, but also as a result of deep changes which

occurred in society. The seventh century B.C. was the time of aristocracy or *aristoi*; the sixth century is on the contrary the time of the city or the *reges*. New classes were born, that fifty years ago Massimo Pallottino termed as "corageous merchants" (Pallottino 1953). The tomb architecture reflects these changes, both in Caere as in other cities like Volsinii, corresponding to modern-day Orvieto. In terms of the monumental tumuli we instead have regular rows of cube-tombs, which appeared in Caere already in the second quarter of the sixth century B.C. and in Volsinii after 550 B.C. (fig. 7.11; general view: Colonna 1986b; for Caere: Moretti Sgubini and Ricciardi 2004; for Volsinii: Della Fina 2003).

The outsides and insides of these chambers are quite similar because they strictly followed a model, probably imposed by a central authority of the city (Oleson 1976, 1978). Only a few skilled workers, or perhaps a workshop, were responsible for their construction. At the same time the so-called standardization of the tomb groups began (Batino 1998). This marks the beginning of a new age, with new historical problems, that is impossible to examine here.
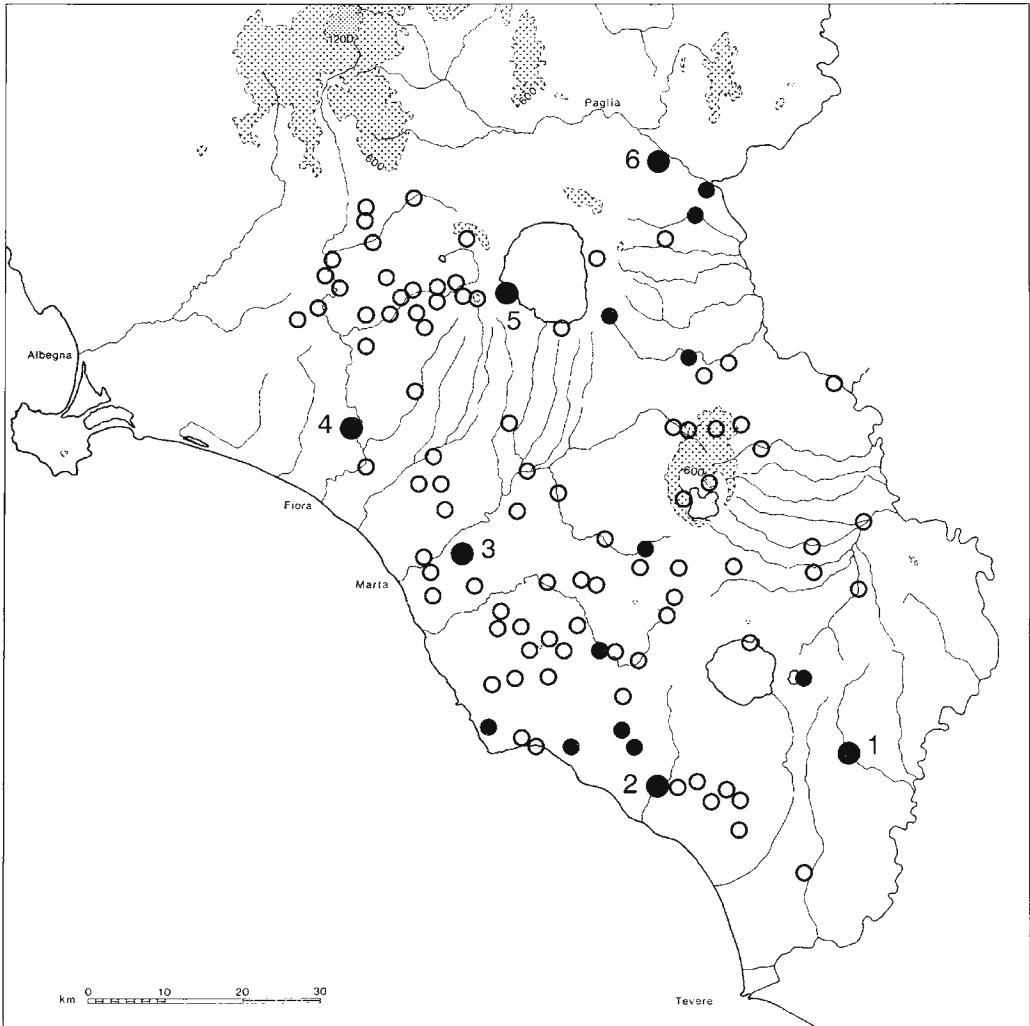
Figure 7.1. Abandonment of Final Bronze Age Settlements in Southern Etruria. Open Circles: Final Bronze Age Settlements Abandoned in the Iron Age. Filled Circles: Final Bronze Age Settlements Surviving until the Iron Age. The Larger Circles are the Protourban Centers: (1) Veio; (2) Caere; (3) Tarquinia; (4) Vulci; (5) Bisenzio; (6) Orvieto (after Pacciarelli 2000, fig. 60)
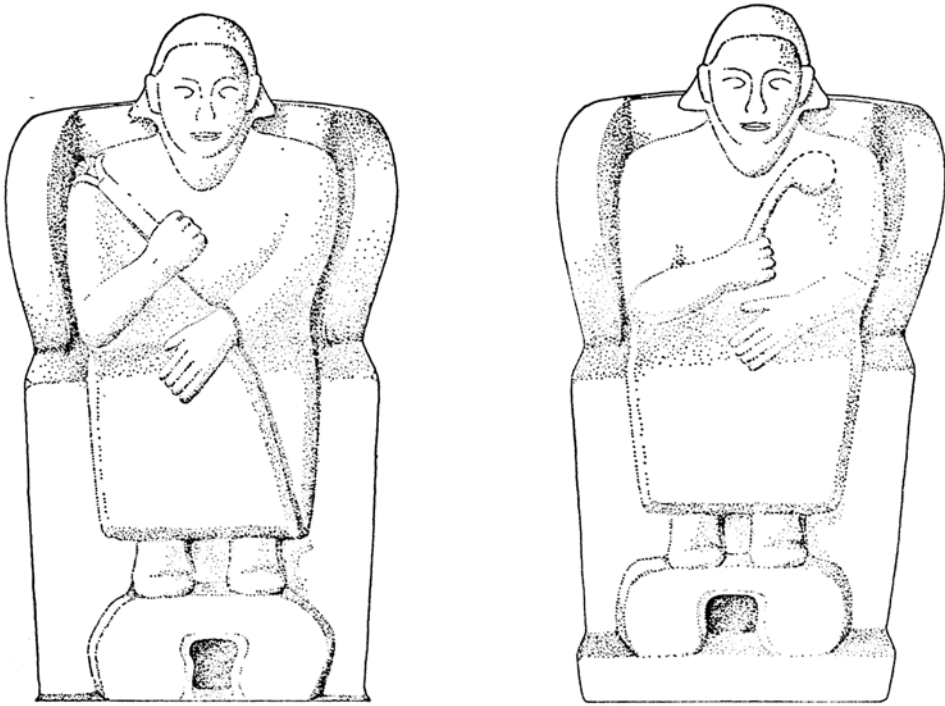
Figure 7.2. The Statues in the Tomb of the Statues near Caere (after Colonna 1986a, fig. 11)
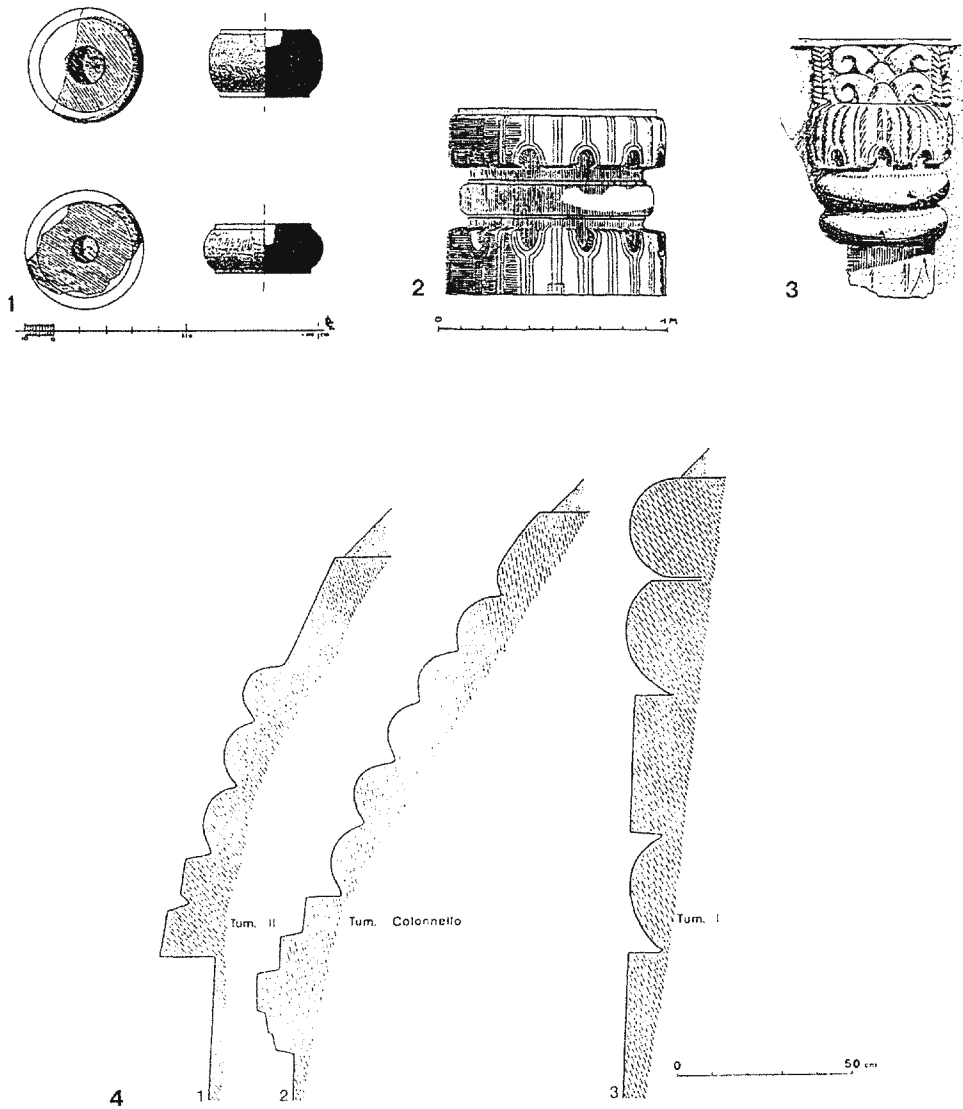
Figure 7.3. (1) Tell Halaf, Pillar Base; (2) Zinçirli, Column Base; (3) Tell Tayinat, Throne Fragment (after R. Naumann 1971, figs. 148, 152, 177); (4) Profile Drawings of Some Tumuli in Caere (after Colonna 1986b, pl. 7)
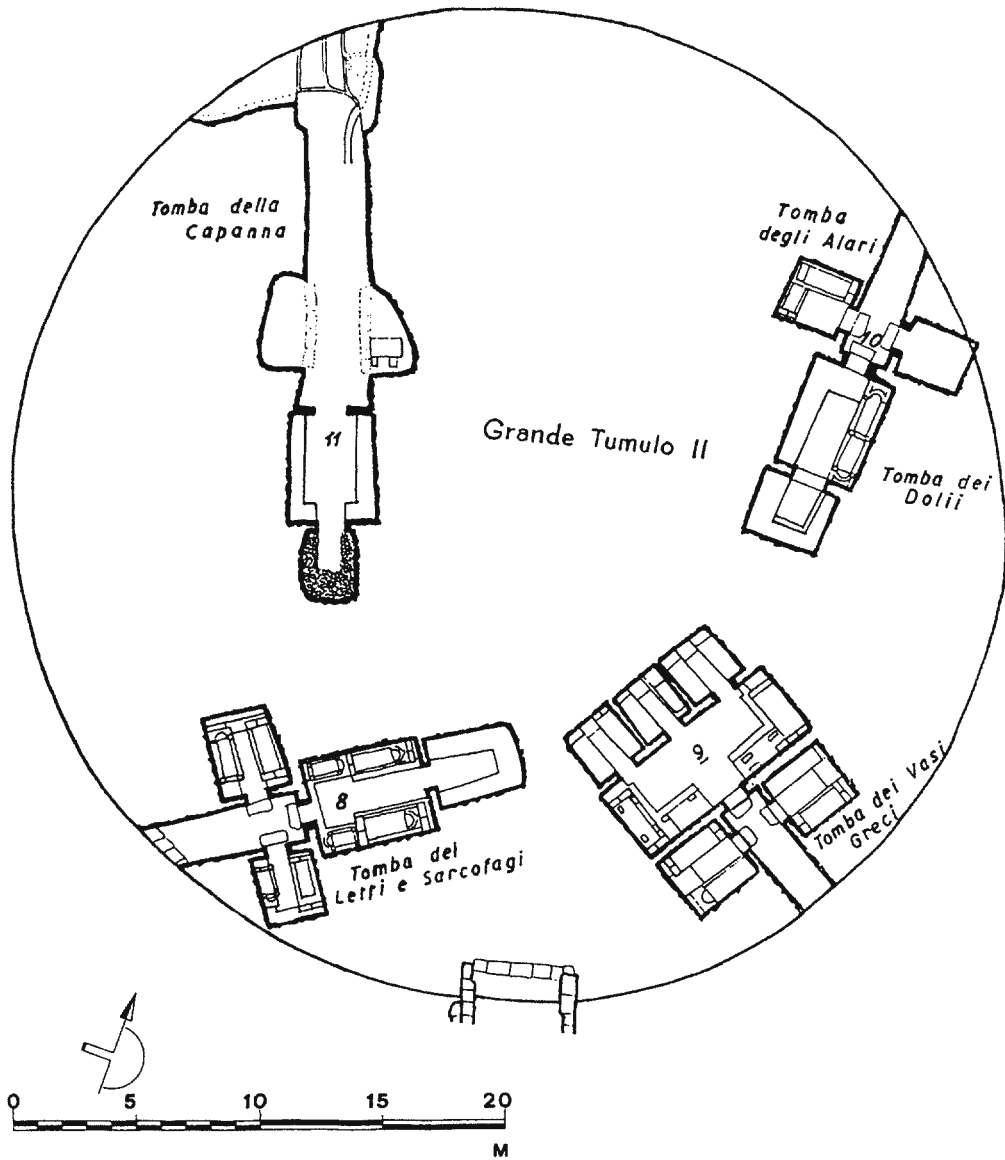
Figure 7.4. Caere, the Great Tumulus II in the Banditaccia Necropolis (after Naso 1996b, fig. 1)

Figure 7.5. View from the Air of the Banditaccia Necropolis: Tumulus Mengarelli (left) and Tumulus of the Colonel (right) Are the Larger of the Tumuli (after Colonna 1986a, fig. 12)
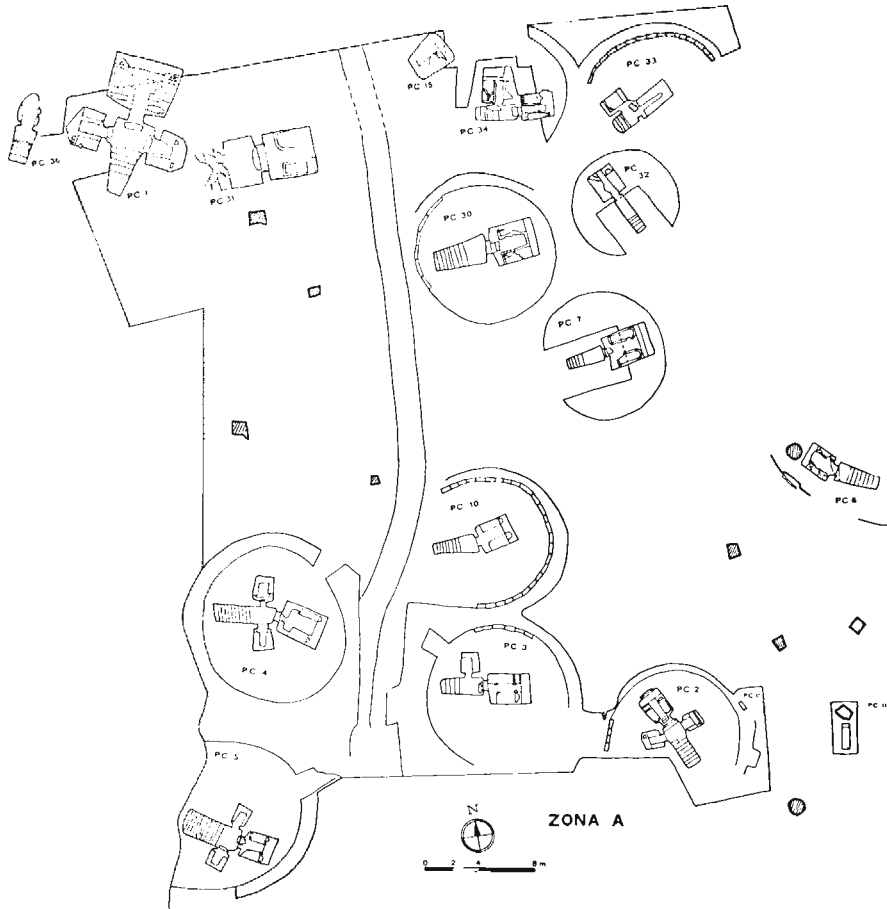
Figure 7.6. Plan of a Sector of the Necropolis of Pian della Conserva
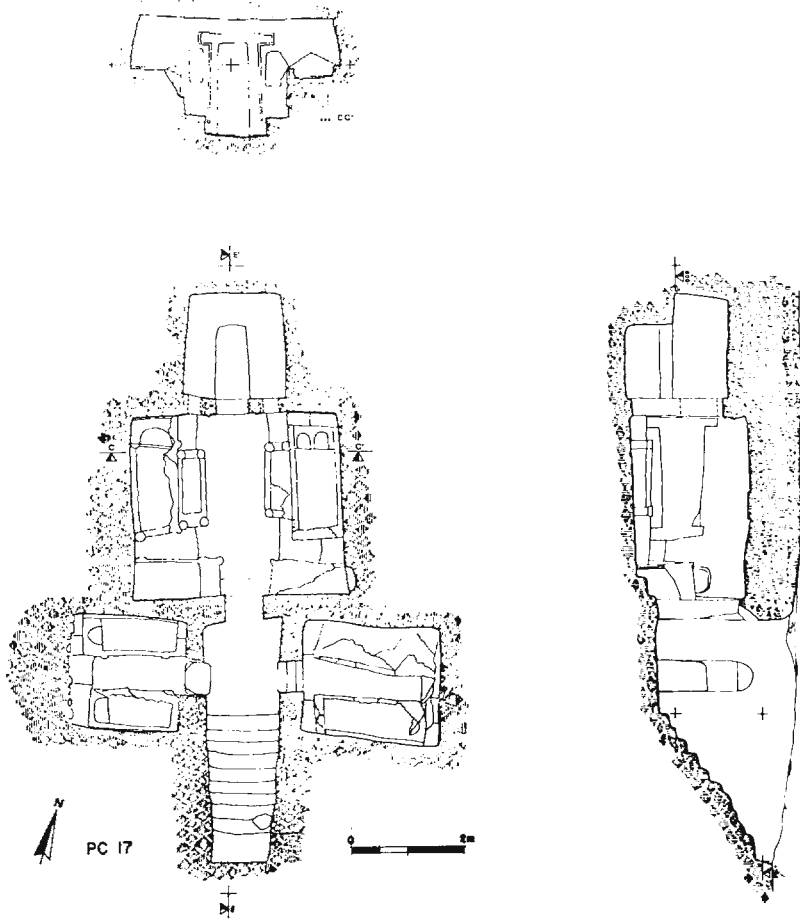
Figure 7.7. Plan and Sections of the Tomb Pian della Conserva 17
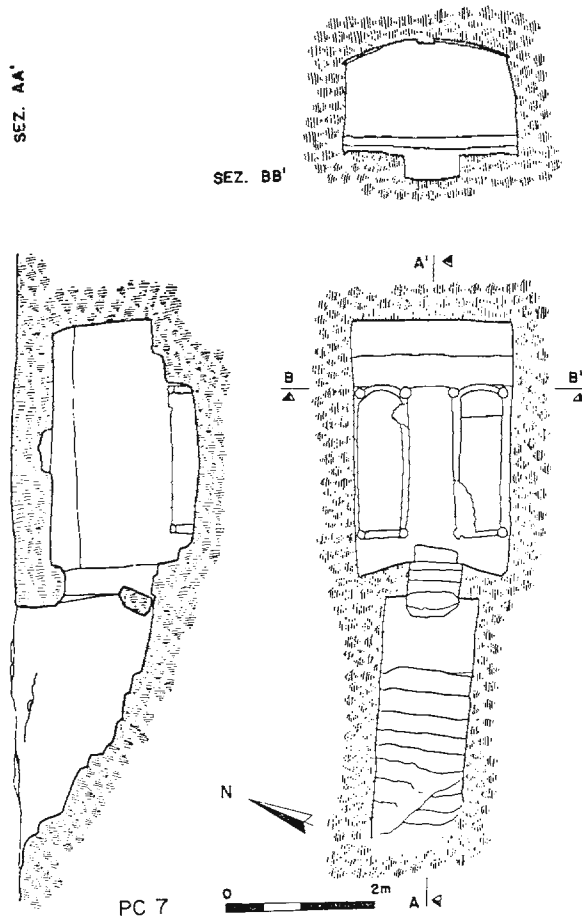
Figure 7.8. Plan and Sections of the Tomb Pian della Conserva 7
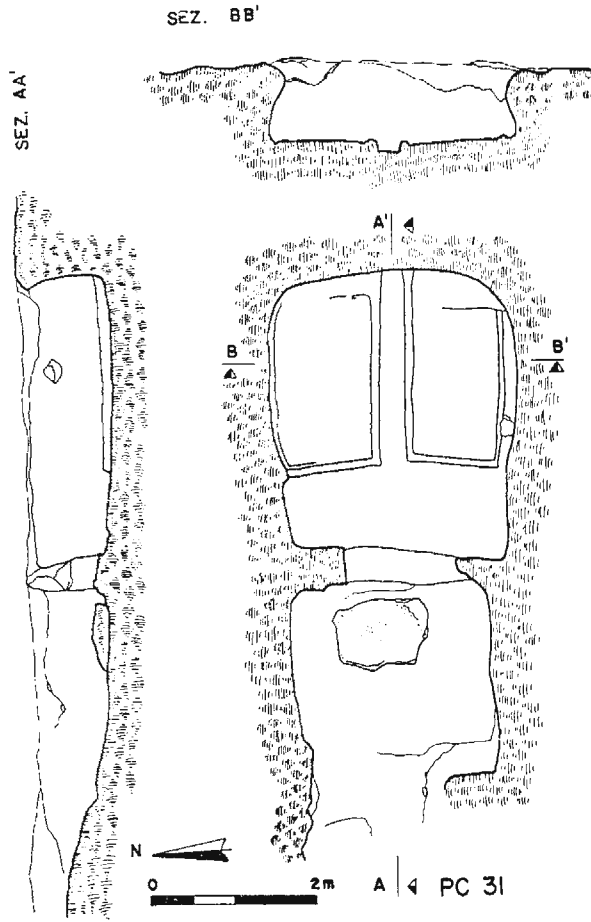
Figure 7.9. Plan and Sections of the Tomb Pian della Conserva 31

Figure 7.10. Etruscan Inscription of a Bucchero Bowl from the Tomb Pian della Conserva 17
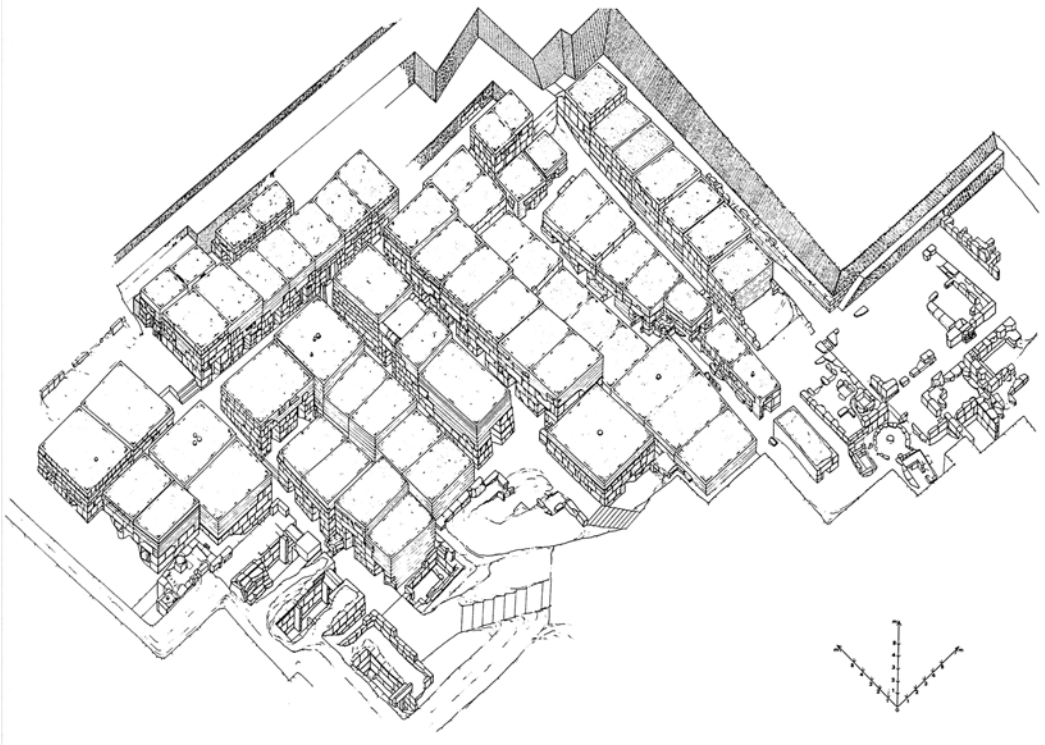
Figure 7.11. Isometric View of the Necropolis of Crocifisso del Tufo in Orvieto
(from Della Fina 2003, fig. 9)

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8

THE POLITICS OF LOSS: COMMENTS ON A POWERFUL DEATH

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In sharing a few thoughts provoked by what are indeed a thought-provoking group of papers, I want to read them in two different ways. The first way can be thought of as reading with the grain. That is, following along the insightful analyses provided of dead things doing real work amongst the living. This is in effect a process of social re-animation by which bodies interred and things disposed are resurrected to be instruments in the continuing life of a community. Archaeologically, this certainly embraces the now axiomatic principle summed up neatly in a parentheses by A. Naso who declares: "The *aristoi* felt the need to display their wealth (presumably not only in the graves … but in their daily lives as well)."

THE DEAD AMONGST THE LIVING

As the title of the first session suggests, what effectively unites this set of papers is a concern to theorize mortuary practice as an intervention in the political constitution of authority relationships. How is this theorized? Although I hesitate to reduce the complexities of the arguments we have heard today in this diverse group of papers, a conversation such as this provides an opportunity to bring forward shared approaches within an overall thematic. These lines of similarity and difference are most conspicuous in descriptions of the processes by which the dead do political work. The first approach details an essentially expressive role for the mortuary record in relation to political life.

Cultraro describes shifts in the location, architecture, and contents of tombs in the transition from the Neolithic to the Early Helladic period. At root, he argues, the new mortuary practices are expressive of a kin group identity.

Naso describes the funerary monuments in Caere and its hinterland to suggest a coalescing "Etruscan" style of dying which, it turns out, was closely related to both the emergence of family armies and to impositions of city political authorities. Interestingly, Naso describes these consequences partly as the result of a conscious search for models for the representation of wealth (as opposed to passive diffusion).

Chapman examines the Argaric Bronze Age in order to solidify an account of regional politics as vested within a system of regional states supported by the unequal appropriation of surplus and wealth. There is "buried" here a further argument beyond the reflection of a polity type in graves. This argument suggests that rituals might link settlements to their cemeteries. And the advice to proceed in this direction is, I think, well-taken as we search for lines to actively articulate the living and the dead.

This brings us to the second approach to linking politics and the archaeology of death, which views the mortuary monuments as acts of representation.

Schwartz describes the mortuary complex at Tell Umm el-Marra as a materialization of elite ideology. The built environment of death effectively renders in the physical world a claim to political authority.

Dietler provides an intriguing account of differences between regional patterning in tombs from the Hallstatt and lower Rhone basins during the mid-first millennium B.C. Dietler argues quite persuasively that great care needs to be taken in reading social organization out of cemeteries. Burials are not reflections, he argues, but representations of the social world. What remains open to great contention then is the nature of mimesis within rituals of interments. Presumably room is made for ideology not in showing wealth or power in grand moments of consumption, but rather in the distance between the real and the represented. The more burials in effect do not "look like" the social world around them, the more powerful the sense that the disposal of the dead is instrumental in producing — rather than just reflecting — social life. The dead, it seems, can indeed tell lies, even if they are only ventriloquizing.

This brings us to the third approach to linking the politics of life and the world of the dead contained in the papers. This approach considers mortuary landscapes to be productive sites of political action.

Chesson examines the Early Bronze Age southern Levant and provides an interesting possible elaboration of Dietler's effort to view burials as representations of the social world. As Chesson effectively points out, secondary burials, such as the charnel houses of the Early Bronze Age II–III period, provide a complex moment for renegotiation of the position of the dead in the world (here we might also think back to the ideas on transformational re-entry described by Schwartz and indeed to the act of looting as part of the same issue). Death is indeed just the beginning — a point of departure for a broad complex of politically engaged social practices.

Morris attacks a particularly crucial issue in the relationship between death and politics. Her paper does not examine the appropriation of death to do social work, as much as it examines how the state effectively manages and, in some cases manufactures, death as part and parcel of its reproduction. How do individuals become convinced that the state is worth dying for? This sense of the sublimation of the self to the order of command is, I think, at the very heart of political authority.

What all the papers grapple with is how to move between the social and the political. In defining the sociologies that coalesce within burials, we do need to be careful in how we leap from social elevation as wealth to political authority. These are not the same thing — coterminous neither as positioned practice nor as historical process. That is, the production of authority has a far more complex relation to stratified social hierarchies than is often admitted, as a century of Marxist debates over the autonomy of the state from the levers of capital can proudly confirm. One challenge that emerges from these papers is a call to define how we move from a mortuary record that displays stratified social difference to a concern with political positions. Thus the inclusion of a wealth of burial goods in the tomb of an infant may well indicate the inheritance of a particular social status, but I think it would be premature to suggest that this entailed a systemic inheritance of power. Wealth may entail privilege, but only in certain sociopolitical formations does wealth unambiguously confer power, in the political sense of the term.

Several papers argue for the direct involvement of political authorities in practices of entombment. Naso's paper, for example, ends with a suggestion that the central authorities of Caere effectively regulated tomb architecture. It is worth asking then as a follow-up question how such a deep political interest in the architecture of death was generated, and to what ends?

Several papers consider the relation of burial to politics utilizing variations on the concept of materialization in order to describe the rendering of the insubstantial world of ideology into the stones and bones of the archaeological record. I do worry that this formulation presumes a resolutely idealist theory of ideology in which archaeology comes out the loser, confined to detail things as residues of the life of the mind, where the real action takes place. Such an approach serves to reinforce the old Cartesian separation of thought and material. Might we consider instead that what we see in the construction of elite graves and royal tombs is the production of ideology in itself. Ideology, we might say, has no life outside the things that give it substance and that insert it into the world of action.

In this sense then, archaeology is not a poor cousin to sociocultural anthropology, but is in fact a direct investigation of the real work of ideological production. It is not the deep time span that gives archaeology its only claim to epistemological priority; it is our understanding of things at work in the social world. Hence the burial does not only express, represent, or materialize ideology — it is ideology.

I also worry about describing the politics of burial through a conceptual turn toward memory. There is a tendency to assume a rather easy move in the minds of the ancients from a sense of "pastness" to a sense of "naturalness." Thus reverence for dead ancestors becomes in effect a reverence for hierarchy and thus a reverence for present elites. But memory is a far trickier issue in which the obligations of ritual practice and the affect of reverence are not a necessary pair. Furthermore, oft-times the decayed flesh of the ancestors sheds rather poor light indeed on the too-human flesh of present political leaders. But the affective distillation of memory in ritual — that is, memory as a public physical engagement — is indeed quite vital, particularly as the production of memory seems to demand conspicuous consumption.

I was quite intrigued by the sense in which so much of death stimulates extraordinary moments of consumption. As if the death of individuals is not tragic enough, they have to drag a host of cattle, sheep, oxen, and sometimes other people down with them! This connection between production and consumption is eloquently forwarded in Chapman's paper. There is an interesting anthropological issue lurking here insofar as the singularity of death rests atop a regular order of production and sparks an orgy of consumption. Certainly Dietler's sense of the politics of feasting surrounding the moment of death is quite critical to our understanding. And it does provide us with a way to understand the political possibilities entailed in death. But the flip side of possibility is, of course, crisis.

THE LIVING AMONGST THE DEAD

The problem posed by death for political order is not an insignificant one. As Morris points out quite dramatically, the death of the king is a serious problem for the body politic. It is a moment when instability is not simply thinkable, but perhaps even likely, as it seems the entropic force of the world has been let loose. This sense of the dangers in the interdigitation of funerals and politics encourages a second reading of the papers, one which cuts directly against the grain by considering how living things effectively do considerable work among the dead. I do not mean this simply as a neat turn of phrase. We diminish our enterprise when we wall off the questions of belief and religiosity so hermetically that we lose sight of a vernacular understanding of the real point of mortuary ritual, that is, the securing of the (good) afterlife.

But in advancing a reintroduction of a vernacular sense of religiosity, I do not mean to lose sight of what is our titular concern in this session: the political instrumentality of death. If ghost stories and horror movies have taught us one thing, it is a reminder that death is not nec-

essarily an end to the story. Indeed, here in Chicago we know quite well that the dead can even still vote. So the proper treatment of the dead may not, I suggest, be understood in the fullness of its instrumental operation without at least some account of the motivating beliefs that render the loss entailed in death more thinkable. Similarly, the improper treatment of the dead — think Achilles petulantly dragging the body of Hector around the walls of Troy in contrast to the loving treatment of Patroclus's corpse — can also be a moment of the most profound intrusion of the living into the "life" of the dead.

I don't mean to juxtapose the poignancy of death with its cold political instrumentality. Quite the contrary, the point I wish to make is that it is the aesthetics of death that in effect make possible its instrumental deployment. Without the sense of bereavement, tragedy, loss, comfort, or even triumphal reveling in the embrace of the ancestors, the pater, the deity, or a bevy of celestial virgins, there is no instrumental efficacy. Even the most transparent effort to rest the polity on a dead body presumes an affective world of feeling in which mourning is about the future of a community even as it is also about that community's past. While I am arguing in effect for attention to grief, the papers here provide a moment for celebration, as future studies of the political life of death will be greatly enriched by the conversation amongst the papers presented here today in this volume.

9

SUMERIAN FUNERARY RITUALS IN CONTEXT[1]

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INTRODUCTION

In a letter to Sin-iddinam, King Hammurabi of Babylon quotes the complaint of Sin-uselli: "My son Sukkukum disappeared from me eight years ago and I did not know whether he was still alive, and I kept making funerary offerings for him, as if he were dead. Now they have told me that he is staying in Ik-bari, in the house of Ibni-Ea the 'rider' (and) goldsmith, the son of Ṣilli-Šamaš." [2] Although the father had neither a corpse to bury nor, apparently, even any reliable evidence that his son had died, he took care of the spirit.

The care for dead family members is the most obvious response to the belief in afterlife. The individual continues to exist after the death in the form of a spirit in the next world: a burial ritual liberates the soul from the body and takes care of the corpse which is doomed to decay. Regular offerings of meals nurture the surviving spirit. The incantation literature indicates that neglected spirits turn malicious, roaming in the world of the living and haunting the people, and causing physical or psychological harm. The literary texts, on the other hand, emphasize the personal grief and the conduct of the relatives following the death of a loved one.[3] The incantations, the literary sources, and the letter of the distressed father imply that funerary and mourning rituals were not restricted to one particular social class, gender, or, possibly, age.

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[1] The definition "Sumerian sources" is a linguistic one, not ethnic nor political. Most of the Sumerian non-administrative sources are known from Old Babylonian copies. Some were composed, others were compiled in the second millennium. Only texts or parts of texts that can be traced to the third millennium may have conveyed ideas of the Sumerian people. Since the Sumerians lost their hegemony in southern Mesopotamia at the turn of the millennium, and until then they were not an isolated ethnic group in population, and since each ethnic group may have had its traditional customs to which it adhered, one should take into account the effects of possible cultural interactions.

Dates of administrative texts are given in the following formula: King's name year.month.day. Text volumes are abbreviated according to the standard list of abbreviations for Assyriology (see list of abbreviations).

[2] Van Soldt 1994, no. 21.

[3] Mourning gestures, such as tearing the hair, scratching the body, and sitting in the dust, express the emotions of the bereaved, for example, Geštinana over Dumuzi (Dumuzi's Dream lines 242–45, ETCSL 1.4.3). Mourning gestures, however, were customary, normal social behavior, irrespective of the personal feelings. Consider the two days of mourning over Baranamtara, the wife of Lugalanda the pre-Sargonic ruler of Lagash; each day three-hundred people received food rations for their participation in the ceremony (TSA 9 and VS 137). No doubt, most of them did not have personal relations with the deceased but were hired for the purpose. The importance of expressing the personal grief, and moreover that it was expected of the close relations, if not compulsory, is demonstrated by the narration of "Inana's Descent" ETCSL 1.4.1. The deities who mourned Inana, Ninšubur (lines 307–08), Šara (lines 330–31), and Lulal (lines 340–41) were spared from the Gala, whereas Dumuzi, who carried on with his life as if nothing had happened, was punished and carried to the netherworld as Inana's substitute (lines 349–50).

THE LITERARY RITUALS

Two Sumerian literary texts sketch the pattern of the funerary ritual. Additional information about actual ritual is inferred from a list of sacrificial animals delivered for the funerary rituals of Šu-Suen, the fourth king of the third Ur dynasty (2037–2029 B.C.), and from an account of the expenses of the funeral of Geme-Lama, the high priestess of Baba in Girsu; this is dated to Amar-Suen's first year in office, 2046 B.C.

LULIL AND HIS SISTER

In the mythological lament over Ašgi,[4] the young dead god instructs his sister Egime about his funerary ritual. First of all she must announce: "his spirit is released." Then she should fetch a bed, set a chair and put a statue on it, place a garment on the chair, and cover the statue. Afterwards she should offer bread, rub it,[5] and pour water into the libation pipes (a-a-pa$_4$-šè).[6] Ašgi, the son of Ninhursağa and Šulpae in Keš and Adab, is called here Mulu-líl, the Emesal form of Lú-líl, literally "man – spirit." The name of his sister Egi-me, written NIN$_9$-me, means "my sister." Read as a pun, the names of the participants in the ritual are generic appellations that signify their role in the cult, endowing the text with a universal sense: Mululil is any dead young man and Egime is any mourning sister. The mention of libation pipes suggests that this ritual was performed over the grave. That it began with the announcement of the release of the spirit indicates that the ritual is enacted when the body is interred.

THE MESSENGER AND THE MAIDEN

The same procedure, also performed on a statue, is attested in "The Messenger and the Maiden."[7] This text narrates in poetical language the preparations for and the performance of a ritual for a restless spirit by a young woman. After the narrator reveals to the girl that her man is coming, describing his whereabouts in rich imagery which signifies that he is dead (lines 1–19), the girl enumerates all the things that she will offer to him (lines 20–37): cakes, various sorts of fruit, barley, beer, wine and honey, cream and milk, hot and cold water; the list also includes other objects: a harness and a whip, a clean garment, a chair, and a luxuriant bed. Her ritual begins with a description of the messenger as though he were a statue: he comes but does not walk, he has eyes but cannot see, a mouth but cannot speak (lines 38–41). Then the girl describes the ritual (lines 42–49):

> I placed bread and rubbed it; from a bowl whose strap had not been opened, from a dish of which the rim had not been soiled I poured water, I poured to the ground and he drunk it. With my good oil I anointed the figure. With my new garment I dressed the chair. The spirit has entered, the spirit has departed. My messenger in the Mountain; in the midst of the Mountain he was whirling, he is lying (now in rest).

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[4] Thureau-Dangin 1922: 175–84; Katz 2003: 205–12, passim.

[5] Rubbing the statue with the bread is a puzzling activity. In magical texts the rubbing with dough was used to draw from a body the evil which caused the disease. Is this a similar function, even if symbolic? In that case perhaps it should be connected with a belief that spiritual cleansing was a prerequisite for entering the world of the dead. Conversely, since the dead cannot actively eat,

perhaps this gesture simply symbolized the consuming of the solid food.

[6] Libation pipes were uncovered in some graves at the Ur royal cemetery as pipes going down through the filling into the grave. Perhaps also the libation channels in the building which may have been a mausoleum of Šulgi and Amar-Suen; Woolley 1974, pl. 6a–b.

[7] Kramer 1977: 139–42; Katz 2003: 202–12.

The concluding statement suggests that the girl performed the ritual for a man who died far away and was not properly buried. Also "messenger" and "girl" are general appellations that can signify any man who has died and any girl who is lamenting him.

An abridged version of the Messenger's ritual,[8] followed by a part of the lament Edina-usağake,[9] ends with three additional lines that contain epithets of Dumuzi. As such it identifies Dumuzi as a messenger. A letter from Mari mentions an annual ritual commemorating Dumuzi's death in connection with the harvest.[10] This version, therefore, should perhaps be associated with a literary version of the harvest ritual, also a model, that includes the fragmentary remains of a lament over the young dying god.[11]

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LITERARY EVIDENCE

The order of the procedure is not completely identical, but the differences may be due to the different circumstances concerning particular occasions. Therefore it is not appropriate to decide at this point which order is historical. Yet, these literary texts highlight the three main components of the funerary ritual.

THE STATUE

The ritual is performed with a statue, an effigy.[12] It is the embodiment of the deceased himself. The importance of the effigy is twofold: firstly, the physical figure actualizes the continual presence of the deceased in the family circle. Thereby it keeps his identity alive and also reinforces the identity of the family. Second, with the use of a statue, the cult of the dead is not restricted to a place but could be performed anywhere. When a family moves out and away, the cult is not interrupted, but moves with it. Thus, the spirit would not be neglected in the realm of the dead and turn hostile.

The population at large probably observed the cult of their dead at home, where the deceased was deemed to participate in the meals of the family. In the absence of a grave, home was probably the place where Sin-uselli, the bereaved father, cared for the spirit of his son Sukkukum, about whom he wrote to Hammurabi in the letter mentioned earlier.

Dead rulers received offerings in several towns. They could have had their funerary chapels in the sanctuaries, where their statues were already placed, and were revered as part of the routine cult of the gods. A good example is Urnamma, who received daily offerings in Enlil's temple in Nippur.[13] Tablet VIII of the Akkadian Epic of Gilgamesh describes the

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[8] TIM 9, 15:1–10; Alster 1986. Bendt Alster read the manuscript and I thank him for his useful comments.

[9] Edina-usağake, "In the desert, in the early grass" is a long lament of the mother and sister over the young dying god. Originally it was a part of the cult of Damu, but the Old Babylonian edition incorporated into it the names of local incarnation, which were then merged in the divinity of Dumuzi, that became the only young dying god. For a translation, see Jacobsen 1987: 56–84.

[10] "Now, why am I not like Dumuzi? At the end of the year they kill him; [in the spring] he keeps returning to the temple of Annunitum" (Marello 1991).

[11] CT 58, 21:32′–53′; Katz 2003: 162–67 with bibliography.

[12] The messenger: é-gar$_8$ "shape, figure"; in Lulil: si-la-ah, Elamite for statue.

[13] For expenditures of animals from Drehem for the funerary chapel (ki-a-nağ) of Urnamma in Enlil's temple in Nippur, see AUCT 3, 413 i:4 (date: ŠS 9.11.15); MVN 8, 139:5–6 (IS 2.6.14); MVN 10, 144 i:4 (IS 2.9.3); SET 58:3 (IS 2.10.24) and on the following day MVN 13, 128:3 (IS 2.10.25); for a monthly account of delivery of regular offerings from Drehem, see SACT 1, 188 (date broken, probably Šu-Suen). Gudea, who placed his statue in the Eninu to communicate his deeds to Ningirsu, declares that after death "may it stand in the place of libation" Gudea, St. B vii:47–60. A statue of Kubatum, wife of Šu-Suen, was placed during her lifetime in

funerary ritual that Gilgamesh made for his friend Enkidu, The first task for Gilgamesh was to summon craftsmen to fashion the statue of Enkidu.[14]

THE TREATMENT OF THE STATUE

The statue is dressed with a clean garment and anointed. This act is similar to the treatment of the corpse before interment, as described in a healing ritual which simulates the funerary ritual but uses a scapegoat: "as a substitute of man for Ereškigal, you slaughter a lamb that knew no copulation, and fill its intestines with perfume. Treat her like a corpse, dress her in a garment, anoint her hands with sweet oil. You display a *taklimtu* and offer *kispu*."[15]

The warning of Gilgamesh to Enkidu, how not to behave in the netherworld, reflects the same custom. Gilgamesh warned Enkidu against entering into the netherworld the normal way, that is, as a corpse that has just been buried: "Do not put on your clean garment, they would mark you as a messenger. Do not anoint yourself with fine oil, they would surround you at your smell."[16] This warning does not mean that Enkidu must go naked. Rather, he should wear soiled cloths so that he would blend in with the crowd of the spirits.[17] Since, however, there must be an absolute separation between the world of the living and the domain of the dead — and human beings cannot simply move between the two worlds — Enkidu did not have a choice. He could not obey the instructions of Gilgamesh. In order to penetrate the netherworld Enkidu had to appear in the netherworld like a properly buried and liberated spirit, otherwise he would not be allowed into the domain of the dead, with the unavoidable result that he had to die.

Anointment with fine oil was widely used in Mesopotamia for medical as well as for ritualistic purposes, through which the anointed became ritually clean. It was not limited to funerary rituals but was used in various cultic activities. By analogy, it seems that the anointment of the statue simulated the ritualistic cleansing of the body in preparation for and as a part of a cultic activity. The donning of a clean or new garment serves the same purpose.[18] These acts signify, therefore, that the spirit is cultic and legally pure.

Enlil's temple in Nippur BiOr 9, 173, 1. On statues of rulers, see also Selz 1992: 247; in the literary texts: DGil, segment N1:7.

[14] Gilg. VIII:65–72; George 1999, volume 1: 656–63.

[15] LKA 80:2′–7′. *kispu*, Akkadian for funerary offerings.

[16] GEN 185–89; George 1999, volume 2: 750. "Messenger" is written /GIR₅/, as in the literary ritual "The messenger and the maiden." Could this suggest that /GIR₅/ had an additional conventional meaning connoting a spirit? The image of the spirits surrounding the new resident "at the smell" brings to mind the description of Urnamma's entrance in the domain of the dead. We are informed that his arrival raised great excitement among the inhabitants, and immediately following is the description of the banquet he offered to the ghosts (DUr: 78–82; Katz 2003: 332).

[17] Contrary to the prevalent view, based on the plain literal description of Inana's entrance into the netherworld, the spirits of the dead were not naked but fully dressed. Certainly divinities! The case of Inana is not a general

rule, but a particular scheme designed for this particular mythological narrative, a means aimed to abort her plot to take control of the netherworld, and at the same time a literary means to raise the tension toward the climax of the story. Inana's attire, which she carefully donned before her departure, endowed her with divine powers and immunity, therefore, the only way to disable her was by removing it. See in detail Katz 1995. Ample evidence, textual and archaeological, indicates that the dead were especially dressed for their journey. In addition to the instructions in our rituals, see particularly the Pre-Sargonic list of garments, from Shasha, the wife of Urukagina, to four persons as their túg-GIDIM, VS 14: 163.

[18] In a legal procedure donning a clean garment signified that the defendant was acquitted. Note especially the case of the man who was found guilty, in the Nungal hymn ETCSL 4.28.1, lines 96–100. The individual would be saved from death only to be imprisoned in Nungal's "house of life." The prison is characterized as a place where no one wears a clean cloth.

Considering the strong belief that the netherworld is completely separated from the world of the living and that the spirits should not mingle with living people, I suggest that the treatment of the clay image as a corpse is intended to imbue the clay image with the identity of the deceased and thus allow it to function in the cult as the embodiment of the spirit.[19]

THE GRAVE GOODS

Grave goods, well represented by the archaeological finds, consisted of the things that the deceased needed for his journey and his survival in the world of the dead, until the regular offerings would be provided. Therefore, the most common among the finds are ceramic vessels for foodstuff. In the ritual for the messenger the girl offers him various sorts of food and drink. However, a famous Akkadian topos which encapsulates the experience of the netherworld in a few lines, describes the domain of the dead as a dark and dusty place, where the inhabitants exist on soil and eat clay.[20]

The Sumerian literary sources deal only with the food of the spirits and the general view is that it is bad. But rather than clay, the dead consumed spoiled victuals, the food and drink that were offered regularly. It is important to note, however, that the genre and the purpose of the given text determined the terms of the description, that is how bad the victuals are. Providing the spirit with food and drink is consistent with the belief that the netherworld is infertile, devoid of basic necessities for existence. For that reason containers for food were placed together with the corpse during the interment. From the administrative texts that record regular deliveries of food for the funerary chapels of the Ur III kings, we can safely conclude that the dead were provided with a daily meal, like the living. There are, of course, no records concerning ordinary people and, since they were venerated in private houses, private cultic ceremonies would hardly be distinguishable in the remains.

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[19] Thereby the statue becomes the deceased himself, and in its very presence it substitutes the spirit that can remain in the netherworld for eternal rest, in line with the dominant belief that the spirits should not appear in the world of the living. However, the name of the month and the festival of ab-è, the tenth month (winter time) in Pre-Sargonic Lagash, and in Ur III Nippur, suggest that it was a special occasion for the spirits to come out of the netherworld for a family visit. For a general discussion of the festivals for the dead, ab-è, NE.NE-gar, *abum*, and the references in the administrative texts, see Cohen 1993: 454–65. Yet, a belief that generates such a festival is problematic because the literary sources deliver a clear message that there is no return from the realm of the dead. Consider, for example, Ištar's Descent (CT 15, 45:17–20), her threat to break the doors of the netherworld and raise the dead, who would then outnumber the living, could not frighten anyone if the spirits were reappearing regularly at their family homes. Also the use of necromancy to raise the dead suggests that people did not believe that there is a regular visit of spirits. In GEN, Gilgameš saw Enkidu in a dream not as a spirit (Sisig, the dream god, not "spirit"). Even gods could not move freely and simply: Inana, Enlil, Ninlil, and Nana-Suen

had to provide a substitute each; In Nergal and Ereškigal, the queen of the netherworld could not leave even in order to participate in the assembly of the gods. One may wonder, therefore, whether it is possible that the gap between the literary texts and cultic practice could be so big that they would reflect opposite beliefs. Or, perhaps the traditional interpretation of these Sumerian terms needs reconsideration.

[20] "To the dark house, the dwelling of Irkalla, to the house which those who enter cannot leave … to the house which those who enter are deprived of light, where soil is their sustenance, clay their food. Light they do not see, they dwell in darkness, and clad like birds a garment of feathers. Over the door and the bolt dust has spread." Ištar's Descent: CT 15, 45:4–11 and Borger 1963: 86–87; Nergal and Ereškigal: *STT* I, 28 iii:1–5; Gurney 1960: 114; Gilg. VII, iv:32–40; George 1999, 61:184–93; Nergal and Ereškigal: Dalley 1997: 386. The date of this topos is important, but it is difficult to determine in which of the three myths it originated. That neither this topos nor its purport can be traced in Sumerian literature of the Old Babylonian period and other literary considerations suggest a later date, probably Middle Babylonian.

In addition to food and drink the corpse was laid to rest with personal belongings: the Messenger was offered a harness and a whip. A text from Ur, dated to the eighth year of Amar-Suen, lists six golden objects to be placed in the grave of a person from Gaesh.[21] Objects and jewelry of gold and precious stones were found only in graves of the wealthy; more common grave goods are seals, weapons, and beads. These objects indicate that the dead were sent on their last journey with personal items that preserve their identity and rank.[22] That the food and objects were put in the grave suggests that the spirit was still in the corpse at the time of interment.

In the funerary ritual that Gilgameš prepared for Enkidu gifts were presented to the gods. Whether that was customary with the wide population is not clear.[23] DGil and DUr make a list of gods who received gifts from the dead kings. The list of DUr provides a detailed specification of the gifts, which is most probably based on an archival document.[24]

THE EMERGENCE OF THE SPIRIT

Rather than the normal Sumerian word for dead spirit, /gidim/, both Sumerian rituals use the term /im/ "wind." The distinction between /im/ and /gidim/ is illustrated in a document from Drehem, the royal distribution center for animals. The text, TIM 6,10 (ŠS 7.3.8), records the expenditure of animals for two rituals for a dead princess:

> [1] fat sheep for when the "wind" (/im/) of Tezenmama[25] was seized. The first day. 1 big goat for Ninsun, (and) 2 fat sheep when the wooden altar (ğeš-a-nağ) of the ghost (/gidim/) of Tezenmama is performed. The eighth day.[26]

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[21] UET 3, 335 (AS 8.8.00) "1 golden crown, 1 golden breast decoration, 1 golden -?-, 1 golden pendant, 1 golden basin with a handle, 1 golden mirror …. placed with him when he was laid down (buried)." His name is broken, perhaps he was the En of Eridu (because of the year name). See Sallaberger 1995: 15–21.

UTI 6, 3800 is a list of valuable goods, jewelry of gold and precious stones — from Umma to royalty and deities in Nippur and Ur. The date is broken but some personal names suggest a date between the second and sixth years of Šu-Suen. Among the recipients are Kubatum lukur lugal, and Abi-simti — the mother of Šu-Suen. Two of the deliveries are for ki-a-nağ: one for Šulgi (rev. i:1–9) and the name of the second is broken (rev. i:10–20, perhaps Šulgi-simti?). Not all the objects are identifiable, but the material is gold, turquoise, or nír-stone. The interesting point is not so much that Šulgi received precious objects, but that it occurred some years after his death. Since it stands to reason that he received precious objects on the occasion of his death, this text suggests that also after the death such objects were deposited in the funerary chapel. Perhaps it was intended as additional gifts for the netherworld deities.

[22] Which, in turn, suggests that it was preserved in afterlife.

[23] The text of Gilgameš is fragmentary and my impression is that the gifts were presented. When the burial is on the third day after the death, as in the cases of Geme-Lama, Baranamtara, and Šu-Suen we may conclude that the corpse was lying in state. Particularly consider Baranamtara whose two days of mourning were performed by more that 300 mourners per day. But see also Scur-

lock 1991: 3 with previous bibliography.

[24] The objects that were intended for the funeral of Ur-namma were surely recorded, like the list of UET 3, 335. That the narrative of DGil is a fiction may explain the schematic, undetailed list.

[25] A woman by this name received animals from Drehem between Šulgi's twenty-ninth year and Amar-Suen's fourth year. Most of the receipts are mu-DU Šulgi-simti, wife or concubine of the king Šulgi. Her mention in quite a few documents from Drehem, the eight day long ritual and the offerings for Ninsumuna, the divine mother of the dynasty, indicate that she was a princess, perhaps ti-zé-ma-ma dumu-munus-lugal, a daughter of Šulgi, attested in MVN 11, 205 (no date), or, Amar-Suen (as Frayne 1997: 267).

[26] The interval between her two rituals indicates merely that Drehem issued animals only on the first and the eighth days. In between those days, other commodities were probably offered. The duration of eight days suggests that she too was lying in state but no more than two to three days because the corpse would begin to decompose.

The meaning of ğeš-a-nağ remains uncertain. Wilcke (1988: 254) suggested that ğeš-a-nağ was a temporary wooden altar used for the ritual before the permanent "libation place," ki-a-nağ, was built. We notice, however, that Geme-Lama, the high priestess of Baba, was already mourned in her ki-a-nağ on the second day of her ritual. Apparently, the extant references for giš-a-nağ date to the reign of Šu-suen. Since this term is used in a general meaning it may have been employed for just a short peri-

Between the two rituals the /im/ became a /gidim/, a ghost. Therefore, we may conclude that /im/ designates a spirit still in the form of the breath, which is caught up in the body on the moment of death — the dead soul if you like. And /gidim/, however, is the breath after it was transformed into a ghost. How /im/ changes into /gidim/ we learn from the ritual of Egime who was instructed to pronounce the formula "his /im/ is released."[27]

Since /gidim/ is the released /im/ "breath," it appears that the ghost is inherent to the composition of mankind. The concept of the ghost as a primary element in the human structure would explain the belief that the spirit retains its lifetime personality, its physical and emotional needs. This concept emerged for the first time in the Akkadian Old Babylonian Sippar version of Atra-Hasīs. According to the Akkadian narrative man was created from the blood and flesh of a slain god mixed with clay. The purpose of the godly component was to create the ghost as an everlasting reminder to the gods of the circumstances that led to the creation of man. It was never to be forgotten why man was created and why this particular god was slaughtered.[28]

A spoken formula liberated the ghost from the flesh and thereby the spirit was made ready to depart to the netherworld. Considering the excavated grave goods, with foodstuff in particular, one may wonder whether the spirit was liberated before or after interment. Since an effigy actualized the deceased in the ritual, the presence of a corpse was not essential for the performance. Therefore, it is quite possible that first the body was interred and then the spirit liberated. The list of food rations for the spirit of Geme-Lama supports this possibility: her spirit received two meals a day before she was interred, and one single meal was placed in her tomb. This implies that the spirit was buried with the body and stayed in the grave before it departed to the netherworld, and that it left the grave after the first meal. What follows is that the regular funerary offerings had to begin on the same day as the interment, in time for the second daily meal. One motive to release the spirit after the burial may be the universal fear of ghosts. If the spirit is released after the interment the mourners do not have to encounter it. This practice explains why the grave was considered as the gate to the netherworld, and it is in line with the guiding principle of the concept of the netherworld, which is a total separation of the domain of the spirits from the world of the living. At the end of the third millennium the only effective partition between the worlds of the living and the dead was the surface of earth.[29]

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od of time; or it also may have been a movable altar, used wherever necessary. Or is it a coincidence? Perhaps it was a wooden altar on which libations were made for the spirit in a central royal funerary chapel (ki-a-naǧ) in Ur, if there was one. The funerary chapel is not the same as the tomb, and not necessarily in the same place. But the structure which Woolley identified as mausoleum (Woolley 1974) seems to me as a burial place and funerary chapel; see also Michalowski 1977: 223. However, Moorey (1984: 1–18) maintained that kings were buried in their palaces. But note that funerary offering for Urnamma was delivered to the "new palace" (UET 3, 76:6–7). The list of sacrificial animals for the rituals of Šu-Suen suggests that he was buried in a certain garden.

[27] Compare, in the lament Edina-usaǧake (SK 26, v:24), the young dead god begs: "I am indeed a handcuffed lad, may she say my 'release him' (šu-ba!-àm-mu hé-em-me)."

[28] Sippar was densely populated by Semites and had strong ties with the west, particularly Mari, and the Diyala region. This may explain why Sippar was the locus of the innovative Akkadian literature. During the first dynasty of Babylon the town was an important center of scribal activity. On Sippar as the religious and cultural capital of northern Babylonia, comparable to the southern Nippur, see Myers 2002.

[29] Where was the domain of the dead? The cardinal, unchanging principle was the absolute separation of the realm of the dead from the world of the living. Since the standard Sumerian term for netherworld is "mountain" (kur), and in some traditional lamentations the netherworld is described as an actual mountain, the geography of the cosmos is a great problem. "Mountain" is used in the literature as a term of actual geographical reality, suggesting that in prehistoric times the Sumerians believed that the realm of the dead was in an inaccessible mountain area. This suggestion implies a horizontal perspective of the universe, and, therefore, it is rather controversial, especially in view of textual evidence from the late third millennium. Until a better explanation is offered for the plain literal use of the term "mountain" for the world of death, one can maintain the view that it was in the mountains and

The passage from the one world to the other was, therefore, not simple. The story of GEN signifies that a plain hole in the ground did not make a corridor between the two worlds. The ball (*pukku*) and the stick (*mekku*) fell into the netherworld through a hole which opened magically, and by the same route emerged the vision of Enkidu. The face of earth seals off the world of the dead, and a passage thither required a supernatural stimulus. Presumably, the full funerary ritual was the magic power that could turn a grave from a mere pit in the ground into a gate to the world of the dead. The simulated burial ritual of the Messenger demonstrates the supernatural power of the ritual. His spirit was whirling restlessly in the mountains, already outside the body. The restlessly roaming spirit was invited to participate in a ritual which imitated the burial rite. It arrived, experienced the burial ritual, with bed, chair, garment, and oil, and then departed to the netherworld for eternal rest.

The duration of the ritual and its complexity were probably related to the social status of the deceased. Tezenmama's funerary rituals continued at least eight days according to the registration of deliveries of animals from Drehem.[30] Šu-Suen, the fourth king of Ur (2037–2029 B.C.), who was also deified, enjoyed two weeks of mourning.

AN ADMINISTRATIVE DOCUMENT CONCERNING FUNERARY RITUALS

A standard monthly account from Drehem, lists the sacrificial animals delivered for the funerary rituals of Šu-Suen.[31] This unique document throws a new light on the performance of the funerary ritual; it complements the information offered by the literary texts and endows the mythological perspective of the literary sources with historical validity. The total number of animals (152) mostly sacrificed during the first three days, suggests that the offerings were made in several places. It has to be stressed, however, that this document lists only animals and the days when they were delivered.[32] Unfortunately, the reading of some crucial elements is uncertain.

Among the many recipients of animals are some obscure entries concerning deities, locations, and objects. Here attention is focused on the most significant components of the ritual. The list begins on the night of the fifteenth day of the month.

THE FIRST RITUAL (rev. i:17–19)

> 1 goat, in the canal — opening the mouth (sùr-ra KA du$_8$-a).
> At midnight. The 15th day.

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that this geographical concept was changed in the third millennium or late in the fourth. This problematic issue is discussed in Katz (2003: 102–09, passim). It may be helpful to keep in mind that so many people nowadays believe that the dead go to heaven, although in actual reality this belief is unbelievable.

[30] TIM 6,10 (Šu-Suen 7.3.8).

[31] YBC 4190, Sigrist 1999: 136–46. Note that up to reverse i:16 the tablet contains a standard monthly account of daily deliveries from day 1 to 29 of the month. The deliveries for the funerary rituals begin after the twenty-ninth day of the month, on reverse i:17, on the fifteenth day of the month. Considering the weather conditions in

southern Mesopotamia we may safely conclude that the king died on the fifteenth day of the month. MVN 13, 120 is an original receipt which was used for the compilation of the monthly account and is used here to reconstruct a broken part of the text. Bram Jagersma read an early version of the paper that I read in Chicago and made important suggestions for which I am thankful.

[32] Comparable to the ritual of Tezenmama. On the days that are missing from the list there may have been offerings of bread, beer, or fruit. The list makes no mention of precious objects for the gods and for the spirit, which undoubtedly were placed with the king. Therefore, we cannot consider the description as full.

THE SECOND RITUAL (rev. i:20–ii:9)

> 1 male goat of the grave[!33] at the lying-place in Ur (ki-tag-ga šà uri$_5$^{ki}-ma).
>
> 1 sheep and 1 lamb for Ninazu, 1 sheep for Ereškigal, 1 lamb and 1 sheep for Ninšubur, in Enegi (šà EN.DÍM.GIG^{ki}).
>
> 1 sheep and 1 lamb for Ningišzida in Gišbanda.
>
> 1 lamb for the *mihru* offering in the boat,[34] 1 lamb for the gate of Nana,
>
> 1 goat for the gate of the king, 1 lamb for Ningišzida, 1 lamb for Ninazu,
>
> 1 lamb for the gate of the throne, 1 lamb for the gate of the throne of Šulgi,
>
> 1 lamb for the gate of the throne of Amar-Suen to the …[35]
>
> 1 lamb for the wooden altar of the spirit of the breath (ĝeš-a-naĝ gidim-im-a),[36]
>
> 1 lamb for the wooden altar of the spirits …(?)[37]
>
> > At midnight.

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[33] The reading is problematic and seems to need emendation. The second sign is /nita/, so either it is 1 máš nita súr[!]-ra-ke$_4$ — 1 male goat of the grave (reading /sùr/ as /súr/) or, less likely, 1 máš-gú[!]-sùr-ra-ke$_4$ — 1 goat of the bank[!] of the canal (reading /nita/ as /gú/).

[34] The rest of the column is reconstructed according to MVN 13, 120. Note that Ninazu and Ningišzida received animals again, a lamb each, in addition to the offerings they received in Enegi and Gišbanda. Therefore I assume that this part of the list records animals that were sent to their shrines inside Ur.

[35] Very uncertain: MVN 13, 120 rev. 3 kar-má lugal x é-gu-za-šè against YBC 4190 rev. ii:3–4 kar-re lugal é ^{ĝeš}gu-za. The disagreement between the original receipt and the monthly account continues in the following lines. Since the writing of the original receipt is clear, the changes indicate that the scribe who compiled the monthly account considered the information on the receipt faulty, and in need of correction.

[36] Clearly written in MVN 13, 120:4. In YBC 4190 Sigrist 1999:136 read gidim šul [ ], but on p. 141 gidim-im-a. Since in the procedure of the ritual gidim-im-a makes good sense, the general similarity between /šul/ and /gidim/ suggests that the reading should indeed follow the text of MVN 13, 120. A collation of the tablet may indicate that the monthly account has /gidim/ as well. The spirit of the breath is the ghost which is still locked up in the body before its release during the ritual. Compare the literary rituals and the ritual of Tezenmama, TIM 6, 10:2.

[37] Very uncertain, both sources are problematic: read in MVN 13, 120:5 ĝeš-a-naĝ A àga-bar-ra against YBC 4190 ii:7–8 ĝeš-a-naĝ gidim àga-bar-ra. The term ĝeš-a-naĝ, like ki-a-naĝ, is always followed by a personal name or by the term /gidim/. Since the structure of both accounts does not allow the interpretation of /-a/ as a grammatical element, the version of YBC 4190 with /gidim/ signifies that the compiler of the monthly account found the /a/ of MVN 13,120 a mistake, which he corrected to /gidim/. Both sources have àga-bar-ra "split with an ax" which is difficult to understand (see nineteen attestations in http://psd.museum.upenn.edu/epsd.index.html, s.v. TUN$_3$ and the printed version: PSD A/III, 40f s.v. àga, and PSD B, 111f s.v. bar). The attestation of the compound verb àga-bar in the Instruction of Šuruppak line 31 indicates that the use of this verb is not restricted to cutting wood, as most examples show, but can apply to human beings as well, see Alster 2005: 62, commentary on p. 114 with previous literature. This single example suggests that àga-bar-ra describes /gidim/, implying that the lamb was sacrificed to spirits that were cut, or more likely killed by an ax. Although one cannot deny this possibility, it seems to me odd that in this context such a particular group of spirits would be isolated from other groups of ghosts and would be chosen to receive offerings, unless the king himself died in that manner, which is doubtful. Note, however, that the circumstances and manner of succession to the throne after Šulgi are still uncertain; see Dahl 2004.

What is expected here is a reference to ghosts in general. This would be possible if the case is that àga-bar-ra describes the construction of the altar, but syntactically and thematically it is less likely. It would mean that the use of the àga ax has some as yet inexplicable cultic significance, but perhaps it was meant in Gudea Cyl. A,B 408–11. In that case it could be translated "for the Aga-ax-cut-altar of the ghosts," thus ghosts in general, with no specification.

The same sign, TÙN in the reading /du$_5$/dúl/ dul$_x$/ usually with the phonetic complement /-lá/ signifies "lower," see PSD s.v. TUN$_3$ (http://psd.museum.upenn.edu/epsd/index.html). The emendation gidim-du$_5$(TUN$_3$)-lá!-‹‹ra››, or gidim-dula$_x$-‹‹bar-ra›› could offer a solution: "wooden altar of the spirits of the depth." Since, however, the phonetic complement /-ra/ in àga-bar-ra is attested in both sources this emendation is also uncertain.

THE THIRD RITUAL (rev. ii:10–19)

> 1 goat for the harp of Nana, 1 goat for the harp of Ninsumuna,
> 1 goat for Šamaš of the bank of the canal (^{d}utu gu$_2$-sùr-ra).[38]
> 1 lamb released in the canal, 1 goat for the wooden altar of the seated spirits.[39]
> In the evening, in Ur.
> The 16th day (of the month).

THE FOURTH RITUAL (rev. ii:20–iv:26)

Included in a long list of recipients, mainly deities, and sacred objects are:[40]

- 1 šakira sheep for the wooden altar of the spirit (ğeš-a-nağ gidim),[41] 1 sheep for the wooden alter of the out and in going spirits (ğeš-a-nağ gidim è-è).[42]
- 1 or 2 animals each for the following deities:
  Peti (the gatekeeper of the netherworld), Ninpumuna, Ninšubur, Baba, Evil-Has-No-Hold, Haja, Inana of the weapons (^{d}inanna ^{ğeš}tukul), Belat-suhner, Ninaamu, Šamaš, Meslamtaeda HA.ZI, Amar-Suen, Ğeštinana, Allatum, Gilgameš, Ninkununa, the Lady of Eana in the city.
- 1–2 animals each for the following locations and objects:
  The gate of the throne, ki-búr-búr (the place of absolution), a statue in the house of Urnamma, the crown of the Akiti, the gate of the big workshop, the gate of the king, the gate of Gula, the storehouse "called in the heart of Nana," the seat made of Halub-wood,[43] the throne of [xx], the gate of the canal, the mound of the measuring-rod,
- 1 lamb for "the lament of the lying-place in the garden of Nin-[an?]-si$_4$ and Dumuzi(?)" (ér-e ki tag-ga šà ^{ğeš}kiri$_6$ ^{d}Nin-[x]-si$_4$ ^{d}dumu-zi-da),[44]
- Items of the offerings in the water of the quay (níg-sískur-ra a-kar-ra-a):
  3 cows and 3 oxen, two year old and fed on milk; 4 two year old cows that did not yet copulate; and 57 lambs and goats "fill the canal" (sùr-ra ba-an-si), a … ? …
- 1 sheep and 1 goat slaughtered(?) and a goat for the harp of Ninsumuna, requisitioned items for "the place of slaughter(?" ki-kùn-na[45])
  At midnight.
  The 17th day (of the month).
- The next deliveries were for the 6th, the 9th, the 12th, and the 13th day of the ritual, a few animals for mainly sacred objects.

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[38] It is preferable to read Šamaš rather than the Sumerian sun-god Utu because of the purpose and essence of the ritual, and in view of its date, late in the Ur III period.

[39] These lines I read as a chiasmus. Note the sequence of lines in the original text: 13. 1 sila$_4$ /14. 1 máš /15. sùr-ra šu bar-ra /16. ğeš-a-nağ gidim dú-ru-na.

[40] Some of the deities on the list are not mentioned elsewhere, like Ningištete, Ama-abzukar, or Lugalengardu-du.

[41] The Spirit, presumably the spirit of Šu-Suen.

[42] è-è(-d) "out and in" see Edzard 2003: 132, 12.14.2.1.1. The "out and in going" (*marû* pl.) spirits, perhaps roaming restless spirits. Ghosts are universally considered scary, even if not hostile, so unless it is to appease restless spirits, the idea that ghosts would come out of the

world of the dead is problematic, here and in the interpretation of the month-name and festival ab-e$_3$; see also footnote 19.

[43] Compare GEN: 147.

[44] Whether Dumuzi is related to that garden is uncertain because of a discrepancy between the transliteration in Sigrist (1999: 137) and the quotation of the passage in the discussion (Sigrist 1999: 143). In the transliteration Dumuzi is an independent recipient of a speckled goat.

[45] This is a guess. The reading /kùn/ is confirmed by the phonetic complement /-na/, but I could not find any suitable translation for /kùn/. The translation "slaughter" is taken from another reading of the same sign, /gaz/, which happens to fit the context.

End of the text: the total of two weeks "10 oxen and 142 sheep prepared for the wooden alter of the spirit of Šu-Suen."

RECONSTRUCTION OF ŠU-SIN'S FUNERARY RITUAL — A PROPOSAL

THE PROBLEMS OF THE THIRD RITUAL

The term gidim-im-a suggests that at the second ritual during the second night the spirit was still locked in the body but, during the fourth ritual on the third night it was free. Therefore, the purpose of the third ritual, in the evening by the canal, needs clarification. The offerings for the mourning harps of Nana and Ninsumuna are obvious. Nana, the chief deity of Ur, and Ninsumuna, the divine mother of the dynasty, are the divine parents of the deceased king. But the function of other constituents is obscure. The epithet of Šamaš "of the bank of the canal" suggests that Šamaš had a specific role connected with a water course. What was the significance of the location at the canal and what was the role of Šamaš "of the bank of the canal"? Was it to secure the journey of the spirit, its entry in the netherworld, a river ordeal, or something else? An additional problem is the successive listing of a lamb and a goat which were intended to be set free, šu-bar-ra, in the canal and for the wooden altar of the sitting spirits. First, the compound verb šu-bar "to release, set free" indicates that the animals were let loose alive into the water and, therefore, the two creatures could not also have been sacrificed on the wooden altar to the sitting spirits. In that case, how can we explain the association of the animals with the sitting spirits, and who are these spirits? Second, for what purpose were the animals released in the canal? Did the released creatures symbolize the departing spirit, or did they carry the sins of the king? Also, if a scapegoat was meant, why two animals, a sheep and a goat, rather than one?[46] Thus, the release of the two animals in the canal is odd. Since it seems more like a textual problem, this point is discussed first. Structurally, the text lists the animals for a single recipient, rather than for groups of recipients. Therefore, the combination of two animals set free in the canal and also sacrificed is atypical, suggesting that we should read these entries in chiasmus: "1 lamb released in the canal, 1 goat for the sitting spirits."[47]

Divided into two acts, we can explain the sacrificial animal for the "sitting spirits" by analogy with several sources: DGil, Me-Turan:193. "Go ahead to the place where the Anuna gods are sitting at the funerary offerings,"[48] or DUr lines 81–82. "The king slaughtered many oxen and sheep, Urnamma seated them (the spirits) at a huge banquet."[49] The sitting spirits may also be associated with the chair, mentioned in the literary rituals, and well attested in administrative texts as part of the furniture of funerary chapels. Thus perhaps, the ancestors of the king in their funerary chapels, the group of dead priests and kings waiting to welcome the king in the netherworld, were seated for the expected banquet, as described in DUr, or the cared for spirits in general. Chiasmus, which separates the sheep from the goat creating two different entries, facilitates the interpretation of the performance of the ritual in the evening by the waterway.

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[46] The use of a substitute to relieve a patient from a mortal threat, usually to be transferred to the netherworld, is well known from rituals related to medical texts.

[47] Or the other way around. The needed collation may show that this is indeed the order of the lines and that the problem is a printing error in the publication.

[48] ETCSL 1.8.1.3, Me-Turan F:154.

[49] Katz 2003: 332.

THE THIRD RITUAL — RECONSTRUCTION

The third ritual was relatively small in scope. Offerings were made for the mourning harps of Nana and Ninsumuna, the main gods of the dynasty, with whom the dead king seems to have had a special relationship.[50] But of the many deities worshipped in Ur, some closely related to the dead king, only Šamaš received an offering during this performance. Specifically, Šamaš "of the bank of the canal."[51] The location next to a waterway prompts the opinion that it was meant for the journey of the spirit to the netherworld. On the other hand, offerings only to Šamaš "of the bank of the canal" may prompt the opinion that this ritual involves judgment of the dead. These two options raise the question whether the sheep was released in the canal as a scapegoat, or was it a metaphor, symbolizing the journey of the dead to the netherworld.

The Sumerians and Babylonians did not conceive of the netherworld as divided into paradise and hell. They understood that all the spirits gathered in one realm of death and for subsistence they depended on their living kin. Given that all the spirits dwell in the same place, a judgment by Šamaš and the use of a scapegoat in the funerary ritual would seem pointless because it would imply a qualitative distinction between spirits. An undated Ur III text from Girsu may suggest an explanation. The text lists offerings of sesame oil and dates to Lugal-i$_7$-da, Lord of the river, and to the mouth (ka) of Pirigimdu canal. The products were issued by the official in charge of the ki-a-naĝ.[52] This text suggests a connection between funerary rituals and the cultic properties of the river. A primary divine role of the river is cleansing by the flowing water. Hence, a ritual by the river may have been performed to lustrate the corpse so that the emerging spirit would enter the netherworld as pure and faultless as a newborn baby. Presumably, therefore, the location by the canal was meant for the ritualistic purification of the dead king. Correspondingly, the sheep was probably made scapegoat for the same purpose, to carry away his faults and sins. This possibility is supported by the offering of a sheep to the place of absolution ki-búr-búr during the fourth ritual on the second night (rev. ii:28). The idea that the initiation of the spirit involves purity is supported by the literary funerary rituals, which stipulate the anointment of the effigy and donning it with a clean or new garment. It is also suggested by analogy with medical rituals, perhaps the rubbing of the statue with bread served for the same purpose.[53] The offerings for the mouth of the Pirigimdu canal may be comparable to the difficult reading of the first ritual "1 goat, in the canal — opening the mouth (sùr-ra KA du$_8$-a)," implying the preparation and consecration of a canal for the ritual.[54] Considering that

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[50] Divine parents. Šu-Suen had two statues receiving offerings, the one called "Šu-suen the beloved of Nana" and the second "Šu-suen the beloved of Ninsumuna" standing next to the respective deity. See TCL 2, 5485 i:7 13; CST 453, obv. 8 and rev. 3; StOr 9/1, 27:1; Rochester 86:14.

[51] Note the offerings during the next ritual to deities that are particularly related to this dynasty or known only in this texts: ᵈNin-ǧeš-te-te, ᵈAma-abzu-kár, ᵈLugal-engar-du-du, ᵈBelat-suhner (probably introduced by Šulgi-simti, Šulgi's wife), ᵈNin-a-a-mu, and, of course, Gilgameš.

[52] TCTI 2, 3184. For the office lú-ki-a-naĝ, I found only two references, both from Girsu. As for lugal-i$_7$-da, no additional reference was found, but the very fact that it received offerings is proof for its existence. Pirigimdu is a part of the Iturungal. It may have been used as a location for the river ordeal but it is uncertain whether in es-

sence ᵈLugal-i$_7$-da is the same deity as ᵈI$_7$-lú-rú-gú.

[53] Note that in the literary ritual for Ašgi bread is clearly offered. In the ritual of the messenger the girl's first act is the rubbing with bread. That she uses a new clean dish and a new garment signifies that purity has to be observed during the ritual.

[54] ka i$_7$da du$_8$-a (ITT 5, 06989). Usually, the mouth of a canal was opened to let the water flow into fields for irrigation; see, for instance, Sigrist 1995: 100, no. 145. I would cautiously suggest that a similar purpose is intended here, though it would not lead to a field, but to a special canal to the royal funerary chapels, which on the occasion of a royal funeral was opened to a working watercourse, to be filled with streaming water for the ritual. Note that Woolley 1974, the report on the mausoleum in Ur, does not mention any canal.

the purpose of the funerary ritual is to initiate the new life of the spirit, it stands to reason that purity was believed to be required for admission into the next world. In a later text, the Old Babylonian school text "The first elegy of the Pushkin Museum," a mourning son, Ludiğira, pleads with the city and family gods to absolve his father's sins and guilt.[55] Although the elegy does not explicitly describe a funerary ritual, this request reflects the belief that when a spirit enters the netherworld it must be pure and faultless. If this chain of thought is correct, then ablution by a river or canal may have been a common practice in southern Sumer, and later, with the growing Semitic influence, it was done in front of Šamaš.

That the ritual took place in the evening signifies that Šamaš did not function inside the netherworld. Instead, it suggests that in cosmic terms the ritual was performed in front of the gates of the netherworld.[56] Given the possibility that the spirit was released after the interment of the body, it can be deduced that Šamaš was invoked to watch over the purification of the corpse, particularly the transfer of the sins by the scapegoat to the netherworld. His involvement, rather than Lugalida, is probably due to the growing Semitic influence on the Ur III court. Yet it endows the performance of the purification with a judicial sense, doubtlessly related to the transference of possible sins. If in order to begin a new life in the netherworld the spirit must be unblemished, Šamaš would be the one to authorize it.

THE FOUR RITUALS OF THE FIRST THREE DAYS — A PROPOSED RECONSTRUCTION

The order of the deities in the offerings list may be incidental, particularly in the fourth and richest ritual. The sequence in days, however, suggests a procedure, as follows: the first nightly ritual prepared the location at a canal; perhaps it was consecrated for the funerary ritual and water was let into a particular canal that served for royal funerals inside Ur.[57] The second night ritual was focused on the residents of the netherworld and prepared for the coming event; major deities and the spirits received sacrifices,[58] including the seized soul of the king, the ghost that is still in the locked breath. The offerings were made in Enegi (Ninazu's cult center — the southern center of the cult of the dead), in Gišbanda (Ningišzida's cult center), and in Ur, where the body was lying and the royal emblems are located. Ninazu and Ningišzida received offerings again, this time therefore, it must have been in their shrines at Ur. The third ritual, in the evening by the canal, was the ablution rite under the supervision of Šamaš:

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[55] ETCSL 5.5.2. Unlike the lamentations over young dying gods, which may have been composed during the Old Babylonian period, but on the basis of much older traditions, the elegy is an Old Babylonian school text. But the list of the invoked gods shows certain marks of northern Mesopotamia tradition, particularly the mention of Etana, the legendary king of Kish. It is quite possible that this list of gods pre-existed the elegy. The Old Babylonian period marks the emergence of Akkadian literature. The maturity of the Akkadian texts (e.g., Atra-Hasīs or the tale of Etana) and their deviation from comparable Sumerian narratives indicate that Akkadian stories were circulated orally before the Old Babylonian period. The references to Etana and the importance attached to him point to the Semitic population in northern Mesopotamia as the origin of the Akkadian literature, including our elegy. Although the text was written in Sumerian at Nippur it seems true to its Semitic origin and Old Babylonian date.

[56] In the Sumerian narrative "How the grain came to Sumer" the sun-god Utu is featured as the guardian of the passage to the netherworld; see ETCSL 1.7.6, lines 28–31. Elsewhere I proposed that the narrative explains why Ninazu and Ereškigal became netherworld gods, see TMH NF 3, no. 5, *N.A.B.U.* 2004/2: 37.

[57] See footnote 54. Considering the importance of the canal in the ritual of Šu-Suen it may have been customary in the family. Thus, a canal may have been dug in Ur for the funerary rituals of the royal family in the vicinity of their funerary chapels. The idea of a funerary canal seems reminiscent of the building of the tomb of Gilgameš at the bottom of the Euphrates in DGil. See ETCSL 1.8.1.3 Segment H; George 1999: 205; DGil 59-9, lines 239–60, text on p. 34.

[58] Compare DUr: 76–80. Note that although the Šu-Suen was deified, all the preparations are made for his spirit to be received in the netherworld.

the dead king was made cultically pure, his faults absolved through the scapegoat. Thus, the corpse was prepared for burial and the spirit for the coming journey to the netherworld. The mourning harps of the bereaved Nana and Ninsumuna received offerings, as well as Šamaš, who acts at the bank of the canal, and a group of ghosts, perhaps ancestors, priests, or maybe peers, waiting for the arrival in the netherworld of the spirit which was about to be liberated. A few hours later, at midnight, during the fourth ritual, animals were sacrificed for "the spirit," presumably the released spirit of Šu-Suen, for the "out and in going" spirits, perhaps restless spirits that had to be appeased, and for many deities, personal, family, and netherworld gods.[59] Sacred locations and objects also received offerings during this ritual.[60] A lamb sacrificed for "the lament of the lying-place in the garden of ^{d}Nin-[x]-si$_4$ (and Dumuzi?)" (col. rev. iii:31–32) is probably associated with the actual interment of the body since "lying-place" may be an alternative expression for the tomb. So it seems that on the same nightly ritual, a few hours after his purification, the tomb of the king was sealed.

Considering the quantity and the quality of the animals, the fourth ritual seems to be the most important. Sixty-seven animals were sacrificed in the canal, and about forty elsewhere, probably in the royal funerary chapels and in different shrines of the gods. The quantity of animals for the offering in the canal (rev. iv:10′–19′) indicates that the quay was the arena for the major part of the ritual. If we follow the order of the sacrifices on the list, this is the end of the ritual. At that stage the king was buried and his spirit released. Perhaps, therefore, in the fourth ritual the location at the canal is related to the journey of the king's spirit to the netherworld and the animals for a banquet after his arrival, as described in DUr.

Thus, the funerary rituals of the king reached the climax on the third day: the corpse was placed in the tomb, and the spirit released to settle in the netherworld.[61] By analogy, Baranamtara, wife of Lugalanda, the pre-Sargonic ruler of Lagash, was mourned for two days before she was interred,[62] and Geme-Lama, the high priestess of Baba and wife of an Ur III ruler of Lagash, was buried on the third day.[63] Given the weather conditions in southern Mesopotamia, after three days a corpse would probably begin to decompose.

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[59] The better-known deities are Peti, the gatekeeper of the netherworld, Ninšubur, and Meslamtaeda HA.ZI (Meslamtaeda HA.ZI is attested also in StOr 9/1, 27:10 [dated to IS 2.7.8], an offering list for the third day of the Akiti, together with Annunitum, Ulmašitum, Allatum, and Nana of Murianabak. There is no additional evidence for HA.ZI), Baba, and Haia, Šamaš, Geštinana, Allatum, Gilgameš, and Dumuzi. Others who received offerings are some manifestations of Inana, and several minor deities, some related to the netherworld. Note that Nina-zimua, the wife of Ninĝišzida, who featured in DUr as the scribe of the netherworld, is not mentioned. Instead it is Geštinana, the sister of Dumuzi and the traditional holder of this office. Ninazimua appears on the cultic scene as another name of Geštinana in the inscriptions of Gudea of Lagash, but this merger did not hold long, and Ninazimua disappeared from cultic practice probably before the Old Babylonian period (see more in Katz 2003: 397–401).

[60] Among the objects are the statue in the "house" of Ur-namma, a storehouse, gates, the crown of the Akiti, and a seat made of Halub, perhaps the subject of the mythical chair that Gilgameš made for Inana in GEN: 147.

[61] We notice, however, that a *mihru* offering on a boat was made on the first night, before the release of the spirit. That in the fourth ritual no boat is mentioned does not exclude the possibility that a boat was used since other goods may have been offered or loaded.

[62] Baranamtara: TSA 9 and VS 137. These references are courtesy of Bram Jagersma. Each text lists the day's rations of food for the mourners of Baranamtara. VS 137 specifies: "the 2nd day." Considering that on the first day 300 people and on the second 317 Gala (lamentation singers), wives of elders, and slaves were fed, it must have been rather crowded there.

[63] The texts indicate that Geme-Lama died on the ninth month of the first year of Amar-Suen. The account of the expenses of Geme-Lama's funeral: Maeda 1987: 325 (BM 18352). In addition, BM Messenger 325 records a delivery of bitumen for her tomb (ki-mah) on that month, and TLB 3, 54 — a delivery of wool. An unpublished text, BM 18686, records the delivery of a sheep for her ki-a-naĝ on the ninth month of that year (Jagersma forthcoming). MVN 17, 105 lists sorts of food rations, for her ki-a-naĝ for the tenth–twelfth months of Amar-Suen's first year.

THE FUNERAL OF GEME-LAMA

Geme-Lama belonged to the ruling class, so her funerary ritual was probably more elaborate than that of the ordinary citizen. The documents that record the expenses for her burial rituals offer additional information about funerary rituals. The food rations indicate that on the first day she was mourned in her residence (a-nir šà é-ki-tuš é ú-šim), on the second day in her funerary chapel (a-nir šà ki-a-nağ), and one last meal was placed in her tomb (ki-mah nin-diğir-ra-ka ba-an-ğar).[64] The quantities of food and the last meal in the grave indicate that these products were meant for the spirit of the priestess, not for the mourners. More significantly, the one food ration that was placed in the tomb indicates that the priestess was interred before the release of the spirit, and that the spirit was released after one meal in the tomb. The list of expenses also register the wages of carpenters who made a coffin[65] and the price of a reed mat on which Geme-Lama was laid,[66] the price of a wheel and of equipment for the me-al-tum carriage.[67] Me-al-tum is probably a hearse, the bed mentioned in the literary version of the rituals. There is no record concerning a chair, a standard item of furniture in funerary chapels.[68] The broken lines of reverse i:20–23 probably record the delivery of bitumen for the construction.[69] Unlike the case of the king there is no record of libation to netherworld deities on behalf of Geme-Lama. The absence of such a record does not mean that netherworld, personal, and family gods were not invoked. In the Old Babylonian first elegy of the Pushkin Museum,[70] Ludiğira invokes Šamaš, Nana-Suen, netherworld, and personal gods, begging them to show favor to his deceased father and also to the surviving family.[71] His list of netherworld

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[64] The account of food rations for her funerary rituals specifies two meals for the wailing in her residence, col. i: 13–23: "2 liters of ghee, 1/3 liter of honey, 4 liters of good dates, 4 liters of cheese, 4 liters of pears(?), 4 liters of dried apples, 4 liters of raisins, 4 liters of pomegranates, a 2 cubit string of figs. Its allocated food portions are two. (For the) wailing in the residence, in the greenery(? a-nir šà é ki-tuš é-ú-šim)." Two meals for the wailing in the funerary chapel (šà ki-a-nağ, col. i:24–ii:6 list the same products and the same quantities). One meal to be placed in the grave of the priestess, col. ii:7–17. 1 liter ghee, 2/60 liter of honey, 2 liters of good dates, 2 liters of cheese, 2 liters of pears (?), 2 liters of dried apples, 2 liters of raisins, 2 liters of pomegranates, a 3 cubit string of figs. Its allocated food portion is one. It was placed in the tomb of the high-priestess (ki-mah nin-diğir-ra-ka ba-an-ğar).

If two meals are one day's ration, it means that the actual burial took place on the third day, and that the spirit of the priestess received meals while it was seized in the body, before and after the interment.

[65] Reverse i:11: á hun-ğá ğešdub nin-diğir-ra. A wooden coffin was found in PG 1422 in Ur.

[66] Reverse i:18–19: … níg-sa₁₀ kid ki-a-nağ nin-diğir nú-da-šè.

[67] See respectively reverse i:7: 60+10 níg-sàm ğešumbin me-al-tum-ma 1-a-kam - : "70 liters (of barely) is the price of 1 wheel for the me-al-tum bed"; and rev. ii:1–3 (= TLB 3, 54): 4 ma-na siki gi 2 ma-na siki gú-TAR á šu-du₇-a ğešgigir me-al-tum nin-diğir-ra-šè "4 pounds of … wool and 2 pounds of … wool, equipment for the mealtum carriage of the high priestess (withdrawn by PN)."

[68] Very well documented in administrative texts as well as in the literary ritual. See particularly BM messenger 226:1–3 recording 4 mana of wool for ğešgu-za ki-a-nağ énsi-ke-ne-šè (Girsu, date: Š 41.6.00, Sigrist 1990). HSS 4, 52:14 (Girsu, date: ŠS 2), records a delivery of two ox skins and two sheep skins for the chair of the chariot of the funerary chapel of the rulers (énsi-ke₄ne). There can be little doubt that Geme-Lama had a chair placed in her funerary chapel.

[69] The traces conform with BM Messenger 325.

[70] See footnote 55.

[71] The role of Šamaš as a supreme judge is an intrinsic property of the Semitic pantheon, observable in texts of the Old Babylonian period and later. The Sumerian Utu, although himself the Sun as well, was not the exact southern counterpart of Šamaš. Semitic cultural influence was increasingly felt since the reign of Šulgi, with a great contribution from the Semitic royal wives. Therefore, one should not be surprised that Šamaš plays a central role in Šu-Suen's funerary ritual, a role which elsewhere in southern Sumer may have been done by other deities.

In his prayer to Šamaš and Nana-Suen Ludiğira expands the funerary ritual beyond the release of the spirit and its initiation into the netherworld. The ritual is expanded because he actually activated the gods on behalf of his father's spirit. In asking Nana to decree a good fate to his father he puts the god in charge of the welfare of the deceased. And in asking Šamaš to judge the case of his father, Ludiğira seeks justice for his father in his next life. Seeking justice means that lifetime circumstances, including the manner of death, determine the individual's

gods seems like a standard list and strongly suggests that the invocation of the netherworld gods was a standard practice during the funerary ritual.

There is no documentation concerning a prolonged period of funerary rituals for Baranamtara or Geme-Lama. However, the libation on the eighth day for the spirit of Tezen-mama indicates that her funerary rituals continued after she was interred. The funerary rituals for Šu-Suen continued for two weeks in total. A single day afterwards, Ibbi-Suen established himself as a king, sacrificing and receiving the crown in Nippur. Two days later he was crowned again, this time in Ur.[72]

"DEATH OF URNAMMA" AND THE FUNERARY RITUALS FOR ŠU-SIN

The account of animals for the funerary rituals of King Šu-Suen offers the historical background to the literary lament "Death of Urnamma" (DUr). The description of Urnamma's funeral and first days in the netherworld, particularly the huge banquet that "he laid" for the inhabitants of the netherworld, and the long mourning period of the population, now seem closer to reality.

Nevertheless, a comparison between the list of gods who received gifts from Urnamma and the gods associated with the funerary ritual of Šu-Suen shows some important variations. The discrepancy may be due to the difference between a contemporary administrative account and a literary text that was probably edited in the course of study and copying later in the Old Babylonian period.[73] Nergal, heads the list of DUr with the epithet "Enlil of the netherworld," as if he was the main god of the netherworld. However, he did not receive any sacrificial animal

conditions in afterlife. This relieves the family from full responsibility for the spirit. The precursor of this notion can be traced to DUr and DGil. Urnamma and Gilgameš were compensated in the afterlife for their deeds during their lifetimes. However, Šamaš was not involved in determining their afterlife status. For Urnamma it was Ereškigal and later, again, Ningišzida, whereas for Gilgameš it was Enlil. Therefore, Ludiĝira's appeals to Šamaš, the god of justice, reflect a development in the concept which occurred at the beginning of the second millennium.

[72] For the next month, the scribes in Drehem record deliveries of sacrificial animals for offerings of the new king Ibbi-Suen to various deities, when he was traveling between Nippur, Ur, and Uruk to assume his kingship àga šu ba-an-ti-a. The account for the month following the death of Šu-Suen, and some original daily receipts were studied by M. Sigrist (1989). Thus, according to JCS 7, 48, and the monthly account AnOr 7, 108, on the first day of the tenth month — directly after the last recorded funerary offering — Ibbi-Suen was offering sacrifices in Nippur on the same day he was crowned in Nippur ("received the crown" àga šu ba-an-ti-a) and went to Uruk. According to UDT 100 and JCS 10, 28, 4, on the third day of the month Ibbi-Suen was in Ur, at night sacrificing to various gods including the netherworld gods Allatum and Meslamtaeda; in the evening he sacrificed to Nana and received the crown, that is, he was crowned, again, in Ur. On the fourth day,

still in Ur, AnOr 7, 107, records offerings to the thrones of his ancestors Urnamma, Šu-Suen, Šulgi, and Amar-Suen. On the ninth day, in the evening the king offered oxen to Nana, and to "the divine Šu-Suen beloved of Nana," to Ninsumuna and to "Šu-Suen the beloved of Ninsumuna" — two deities and two statues of Šu-Suen in the temples of the respective deities, to Gula, Allatum, and Meslamtaeda, as well as provisions for the NE-IZI-gar "torches are lit," a festival which seems to be related to the cult of the dead (it is not the month name). On the twenty-first day of the month, Ibbi-Suen and his wife Geme-Enlila made offerings in Uruk: to Inana, Gansura, and Geštinana. From the twenty-fifth until the twenty-ninth day of the month he is in Uruk again. His hectic cultic activity and hasty crowning circumstantially support the suspicions of Dahl 2004: 131 that he was not the son of Šu-Suen.

[73] Regrettably, the registration of animals for the funerary rituals of Šu-Suen was not known to me when I prepared my book (Katz 2003) for publication. In the absence of a genuine historical document for comparison, I could not properly evaluate the degrees of historicity and literariness of the list in DUr. I still maintain that the compilation of the original Ur III version of the list was already influenced by literary considerations. In view of YBC 4190 it seems to me now that the list may have been further edited in the Old Babylonian period, in accordance with contemporary convictions. The lists of DUr and that of DGil are treated in detail in Katz 2003: 357–74.

in the ritual of Šu-Suen.[74] Gilgameš, who in DUr was listed after Nergal as "lugal of the netherworld," received one lamb on the third night, among many other deities, not all chthonic.[75] At the head of Šu-Suen's list are Ninazu and Ereškigal, as expected. Ninazu's temple in Enegi was the southern center for the cult of the dead, and Ereškigal, his mother, was the queen of the netherworld.[76] Ninšubur was not mentioned in any of the literary lists, but included among chthonic gods already in pre-Sargonic Lagash. Her temple in Enegi and her association (as a female deity) with Meslamtaeda demonstrate her affiliation to the netherworld.[77] Ningišzida, originally a young dying god and genealogically the son of Ninazu, has a secure place in all the lists of netherworld gods, down to the first millennium.

THE DEATH OF A KING

Šu-Suen, like his predecessors Šulgi and Amar-Suen, was deified. The death of a deified king raises an ideological problem: as a god he should be immortal, but as a king he is a mortal human being. The court scholars were surely aware of this inconsistency because this concern was raised in the composition "Death of Gilgameš." The issue is unfolded in a vision that appears to Gilgameš in a dream. The legendary king of Uruk was lying sick when in a dream he saw the assembly of the gods debating over his fate. Enlil's inclination to grant Gilgameš immortality like a god because of his accomplishments was declined by Enki, who reminded the assembly of their oath after the flood. It was decided that because of the human part of his nature and despite his mother being divine he should die.[78] Therefore, as a reward for his own great achievements, and his partly divine ancestry, he would become the leader of the spirits, with an authority like that of Ninǧišzida and Dumuzi. Thereby Gilgamesh became equal to netherworld gods. The fate of Gilgameš answers the problem of the deified kings of the third dynasty of Ur: it is the human segment of their being that determines their fate. The case of Šulgi illustrates the problem. A text from the eleventh month of his last (forty-eighth) year is dated to the day when the king went up to heaven.[79] This should seem normal because Šulgi

[74] The absence of Nergal from the offering list of Šu-Suen supports my view that in southern Sumer of the Ur III period Nergal was not yet recognized as an important netherworld god certainly not as head of the pantheon; he features in the list of DUr as a warlike deity for thematic reasons, i.e., reflecting Urnamma's death during a military action. For those who promote the idea that Nergal and Meslamtaeda are two names of one god because both resided in the Meslam temple of Kutha, note that a certain Meslamtaeda HA.ZI received a sheep on the fourth ritual. It is doubtful that he can be considered a southern image of Nergal, and his place in the fourth ritual cannot be compared with Nergal's place in DUr, it seems even lower than Ninšubur's, and certainly that of Ninazu and Ereškigal.

[75] The place of Gilgameš in Šu-Suen's list, among gods who were linked to members of the royal family, suggests the possibility that he was not treated here as a netherworld god, but as a patron deity of the dynasty.

[76] In DUr Ninazu was mentioned only in Ereškigal's epithet "Mother of Ninazu." This is rather surprising, considering that two consecutive months in Ur and Drehem are named after his cult: ki-siki-Ninazu and ezen-Ninazu.

These names alone establish his prominence in Ur III Ur. The offering list of Šu-Suen confirms Ninazu's central role in the cult of the dead during the Ur III period. To my previous suggestion (Katz 2003: 358–59), I would add now the possibility that his modest place in DUr may also be due to an Old Babylonian elaboration of the Urnamma list, which reflects Ninazu's low status in the pantheon after the collapse of the Ur III dynasty.

[77] See also in UET 3, 267 rev. i:12 followed by Meslamtaeda. Ninšubur's gender is rather complex issue, see *RlA* 9, 490–500. In the third ritual a sheep is offered to Ninšubur (rev. ii:29), this is for her shrine inside Ur.

[78] Thus Enlil and Enki presented each aspect of the deified king: divinity and immortality against humanity and mortality. DGil lines 162–73.

[79] The text (BCT 132, 1) calculates the wages to workers who were released from work on that day. See also Wilcke 1988. Ascent to heaven is also documented for Išbi-Erra, the founder of the Isin dynasty (BIN 10, 190). That we do not have references to the ascent of Šulgi's successors may be coincidence. It may also hint at weakness and therefore irregularities in the procedure of legitimate succession.

was deified. But Šulgi also had a funerary chapel where he received funerary offerings in food-stuff and precious objects, on the second day of the same month.[80] Deified or not, in actual reality the mourners were left with a body that needs to be properly buried, and a soul that needs to be liberated. So the burial practice is observed as usual. As for Šu-Suen, the texts leave no doubt that he went to the netherworld in a grand ceremony. And since there is a tomb, there is also a funerary chapel where offerings are brought regularly. At the same time, statues of the deified kings, which were fashioned during their lifetime, received offerings among those given to the gods and similar to them.[81]

Urnamma, unlike Gilgameš, did not have a divine parent, nor was he deified. But he too was rewarded in the afterlife for his achievements in his lifetime. The lament over the death of Urnamma is a protest against the great gods for changing the king's fate: Urnamma was not rewarded with long life for his great deeds on behalf of the gods and Sumer. The episode at the assembly of the gods implies that in actual reality his premature death raised an ideological problem. This episode, however, offers no solution. It ends with a bitter lament over the king, reminiscent of Inana's lamentations over Dumuzi. A respectable solution, to reward Urnamma with duties and status similar to those of a Sumerian king on earth, and to associate him with Gilgameš, is described shortly after his arrival in the netherworld, before his protests and Inana's scene in the assembly of the gods. The sequence of narrated events, in which the solution precedes the protest, is awkward.[82] It suggests that the reward was composed and added at a later stage to the lament that expressed the grief of the wife. Be that as it may, the reward that endows Urnamma with high rank in the world of the dead is a political statement. As such, we may assume that it was conceived as propaganda, to support the case of one of his successors, most likely Šulgi, who could use it in connection with his deification.[83]

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[80] HSM 911.10.131 in Michalowski 1977: 225. But note especially UTI 3800, a delivery of jewelry of gold and precious stones from Umma at least ten years later, some time during the first years of Šu-Suen (see footnote 21).

[81] Gudea states that after death his statue, which he placed in the Eninu, should "stand in the place of liba-tion" (Gudea St. B vii:47–60). There are few examples from texts dated to the reign of Ibbi-Suen: CST 453:8, 10 for Šu-Suen (ŠS 9.10.9, IS); PDT 1, 563:11–13, for Šul-gi, Šu-Suen of the gate of Šulgi and Šu-Suen of the gate of Utu (ŠS 9.10.21); JCS 7, 48:8 for Šulgi (ŠS 9.10.1 — the first day after Šu-Suen's funerary rituals ended, when Ibbi-Suen was crowned in Nippur); MVN 8, 139 ii:8 for Šulgi (IS 2.6.14); SET 57:8 Amar-Suen of the chariot house (IS 2.10.9).

Funerary offerings for each of the kings are documented as well. But an approximate survey of the ex-tant sources suggests that more offerings were delivered for the funerary chapels of Urnamma than for his dei-fied successors. If this impression proves a fact, then the deification made the difference; compare the big offering list TCL 2, 5514 (date: IS 2.10.3) obv. 3–4 ki-a-naǧ Ur-namma but his wife — ᵈGeštinan-SI-A-tum or rev. 3–4. ᵈŠulgi and ᵈŠu-Suen in the temple of Ninsumuna in Ur and rev. 6. for ᵈŠulgi in Kuara (and note that Amar-Suen is not mentioned in this list). Ki-a-naǧ Urnamma is at-tested again in a list for the ninth day of the month (SET

57:4), on the fifteenth day (PDT 1, 342:3, in Inana's temple, Uruk?), on the twenty-fourth day in Enlil's tem-ple in Nippur (SET 58:3), on the twenty-fifth day again in Nippur (MVN 13, 128:3) and on the twenty-sixth day (MVN 13, 124 [location unknown]). None of his deified successors appear in these lists. SACT 188 records a dai-ly regular offering for the funerary chapel of Urnamma in Nippur. Also interesting are texts that record deliver-ies for all four dead kings: UET 3, 242 rev. 5 records a delivery of dates for ki-a-naǧ lugal 4-ba-šè, among oth-er deliveries to various cultic installations. A text from Umma, OrSP 47, 465 (date broken), records a delivery of bundles of reed to the funerary chapels of Urnamma, Šulgi, Amar-Suen, and Šu-Suen, but also to "Amar-Suen in the house of Urnamma" (obv. 7–8). During the reign of Šu-Suen we find that Šulgi and Amar-Suen received funerary offerings together like in SAT 3, 1197.

[82] Although awkward, it is possible, of course. But it seems out of place that his fate would be determined again after Inana's protest (line 221, reconstructed: whose fate if not Urnamma's?). It is more suitable for a version in which his position has not been determined yet, i.e., a version that lacks the appointments to leader and judge by Ereškigal.

[83] Afterwards, for his successors, deification would be hereditary.

The death of a king begins a politically sensitive transition period which continues until the coronation of his heir. The crown prince is not yet in office, and power centers are not yet under his control. The elaborate funerary rituals for Šu-Suen are not only a sign of grief. The richness of the offerings, particularly the many sacrifices for the royal emblems, makes a political statement. The elaborate ritual asserts the identity of the deceased king as a member of the dynasty and the importance of the king in his own right. But moreover these offerings make a statement on behalf of his heir Ibbi-Suen, indicating his position as the legitimate successor to the throne. It is not surprising, therefore, that the first day after the funerary rituals for Šu-Suen ended, Ibbi-Suen came to Nippur, the religious center of Sumer, to sacrifice oxen for a grand offering in the temples of Enlil and Ninlil, and to be crowned.[84] Two days later, on the third day after the end of the funerary rituals, Ibbi-Suen was crowned in his capital Ur.[85]

ABBREVIATIONS

AnOr	*Analecta Orientalia*
AS	Amar-Suen
ASJ	*Acta Sumerologica (Japan)*
AUCT	Andrews University Cuneiform Texts
BCT	P. J. Watson. Catalogue of Cuneiform Tablets in Birmingham City Museum
BIN	Babylonian Inscriptions in the Collection of J. B. Nies
BM Messenger	M. Sigrist. *Messenger Texts from the British Museum*. Bethesda, 1990
CAD	A. Leo Oppenheim et al., eds. *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*. Chicago, 1956–
CST	T. Fish. *Catalogue of Sumerian Tablets in the John Rylands Library*. Manchester 1932
CT	Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets
DUr	E. Flückiger-Hawker. *Urnamma of Ur in Sumerian Literary Tradition*. Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 166. Freiburg, 1999
DGil	A. Cavigneaux and F. N. H. Al-Rawi. *Gilgameš et la mort. Textes de Tell Haddad VI, avec un appendice funéraire sumériens*. Groningen, 2000; ETCSL 1.8.1.3
ETCSL	The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk
GEN	A. George. *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic, Introduction, Critical Edition and Cuneiform Texts*, Volumes 1–2. Oxford, 2003
Gilg.	Gilgameš
Gudea Cyl. A,B	lit. comp.; F. Thureau-Dangin, TCL 8; ETCSL 2.1.7
Gudea St. B	Royal Insc. H. Steible, *Die neusumerischen Bau- und Weihinschriften*, Part 1, pp. 157–79. Stuttgart, 1991
ITT	Inventaire des tablettes de Tello
IS	Ibbi-Suen

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[84] JCS 7 (1953), p. 48.

[85] AnOr 7, 108, col. i:1–22; UDT 100 and JCS 10 (1956) 28, 4. On the problems concerning succession to the throne of the Ur III dynasty, see Dahl 2004 with previous literature.

JCS	*Journal of Cuneiform Studies*
LKA	E. Ebeling. *Literarische Keilschrifttexte aus Assur*
MVN	Materiali per il vocabolario neo-sumerico
N.A.B.U.	Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires
OB	Old Babylonian
OrSP	*Orientalia*, Series Prior
PDT	M. Çig, H. Kizilyay, and A. Salonen. Die Puzris-Dagan-Texte der Istanbuler Archaologischen Museen Part 1 = texts 1–725 (= AASF B 92, Helsinki 1956)
PSD	The Sumerian Dictionary of the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania
RlA	*Reallexikon der Assyriologie*
Rochester	M. Sigrist. Documents from Tablet Collections in Rochester, New York. Bethesda, Maryland, 1991
SACT	Sumerian and Akkadian Cuneiform Texts in the Collection of the World Heritage Museum of the University of Illinois, I/II: Sh. T. Kang (Urbana 1972/1973)
SET	T. B. Jones and J. W. Snyder. Sumerian Economic Texts from the Third Ur Dynasty. Minneapolis, 1961
SK	H. Zimmeren. *Sumerische Kultlieder aus altbabylonisher Zeit*. VS 2. 1912
StOr	*Studia Orientalia* (Helsinki)
STT	O. R. Gurney, J. J. Finkelstein, and P. Hulin. *The Sultantepe Tablets*
Š	Šulgi
ŠS	Šu-Suen
TCL	*Textes cunéiformes du Louvre*
TCTI 1	Bertrand Lafont and Fatma Yildiz, Tablettes cunéiformes de Tello au Musée d'Istanbul: datant de l'époque de la IIIe Dynastie d'Ur. Volume 1. ITT II/1, 617–1038. PIHANS 65. Leiden, 1989
TCTI 2	Bertrand Lafont and Fatma Yildiz, Tablettes cunéiformes de Tello au Musée d'Istanbul, datant de l'époque de la IIIe Dynastie d'Ur. Volume 2. ITT II/1, 2544–2819, 3158–4342, 4708–4714. PIHANS 77. Leiden, 1996
TIM	Texts in the Iraq Museum
TMH NF	Text und Materialien der Frau Professor Hilprecht Collection … Jena, (Leipzig 1932–1934), Neue Folge. Leipzig 1937, Berlin 1961ff.
TSA	H. de Genouillac. Tablettes sumeriennes archaiques
UDT	J. Nies. Ur Dynasty Tablets (= AB 25, 1920)
UET	Ur Excavations, Texts
VS	Vorderasiatische Schriftdenkmäler der (Königlichen) Museen zu Berlin. Berlin 1907ff.
YBC	Tablets in the Babylonian Collection, Yale University Library

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DEATH AND DISMEMBERMENT IN MESOPOTAMIA: DISCORPORATION BETWEEN THE BODY AND BODY POLITIC

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> "As for the grave: the hoe buries people,
> but dead people are also brought up from the ground by the hoe."
> — *The Song of the Hoe*, lines 74–75[1]

This contribution investigates funerary ritual not by looking at ideal or optimal practice, but rather by looking into examples of its deliberate inversion or non-performance. It is argued that corpse abandonment and abuse were deployed as literary-historical motifs which primarily acted on (and thus reflect) Mesopotamian social anxieties about death and the body. The essay surveys two particular thematic "episodes" of corpse violation in royal literature (third-millennium burial mounds and the repertoire of Neo-Assyrian corpse abuses) and makes a further assessment of the theme's position in other textual genres. Idealizing behaviors and cultural norms — even those concerning funerals, burials, and the dead — must always be considered in juxtaposition with the undesirable (if mostly propagandistic) alternatives which gave them operational force.

Two very modern stories can be used to illustrate the arbitrary and socially-constructed nature of even the most sacrosanct cultural symbol, the treatment of the human corpse: In June of 1982, the American essayist Joan Didion was asked, in polite conversation with an aide to then-President of El Salvador, Alvaro Magaña: "Of course you have seen El Playón?" The aide extolled the virtues of the famous touristic site, a national park with breathtaking views of geological and botanical wonders, without mentioning what both he and Didion knew was the real point of the question. From 1979 to 1981, the daily views to be taken in at El Playón included many of the 30,000-total bodies of death squad victims, dumped nightly following their extrajudicial murders, and left on view in the morning as political warnings by right-wing elements allied with the government.[2] The point was to display the bodies (fig. 10.1).

Only a few years earlier and half a world away, quite a different tack was taken in the discorporation of "undesirable" social elements: from 1975 to 1978 Cambodia's Khmer Rouge regime undertook the murder of hundreds of thousands of citizens. In this case, however, the program was effected through a "legal" process including police detention, interrogation (though without trial), sometimes written and photographic documentation of the "criminals," and finally execution by the state. Though the sites of these murders are now famous as "Killing Fields," they were notionally secret under law. The now-familiar images of exhumed burials and towers of skulls erected *in memoriam* only became public *after* the fall of the regime, as monuments, memorials, and tourist stops. Thus, despite a scaffolding of legitimizing process, bodies were anonymously and hurriedly buried in mass graves at secluded, clandestine sites,

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[1] Translation G. Farber (COS I.157). I would like to thank W. Farber, M. Roth, and N. Laneri for their helpful and valuable comments on drafts of this paper.

[2] Didion 1983: esp. 14–21.

Figure 10.1. Skull of a Death-squad Victim, Left
Exposed; El Playón, El Salvador, 1982.
Photo Courtesy of Marcelo Montecino

Figure 10.2. Sign Marking the Site of One of
Almost 100 Mass Graves Used by the Khmer
Rouge in the Mid–Late 1970s; Siem Reap,
Cambodia. Photo Courtesy of Caleb Crane,
May 2006, http://www.flickr.com/photos/
simulacre/sets/

often located in former population centers that had been depopulated via mass evacuations.[3]
The point was to hide the bodies (fig. 10.2).

In the case of El Salvador, legitimacy was beside the point and the display of the corpse
was a grisly tool for political rhetoric; in the case of Cambodia, the machinery of death existed
precisely to bolster claims of state legitimacy (though virtually all accusations of criminality
were patently false), but its operation on bodies took place in secret prisons, camps, and kill-
ing fields.[4] It is by now well argued that the state's claim on the living body as an object of
punishment deeply underlies political relations; the state's claim on the *dead* body as a medium
of political discourse is perhaps less well explicated.[5] Yet in these cases we see two points
somewhat at odds with each other. First, the "proper" treatment of the dead body in burial must
be uncovered as a form which (like other cultural practices) derives its meaning and force not
only through ideal observance, but also through social knowledge and fear of non-performance,
denial, or inversion. Second (and simultaneously), violation of normal funerary practice, like

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[3] My thanks to Dr. Stephen Heder of the School of Ori-
ental and African Studies, London, for some clarifying
language here; the legal applicability of the term "mur-
der" in the case of the Khmer Rouge program is, he cau-
tions me, still "a very open question."

[4] It is worth noting that both El Salvador and Cambodia
observe a range of "normal" burial practices, including
inhumation and cremation; it cannot be in doubt there-
fore that both exposure and mass burial were inversions
of normal practice.

[5] Notably, Foucault 1977; see also Haboush 2003.

proper burial, is an ambivalent and changeable symbol, with a range of emphasis and importance within the rhetorical systems which construct them.

These points together present something of a conundrum, but they underlie my main argument: the importance of burial can be distinguished partly by looking at examples of its deliberate inversion (and the manipulation of the fear of inversion), yet burial must nevertheless be viewed as a categorical imperative secondary to the ongoing economic and ideological needs of living households. This latter opinion I have argued elsewhere,[6] and thus here abbreviate: it was the act of speaking the name of the dead and offerings of food (not body, grave, or funerary rite[7]) which were the *sine qua non* materials in rituals for the dead in ancient Mesopotamia. (This being the case, we must remain aware that the principal ritual symbols for household identity and historical knowledge are archaeologically invisible.[8])

My investigation is a reaction to this seminar's topic as implicitly privileging idealizing behaviors as culturally representative (through ancestor worship, *die Totenreligion, enterrement pieux*, etc.) in the face of much evidence for a wide variety of other treatments of the dead human body.[9] My method here is to focus on the most extreme examples of inversion in order to establish a bracketing antipode, but as Robb (this volume) suggests, the most difficult phenomena for analysis will remain those many intermediate data sets, distributed across the spectrum, in which evidence for "abbreviated" burials will be either lacking or obscured. Analysis of cultural forms must take into account not only the full range of attested treatments of the dead body, but also the function of the physical body as a symbol within a wider semiosis of rituals-of-death.

IDEAL AND INVERSION

Ritual performance of burial indeed aided the construction of social boundaries, but funerals did not limit their transformative effects to changing the "negative" event of death into a "positive" one, always and consistently affirming community ideals. As Pollock (1991) and others have argued, death is a "contested realm" (and not only for subjects, but for scholars, as well[10]). Social identity, therefore, is created not purely by the projection of perfecting ideologies, but also by their admonitory inversion. Cautionary examples and fears of non-performance reveal cultural anxieties and social differentiation, principally deployed in royal literature as claims which extended the authority of the state into the afterlife. In short, the concern

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[6] Richardson 1999–2001: esp. 172f.

[7] The greater archaeological visibility of these forms for elite household contexts discussed by Katz and Pollock (this volume) may tend to give a skewed view of graves as inherently important, where rather what we have left to us as evidence are mostly the more important (and exceptional) burials. I do not here undertake the question of whether or not burial was differently emphasized within Sumerian and Akkadian cultures as expressions of irreducible social authority.

[8] For the purposes of this argument, I adopt Brian Schmidt's (1996: 29–30) terminological structure of ritual evidence and behaviors relating to the dead: situational, regular (commemorative), and magical (or problem-solving) rites (typically to do with ghost-exorcism or necromancy). In Mesopotamia, body and grave were indeed optimal (but not necessary) elements for com-

memoration and remembrance. This clarification of the middling importance of the body is important for two reasons. First, terminologically, it asks us to consider more carefully what ritual actions are precisely funerary (i.e., human death, and the ensuing acts of body preparation, tomb building, and interment), and which are commemorative or magical. Second, and resultingly, we should re-direct our focus away from the liminal, transformational (and archaeologically dominant) events of death and burial, and toward the ongoing social claims of families about their dead.

[9] Other recent Assyriological work on the body has focused on questions of gender, eroticism, and/or medicine as primary subjects of interest.

[10] On the unbounded field of inquiry as a theoretical problem for the scholar, see Connor 1995.

for proper burial should also be illuminated by an examination of cases in which burial was flagrantly *not* performed. Our texts about burial already do not so much document practice as they project idealizing and normative precepts, and the exceptions are those instances in which they deal with deviations from the norm. This being the case, we are obligated to do more than look at burial as an "ideal type" purely upholding social inclusion, but also investigate instances in which the treatment of the body was intended to discorporate social elements through violations of burial: the display or exposure of the dead body, head, or (more rarely) other *pars pro toto*, without burial; corpse abuse and dismemberment;[11] corpse abandonment; burial-as-trophy; disinterment — all as acts establishing burial as meaningful through deliberate inversions.[12]

The wide variety of meanings mobilized in ancient literatures and practices by the corpse-abuse topos is evident at a glance. In the Greek epic, outrages upon the dead acted as devices to foreground the heroic exploits of others whose *élan* earned them "*la belle mort*" (e.g., *Iliad* 22–23, the depredations against Hektor's corpse alongside the heroic funerary honors for Patroklos).[13] In Roman literature, the display of the dead body of Lucretia rallied the citizens against tyranny, while the head and hands of Cicero (among others) were displayed in the Rostra as an enemy of the state.[14] Egyptian funerary practice incorporated dismemberment as part of a ritual cycle ultimately geared toward reintegrating the body through magic spells.[15] The Hebrew Bible introduces both narrative and metaphoric references to the display of the dead body or *pars pro toto*; segregated, prohibited, or deliberately abnormal burial; disposal by cannibalism or scavenging animals.[16] One can also find here an apotropaic use of corpse abuse, however, when human bones were used as ritual instruments to close off human contact with idolatrous cult places (Ezekiel 6:5, 2 Kings 23:14–16).[17] Every one of these uses, as circumstantially or formally different as they were, referred to some ideal or its opposite, and the variety of Mesopotamian cases are in this respect no different.

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[11] Although the physical dispersal of body parts was not an unusual feature of Mesopotamian battlefield accounts, they were rarely specific to already-dead bodies (compare with the First Geneva Convention, Article 15, which encourages the prevention of bodies "being despoiled"; and Third Geneva Convention, Article 120, which omits it); yet the conduct of "uncivilized" enemies was occasionally marked by these acts, for example, the Gutians in the "Uruk Lament" (Green 1984: 272, line 4.23) are charged with having torn apart corpses.

[12] These examples are themselves problematic, since "violence toward the dead — in the form of destructive acts committed on the corpse of the deceased — is not simply a permitted outlet for undifferentiated aggression, as Freudian interpretations would suggest, but can [as well] be understood as deeply motivated actions with a precise [reparative] psychological significance" (Stephen 1998: 405). Some cases of "corpse abuse" in other cultures (e.g., taboo violation, necrophagia, preservation of decapitated heads/skull fetishes) had purposes which were in fact socially therapeutic or magically protective rather than political statements about enemies and social membership (DeLeonardis 2000; Connor 1979).

[13] Vernant 1982: 71: "Par le thème de la mutilation des corps, l'épopée souligne la place et le statut exceptionnels de l'honneur héroïque, de la belle mort, de la gloi-

re impérissable …" It is unclear, it must be noted here, whether the Greek ritual form of *sparagmos*, only occasionally practiced on human beings, should be counted among abuses to the corpse per se — except in those cases where it is followed by *omophagia*.

[14] The ambivalence of these symbolates is captured by Plutarch's whimsical but fitting account in his *Cicero* XLIX 2: "Then [Antony] ordered the head and hands to be placed over the ships' beaks on the Rostra, a sight that made the Romans shudder, for they thought they saw there, not the face of Cicero, but an image of the soul of Antony."

[15] The removal of body organs during the embalming process was thus not purely mechanical, but meant to encode them as ritual instruments since "the *disiecta membra* of the corpse were identified with a plethora of gods…" (Powell 2007).

[16] Display: 1 Samuel 31:8–12, 2 Samuel 4:7–12; differential burial: Isaiah 14:20, Jeremiah 16:4, 22:19, Ezekiel 39:14–15; metaphoric body desecrations: Deuteronomy 28:53, Jeremiah 34:20, Psalms 79:2.

[17] Since corpse contact was abhorrent in the first place (e.g., Leviticus 21:11, to idolators and non-idolators alike), this device used a common-culture taboo to assert a specific religious one.

Since it is not my intention to present a *catalogue raisonné d'horreurs*, I illustrate these points first by discussing two of the most important episodes of *discorpora* found in royal inscriptions (the most explicit source type for our subject), and then turn to non-royal sources to indicate the broad cultural folkways from and against which those ideological statements derived their force. Royal inscriptions are the texts that are perhaps least representative of actual cultural practice, especially regarding social discorporation, since they make explicitly political claims. Yet they were also less conservative in deploying or contravening those practices as metaphors for their particular claims, and in this sense they amplify, rather than invent wholesale, the concerns of their audiences about the political community and its claims on the body; the non-royal sources thus reveal the anxieties upon which these claims capitalized.

The negative treatment of enemy bodies in royal inscriptions, we may take note, was a subject restricted to certain times and places: in lower Mesopotamia ca. 2500–1700 B.C. (via the theme of burial mounds for enemies) and in Middle and Neo-Assyrian inscriptions from the thirteenth to seventh centuries B.C. (in a variety of forms). These episodes were not, as perhaps superficially appearing, identical rhetorical symbols; the third-millennium references to burial mounds of enemies were markedly conflicted in their symbolism — were they victory markers[18] or proper burials of enemy dead? — in comparison to the lurid Neo-Assyrian accounts of corpse abuse. Further, between these cases lies the vast swath of the second millennium during most of which we find no lack of warfare, but a much more subdued rhetoric about the treatment of the enemy body.

BURIAL MOUNDS

A number of royal inscriptions from around 2500–1700 B.C. mention the construction of heaped-up burial mounds (Sumerian saḫar.du₆.tag₄, ki.gal, and zar; Akkadian *birūtum*,[19] *gurunnu*, and *damtum*) of enemy dead marking the conclusion of successful military campaigns. Ur-Nanše of Lagaš (r. ca. 2475 B.C.) was the earliest to claim the construction of such a mound:

> He (Ur-Nanše) defeated the leader of Umma. He captured Mu[…] the admiral?, captured Amabara(ge)si and Kišibgal the officers, [captured] Papursag, son of U'u, captured […] the officer, and he made a burial mound (for them) (Cooper 1986: 25).

Such brief descriptions have come to seem a very unambiguous hallmark of Mesopotamian triumphal rhetoric; it is therefore remarkable that the practice was restricted to thirteen instances which present no clear typology (see table 10.1). It is tempting to connect the appearance of the practice with a uniform, general rise of mass political violence, but too many important variables appear in their descriptions in the texts, terminology aside. In some cases, mounds were erected for only a few, elite, and specifically identified individual enemy leaders and officers; in others, masses of unnamed enemy dead (civil and/or military) are the recipients of this dubious honor.[20] In some instances, the tone is clearly celebratory, while in the Enmetena inci-

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[18] Van Dijk 1983: 89, line 303, where Ninurta celebrates a victory over the burial mound of the Asag.

[19] CAD Š/1 s.v. *šapāku* v. 1 a–4′; cf. CAD B s.v. *birūtu* s. 1, "(a rare and poetic synonym for destruction) … [e.g.,] 'he (Rimuš) heaped destruction upon them (the defeated Elamites)'…" and CAD D s.v. *damtu* 1, also "destruction," in similar context. Both terms are considered by Westenholz (1970) to mean "burial mound," but it must be pointed out that the meaning of the term is not fully clear. The translation "burial mound" as a unitary and

identifiable cultural phenomenon throughout this essay derives from (a) context, and (b) the depiction on the Stele of the Vultures (where the term appearing is saḫar.du₆.tag₄); see figure 10.3.

[20] Cooper 1986: 34, La 3.1: The promise given by Ningirsu in a dream to Eanatum that "the myriad corpses will reach the base of heaven" matches a new emphasis on a mass enemy, rather than the elite peer competition implied by Ur-Nanše's previous humiliation of specific enemy rulers and officers.

Table 10.1. Early Victory Burial Mounds: A Typology[a]

King	Victory Over	Burial Mound Term / For	Enemy	Site
Ur-Nanše	Ur (La 1.6)	**SAḪAR.DU₆.TAG₄**[b] for named officers	Babylonian[c]	Unclear
Ur-Nanše	Umma (La 1.6)	**SAḪAR.DU₆.TAG₄** for ruler and officers	Babylonian	Unclear
Eanatum[d]	Umma[e] (La 3.1, 3.5, 3.6)	**SAḪAR.DU₆.TAG₄** "for Umma" (not ruler)	Babylonian	Fields(?)[f] (Twenty mounds)
Eanatum	Elam (La 3.5, 3.6)	**SAḪAR.DU₆.TAG₄** "for Elam" (not ruler)	Non-Babylonian	[Not in Elam][g]
Eanatum	Urua (La 3.5, 3.6)	**SAḪAR.DU₆.TAG₄** "for Urua" (incl. ruler)	Non-Babylonian[h]	Unclear
Enmetena[i]	Umma (La 5.1)	**SAḪAR.DU₆.TAG₄** for sixty chariot teams	Babylonian	Battlefield (Five mounds)
Rimuš	Elam (RIME 2 1.2.6–8)	*birūtu* for king and officers	Non-Babylonian	Near City of Paraḫšum
Narām-Sîn	Unclear[j] (RIME 2 1.4.24)	**KI.GAL** for [unclear]	Non-Babylonian	Unclear
Narām-Sîn	Lullubum (RIME 2 1.4.31)	**KI.GAL** for "highlanders" (SA.DÚ-*i*)	Non-Babylonian	Unclear
Šulgi	Kimaš (RIME 3/2 1.2.33)	*birūtu* for [unclear]	Non-Babylonian	At City Moat(?)
Šu-Sîn	Simaški (RIME 3/2 1.4.3)	**ZAR** for "corpses of the people [Zabšali]"[k]	Non-Babylonian	Unclear
Iaḫdun-Līm	Samānum (RIME 4 6.8.2)	*gurunnu* for troops of Samānum coalition	Non-Babylonian	City of Samānum
Samsuiluna	Larsa (RIME 4 3.7.7)	*damtum* for Rim-Sîn (II)[l]	Babylonian	"in the land of Kiš"

[a] Data derive from: Early Dynastic: Steible 1982 and Cooper 1986; Akkadian: RIME 2; Ur III: RIME 3/2; Old Babylonian: RIME 4.

[b] The Early Dynastic instances are remarkable in their consistency: all are SAḪAR.DU₆.TAG₄-bi / mu-dub (Steible 1982), inscriptions Urn. 51 (rev. col. 3:8–9 and col. 5:4–5), Ean. 1 (col. 11:14–15). Ean. 2 (col. 3:15–16, 21–22, 25–26), and Ent. 28 (col. 3:25–27).

[c] "Babylonian" here means "lower Mesopotamian" (i.e., "native" Mesopotamian); "Babylonian" is, per se, a geographic anachronism in cuneiform-writing antiquity.

[d] Eanatum's campaigns against seven other enemies did not result in the construction of burial mounds: Uruaz, Akšak, Ur, Uruk, Kiutu, Mišime, and Arua.

[e] La 3.1 (the "Stele of the Vultures") is the only known depiction of a burial mound (see fig. 10.3, detail): the reverse shows Lagašite soldiers bearing baskets of earth (much as for normal Mesopotamian building work), and enemy bodies heaped in a pile. The image of massed bodies is evocative of the compact phalanx of living bodies advancing above it, suggesting a grim input/output sensibility of mass warfare, which may have been new along with the non-elite burial mounds in this reign.

[f] The text may have meant to indicate a burial mound marking each one of the fields in contention (cols. xii–xiv); see Cooper 1986: 38 n. 18.

[g] Subsequent to the victory claim, La 3.5 records: "He [Eanatum] drove the Elamite back to his own land" (Cooper 1986: 42).

[h] Edzard, Farber, and Sollberger 1977: 180–81: "Der Ort wird immer im Zusammenhang mit elamischen ON genannt."

[i] Enmetena was at that time only the son of the ruler of Lagaš, Enanatum; cf. La. 9.3. The episode is not preserved in Eanatum's account (La 4.2).

[j] The Pir Hüseyn stele records a victory somewhere in the Upper Tigris region (RIME 2 128).

[k] ad₆-nam-lú-ùlu(GIŠGAL)-bi / zar-re-éš mu-du₈-du₈. The verbal clause /zar/ ("stack of sheaves") … /du₈/ ("to heap up") is unique among these allusions to burial mounds. Note in this case the differing treatment of kings, lords, and governors, bound and taken as prisoners.

[l] Compare the same inscription, lines 101–110: twenty-six other "rebel kings" were simply "killed"; Iluni, king of Ešnunna, was "led off in a neck-stock and had his throat cut." Compare RIME 4 3.7.8, lines 42–49, wherein the regular prisoners of war from the Ešnunna campaign were set free.

dent, the mound is erected as much to rectify the enemy leader's dereliction of duty for his own dead:

> Enmetena, beloved son of Enanatum, defeated him (Urluma, ruler of Umma). Urluma escaped, but was killed in Umma itself. He had abandoned sixty teams of asses at the bank of the Lumagirnunta-canal, and left the bones of their personnel strewn over the plain. He (Enmetena) made burial mounds in five places there for them (Cooper 1986: 55).

Within single Early Dynastic inscriptions, some of which summarize multiple victories, it is unclear why some defeated enemy kings were singled out for burial in a mound while others were not (e.g., Cooper 1986, La 3.5, 3.6). Also odd is the choice of Rimuš

Figure 10.3. Detail of the Construction of a Burial Mound after Battle. Verso, Stele of the Vultures. Drawing by Elizabeth Simpson, Courtesy Irene Winter (as appearing in Winter 1985)

to claim the erection of a burial mound only once, where he was not in other inscriptions too shy to have described killing tens of thousands of men in lower Mesopotamia. The location of mounds was also variable: sometimes at the battlefield, sometimes within view of cities, but most of the time unspecified. One possible trend that emerges, however, is that burial mounds were in almost all cases only constructed for non-Babylonian enemies following the Early Dynastic period (Samsuiluna's claim being the anomaly); the practice was perhaps now suitable only for foreign enemies.[21]

At least some of the mounds were piled up in borderlands already peppered with inscribed monuments (if we may trust their descriptions), displays for both gods and humans. Their verticality on the flat plain must have made them stand out sharply, resembling the ruin mounds of abandoned tells (see fig. 10.3[22]). Among the built monuments of the floodplain, these found company among other historical symbols on view to audiences. Yet, with no clear correspondence of whether the occupants of these "anti-burials" were elite peers or mass dead, whether the mounds themselves constituted completed curse formulae, marked property, asserted political claims,[23] and/or conformed to pietistic behaviors, we are presented with a pastiche of messages which probably should only be harmonized insofar as recognizing that they accommodated multiple political needs. Burial mounds stigmatized the enemy as the "Other," but simultaneously permitted victors to assert claims about legitimate ownership and civilized practice by speaking through a medium of normative burial.[24]

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[21] Conversely, "piled-up corpses" then became a signature of barbarisms perpetrated by Gutians on Mesopotamians: "The Lament for Ur," lines 212ff. (Jacobsen 1987: 460) and "The Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur," lines 93–94 (Michalowski 1989, with corpses "[floating] in the Euphrates").

[22] The basket carriers here are figures evoking, in inverted or parodic context, the construction of cities. Figure 10.3 is reproduced from E. Simpson's line-drawing as it appears in Winter 1985: 16, fig. 8.

[23] See, for example, the Laws of Hammurabi, lines l 92– li 23 (Roth 1995: 139) and discussion by Westenholz 1970: 30.

[24] Compare RIME 1 9.3.1 xi 12–15, where the translator interpolates "…and made twenty burial tumuli (honouring his dead) for it." Compare with the clear indication from a Mari letter that the burial *damtum* could be considered an honored place by local nomadic tribes, marking their ancestral territory (Westenholz 1970: 28).

Though dead enemy bodies were subject to abuses other than burial mounds, much more emphasis in text and image remained on the body of the still-living enemy. Even in Akkadian monuments, the most explicit in terms of early depictions of graphic violence, when the execution of depicted captives was virtually certain, the preferred depiction was of bound and captive bodies. Battlefield scenes in Akkadian monuments display almost ritualistic executions of enemy soldiers, but few actual dead bodies. Telling is Rimuš's metaphorical use of the term "annihilation" in describing enemies expelled from rebel cities: he gave body counts of the killed and the captured, but those whom he "expelled" (*ušuṣiamma*) were also said to be those whom he "annihilated" (*ana karašîm iškūn*) since they were no longer part of the city-state's body politic. In this sense, it mattered less whether enemies were rendered (and displayed as) physically dead, and more whether or not they were resident in the urban commune.[25] The later royal rhetoric of the Old Babylonian period then showed virtually no interest in chest-beating about the disposal of big piles of enemy bodies, an unsurprising absence of claims on the body given that political rhetoric at this time was more geared toward persuasion. In sum, the conspicuous display of dead bodies in this era was both atypical and restricted to a few heterogeneous situations. It was, altogether, a lesser symbol in a political vocabulary which ultimately preferred other symbols of domination than control of the body.

ASSYRIAN CORPSE ABUSE

Not until the rise of Middle and Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions do we again find a literature employing corpse abuse as a statement of power. Historians of the ancient Near East hardly need to be introduced to the parade of ghastliness here: enemy bodies displayed as stacks of severed heads, skulls, or heaped-up piles of unburied bodies; impaled on poles; as flayed skins hanged over city walls; corpses burned to deny burial; severed heads hung on trees surrounding defeated cities.[26] Here, enemies degrade their own bodies by inviting mercy killings;[27] ritualized executions fulfill curse formulae; the dead are trampled by their fleeing comrades; corpses of deposed rulers are cast into the streets and dragged around the city.[28] The methodical ritualism in these displays is evident in their most baroque variations-on-theme, as with Aššurnaṣirpal II's treatment of rebels from the city Sūru, a veritable confection of gore: "I erected a pile [of corpses] in front of his gate, I flayed as many nobles as had rebelled against me (and) draped their skins over the pile; some I spread out within the pile, some I erected on stakes upon the pile, (and) some I placed on stakes around the pile."[29] In the course of this inscription (one of the lengthiest), Aššurnaṣirpal II records six instances in which enemy dead were decapitated (the heads then arrayed in piles, hanged from trees, or decorating a palace

[25] For example, RIME 2 1.2.2 and passim in Rimuš inscriptions. Similarly, see the transferred meanings of *mītu* "dead," CAD M/2 143 usage e, as metaphors for political powerlessness of individuals and political units. Compare Gelb 1973: 73–74, who understood the event described as "gathering enemy males … and putting them to the sword at some place within the territory of the conquered cities," with reference to burial mounds.

[26] The violation of burial norms is best compared against the honorific state burials for (representative) Assyrian soldiers described, e.g., in the "Letter to Aššur" inscriptions of Šalmaneser IV (RIMA 3 105.3), Sargon II, and Esarhaddon (Borger 1956: §68 "Der 'Gottesbrief,'"

102–07). These ritual burials seem to have served a similar cultural position as the American Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the paradigmatic "Honored Dead."

[27] Borger 1996: 59, Prism A VII 28–37, the suicide pact of Nabû-bēl-šumāti; Curtis and Reade 1995: 77 and pictured detail, "a wounded Elamite calls to an Assyrian to cut off his head"; cf. Bahrani 2004: 116 on epigraphs 1 and 3.

[28] Borger 1996: 35, Prism A III 6–9ff.

[29] RIMA 2 101.1 i.89–90; compare the very specific schedule of five separate "treatments" for 174 men captured alive in RIMA 2 101.21 13′–15′.

courtyard),[30] four episodes of impaling,[31] and one each of burning alive and flaying a city-ruler.[32] In these messages, there can be no doubt that the royal punishments went beyond the threat of what merely could be visited on the living body, but also on the dead one.

Reprisals against the dead first became a feature of Assyrian royal inscriptions in the reign of Tukultī-Ninurta I (r. 1243–1207 B.C.), including piles of corpses[33] and enemies burned by fire;[34] piles of severed heads beginning with Tiglath-pileser I (r. 1114–1076 B.C.);[35] flayings and impalings beginning with Aššur-bēl-kala (r. 1073–1056 B.C.).[36] These motifs remained, with minor variation, the full repertoire of Assyrian violence against the dead until Sennacherib's description of the battle of Ḫalulê (691 B.C.) ushered in a new growth of literary creativity: the severing of penises, hands, and testicles ("like the seeds of cucumbers") from dead enemies, the trampling of corpses by fleeing leaders.[37] Esarhaddon after him not only beheaded the kings of Kundi and Sidon, but hung "the heads of Sanduarri and of Abdi-Milkutti … around the necks of their nobles and I marched (them) through the public square of Nineveh with singers and harps."[38]

Yet it is really in the inscriptions of Aššurbanipal that this assemblage of motifs widens most dramatically. His inscriptions dispense with metaphors of animal butchery and take up literalism: enemies were executed not only "like pigs," but upon actual slaughtering tables (giš.*makāṣu*).[39] The Assyrian war machine produces the consumption of bodies in perverse ways: two episodes relate the starvation of enemies to the point of devouring the bodies of their children or each other;[40] the dismembered bodies of Šamaš-šūm-ukīn's palace household are "fed to the dogs, swine, wolves, and eagles, to the birds of heaven, and the fish of the deep."[41] Aššurbanipal's wars are pursued to the brink of the Netherworld: enemy bones are spread to encircle Babylon, surrounding the city's outskirts (*kamâtu*); the sepulchres of the

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[30] RIMA 2 101.1 i.64, i.118, ii.18–19, ii.71–72 (in this instance, twenty more bodies were "spread out" to decorate the palace walls, *ina* ŠU DIB-*ta ina* BÀD É.GAL-*šú ú-ma-gi-gi*; see CAD Ṣ s.v. *ṣabātu* v. 8 sub. *qātu* e), ii.107–09 (where the bodies of the decapitated are burned), iii.106.

[31] All restricted to column iii: RIMA 2 101.1 iii.33, .84, .106, .111–12; the intent of impaling is made clear by Tiglath-pileser III: "I impaled him … and exposed him before his countrymen" (Tadmor 1994: 160–61).

[32] RIMA 2 101.1 i.111 and i.67–68, respectively.

[33] RIMA 1 78.1 ii.16; Šalmaneser I's slightly earlier (77.1 line 103) reference to strewn enemy corpses not only serves a different rhetorical function, but also does not show the concerted action of heaped-up corpses.

[34] RIMA 1 78.1 iii.44: burning by fire secured not only the physical death of enemies, but also pursued their destruction into the afterlife by making burial impossible (CAD Q s.v. *qalû* v., passim, noting the variety of ritual uses, but especially TuL 145:27 sub. 2c): "be it the ghost of someone who was burned to death"); compare Leahy 1984.

[35] RIMA 2 87.1 line 81, "[I] stacked them (i.e., heads) like grain piles (*kima karē*)." The observation by Dolce (2004: 121) that Aššunaṣirpal II was "the first Neo-Assyrian sovereign to introduce themes of defeated enemies as beheaded corpses ignores the earlier Middle Assyrian pedigree of this practice.

[36] RIMA 2 89.1 line 7´; 89.2 iii.12´ and 89.5 16´. One might, however, usefully distinguish between this earlier practice of flaying enemy rulers and the later Sargonid flaying (and impaling) of entire enemy populations (e.g., Borger 1996: 23, Prism B II 1–2).

[37] OIP 2 46 vi:11–12; in his Nebi Yunus inscription, Sennacherib also claimed to have forced Merodach-baladan to flee with the bones of his fathers across the "Bitter Sea," where he died (OIP 2 85 b, lines 7–11).

[38] Borger 1956: 50 A iii 32, 37 (cf. CAD R s.v. *ribītu* A s. d); note also 57–58 A iv 6, that Esarhaddon in some cases expressly neglected the burial of enemy warriors: this pointed gesture suggests that burial of enemy dead was in other cases considered normal practice (see also RIMA 2 102.2 ii.100f.) and abuses thus were exceptional, purposive messages.

[39] Borger 1996: 108, Prism B VI 87–89, on Dunanu, the Gambulu prince. Animal similes otherwise pervade Sargonid punishments: the Arab king Uaite' has his jaw pierced so that he can be chained and kept in a kennel at Nineveh like a dog (Borger 1996: 68–69, Prism A IX 106–11; see also CAD Š/1 s.v. *šaḫû* s. 1 b, kings captured by Esarhaddon and tied up "with a bear, a dog, and a pig" (literal) and "like a pig" (metaphoric).

[40] Borger 1996, all Prism A: in Babylon: 43, IV 44–45, and 63, VIII 35–37; in Arabia: 67, IX 57–59.

[41] Borger 1996: 44–45, Prism A IV 73–76; to vultures/jackals see CAD Z s.v. *zību* s. a.

Elamite kings are exposed, their bones seized as prizes of war, and eternal restlessness laid on their ghosts.[42] The bones of Nabû-šūm-erēš, the governor of Nippur, were brought from Gambulu territory to be ground into powder inside the gate of Nineveh.[43] The corpse of Nabû-bēl-šumāti was originally packed in salt for transport to Nineveh,[44] and the head of Teumman, most famously depicted hanging in Aššurbanipal's garden, did not arrive there until it had first been paraded through all the Assyrian cities.[45] In forcing the brother of Nabû-bēl-šumāti to wear the dead king's head around his neck for display, he said of that corpse: "I made him more dead than he was before."[46]

While attention to these features suggests a tinge of credulity for propagandistic claims, by far the most typical question asked is nevertheless (simply and simplistically) whether or not they were actually carried out, namely, the historicity of these claims. Several features of Assyrian royal inscriptions could indeed be marshalled to argue that these abuses were very real: the restriction of the claims to specific instances within the context of longer narratives otherwise devoid of atrocities; their application to specific persons or small groups (marking them as exemplary, but real); the variations in staging for display (gates, interiors, different cities, on parade), suggesting response to specific audiences; to say nothing of more believable reportage in Neo-Assyrian letters.[47] There is also the possible example of the jumbled mass (re-)burials of 1,500+ bodies from Lachish, which some have argued to be the result of Sennacherib's siege and subsequent punishments in 701 B.C.[48] One is left, however, with the possibility that these specifications and variances were marked merely on the rhetorical level, a grammar of violence meant principally to persuade and assure Assyrian (rather than terrorize subject) audiences, not to document practice. These persuasions were not merely normalizing, but eroticized and titillating, inviting participation through a "pornography of violence." Lincoln (2007) has recently described a similar aestheticization of violence in the Achaemenid (as well as modern American) empire:[49]

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[42] CAD E s.v. *eṣemtu* s. usage b; Borger 1996: 55, Prism A VI 70–76.

[43] Borger 1996: 108, Prism B VI 97–VII 2.

[44] Borger 1996: 59–60, Prism A VII 39–45.

[45] Borger 1996: 106, Prism B VI 52–55ff., entering Nineveh; CT XXXV 31, 36, Teumman's head on the road to, and entering, Arbela; for other "parades," see also Borger 1996: 108, Prism B VI 90–92, the butchered "flesh" (UZU) of the Gambulu princes paraded throughout Assyria *ana tāmarti mātitan*, "for viewing in all lands"; cf. 37 Prism B IV 16–17, submission of an enemy head to Aššurbanipal by vassals.

[46] Borger 1996: 60, Prism A VII 46–50.

[47] Reynolds 2003: nos. 148 and 170 both report impalings of criminals in quite matter-of-fact tones; it must be admitted, however, that such references seem few and far between. Albenda (1970) previously argued that the technical and compositional developments in the depictions of nude captives being flayed demonstrated firsthand familiarity with the procedure. Yet indeed, with the amount of scholarship committed to re-imagining the brutal, coercive power of early (non-literate) pristine states, it sometimes seems remarkable that the textual evidence for mass political violence of first-millennium empires is so interrogated for veracity!

[48] Tufnell 1953: Tombs 107–08, 116, and 120: 187–08, 190, 193–04 and pl. 4. Most of the remains in these tombs were secondary reburials; Tomb 107 and 120 in particular revealed a top layer of animal (mostly pig) bones over the human ones; the visible violence to the bones included only burning, though purposeful decapitation may remain a possible construal of the many disassociated skulls. It is not a necessary deduction that the bones were the direct result of Assyrian violence; both the original and later excavators (Ussishkin 2004: 92–95) seem to incline to the idea that the reburials were a reconsequence of the rebuilding phase that followed, which entailed the clearing out of older cemeteries. Punishments depicted in Sennacherib's palatial reliefs included impalings, flayings, and only possibly beheadings (Russell 1991: 204–06, Slabs 7 and 9–10).

[49] Assyriological attention to the question of audience for palatial reliefs has generally been directed toward the subjects, at the expense of Assyrian audiences. Bersani and Dutoit already twenty years ago (1985: esp. 52–56) argued for a primary function of violence in the reliefs as normalizing and propagandizing the Assyrian elites through its eroticism. These elites, after all, were the ones who were expected to participate in and reproduce violent control from the center on a regular basis. An-

> What we see here is the way moral depravity and moral confidence (or the simulacrum thereof) are dialectically related: how they produce and reproduce each other through a variety of discourses …, all of which help relieve the leaders and foot soldiers of empire from those inconvenient reservations and qualms that might otherwise inhibit their effective, relatively guilt-free exercise of the brutish and brutalizing power necessary for the conquest and maintenance of empire.

What is further remarkable then, is that, as a grammar, the symbols (severed heads, flayed skins, impaled figures) do not display a coherent relationship to other Assyrian ritual systems. Insofar as they bespeak ritual action, they seem neither to be the performance of curse formulae (which in general prescribe fates on living kings and lands that require them to be alive to suffer them[50]), nor magical rituals of execration.[51] Only among Sargonid documents does one begin to find florid corpse abuses encoded among curse formulae, in Esarhaddon's succession treaty[52] and among some land grants.[53] By this late date, these acts seem either a reflection and amplification of a pre-existing political rhetoric, or the creation of an altogether different level of mantic communication. Otherwise, one thinks of a purely political communicative system, of analogies about control and ownership — flaying "like sheep," slaughtering "like lambs" — under which the bodies of docile vassals were reduced to objects for use, decoration, even amusement. This language of control was meant to indoctrinate Assyrian elites through a normalization of violence. From this point of view, the earlier burial mounds and Neo-Assyrian reliefs could not be more different, in that they are pointed toward entirely different audiences: in the first place, the conquered; in the second, the conquerors.

A. Westenholz (1970) long ago struggled to explain the change in mistreatment of corpses between third- and first-millennium contexts. His partial explanation was that fear of the dead motivated victorious kings; the proximity of warring states in city-state times meant that roving ghosts would remain physically proximate and thus needed to be buried for the protection of the victors (though this seems unlikely for the long-distance campaigns of Rimuš, Narām-Sîn, Šulgi, and Samsuiluna). Westenholz's idea for the first millennium was that corpses could be abandoned because the dead were left so far away from Assyria and Assyrians. A friendly amendment to this idea: not only corpse distance but corpse *dispersal* reveals the political sym-

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other point of view is offered by Bahrani's (2004) work on images of the head of Teumman; she sees depictions of violence as performative rather than mimetic; the realism of the images was primarily meant to evoke "the effect of the real," rather than create an accurate historical record as such.

[50] Such curses in royal inscriptions, however, are normally directed at desecrators of the relevant monument, inscription, or building — not at enemies (my thanks to Anna Steinhelper for this observation). The few allusions to enemies turned into ghosts are found in royal epithets, e.g., Erība-Adad II's epithet (RIMA 2 90.1 lines 9–10), "[who] has turned his dangerous enemies into ghosts like reeds in a tempest"; similarly, Tiglath-pileser III Summary Inscription 1 line 2 (Tadmor 1994: 122–23). Compare Cogan (1983: 756 and n. 14). Curse formulae anticipating violations of the corpse were in general of Babylonian origin.

[51] Bahrani (2004) has argued that the episode of Teumman's head (in both text and image) functions as an ani-

mistic and mantic, rather than mimetic, representation, as the fulfillment of an oracle. The episode, however, is rather different from the more general practice of severing heads (or depiction thereof). Reade 2005: 19–22 has offered that a mocking, parodic element may also reside in certain corpse-abuse images (e.g., a game of catch played with enemy heads in an Aššurnaṣirpal II relief), but it is difficult to see these "jokes" as ritualistic, per se.

[52] Parpola and Watanabe 1988: no. 6, line 440: "… instead of grain, may your sons and your daughters grind your bones"; line 481: "that dogs and swine will drag penises and teats through the streets, the dead finding their burial in those animals' bellies"; line 637: "may your bones never come together."

[53] Kataja and Whiting 1995: nos. 25–26, 31, 33–34: "may the dogs tear apart his corpse as it lies unburied." Some of these clauses were almost certainly the basis for later enactments by Aššurbanipal.

bolism at work. In Neo-Assyrian representation, the physical dispersement of corpses across the pictorial space was prefigured in texts as early as Šalmaneser I,[54] describing enemy corpses covering wide plains, ravines, wadis, ditches, city streets and squares, filling entire valleys[55] — like *ašagu*-shrub in the desert, like herds of cattle after a plague. Corpses are carried away by rivers (as early as Tiglath-pileser I[56]), they "cover the surface of the sea" (Šalmaneser III[57]), are even piled up to the edge of the sea (Sargon II[58]). In two cases (Šalmaneser III, Aššurbanipal), the king claims to have dammed major rivers (the Orontes, the Ulai) with corpses.[59] Human blood dyes rivers, fields, mountains, the sea, and even flows through mountain creek beds and city-streets "like a river." In several cases, the land itself — the mountains, deserts, and rivers — is said to have "consumed" (>*akālu* "to eat") the enemy dead. The corpses are strewn about by a "high wind," a "deluge," a "circle of sandstorms" — all similes naturalizing Assyrian dominion by inscribing it in the terrain.

By these means — and in contrast to the verticality of the third-millennium burial mound, which mimicked the city as the emblem of the fortified city-state (see again fig. 10.3, noting the obvious parody of city-building via the presence of basket carriers) — the horizontal dispersement of enemy corpses across Neo-Assyrian battlefields was a rhetorical means of naturalizing dead enemies as the emblem of an extensive imperial landscape. These vertical versus horizontal displays of "anti-burial" were metonymic for conquered states: mounds for city-states, fields of dead for empires, representing the social discorporation of political communities as a whole. Naturalizing both enemy and imperium in this way removed both from the scope of mere human politics and history and re-inscribed them as eternal verities, re-enactments of an unquestionable Assyrian order.

CORPSE ABUSE IN OTHER LITERATURES

Violation of normative Mesopotamian funerary practice in political literature was just one among a repertoire of rhetorical instruments, with little to suggest that actual violations were at all common. That is, despite the number and variety of violations, many more victories were documented without claims of abuse. Yet if actual and practiced "anti-burials" are not reflected in abundance outside of royal inscriptions, a plentitude of sources — of many types, from all periods — show that those rhetorical statements about corpse abuse would have activated deep, widespread anxieties about abuse of the dead body. Fear of non-burial was a pre-eminent concern for Mesopotamians, and the incidence of statements expressing such fears (i.e., the inversion of normative depositional practice for corpses) in fact far outstrips those promoting or documenting normative behavior.[60]

For one thing, corpse abuse and display were among the sanctions of the legal apparatus, although specific prohibitions against burial per se are extremely rare (indeed, as rare as prescribed methods and agents of execution of a living person).[61] One of the most explicit attach-

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[54] RIMA 1 77.1 103–04, "I filled the extensive countryside with the corpses of their warriors"; examples of this motif are too numerous throughout Assyrian royal inscriptions to warrant citation.

[55] RIMA 2 101.1 ii.83–84, in Zamua: bodies were piled up "between Mount Aziru and the River Turnat."

[56] RIMA 1 87.1 ii.23–24.

[57] RIMA 3 102.28 44.

[58] Fuchs 1994: 65, 304, lines 33–34, a campaign against Dūr-Yakin: "der die Leichen seiner Kämpfer im flachen

Land (am Ufer) des meeres zu Haufen schichtete."

[59] RIMA 3 102.2 ii.100f.; Borger 1996: 104, Prism B V 97–99.

[60] Note generally the high incidence of attestations for the verb "to bury the dead" (CAD Q s.v. *qebēru* v. 1 b) which refer to non-performance.

[61] Whitman (1995: 46–49, 82–84) took up the difficult question of the relationship between legal protections against mutilation, death penalties, and posthumous mutilation. In the present context, it seems relevant to observe

es to the dead and impaled female body, prescribed once in the Laws of Hammurabi (LH ¶153, for the killing of a husband in favor of a lover), and once in the Middle Assyrian Laws (MAL A ¶53, for [self-]performance of abortion). In both cases, the body is impaled and displayed, but only in the latter case is an actual burial prohibition spelled out.[62] Two other Old Babylonian laws identify the open hanging or impaled body of a criminal as punishment: breaking and entering a house (LH ¶21), or aiding and abetting the theft of a slave by knowingly shaving off a hairlock (LH ¶227), would result in the thief or barber, respectively, being killed and then hanged in the breached wall or household doorway. Other displays were probably occasionally effected as well — a Mari letter calls for the execution of a criminal and the display of his head "from city to city" on parade[63] — but in virtually every law which carries the penalty of death, the ultimate fate of the body is unspecified, along with much of the rest of the procedural information. One assumes that the almost complete legal indifference of the judicial authority to the body meant that its disposal was a matter normally left to the family or household.[64]

Where fear of non-burial shows up, rather, is across a wide spectrum of literary and epistolary material. These arrive as early as the third-millennium proverb collections:

> SP 18 13: "A slave entrusted with a burial will be negligent."[65]
> UET 6/2 299: "A man who does not worship his god is thrown into the desert; his body is not buried, his son does not provide his ghost with drinking water through his libation pipe."[66]

Omen literature similarly reflects the concern: a dream omen indicates sex with a corpse as a violation of taboo,[67] and the ominous appearance of a corpse at the door or gate, deposited by an enemy or a lion, perhaps echoes the Old Babylonian law establishing doorways as places for corpse display.[68] More common were worries and fears expressed about corpse abandonment and exposure resulting in the devouring of the dead body by dogs, lions, pigs, jackals, or other animals. In some instances, these motifs appear as epithets expressing the fearsome power of gods, monsters, and heroes,[69] in others they are punishments (e.g., in curse formulae of oaths

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that Whitman's doubts about the state's putative origins as the regulator of "primitive vengeance orders" via monopoly are echoed in some historic states' perpetuation of mutilation against the dead as a proprietary right.

[62] Abbreviations here follow Roth 1995 unless otherwise stated; note also the Old Babylonian letter which parodies corpse display, in which a man complains: "Hang me on a peg, dismember me, but I will not stay married to that woman!" (CAD P s.v. *pagrum* s.). Compare LH Epilogue lines l 92–li 23: "… May the goddess Ištar … make a heap of the corpses of his soldiers upon the plain, and may she show his soldiers no mercy" (not, as Westenholz [1970: 30] gives: "his troops should not be granted any burial"). See also the Neo-Babylonian burial prohibitions in curse formulae, in CAD Š/1 s.v. *šalamtum* s. usage c.

[63] CAD D s.v. *dâku* v. 2 b-2´; note also AbB 13 60, an Old Babylonian letter describing a plot of rebels who had sworn to "fill the bank of the Euphrates with skulls …." Severed heads/skulls throughout the history of Mesopotamian literature are most typical of all body parts to act as an index for the (unburied) body.

[64] *Pace* Westenholz (1970), who operates under the assumption that burial prohibitions like MAL A ¶ 53 were

the norm rather than the exception.

[65] Translation ETCSL, t.6.1.18; Alster (1997: 242) is less certain of the meaning: [s]ag ki tùm á-ág-gá še ba-e-da-e-⌈še?⌉ "He who is entrusted with a burial, will … barley …."

[66] Alster 1997: 316.

[67] Geller 1997: 2, citing Oppenheim 1956: 290–91, who was not yet clear on the ideographic value of UM as "to have sex": "the indications concerning the usage of UM in these omina are … insufficient to determine to what aspect of behavior this verb belongs."

[68] Jeyes 1989: 128, no. 7 13´ (*pagrum*). To be clear, however, though there are many apodoses predicting death, mention of the corpse, burial, funeral, etc. are generally absent from at least Jeyes' corpus; see, however, no. 19 lines 8–10 and note p. 186.

[69] For example, Gilgameš and Huwawa A 98–106 (ETCSL 1.1.1.5): Huwawa is like "a lion eating a corpse, he never wipes away the blood"; in "Lugalbanda in the Mountain Cave" (Black 1998: 177), Enmerkar's warlike demeanor earns him the simile that he is "like a dog eating a corpse" (line 58); of Inanna: "That you devour cadavers like a dog — be it known!" ("The Exaltation of Inanna," line 128; translation W. W. Hallo [COS I.160]).

and treaties, "your burial place [*naqbaru*] shall be in the bellies of dogs and pigs," etc.[70]). Few sources suggest that these were normal occurrences, but the fear was real and ambient: one letter of an indebted man from sixth-century Ur prays, *in extremis*, "let the dogs not eat what is left of my body and the bodies of my family,"[71] and a variety of similar general statements and personal names (e.g., *Ša-pī-kalbi*) reflect a fear of street animals as not only killers but corpse devourers. These expressions all reflect what would have been unusual circumstances, but the diffusion of the motif throughout many genres and periods reflects a very real social anxiety rooted not so much in afterlife punishments or fate as a roving ghost, but in the neglect or absence of a family to carry on a living household.[72] As with the many expressions of concern about unburied persons who produce harmful ghosts, these fears are centered on the poverty or dissolution of the living family.[73]

Disposal of the corpse in the river is another common fear motif; again the indications are found first in early proverb collections (e.g., "a huge river is a grave"[74]), court literary letters in Sumerian ("Let my bones not be carried off by water to a foreign city"[75]), and a variety of literary historical works. "The Lament for Sumer and Ur" lists "corpses floating in the Euphrates" among the signs of Nanna's abandonment of Ur; one Babylonian chronicle tells of Marduk consigning Utuḫegal's corpse to the Euphrates as punishment for his "criminal designs" (*lemuttu*) on Babylon; another juxtaposes swamp burial for usurper kings with (proper) burial in a palace.[76]

Some ambivalence about this method of disposal, however, must also be noted; a Mari letter describes an episode within which the body is, with little remark, buried in the Ḫabur River (with a wide range of options for burial of the head from which to choose):

> … and they searched, but they did not see his body. And I heard the following: 'They buried his body in clothes and left it for the Habur [River].' Now, I did not find his body. And his head is in Qaṭṭunān. Is his head to be buried? And in which city is it to be buried? And where is it to be buried: is it to be buried outside or inside the city? And when we bury it, are we to bury it in outstretched position? (ARM 6 37 r. 2′–14′).[77]

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[70] See footnote 52 above; CAD N/1 s.v. *naqbaru* s.; Grayson 1975: Chron. 20 A 30 (Marduk's vengeance on Šulgi [for "criminal tendencies," *lemuttu*] enacted by *something* consuming his body); and Lambert 1960: 197 14, on the boast of the Dog (in a fable) describing his corpse-devouring prowess (but compare against, ibid., p. 149 in "The Dialogue of Pessimism," line 77, wherein the motif of exposed skulls on ruined mounds serves as a *memento mori*).

[71] UET 4 190:14 (NB); a similar, but earlier, Old Babylonian letter (AbB 14 135) seems to express the fear that creditors will actually repossess any unburied family dead! See also CAD K s.v. *kalbu* s. 1a.

[72] It is unclear whether or how any ancient Mesopotamian municipality would have dealt with the problem of unclaimed dead or abandoned corpses in the event of a household's failure to perform its duty (beyond permitting animal devourment or riverine deposition). At least one astronomical omen predicts that an epidemic will result in the dead going unburied (among other literary tableaux depicting mass unburied dead, e.g., YOS 10 24:34), and most medical texts reflect no provisions for corpse disposal as an anti-epidemiological measure (Scurlock and Andersen 2005); for some evidence in favor of sanitary measures against contagion from dead bodies, see Farber 2004.

[73] Note the juxtaposition of honored versus abandoned dead in Gilgameš' inquiries of Enkidu about whom he saw in the Netherworld (Foster 2001: 138–42); see, for instance, Jeyes 1989: 135 No. 91.13′, the liver omen "[If …] they will carry the head of the leader (as a trophy)."

[74] Alster 1997, SP F 2: íd-maḫ ki-maḫ-àm.

[75] Letter from Inim-Enlil (ETCSL 3.3.27).

[76] Michalowski 1989: 42–43, line 94 ("There were corpses floating in the Euphrates …"); Grayson 1975, Chron. 19 l. 62 and Chron. 18 v 5–6; see also Šulgi E 220–39 (ETCSL 2.4.2.05), referring to corpses filling the reedbeds and "crannies" of rebel lands.

[77] Translation after Heimpel 2003: 487; cf. CAD Q s.v. *qebēru* v. 1b (negated use — note also other references there); his assumption was that riverine burial was an "unceremonious dumping." Heimpel had earlier argued (1996) that CAD's translation of *ina terṣim* "in the regular way" (after Kupper 1954, "dans la règle"), and Durand's later (1997: 326–37) "de façon détournée" mistook the distinction being made of a "round hole" for the head versus a hole for the full shape of the body (i.e., "outstretched position").

Clearly the burial options were far from perfect at this point — and some scholarly disagreement has obtained as to the precise meaning of the practices in question — but the fact that four questions of procedure were worth discussing by letter, while the head waited by patiently, indicates that each choice meant something, marked some particular social signal. These signals were not "natural" and known to all, but had in extreme cases to be negotiated and coordinated; simply because the situation was not perfect does not mean that some attempt was not being made to mitigate the imperfections.[78]

Another case: Gilgameš, describing to Utu the distress of his city, says resignedly:

> I raised my head on the rampart, my gaze fell on a corpse drifting down the river,
> afloat on the water: I too shall become like that, just so shall I be!

Gilgameš' complaint here is about mortality in general, not proper funerary procedure: in no way does the narrative indicate that the presence of bodies in the river is unusual.[79] Riverine burial was perhaps less prestigious, but withal an acceptable and practiced method of burial. We might think not only about variability of practice on the level of social class, but also about individual choice making about burial, for which Mesopotamian letters are a further, rich source: an Assyrian letter directs a man to indicate his preference for a burial spot; in a Neo-Babylonian letter, a man wonders, resignedly and rhetorically, where his grave would eventually be; a Middle Babylonian letter glumly notes that the burial of a man in another city was purely circumstantial, he having died there.[80]

What is little anticipated in models of optimal burial — and in the variety of anti-burial — is the degree of (socially normative) variation and (individual and agentive) choice in method of burial. Clearly there were ideas about what forms of burial were insufficient, hostile, punitive — if also infrequent, exceptional, and notional. None of these concatenations requires us to conclude that sufficient and honorific burial was exercised as a unitary, ideal type. Between ideational extremes, there was both variety of practice — household, cemetery, tomb burials (even contemporaneously) — and also social choice making, elements of variability that have already been identified for the Ur cemetery by Pollock (1991). Any argument reifying an ideal type of burial from either literary or archaeological sources will be perpetually stymied by this aspect of variability, further aggravated by Robb's (this volume) observation that "abbreviated" burials (e.g., riverine burial) were likely the most common, and yet the most invisible in the archaeological record.

This brief survey suggests that the original conundrum — burial's secondary importance, and the sustained but low-level evidence for failure to bury, or for outright corpse abuse or display — implies that the body and its sanctity in death could be violated, but the intersect of concern for proper burial and fear of improper burial was secondary in the system of Mesopotamian of sociocultural concerns. Mesopotamians were most critically concerned not with the dead themselves, but with the ambivalent complex of problems and opportunities they presented for the living: for the economic well-being of the estate, the ritual protection of the household by the honored dead, and the claim of social identity in the perpetuation of the name of the dead.

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[78] It is worth remembering that the head belonged to Qarni-Lim who was, after all, for the most part an ally of Zimri-Lim, whose agent Baḫdi-Lim now writes with these questions. Literary references to corpse disposal in rivers are otherwise widely attested; see also Piotr Steinkeller's response to Pollock (1991: 187). It is my assumption that the function of the rolled reed mat in the case of ARM 6 37 was to help prevent a corpse in a river from bloating and rising to the surface.

[79] George 1999: 151, Bilgames and Huwawa, Version A, lines 25–27.

[80] References in CAD Q s.v. *qebēru* v. 1: ADD 647 r. 22; BE 14 8:15; CT 54 1 r. 10.

ABBREVIATIONS

AbB	Altbabylonische Briefe in Umschrift und Übersetzung
ADD	C. H. W. Johns, *Assyrian Deeds and Documents* (ADD 1182–1281 pub. in AJSL 42 170ff. and 228ff.)
ARM	Archives Royales de Mari (1–10 = TCL 22–31; 14, 18, 19, 21 = Textes cunéiformes de Mari 1–3, 5)
BE	Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania, Series A: Cuneiform Texts
CAD	*The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*. A. Leo Oppenheim et al., eds. Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 1956–
COS	Hallo and Younger 2003
CT	Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets
Ean.	Eanatum
ETCSL	Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature: http://www-etcsl.orient.ox.ac.uk
LH	Laws of Hammurabi
MAL	Middle Assyrian Laws
NB	Neo-Babylonian
OB	Old Babylonian
OIP 2	Luckenbill 1924
r.	reign
RIMA 1	Grayson 1987
RIMA 2	Grayson 1991
RIMA 3	Grayson 1996
RIME 1	Frayne 2008
RIME 2	Frayne 1993
RIME 3/2	Frayne 1997
RIME 4	Frayne 1990
SP	Sumerian Proverbs
TuL	E. Ebeling, *Tod und Leben nach den Vorstellungen der Babylonier*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1931
UET	Ur Excavations, Texts
YOS	Yale Oriental Series, Researches

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11

DEATH OF A HOUSEHOLD

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Since they were excavated in the 1920s, the so-called royal tombs of Ur have fascinated archaeologists and non-archaeologists alike, thanks to the vivid picture painted by the excavator, C. Leonard Woolley, of the funeral rituals that produced them (Woolley 1934). The Royal Cemetery burials are distinct from any others known from southern Mesopotamia in the mid-third millennium B.C., principally because of the occasional practice of sending people to their death to accompany the primary deceased person in a tomb. As the name suggests, Woolley was convinced that the people buried with such pomp and ceremony in the royal tombs were kings and queens, accompanied to their graves by members of their courts. He also argued, on the basis of the orderly arrangement of skeletons in some of the better preserved tombs and the absence of any indication of struggle, that the accompanying people — human sacrifices, in his terms — went willingly to their deaths (Woolley 1934).

Since Woolley's monumental publication of the cemetery, numerous scholars have sought to make sense of the Ur burial practices. For many researchers, the principal question has been the identity of the people buried in the tombs: were they kings and queens, priests and priestesses, or unspecified high officials (e.g., Woolley 1934; Moorey 1977; Pollock 1991a; Reade 2001; Marchesi 2004)? What did their genders or social rank suggest about Early Dynastic society more generally (e.g., Rathje 1977; Redman 1978; Pollock 1991b)? Others have asked how archaeological and textual evidence of mortuary practices can be understood in terms of religious beliefs, ritual practices, memory, and notions of death and the netherworld (Jonker 1995; Katz 2003; Selz 2004b). In several recent examinations, Royal Cemetery death practices have been considered part of ideological and political struggles (Pollock 1999; Cohen 2005), spectacular public performances (Selz 2004a; Cohen 2005), state funerals that helped to stabilize or establish state institutions (Selz 2004a; Pollock 2007), and examples of state terror perpetrated against the subjects of the state (Dickson 2006).

Underlying many of these interpretations are notions — sometimes explicit, but often implicit — about how it was possible to convince so many people to go to their deaths on the occasion of the decease and burial of another person. For the most part, Woolley's contention that accompanying persons went peacefully and willingly to their deaths — as part of the prerogatives of royal power or the result of religious beliefs — has been accepted with little question. Recently, a few scholars have addressed this issue more directly, drawing on notions of state cult, ideology, state violence, and the constitution of subjects to make sense of the cemetery's unusual and — to us — macabre burial ritual (Selz 2004a; Cohen 2005; Dickson 2006; Pollock 2007).

My goal in this paper is to contribute to the recent discussions about how and why some people at Ur acquiesced in their own premature deaths. Elsewhere I have considered how practices related to feasting contributed to the production of subjects who were prepared to go — apparently without protest — to their deaths in the tombs. Here I would like to extend this argument by incorporating the notion of loyalty. I draw on the arguments made by Alain Testart (2004) in his review of *les morts d'accompagnement* in worldwide ethnographic and

archaeological contexts. Testart contends that going to one's death to accompany another person is a sign of personal loyalty and dependence (see also Wagner 2002). He contrasts such deaths and the loyalties they imply with the practice of dying for a principle, an abstract cause, or an institution, which, he contends, does not result in "accompanying dead" (Testart 2004: 222–35). I suggest that Testart's ideas concerning loyalty can make an important contribution to a comprehensive understanding of Royal Cemetery practices but that they need to be broadened to encompass loyalties as contested domains. Specifically, I argue that the royal tombs were, in part, ideological statements of the death of "great households," with tombs producing and displaying household identities and affiliations through their specific ritual practices and material styles.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The elaborate burial rites known from mid-third-millennium B.C. (Early Dynastic [ED] III) sites in southern Mesopotamia took place in a context of political, social, and economic ferment. Early Dynastic polities were engaged in struggles with one another over land, water, and political sovereignty; kingship was becoming established as a distinct form of leadership; and "great households," or *oikoi*, were coming to play a dominant role in the economic and social configuration of urban life. Before turning to burial practices, I briefly sketch some of the key contours of political, religious/ritual, and economic dynamics in mid-third-millennium B.C. southern Mesopotamia.

For the first two-thirds of the third millennium, southern Mesopotamia was a landscape of city-states, each consisting of one or a few major cities surrounded by a rural hinterland (Adams 1981). Although sharing many similarities of culture, religion, and languages, conflicts between city-states as well as with lands outside the alluvial lowlands were common, as each state struggled for economic and political advantages that ranged from control of water and (irrigated) land to trade and political leadership. Open war was not unknown, and city-states entered into alliances with other polities for both defensive and offensive purposes (e.g., Cooper 1983).

An important economic and social institution in Early Dynastic city-states was the "great household" or *oikos* (in Sumerian, **é-gal** [literally, big house] refers to a palace and **é-DN** to a temple; Pollock 1999; cf. Weber 1972). Great households included the temples of the gods as well as the palace and other households headed by members (including men, women, or children) of the royal family. Great households were large, hierarchically organized socioeconomic units that owned large tracts of land and were staffed by a dependent labor force consisting of both permanent and part-time workers. Such households, even if specifically religious in name, were also key political and economic players in the life of Early Dynastic states.

During this time there appear to have been growing internal tensions between an emerging palace sector, with centralizing tendencies and interests in creating political alliances that transcended individual city-states, and "traditional" decentralizing elements, generally associated with temples and independent city-states (Nissen 1988; Beld 2002). Internal to a city-state these tensions played out between temple officials, who sought to retain their control over the appointment (and deposing) of rulers, and elite families that strove to make rulership, and the privileges and rights to property that accompanied the position, adhere to dynastic (i.e., inherited) principles of succession (Heimpel 1992; Selz 1998, 2004c).

A number of scholars have suggested that "kingship" (**nam-lugal**, in Sumerian) was becoming established as a distinct institution in the middle of the third millennium (Frankfort

1978; Heimpel 1992; Selz 1998, 2004c; Steinkeller 1999; Cohen 2001, 2005). The terms "king" and "kingship" are, of course, ours, and they cannot be assumed to correspond in all respects to Mesopotamian concepts of leadership. In particular, the variety of Sumerian words used for rulers in the first half of the third millennium (including **en**, **ensik**, and **lugal**) points to the complexity, temporal changes, and regional distinctions in the scope and meanings of these concepts. Although the full implications of each of these terms remain to be explored, the issue of succession to positions of rulership has been studied in some detail. Prior to the later part of the Early Dynastic period, a person became ruler of a state — usually designated by the term **en** — through appointment by a temple-based elite rather than on the basis of inheritance. In contrast, the positions of **lugal** or **ensik**, which supplanted **en** as terms for the ruler of a state in Early Dynastic III southern Mesopotamia, seem to have been inherited.

In a discussion of the relationship between death rituals and the emerging concept of kingship, Andrew Cohen (2005) has argued that in order to create a concept of kingship as an office that is independent of the specific people holding the position, rulers had to relinquish some portion of their authority as individuals to the office. Institutionalizing the form of state leadership must also have involved the creation of new kinds of loyalties to institutions and offices that transcended, at least in part, personal loyalties. Establishing loyalties to institutions — what Weber (1972) has referred to as the bureaucratization of social relations — seldom fully supplants personal loyalties, and the persistence of personal bonds makes it likely that the creation of institutional loyalties involved some degree of struggle. As part of the process of making new kinds of loyalties and offices legitimate, notions of rulership often draw on traditional images and practices associated with existing ideas about leadership (cf. Weber 1972: 142–44).

It is in this context of substantial social, political, and economic experimentation that the spectacular Royal Cemetery funerary rituals must be understood. The Royal Cemetery burial rituals were distinct from any others known but draw on "traditional" means of claiming legitimacy, such as connections to natural rhythms of the agricultural cycle and the deities who ensured that cycle (cf. Geertz 1980; Bloch and Parry 1982; Kertzer 1988; Bell 1992).

BURIAL PRACTICES AND NOTIONS OF DEATH IN SOUTHERN MESOPOTAMIA

Although the burial practices attested in the Royal Cemetery are in some respects unique among those known from Mesopotamia, they also share some fundamental characteristics with contemporary and earlier burials in the southern lowlands. A brief overview of mortuary practices and notions of life and death in southern Mesopotamia in the preceding centuries may highlight both the distinctive and the "traditional" character of Royal Cemetery burials (for a more detailed presentation, see Pollock 1999, chapter 8).

Uruk-period (fourth-millennium B.C.) mortuary practices stand out from both previous and later ones by the near absence of burials. Despite a substantial amount of excavation and extensive regional surveys, there have been only a handful of burials found, mostly of children. If the deceased were buried during the 1,000 years of the Uruk period, the interments must have taken place well away from settlements. Alternatively, other forms of disposal of the dead may have been practiced. Although it is notoriously problematic to argue from negative evidence, I suggest that the widespread absence of burials in Uruk-period southern Mesopotamia and neighboring regions was part of a common practice of dealing with death that transcended particular communities and established identities and traditions at a supra-regional level.

In the following centuries, beginning with the Jemdet Nasr (ca. 3100–2900 B.C.) and continuing in the Early Dynastic (ca. 2900–2350 B.C.) period, burials reappeared in settlements. The dead were interred in graves below the floors of houses (e.g., Delougaz, Hill, and Lloyd 1967; Martin, Moon, and Postgate 1985; Martin 1988; Steele 1990) or in cemeteries within the city (e.g., Mackay 1925; Woolley 1934). There are also occasional examples of unceremonious disposal of bodies in wells or garbage dumps without any sign of a formal grave (Matthews, Postgate, and Luby 1987; Martin 1988). Burial practices show an increasing elaboration over time, with more lavish grave goods as well as more differentiation among the dead based on gender, age, and sociopolitical and ritual positions. Nonetheless, throughout the first half of the third millennium there are general similarities in types of grave facilities, placement of bodies within graves, and types of grave goods. In this sense, one can speak, once again, of a supra-regional tradition of burial practices, but one in which there were growing distinctions between people as well as specific local "peculiarities."

Mesopotamian ideas of death in the later third and early second millennium B.C. center around the notion of the netherworld as a miserable place, with spoiled food to eat and bad water to drink (Katz 2003).[1] Better treatment was possible, at least for some people, but it depended on the performance of proper rituals by the living, both at the time of the funeral and for some time thereafter, especially the offering of libations. The deceased could in some cases be accompanied to the netherworld by servants to attend to his or her needs (Selz 2004a: 186–87). Ghosts were, for the most part, considered to be malevolent beings that could only be pacified by regular provisioning with food and drink (Scurlock 1995; Selz 2004b: 55; Cohen 2005).

Life — and presumably also death — was not an attribute limited solely to people. Votive statuettes, statues of gods and goddesses, and some kinds of sacred objects (for example, musical instruments, crowns, and scepters) could be brought to life through various rituals of naming or eye- and mouth-opening, after which they had to be fed and tended (Winter 1992; Selz 1997). Offerings of food and drink were also made on a regular basis to dead ancestors, suggesting an element of equivalence between dead people, statues, deities, sacred objects, and the living (cf. Bloch and Parry 1982). Apart from the gods, most of these living things could also die — votive statuettes, for example, are occasionally found in buried deposits below the floor of a temple (Bjorkman 1994: 93–101, 254–90). A similar argument might be made for some of the objects buried in the Royal Cemetery graves, including daggers that appear to have been intentionally broken[2] prior to burial, and perhaps also the musical instruments (lyres and harps) that were included in some of the tombs and graves. The implication is that cycles of life and death, and associated care and feeding, extended to more than just living people. In the following sections, I argue that a similar logic applies to the royal tombs, and in particular to the institutions behind them. Specifically, I suggest that the tombs can be understood as ideological claims of the (metaphorical) deaths of "great households" (for similar arguments for temple buildings and artifacts, see Bjorkman 1994: 484–97).

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[1] Although this conception is based principally on texts from the late third and early second millennium, there are sufficient points of continuity with earlier evidence (e.g., the importance of libations) to suggest that the mid-third-millennium notion was similar at least in broad outline.

[2] I base this assessment on the presence of several daggers from the cemetery that are broken in the same way (approximately in half), an occurrence which seems unlikely to be the result of chance or the use to which these weapons may have been put.

THE ROYAL CEMETERY OF UR

In his excavation of the Royal Cemetery, Woolley recorded approximately 2,000 graves that had been dug in the cemetery spanning over 500 years, from ca. 2600 to ca. 2100 B.C. (Woolley 1934, 1955; Nissen 1966; Pollock 1985). Many additional graves encountered in the course of excavation were said to be so badly preserved that no attempt was made to record them (Woolley 1934: 16).

Woolley distinguished sixteen of the graves as "royal tombs" and referred to the rest as "private graves." All the royal tombs can be attributed to the earliest (ED IIIa) phase of the cemetery's use, ca. 2600–2500/2450 B.C. They stand out from the other graves in the cemetery by the presence of underground chambers built of brick or stone, evidence for a ritual sequence that occurred in several stages, and the burial of up to seventy-four accompanying persons with the principal deceased person. Woolley's contention that the principal burials in the tombs were members of royalty was based on several lines of reasoning, most crucially the occurrence of objects inscribed with royal titles (**lugal**, **nin**) in several tombs (Woolley 1934: 37–40), although very few of these inscribed items were found in direct connection with the deceased persons.

In addition to the sixteen tombs, 137 of the so-called private graves can be attributed to the Early Dynastic IIIa period (Pollock 1985). Many graves cannot be assigned to a specific period, so the actual number of non-tomb burials that are contemporary with the royal tombs is almost certainly larger. These graves lack built structures; instead, bodies were placed in wooden or basketry coffins or wrapped in mats and laid in earthen pits. Almost all the non-tomb interments contained only a single body. Although a few of these graves included lavish grave goods, most were much less richly furnished than the tombs.

The burial ritual in the Royal Cemetery, whether in the tombs or the graves, partook of an underlying "standard" Early Dynastic interment ritual. The body was usually placed on its side, in a flexed position, with the hands in front of the chest. The basic repertoire of grave goods included a selection of pottery vessels to which a set of bodily adornments could be added. For people of "greater social centrality" (see Robb this volume), this standard was elaborated in a variety of ways. Despite these commonalities cemetery burial was distinct in important respects from burial within houses, not so much in the material traces of its accompanying ritual but rather in terms of who could be buried in the public space of a cemetery.

The Royal Cemetery was clearly reserved for the burial of selected persons. These were first and foremost adults (*contra* Molleson and Hodgson 2003: 128): less than two percent of the bodies attributable to the Early Dynastic IIIa period were said by Woolley to be those of children.[3] Furthermore, there are far from enough burials in the cemetery to account for the 15,000 or more people who must have lived and died at Ur over the course of 100–150 years (Pollock 1991a, 2007).

I have previously proposed that the dead buried in Early Dynastic III cemeteries such as that at Ur were members of "great households," whereas people whose ties were principally to their familial households were buried within their houses. This latter practice is attested at several contemporary sites but not at Ur, where no houses from this period have been excavated (Pollock 1991a; see also Steele 1990). Royal Cemetery burial seems to have been confined not just to people affiliated with great households but also to adults who held ritual/cultic or mana-

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[3] Neither Woolley nor any of his team was a trained osteologist, but he was a careful observer and is unlikely to have neglected to note skeletons of infants or young children.

gerial posts in those households. Grave goods in the form of elaborate jewelry and dress, official symbols (such as seals), and weaponry point to the identities of the deceased as cultic or managerial personnel. Although it is possible that some of the dead in the cemetery were from the lower classes, it is likely that the masses of "semi-free" and "unfree" laborers were buried (if at all) in places and ways that we rarely encounter archaeologically.[4]

Taking the argument a step further, I suggest that the royal tombs marked the metaphorical deaths of great households, in the form of a deliberate destruction of household personnel and wealth. In other words, when the head of a great household died,[5] the cultic and managerial personnel — the upper echelons of the household staff — were sent to their deaths with her or him, along with a portion of the household valuables. These valuables were household wealth that was buried as part of the ritual "death" of the household; they were not, in this sense, the personal possessions of deceased individuals (Selz 2004a: 203–04). These metaphorical "killings" of households may be part of an ideological denial of inheritance, a point to which I return below.

Although a substantial quantity of a great household's wealth — both in terms of people and inanimate items — was interred in the tombs, the fundamental economic basis of the household was not. Laborers, children (the next generation of administrators, cultic personnel, and workers), and most tools were not buried in the tombs. Material indications of the productive occupations or economic roles of the deceased are notable by their absence; instead, the material accompaniments of the dead accentuated social characteristics such as gender, ritual and class positions, and household affiliation (Pollock 1991a–b, 2007).

HOUSEHOLD DIFFERENTIATION

So far I have discussed the tombs, and by implication the households they represent, as a single group. Although there are marked similarities among the tombs, a closer examination shows striking differences, a point remarked upon by Woolley (1934: 33) as well as others (Moorey 1977; Reade 2001).

(1) Tomb architecture is quite variable: some are multi-chambered constructions (e.g., tombs 777, 779, and 1236), others consist of single chambers with or without a "death pit" (e.g., tombs 789, 1648), and some have little evidence of architectural construction at all (e.g., tombs 580, 1237, 1332).

(2) There are marked differences in the sequences of ritual activities, with some tombs (especially tombs 1050 and 1054) showing complex vertical depositional sequences, whereas others seem to have been the result of a single depositional event (e.g., tomb 1237).

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[4] In a recent re-analysis of the small number of skeletons that Woolley retained from his excavations of the Royal Cemetery, Molleson and Hodgson (2003) have determined that most of the skeletons show indications of the performance of arduous and repetitive activities, such as carrying heavy loads, that must have been practiced from childhood onwards. They liken the evidence for intensive physical exertions to something nearly akin to slavery (Molleson and Hodgson 2003: 91). This seems to me to be an exaggerated claim, which, to be substantiated, would require comparative samples that show that the level of exertion undertaken by the individuals buried in the Royal Cemetery was extraordinary.

[5] With the currently available information about Ur in Early Dynastic III times, it is not possible to ascertain how many great households there were in the city nor whether the death of every head of a great household occasioned the metaphorical death of the whole household.

(3) The numbers of bodies in each tomb vary widely, from two or three to seventy-four.[6]

(4) The tombs exhibit remarkable differences in the kinds and quantities of grave goods they contain. Some are, relatively speaking, quite "poor" even when there is little indication of later grave disturbance (tombs 1050, 1157, and 1332). Some of the riches often thought to be typical of the royal tombs are in fact found in only a few of them. Examples include the elaborate headdresses worn by the most extravagantly dressed women, consisting of one or more wreaths, gold ribbon, and an enigmatic item that Woolley called a comb (Woolley 1934, pls. 127–29, 135–36); these are found principally in three tombs (789, 800, and 1237). The choker-style necklaces that Woolley dubbed "dog collars" (Woolley 1934: pl. 144) occur almost exclusively in tomb 1237, and bead cuffs are restricted solely to that tomb. Certain styles of gold and silver pins tend to cluster by tomb, with large bent pins in 1054 and 1237, and straight pins in 789 and 800. Bracelets usually consist of strings of beads, but most of those in tomb 789 are made of silver wire.

Although later disturbances impacted the tombs differentially, many of the distinctive features of particular tombs cannot be attributed solely to matters of disturbance or preservation. Rather, the variations in kinds and quantities of grave goods are primarily a product of differences in household types and practices that were carried over into burial styles. Households and their tombs were clearly distinguished by emphasizing similarities among household members/tomb occupants and their differences to those in other households/tombs.

"PRIVATE GRAVES"

My interpretation of the Royal Cemetery as a graveyard for public households has so far concentrated on the royal tombs, without incorporating the far more numerous non-tomb burials. Commonalities in treatment of the dead in the graves and the tombs may indicate, as Woolley already noted, that there was not a sharp divide between those people buried in these two different kinds of facilities; however, what they share is principally a set of ritual practices that seems to have been common to most of the dead who received burial in Early Dynastic times. More importantly, the deceased buried in graves, like those in the tombs, were interred in the cemetery rather than within houses. This practice may be an indication that they, too, were closely affiliated to great households.

If the dead buried in the ordinary grave facilities were also part of great households, why were these people not interred in tombs? One possibility is that they were members of public households who died before the head of their household. Their position in public institutions entitled them to burial in the Royal Cemetery, but their "early" death precluded interment in the household tomb. Alternatively, these people may have been members of the great households who were not among those chosen to participate in the funeral entourage, or at least not in that part that was to die with the head of household. They were nonetheless privileged to be buried in the vicinity of the remainder of the household — and in some cases, in a similar style that drew attention to them having belonged to a particular household.

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[6] The exact number of bodies cannot always be determined due to later disturbance. The tombs with the fewest bodies are in many cases the most disturbed.

The connection between persons buried in individual graves and those interred in a tomb can be supported by specific linkages in kinds and styles of grave goods found in particular graves and tombs. Grave 1130, for example, contains a harp and a bead diadem, unusual pieces that bear distinct similarities to items found in tomb 800. Grave 1749 has a bead and ring pendant belt similar to that worn by Puabi (the principal person in tomb 800) as well as a unique mother-of-pearl inlaid cosmetic box (Woolley 1934, pl. 103, upper left). Although this box is not similar in style to Puabi's (Woolley 1934, pl. 103, upper right), it is the only other example of this sort of small inlaid box in the cemetery, suggesting a further link between the deceased person in grave 1749 and Puabi's household.

A small number of single graves contained substantial riches (especially graves 755, 760, 1130, 1315, and 1749), including items otherwise found almost exclusively in the most lavishly provisioned royal tombs. That most of the dead buried in the graves had fewer and markedly less elaborate grave goods than people in royal tombs implies, however, that being buried with the rest of the household was of considerable significance. In other words, it was, with few exceptions, only when the household as such was considered to have died that its principal riches were disposed of by burial on and alongside dead persons.

WHY WERE HOUSEHOLDS KILLED?

The crux of my argument up to this point is that the royal tombs stood for the deliberate, albeit metaphorical destruction of great households and that distinctions among households played a central role in the ways in which they and their members were interred. The act of interring a household involved, among other things, the exercise of the power of life and death by some people over others. As such it was a statement of the social position and clout of the heads of such households as well as a sign of competition among powerful individuals and institutions. The deaths of households that these funerals proclaimed were metaphorical ones, and in that sense clearly ideological, but also terribly real for those people who went to their untimely deaths in the tombs. Ideology is more than a set of mental constructs: it is also always practiced (Althusser 1971) and in that way it contributes to the constitution of subjects and social relations. In this case, the funeral rites in turn constituted living subjects — those who participated directly in the funeral rites as well as those who observed them (Pollock 2007).

The "death" of great households may have been part of a public assertion that neither their property nor their offices were inheritable. As discussed earlier, rulership (**nam-lugal**) as an office that was to be passed down in a dynastic sequence — and hence separable to at least some extent from the personal qualities of particular leaders — was becoming established at more or less the same time the royal tombs were constructed and used. Early Dynastic texts contain indications that lands held by state officials were not supposed to be inherited but rather were allocated to a person for use during her or his lifetime (Gelb 1976: 196). Practice did not always follow principle, however, with individuals often retaining rights to property allocated to a household member in the previous generation. By openly and ostentatiously burying (some of) its wealth and high officials, the "death" of a household was publicly proclaimed. Following a lavish spectacle during which the household was interred, its remaining resources — its land, tools, laborers, and children — could be, and undoubtedly were, inherited or reallocated. In other words, an ideological assertion that the household was dead would not have precluded the actual transmission of its resources to a designated successor. Rather, the exaggerated ritual of killing and burying the household helped to cover up the growing tendency toward accumulation of resources and power in the hands of certain families (cf. Gelb,

Steinkeller, and Whiting 1991). In this way, the cemetery burial practices can be understood as acting to mold and stabilize key institutions of the state, perhaps most especially **nam-lugal** (Selz 2004a).

The reasons for "killing" a household do not, however, account for why people would acquiesce in their own premature deaths in a lavish funeral ritual. In this regard, it is helpful to return to Testart's (2004) ideas about the potent role of *personal* loyalty and dependence in accounting for *les morts d'accompagnement*. The distinctive features of individual tombs — specific styles of dress, adornment, and interment practices — seem to support the notion that personal loyalties to the head of a household (whether royalty, high priesthood, or whomever) played a significant role in these practices. Nonetheless, I suggest that Testart's emphasis on personal loyalties oversimplifies a more complex situation.

A fundamental need of emerging institutions or groups is the creation of new ties that link people to the institution or group, thereby transcending or superseding their existing bonds of loyalty and affiliation. These new ties must extend beyond personal loyalties if the emerging affiliations are to be perpetuated, as Weber (1972: 142–44, 663) noted in his discussion of the limits of charismatic leadership. The royal tombs at Ur were being constructed at a time when new concepts of political leadership were coming to the fore, in which the office of the ruler was increasingly decoupled from the person holding the position and inherited succession was becoming common. These transformations in notions of rulership would have emphasized ties to the office and institution, which to some extent transcended those to the person him- or herself.

Under these circumstances, different kinds of loyalties may have been drawn upon in different contexts and by different persons. The principal loyalties of those in the highest social echelons may have been to the head of household, as these people had the most to gain from loyal service to their overlord. At the same time, an emerging emphasis on institutions and offices would have involved attempts to produce a sense of loyalty to the institution as well. The distinct styles of interment characteristic of each tomb could be as much a sign of loyalty to and identification with the household as to the household head.

In his discussion of hidden as opposed to public transcripts, James Scott (1990) points to the frequency with which subordinate groups preserve the outward semblance of loyalty and acceptable behavior (public transcripts), while utilizing alternative means and occasions to express to one another their dissent (hidden transcripts). Importantly, Scott argues that hidden transcripts are just that — hidden from the powers-that-be whom subordinates see no possibility of confronting directly. The spectacle of Royal Cemetery burial was very much a public one, in which it is likely that every effort, both overt and covert, would have been made to ensure adherence to a public transcript of loyal obedience. It is nevertheless crucial not to mistake the performance of such a ritual for unquestioned loyalty. In particular, people in less privileged positions in great households may have maintained little more than an outward appearance of loyalty — and a loyalty that may have been directed toward the household as an *institution* more than to a particular person, a result of necessity (economic, social, or otherwise) as much or more than of conviction (Wagner 2002: 93; cf. Weber 1972: 594–98).

Personal loyalties may have played a substantial role in forging the bonds that led certain people to lay down their lives for someone else, as Testart argues. Yet, it is unlikely that these loyalties were uncontentious or untroubled by competing claims. At the moment at which the head of a great household died, loyalties may have been placed under particular strain, perhaps in some cases to the breaking point. Would the upper echelons of a household remain loyal to their deceased leader? Or would they transfer their loyalties to the next leader, in a display of

allegiance that owed at least as much to their identification with the institution as to personal loyalties, the sort of classic "*le roi est mort, vive le roi*" scenario? In such situations, where loyalties were subject to question, the succeeding household head may have encouraged key members of her/his predecessor's entourage to demonstrate their loyalty to that person by going to their death with her/him. In other words, the funeral of a household head may have been both a public spectacle of household unity and loyalty and an occasion on which the succeeding head of the household could rid him/herself of unwanted functionaries — unwanted because their loyalty was judged to be suspect, to free up posts to reward supporters, or simply to signal independence from the previous leader. Support for this idea comes from Beld's (2002) recent analysis of a corpus of Early Dynastic cuneiform texts from the city of Girsu, in which the king Irikagina appears to have removed numerous officials from the "household of the lady" (**emunusa**) upon his accession to office and replaced them with others of his own choosing. In contrast to the concern with the loyalties of members of the upper echelons of a household, those of people in lower positions seem not to have been regarded as suspect, perhaps because their degree of economic and social dependency on the household was so great that they had no choice but to remain within the fold of the household.

If the burial practices attested in the royal tombs were closely linked to contestation over new forms of rulership as well as loyalties to persons and institutions, those practices may have ceased once the principle of dynastic succession was established. Although this would not have fully resolved the tension between ties of personal loyalty and those occasioned by bureaucratic and institutional apparatuses (tensions that are rarely entirely absent), it may have been enough to end the practice of killing some people upon the death of another person and of the need for ideological claims of the death of households.

CONCLUSION

The importance of loyalties in creating a sense of belonging, identity, and obedience should not be underestimated. At the same time, those loyalties cannot be presumed to be singular or uncontested, nor should the overt performance of acts of loyalty be confused with an unquestioned belief in them. Rather, taking loyalties seriously also means giving due consideration to people's sense that they have no choice but to perform appropriately in public transcripts such as lavish public funerals and to the forging of ties to institutions and offices that may cross-cut, transcend, or simply conflict with those to specific persons.

I have argued, following Testart, that loyalties contributed to the acquiescence of some members of Ur's great household to their premature deaths. This does not, however, preclude other salient factors. The killing of numerous people upon the death of another person is a form of institutional violence (Dickson 2006), whether those sent to their deaths conceived of it in that way or perceived themselves to be acting out of loyalty. Similarly, neither loyalty nor violence excludes a belief in ghosts, deities, the afterlife, or the proper way to care for the deceased. Becoming a subject who participates with little or no hesitation in a feast to death (Pollock 2007) in no way contradicts the existence of feelings of loyalty or the underlying violence inherent in demanding the lives of others upon the death of another person.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

DN   Divine Name
ED   Early Dynastic

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ACHILLES AND THE SALLIS WASTAIS RITUAL: PERFORMING DEATH IN GREECE AND ANATOLIA[*]

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How does the performance of funerary ritual travel between cultures? The aim of this paper is to explore one case where such borrowing has been suspected, that of the migration of cremation from Anatolia to Greece in the Late Bronze Age. Two specific suggestions have been made about the relation between Mycenaean and Anatolian funerary practice:

A. A number of classical archaeologists have argued that the practice of cremation, which is hardly known in Greece during Late Helladic IIIA–B, is introduced into Greece from Anatolia during the thirteenth–twelfth centuries B.C.; and

B. A number of Hittitologists have pointed to similarities that exist between the cremation in the Hittite royal funerary ritual and Homer's description of the funeral of Patroclus.

In this paper I attempt to reassess these suggestions in combination, setting them in the context of a general survey of what we know about funerary performance in Late Bronze Age Anatolia and Mycenaean Greece.

PERFORMING DEATH IN ANATOLIA

Hittite Anatolia is an unusual case for the student of funerary practice insofar as the archaeological evidence is fairly meagre, confined to a handful of sites, dating from the first half of the second millennium B.C. or before, enough to show that cremation and inhumation were both practiced in the area at that time,[1] whereas on the other hand we have excellent texts, above all the fourteen-day royal funeral ritual known today as sallis wastais ritual, attested in cuneiform tablets from the late thirteenth century B.C., and before.[2] This must be one of the fullest accounts of a funerary ritual known from the Bronze Age, and a superb example of "performing death." The expression "sallis wastais" means "great sin," a euphemism for the death of the king or queen, used in the opening lines:

> When a great sin occurs in Hattusa, and the king or queen becomes a god, everyone
> takes away their drinking straws and begins to wail.

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[1] These include two, Osmankayası and Baglarbasikayasi, which are close to Hattusa and and "probably its extramural burial grounds" (van den Hout 1994: 54). Add the Middle Bronze Age cemetery at Demircihüyük-Sariket, see Seeher 1993. Add now also the recently excavated Iron Age cemetery at Tell Shiukh Fawqani in North Syria, discussed by Tenu and Bachelot 2005.

[2] For the texts, see van den Hout 1994. Several types of Hittite documents contribute to the sallis wastais ritual; to begin with we have complete description of the festival, but there is also a summary outline tablet, a ration-list, and a liturgy giving the words of the participants. A recent translation, with commentary, has been provided by Kassian, Korolëv, and Sidel'tsev (2002).

The exact significance of "taking away drinking straws" is uncertain, but it may well have something to do with a cessation of normal life.[3] In death the king thus achieves divine status, and is in fact worshipped after death in a mortuary cult.

The sallis wastais ritual is imperfectly preserved: there are several lacunae, including a large one in the middle, between Days 4 and 7; we also lack the final fourteenth day, which might have been particularly illuminating. But as it is, two major sections can be distinguished: the first leads up to the cremation of the body on the night between Days 2–3 and the disposal of the bones; and secondly a sequence of micro-rituals focused on a statue of the king or queen, which occupies Days 8–14. In his important discussion of the sallis wastais ritual, Theo van den Hout (1994) has distinguished two dimensions in the ritual, the first relating to the physical body of the king, his "body natural," and, second to his institutional body, the "body politic," represented by the statue.[4]

The place of performance must have been at or near the Hittite capital (at least usually), but the precise location is not mentioned, except that the text refers to a place of cremation, the "eternal place," and also a "stone house" (E.NA$_4$) where the royal bones are taken, and which may have been the locus for a cult of the dead king (*hekur* "mausoleum[?]"). The location of both those is uncertain, although some progress has been made in identifying the "stone-house" of at least one of the Hittite kings.[5]

A large cast of ritual actors are involved in the performance. They include a "cup bearer," "barbers," and a "comedian," who are found in many Hittite ritual texts, and an "old woman" who otherwise turns up in Hittite magical texts. Sometimes the text attributes action to an anonymous "they." A major role is also played by a group called the *taptara*-women, specialized wailers of some sort.[6] Their lamentation often takes an antiphonal form, for example in a passage early on in the sallis wastais ritual (KKS 177) the cup bearer smashes the "cup of baked clay of (the late king's) soul," laments, and the *taptara*-women wail. The *taptara*s are almost continuously present as the micro-rituals are played out; the relationship between the *taptara*s and the other actors in the sallis wastais ritual reminds one of the relationship between chorus and actors in a Greek tragedy. Two features deserve particular attention:

A. First, notice the prominent role of women here, particularly the *taptara*s. Female mourners seem to occur in funerary performances in a very wide range of cultures, perhaps because women tend to be associated with regeneration, as Bloch and Parry (1982) argue. The same nexus of associations may lie behind the term "day of the mother," which seems to have been used in Hittite for "day of one's death" and seems to imply a belief in a close analogy between that birth and death.[7]

B. Second, a striking absence are members of the royal family, although "a relative of the deceased" is involved at one point.[8] There is little or no role for the new king either (perhaps because it was felt inappropriate for two kings to be present at once, as van den Hout [1984] suggests). It looks as if the whole ceremony is delegated to a group of specialists. Either family members and other members of the elite did not participate at all, or they participated more in one of the sections that is lost, or in part of the ritual complex not described in the sallis wastais ritual (after Day 14?) or (and I

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[3] Cf. KKS 73.

[4] Van den Hout 1994; Giesey 1960.

[5] Van den Hout 1994: 52–53; Hawkins 1998b.

[6] See Rutherford forthcoming.

[7] See van den Hout 1994: 43, citing KUB 39.49.

[8] See van den Hout 1994: 42.

think this is most likely) they participated by being spectators (as in the theater rituals of Bali discussed by Geertz 1980).

What this absence means in fact is that is that if you had been hoping to use the sallis wastais ritual as evidence for Hittite society, you are out of luck. (The ritual is more like an extended liminal period, where the normal rules do not apply.) Still, they must have been involved somehow. To pursue the analogy with drama futher, could we see them as the audience?

The first part of the sallis wastais ritual focused on the cremation, which took place on the night of the second day, and was followed next morning by collection of the bones. The section describing what precedes the cremation is damaged, especially for Day 1. On Day 2 they put symbolic objects in the hands of the deceased: a bow and arrows for a man, and a distaff and spindle for a woman. There was also a sacrifice, various minor rituals, and of course the *taptara*-women mourn. After this the cremation begins and the pyre burns through the night. The text for the third day is relatively clear (KKS 261–):

> At dawn "the women" (apparently not *taptara*-women here) go to the pyre to gather the bones. They extinguish the fire with ten vessels of beer, ten vessels of wine, and ten vessels of "*walhi*," an unknown beverage. They take a silver "*huppar*" vessel, filled with fine oil; they take out the bones with silver tongs and put them in the vessel; then they take them out and lay them down on a linen cloth. Then they put the bones of a throne, if it's a man or on "benches" it's the queen.

Then the focus shifts to an effigy in the center of the pyre, which they decorate with fruit and other things (perhaps again reflecting an association of death with regeneration; Bloch and Parry 1982). After that the "Old Woman" and one of her colleagues performs a mysterious micro-ritual involving a pair of scales which is then ritually destroyed (KKS 267–69).[9] Finally the bones are taken from the chair, placed on a bed, and from there taken to the "stone house."

The latter part of the sallis wastais ritual was taken up by a sequence of micro-rituals apparently designed to "secure for the deceased an afterlife modelled on his former existence."[10] Each of Days 7–13 seems to have been taken up by a special ritual, performed in the presence of the effigy, which sits in a chariot.[11] Each day ends with a "main meal" for the participants in the ritual. Examples are:

DAY 7

Straw and the king's clothes are burned "near the gatehouse," and animal sacrifices take place. The *taptara*-women perform an action referred to by the expression "*arahzanta wahnu*-," which may mean "circle around," implying perhaps a sort of dance.[12] The ashes are taken to a place where the heads of horses and oxen were burned, which implies that such a sacrifice had taken place on a previous day.[13]

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[9] On the meaning of this, see van den Hout 1994: 47; Gurney 1977: 60.

[10] See van den Hout 1994: 80.

[11] On the effigy, see van den Hout 1994: 69–70.

[12] Haas 1994: 2025; Kassian, Korolëv, and Sidelʾtsev (2002: 323) think it means "stir the crocks."

[13] For the cultural significance of horse-sacrifices, see the important paper of Brentjes 1999.

DAY 8

The second half of this day's ritual focuses on a piece of turf, which is dedicated to the deceased. The Old Woman holds up scales and says (KKS 383–85):

> May this meadow, O Sungod, make rightful for him. May no one take it away from him, nor sue him! May the oxen and sheep, the horse and mules graze for him on this meadow.

The turf is transported to the place where the heads of the horses and oxen were burned, and presumably itself destroyed. The turf seems to represent paradise enjoyed by the deceased.

DAY 10

Among other things, a plow is burned.

DAY 12

A special grapevine is adorned with a belt, fruit, and wool and the *taptara*-women bring it into the tent of the deceased (KKS 479).[14] Then, a relative of the deceased cuts clusters from the grapevine. The cup bearer smashes a vessel, whereupon the *taptara*-women wail and go round(?) the fire as the ritual items burn.

NIGHT BETWEEN DAYS 13 AND 14

A cord is smeared with oil and thrown on the hearth; then the *taptara*-women sing (or speak?; KKS 517, 591, 599): "when you go the meadow, do not pull the cord (or the bull rush); may your will be done." These words seem to relate the symbolic meadow that is found earlier in Day 8, and the injunction "do not pull the cord" may amount to "do not hang on to the world of the living."[15]

So the principal features of the micro-rituals on Days 7–14 seem to be: i) smashing of ritual vessels; ii) ritual destruction of symbolic objects; iii) wailing; and iv) feasting, at least for the participants. Performing death indeed.

PERFORMING DEATH IN MYCENAEAN GREECE

More or less contemporaneous with the Hittite Kingdom in Central Anatolia is the Mycenaean palace culture of mainland Greece. Despite the decipherment of Linear B fifty years ago, and the confirmation in 1997 that the Ahhiyawa mentioned in Hittite texts is after all Mycenaean Greece (see Hawkins 1998a–b), Mycenaean society remains much less well understood than the kingdom of the Hittites. The nature of the macro-political structures (beyond the basic palace economy) remains uncertain, as well as the location of the center of political authority (if any), and the organization of religion within it.

As far as funerary practice is concerned, almost all our evidence is archaeological and it is much richer than the Hittite evidence. On the other hand, we have no texts at all, which means it is hard to figure out what rituals were performed. The larnakes from Tanagra in Boeotia are an exception: these have depictions of aspects of funerary ritual, including lamentation, pro-

[14] The grapevine is a symbol apparently associated with death in Near Eastern traditions; see Böcher 1971.

[15] Haas 1994: 228, n. 243 cites parallels from Irish (Hartmann 1952: 113) and Armenian (Abeghyan 1899: 12) rituals.

cession, lowering a corpse into a larnax, and making a libation.[16] Other Mycenaean funerary rituals are:

- Presentation of the body in an ideal way, with death masks, etc. (CM 108ff.);
- Sacrifice of animals, including horses (CM 115);
- The burying of objects with the corpse (CM 109–11);
- Ritual destruction of objects, which is attested in Late Helladic but rare (CM 112–13);
- Feasts and libations, possibly followed by the ritual smashing of vessels ("kulikes"; CM 114); probably to be connected to a Tanagra Larnax on which a women holds up a kylix (Cavanagh and Mee 1995: 50).

The evidence for funerary practice shows a high degree of variety (see the survey in CM).[17] For example, there are many types of tombs: shaft graves at the start of Late Helladic, then tholos tombs, chamber tombs, cist tombs and so on. By contrast, one of the most consistent features of Mycenaean funerary practice is inhumation. Cremation was uncommon in Late Helladic IIIA and IIIB; it gets a little more common during Late Helladic IIIC (twelfth century–first half of the eleventh century B.C.), but even then it is estimated that no more than 10% of the dead were cremated. Then in the Proto-Geometric period, cremation becomes more common, at least in some areas.[18] Now, the absence of cremation is one aspect that distinguishes Mycenaean funerary performance from the SWR. That aside, the two traditions have a few things in common:

A. The sacrifice of animals, including apparently horses.
B. The smashing of drinking vessels.[19]
C. The probable presence in both contexts of mourning women. For the Anatolian traditon we have the *taptaras*, and for the Mycenaean world we have the women on the Tanagra Larnakes.[20]
D. I mentioned earlier that the Old Woman in sallis wastais ritual uses scales, and it has been observed that scales are found in some Mycenaean burials (see CM 53).
E. Finally, Morgan (2005) has suggested that a sword symbol in the Mycenean cult center should be interpreted as a funerary symbol analogous to the sword in Chamber B at Yazilikaya in the Hittite capital.[21]

Since there is a good chance that basic political structures of Mycenaean Greece and Hittite Anatolia were comparable, it might be justifiable to try to use the sallis wastais ritual to help us understand Mycenaean funerary performances. For example, that analogy would tend to suggest that the key Mycenaean funeral rituals may not have been communal activities in which members of an elite participated directly, but rather performances staged by ritual specialists. Thus, the women depicted on the Tanagra Larnakes may represent not family members

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[16] Vermeule 1965; Cavanagh and Mee 1995; Immerwahr 1995; for processions, see CM 107–08. The important Gallou 2005 came to my attention after this paper was already in proofs.

[17] Compare Cavanagh 1998.

[18] See the standard guide of CM; for the protogeometric, see Lemos 2002.

[19] On drinking vessels, see Carsten 2001; Soles 1999 with bibliography. Smashed vessels attested also at the Hittite

cemetery at Osmankayası (van den Hout 1994: 54–55; Karantzali 2001: 22–23).

[20] Or the figures of mourning women which are found mounted in a circle on the rim of bowls as if in circling motion, see Cavanagh and Mee 1995: 51.

[21] As Vermeule pointed out, a parallel suggests itself with the divine "weighing of the souls" (psychostasia) in the Greek epic tradition. On Hittite scales more generally, see Puhvel 1991, 1982.

of the deceased but a specialized group of mourners maintained by the palace, along the lines of the *taptara*-women at the Hittite court.

In seeking to understand innovations in funeral practice in Mycenaean Greece, recourse has often been to the hypothesis of influence from other cultures,[22] and in particular there has been a strong tendency to interpret cremation as an import from Anatolia.[23] The argument can be broken down into the following points:

i.   First, in the Late Bronze Age cremation was poorly attested in Greece, but quite well attested in Anatolia, not just in the Hittite area, but also at Troy (Troy 6) and other sites in the West.

ii. On the basis of archaeology and Hittite records, it seems likely that there were Mycenaeans in Western Anatolia and the Dodekanesos from the thirteenth century B.C. Indeed the area has been described as the "Aegean-Anatolian Interface" (see Mountjoy 1998).

iii. There are indications that at points within this area a mixing or "creolization" of cultures occurs already in Late Helladic IIIB (thirteenth century B.C.).[24]

So it is a reasonable hypothesis that Mycenaeans assimilated cremation in the mixed cultural environment of Western Asia Minor during Late Helladic IIIB and from there introduced it back to the mainland during Late Helladic IIIC.[25] There is nothing certain about this. Much of the evidence is contested, and one wonders how the picture would look if we knew more about funerary practice in other areas the early Greeks might have been influenced by at this time, like the Levant, North Syria, the Hurrian world. But the hypothesis that Anatolian influence was significant fits into a context of other indications of political, cultural, and religious contact between Greece and Anatolia. The king of Ahhiyawa and the Hittite king corresponded and there may even have been marriage alliances between them. Anatolian ethnonyms are attested in Linear B tablets from Pylos in Greece.[26] An "Asian" goddess is attested in Linear B tablets from Pylos (S. Morris 2001)[27] and so on. Cremation would be a more cultural meme that gets passed across.

Cultural contact often takes place at the elite level, and perhaps that is what happens in the case of cremation also. One is perhaps reminded of the introduction of inhumation in the Western provinces of the Roman empire in second century A.D., a custom which arguably spread from the Eastern provinces; Ian Morris (1992: 67) argued it was "taken up by the top circles in Rome" and subsequently, after it had lost its Eastern connotations, spread to the rest of the population.[28]

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[22] Some examples: the shaft graves of the Early Mycenaean period have been explained as burials by military invaders, specifically the Hyksos (Stubbings 1973; followed by M. Bernal); the Mycenaean tholos tomb has sometimes been analyzed as modeled on the Cretan circular tombs (Dickinson 1994: 225–26). The Tanagra Larnakes are generally taken to represent an adaptation of the Cretan larnax.

[23] Mylonas 1948; Snodgrass 1970; Melas 1984.

[24] On the term "creolization," see Webster 2001. One area where we can observe this is funerary practice, pre-cisely because Mycenaean forms of burial are found in association with cremation.

[25] Mylonas (1948) suggested that Greek warriors fighting in the Trojan War bought the custom back to Greece.

[26] S. Morris 2001.

[27] See Kühne 1986, 1993; Bremmer 2001. Steiner (1971) discusses a parallel between a Hittite ritual involving offerings to the infernal powers and a underworld ritual described in Homer's *Odyssey*.

[28] On elites and cremation, see also Seeher 1993.

PERFORMING DEATH IN HOMER

The Homeric epics purport to describe events in the Late Bronze Age. Most scholars believe that they were put into canonical form much later, perhaps around 700 B.C., although parts of the epic tradition seem to be much earlier, possibly even Indo-European. Now, Homeric heroes are cremated, and the cremation and gathering of bones is carried out by male relatives, while women prepare the body and lament. The remains are stored in urns and buried under large funeral mounds. In popular Greek tradition, the funeral mound of Achilles was still to be seen in the Troad, the so-called Akhilleion, probably to be identified with a tumulus found today in Besik Bay.[29]

If we compare the performance of funerals in Homer with Mycenaean funerary practice, what strikes us is the focus on cremation. How to interpret Homeric cremation is a mystery. Does it reflect something real? And if so, from what period? Many think it reflects the conditions of the Geometric Period in Greece (roughly tenth–eighth centuries B.C.), or are they largely imaginary, a poetic tradition, independent of any "real" performances, or perhaps rather capable of inspiring it?[30] Note eighth-century B.C. funerary practice in Salamis (near Enkomi) on Cyprus.

The most important funeral is that of Patroclus, which plays a role in the *Iliad* analogous (and perhaps on some level influenced by) Gilgamesh's funeral performance for his friend Enkidu in Tablet 8 of the Epic of Gilgamesh. Homer's account of the funeral begins with the driving of chariots around the corpse (Iliad 23.12–23) and a feast (Iliad 23.24–34). During the following night the ghost of Patroclus appears to Achilles in a dream and requests that he and Achilles (who will himself die soon) be buried together in a golden urn (Iliad 23.65–107).[31] The next morning, Achilles and the Myrmidons transport the body to the pyre covering the body in locks of their hair (Iliad 23.123–51).[32] At sunset, a pyre is built and the body placed on top; sheep and cattle are sacrificed (Iliad 23.152–67). Achilles covers the corpse with the fat from the animals, and piles the skins around it (Iliad 23.67–69); he leans jars of honey and oil against the bier (Iliad 23.170–71). He slaughters two of Patroclus' dogs and twelve Trojan men, in that order (Iliad 23.171–76); he addresses Patroclus (Iliad 23.178–83). Then he sets fire to the pyre (having summoned the winds for this purpose); all night he pours libations of wine and invokes the spirit of Patroclus (Iliad 23.184–225). At daybreak, they extinguish the pyre with wine; they gather the bones in a golden urn with a double fold of fat and build a mound over the pyre (Iliad 23.226–57). Finally, funeral games take place (Iliad 23.257–).[33]

A number of scholars working on the sallis wastais ritual have pointed to used the cremation of Patroclus in Homer as an analogy for the cremation in the sallis wastais ritual, as if both of them represent grand Late Bronze Age funerary performances.[34] Certainly, the two performances share a few key details related to the cremation and the disposal of the bones.

[29] The view of the most recent Cincinnati-Tübingen excavations is that the site could have been Besik-Sivritepe, a little inland, which seems to have been artificially enlarged in the Hellenistic period, as if to produce a tourist attraction; see Korfmann 1988.

[30] For example, Nagy (1980) thinks that Homeric cremation might hark back to Indo-European funerary practice.

[31] According to Odyssey 24, Thetis provided a golden urn, having received it from the god Dionysus, who received it from Hephaestus; see Haslam 1991. Burkert (2004) has recently argued that Greek Dionysus continued certain key traits of the Egyptian Osiris.

[32] Hair dedication remains part of Greek funerary tradition; see Alexiou 1974; CM; Koehl 1986; Leitao 2003.

[33] Compared with the other two funerals, the funeral of Patroclus is aberrant in three ways: i) because Achilles performs the role of the mourner, a female role. (there is a female lament for Patroclus, by Briseis earlier on, in Book 19); ii) because of the presence of human sacrifice, which does not occur in the other funerals; iii) because the completion of the funeral process is postponed until Achilles himself is killed.

[34] See Popko 1995: 155; van den Hout 1994: 39; Gurney 1964: 164–69; Testart 2005. Christmann-Frank (1971: 61–64) collects the numerous earlier references.

And that might seem to fit the hypothesis mentioned earlier that cremation comes to Greece from the Aegeo-Anatolian interface. On the other hand, it is not such a close parallel. I suspect a large number of similar funerary performances are attested in a wide range of societies.[35] And there are also huge differences. First, the participants are not state officials, as in the sallis wastais ritual, but members of the same ethnic group or friends and family. Second, Homer never mentions micro-rituals of the type that dominate the second half of the sallis wastais ritual (instead we have the athletic competition); nor does he have an effigy.[36] But these micro-rituals are important because the sallis wastais ritual and the Iliad differ also in respect of the significance of the cremation. The premise of Hittite ritual is that the king's soul ends up in a sort of paradise, and the purpose of the destruction rituals that take place on Days 7–13 is to make sure he enjoys a comfortable existence there. And two points — institution and immortality — are perhaps linked in Hittite ideology. The king's successful passing to the status of a god is a requirement of the institution of kingship. All this seems strikingly different from the pessimistic Homeric attitude towards death, in which the funeral facilitates the entry of the soul into the shadowy realm of Hades, where it exists as "spirit and phantom, but there is no mind (*phrenes*) at all," as Achilles says after the ghost of Patroclus appears to him (Iliad 23.103–04). It is not quite true that Homeric funeral rites provide no immortality for hero, but it is a weaker form that comes through fame (*kleos*) and memory.[37] So in the end, the differences are perhaps more significant than the similarities. The sallis wastais ritual shows us how a royal funeral was conducted in a Bronze Age society and Homer is doing something else.

I have attempted in this paper to reassess the case for the migration of cremation from Anatolia to Greece, drawing on the insights of both Classical archaeologists and Hittitologists. In the end, the case for the Greeks having appropriated Anatolian funerary ritual in the Late Helladic IIIB–C seems strong, though there are still many gaps in our knowledge, including the reasons it happened and the manner. It also has to be admitted that the way we reconstruct the spread of cremation is heavily dependent on the chance survival of evidence. Thus, we might reconstruct things very differently if we had accounts of elite funerary rituals from Troy or Millawanda, or if we knew more about the Hurrian funerary rituals practiced in the kingdom of Mitanni, which we know exerted a strong influence on the Hittites.[38]

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[35] An example would be the Thai royal cremation as described by Wales 1931: 137–48 (cited in Metcalf and Huntington 1991: 136ff.).

[36] Compare Popko 1995: 155: "since it was a time of war, the rite was shorter than the Hittite one."

[37] See Bloch 1982: 228.

[38] Melas (1984: 28) mentions Hurrian evidence for cremation, but see Wilhelm 1989: 76. Haas (1994: 219) thinks that the sallis wastais ritual itself is Hurrian-influenced.

Table 12.1. Comparison of Sallis Wastais Ritual (SWR) and the Iliad

SWR	*ILIAD 23*
DAY 1	
Beginning of Ritual	Driving of Chariots Round
	Corpse
	Feast
DAY 2	
	Funeral Procession
	Construction of Pyre
Construction of Effigy	
Decoration of Body	Dedication of Hair
Funeral Sacrifices	Funeral Sacrifices (including human sacrifices)
Lamentation by *Taptaras*	Lamentation by Achilles
Cremation by Night	Cremation by Night
	Invoking Name of Deceased
DAY 3	
Gathering of Bones (by women)	Gathering of Bones (by men)
Bones Placed in Oil in Ḫuppar Vessel	Bones Wrapped in Fat
Bones Placed on Cloth	Bones Placed in Urn
	Cloth Laid over Urn
Bones Taken to Stone House	Construction of Mound
	Funeral Games
DAYS 4–14	
Further Micro-rituals	

ABBREVIATIONS

CM   W. Cavanagh and C. Mee, *A Private Place: Death in Prehistoric Greece*. Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology 125. Jonsered: Paul Åstroms, 1998.

KKS   A. Kassian, A Korolëv, and A. Sidel'tsev, *Hittite Funerary Ritual: Sallis Wastais*. Alter Orient und Altes Testament 288. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2002.

KUB   *Keilschrifturkunden aus Boghazköi*

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13

RITUALIZING DEATH IN REPUBLICAN ROME: MEMORY, RELIGION, CLASS STRUGGLE, AND THE WAX ANCESTRAL MASK TRADITION'S ORIGIN AND INFLUENCE ON VERISTIC PORTRAITURE*

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One of the most important and distinctive aspects of Roman aristocratic culture was the right to have a wax mask, or *imago*, of oneself to be given to the family and passed down to posterity.[1] Known as the *ius imaginis*, this right was a great social privilege that included having a public funeral at state expense.[2] The right to a wax *imago* was reserved to those who had attained at least one of the highest offices of the State — the so-called "curule magistracies," namely, the office of consul, praetor, censor, or curule aedile. Since women could not hold political office, they were not accorded this right.[3] In this essay, I consider and offer new ideas on various aspects of the tradition of the wax ancestral mask, including their appearance, their function in performative rituals and in the Romans' concept of memory, and their religio-magical nature, as well as the origins of this tradition and its role in the development of veristic portraiture.

THE FORM AND FUNCTION OF ANCESTRAL WAX MASKS

Although no aristocratic wax masks have come down to us — not even a representation of one in Roman art — numerous ancient literary sources provide information about them.[4] From these records, it can be established that the majority of such masks were intended to be exact likenesses of the deceased. In addition to being closely modeled on the individual's

[1] The word *imago*, which is equivalent to the English "image," means in Latin any sort of portrait image. However, in the context of my essay, I use *imago/imagines* to refer specifically to the wax ancestral masks of the nobility. Several ancient authors speak of these ancestral masks as being made of wax. See, for example, Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 35.6: *expressi cera vultus* "faces rendered in wax."

[2] The *ius imaginis* was not a formal law, but rather a right sanctioned by tradition. On the "right of images," also known as "*ius imaginum*" (a modern neologism), see Flower 1996: 53–59, 61 with further bibiliography. Only the singular, *ius imaginis*, is attested in the ancient sources (Cicero, *In Verrem* 5.36): *ius imaginis ad memoriam posteritatemque prodendae* "the right to hand on [a mask] to memory and posterity."

[3] By the late Republic, noble women gained other honorific distinctions that were intimately linked with the ancestral wax mask tradition. For women being represented as "ancestors" in other contexts, see Flower 2002.

[4] For a comprehensive treatment of the wax ancestral masks of the Roman nobility, see Flower 1996, with earlier bibliography, and pp. 281–325 (Appendix A) for all known literary references to these masks. My general observations about wax *imagines* are based on these ancient sources. See further Zadoks-Josephus Jitta 1932: 22–31.

facial features, they were painted to present as life-like an image as possible. Because of their association with aristocratic funerary practices, ancestral *imagines* were long assumed to be death masks. However, as Harriet Flower demonstrated in her 1996 study, *Ancestor Masks and Aristocratic Power in Roman Culture*, wax *imagines* were not death- but life-masks.[5] Her conclusion has profound implications for the question of the origin of the so-called veristic portrait tradition in Roman art, a matter that she does not take up, but which I address later in this essay. Although I agree with Flower that most of the wax *imagines* were life-masks, it is reasonable to conclude that some would still have been death-masks since at least a few Roman nobles would have died before their life-mask could be made. A death-mask would then have been the only option, one that was quite possibly utilized, for example, in the case of Scipio Hispanicus, who died just after he became praetor in 139 B.C.[6] So that a death-mask would appear more life-like, adjustments could be made to minimize alteration of the face as a result of the *rigor mortis* that sets in soon after death.[7]

Ancestral wax masks were prominently displayed in cupboards (*armaria*) in the atrium, the formal and ceremonial living room of a nobleman's house,[8] where the master received

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[5] See Flower 1996: 2, 36, 38, 340. Some earlier scholars were of the opinion that *imagines* could have been either life- or death-masks (Drerup 1980: 108 n. 94). However, Drerup himself (1980: 107) concluded that they were death-masks. Most of the evidence for death-masks are half and full masks in plaster that are non-aristocratic and date largely to the second and third centuries A.D. For a catalogue and discussion of these, see Drerup 1980: 85–95. A wax full mask with neck has come down to us from a grave in Cumae, now in the Naples Archaeological Museum (inv. 86.497). This wax mask, with added glass eyes, appears to date to the late Imperial period and is unrelated to the ancestral wax masks of the Roman nobility. For this unusual example and the report of a second wax mask of a woman, see Drerup 1980: 95–96, pl. 49.1. See also Zadoks-Josephus Jitta 1932: 21 n. 1. Worthy of note is a passage in Quintilian (6.1.40) about a non-noble woman who introduced in court a wax death-mask of her husband (actually taken from an unknown cadaver). The fact that this mask caused laughter in the court because of its ghastly form argues against the wax ancestral *imagines* being death-masks (at least unaltered ones). Relevant, too, is the senatorial decree of A.D. 20 against the nobleman Gn. Calpurnius Piso Pater, who was found guilty of treason (*maiestas*), a disgrace that resulted in the Senate's revoking (among other things) his "right" to an *imago*. This decree, recorded in an inscription recently discovered in Seville, Spain (the Roman province of Baetica), forbade Piso's wax mask being displayed with the other masks of the Calpurnii in funeral processions or being placed among the other masks in the family home (*… ne inter reliquas imagines, [quibus] exequias eorum funerum celebrare solent, imago Gn. Pisonis patris duceretur, neve imaginibus familiae Calpurniae imago eius interponeretur …*). His wax life-mask had probably been made no later than the time he became consul in A.D. 7. See Flower 1996: 16, 23–31, 55–59, 248–52.

[6] See Flower 1996: 169, although she does not consider the possibility of a death-mask's being created if someone died soon after achieving high office but before commissioning a life-mask.

[7] As Zadoks-Josephus Jitta (1932: 47–48) notes, "A few hours after death the face of the deceased has already considerably altered; the *rigor mortis* fixes these changes. These are due to two principal facts: the moisture of the soft parts of the face disappears and the muscles loose [sic] their tone because there is no longer any nervous stimulus. The combined consequences of both these phenomena are clearly discernible when we observe the death mask from a stylistic point of view. The bony structure becomes more apparent. The form of the forepart of the skull grows very pronounced. Temples and cheeks fall in, cheek- and jaw-bones strongly protrude … The closed eyes sink deep into the orbits because the moisture in the tissues supporting the eyeballs and the tone in the eye-muscles disappear. The bridge of the nose grows very pronounced; its tip falls in. The naso-labial furrows become deeper, the folds grow limp. The mouth hangs loosely down with drooping corners and is often drawn awry; the lips are sunken, especially the upper one, so that the distance between nose and lips is unnaturally lengthened. The chin, no longer under control, becomes long drawn out while its point falls slightly in. The entire face is often drawn awry owing to the position of the head. Every detail, every little line and wrinkle is smoothed away." Therefore, true death-masks would have appeared rather ghastly, as the passage in Quintilian (6.1.40) also makes clear: see footnote 5. Alterations in the face as a result of death have been important in the discussion of whether or not death-masks played a significant role in the development of the Roman "veristic" style, a type of hyper-realism showing "warts and all."

[8] See, for example, Seneca the Younger, *De beneficiis* 3.28.2. For this usage of the atrium, see Flower 1996: 185–222.

clients and friends on a daily basis — the so-called *salutatio*.[9] Giving us a sense of what the masks looked like set in their cupboards are some of the non-elites' grave monuments, like that in the National Archaeological Museum in Copenhagen (fig. 13.1).[10] The ancestral masks were intended not only to impress visitors with a nobleman's lineage but also to inculcate moral and civic values in members of his family. Young males, in particular, were expected to emulate the illustrious achievements of their ancestors and bring further distinction to the family. Growing up in a noble house in the presence of these wax masks must have exerted enormous pressure on the young to achieve greatness. We gain a sense of a nobleman's pride in his ancestors from the so-called Barberini *Togatus*, a marble statue of around the first century A.D. now in the Museo Montemartini Centrale in Rome (fig. 13.2A–C).[11] The type of shoes that this figure wears distinguishes him as a member of the noble class.[12] The *Togatus* holds in his left hand the portrait bust of one ancestor, while placing his right arm around another. These two busts are not intended to be wax masks, but rather sculptural portraits-in-the-round, probably to be thought of as cast in bronze, not stone, since the bust that he holds in his left hand would have to be light enough to carry in one hand.[13] Ancient sources testify that statues and busts like these, as well as shield images and painted portraits, were set up in close proximity to the wax *imagines* displayed in the atrium. There were also family trees (*stemmata*) with the names and/or pictures of family members painted in the entrance to the home. These names and portraits were linked by strings or painted lines to make connections among prominent family members (Seneca the Younger, *De beneficiis* 3.28.2; Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 35.6).[14]

Most important for this conference on funerary rituals is the performative function of wax *imagines* in the context of aristocratic funerals. In the funeral procession of a newly deceased prominent nobleman the wax ancestral masks were worn by hired actors chosen for their general resemblance to those who had passed on. Unlike theatrical masks, the wax *imagines* only covered the face of each actor,[15] who would also don the garments and carry the insignia of the highest office held by the individual portrayed[16] and repeat that person's famous sayings. The actor thus took on the individual's "persona," which also happens to be the Latin term for

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[9] Flower 1996: 217–20. For the *salutatio* and the relationship between *patronus* and *cliens* in the context of the Roman house, see Wallace-Hadrill 1994: 12; Hales 2003: 5, 18–19.

[10] Museum inv. 1187: Zadoks-Josephus Jitta 1932: 26, 43, pl. IV.a; Flower 1996: 7, pl. 1. See also similar pendant portraits on the grave relief of T. Paconius Caldeus in the Gabinetto delle Maschere in the Vatican Museum (inv. 808): Helbig I⁴* 1963: 154–55 (no. 210) (E. Simon); Zadoks-Josephus Jitta 1932: 43, pl. V.a. Compare also the tombstones in St. Paul's in Rome and on the Via Appia: Zadoks-Josephus Jitta 1932: 26, pl. IV.a–b. For actual sculptural busts placed in an cupboard-like aedicular structure, see the Tomb of the Haterii: see footnote 41.

[11] Museum inv. 2392: Helbig II⁴* 1966: 418–19 (no. 1615; H. v. Heintze). The head of the *Togatus*, though ancient, does not belong to this body. See also Drerup 1980: 105, 123, pl. 51.1–2; Lahusen 1985: 281–82. This statue has been moved from the Braccio Nuovo of the Palazzo dei Conservatori to the Museo Montemartini Centrale on the Via Ostiense. See more recently Flower 1996: 5–6 with n. 24 for earlier bibliography. *Pace* Flower, the "column" on which one of the busts sits is

not a "herm," but a stylized palm tree. Also, it cannot be established whether or not the *Togatus* is a *novus homo*, as Flower suggests.

[12] For the shoes of the Roman nobility, see Goldman 1994: 116–22.

[13] Of course, we may be trying to see too much reality in a work in which artistic license is operative.

[14] For these other forms of portraits in the atrium and elsewhere in the homes of the nobility, see Flower 1996: 40–46.

[15] Polybios (*Histories* 53.5) uses the word πρόσωπον ("face"), not προσωπεῖον ("theatrical mask"), while Pliny (*Naturalis historia* 35.6) employs *vultus* ("face"), not *persona* ("theatrical mask"). See also Zadoks-Josephus Jitta 1932: 23, 27, 30.

[16] See also Freedberg (1989: 243), who discusses the dressing up of wax statues in museums to make them seem life-like as possible. For such images of the English royal family in the Undercroft Museum of Westminister Abbey: 218–19, figs. 115–16 with n. 67 for further bibliography; for the French royal family: 216–18 with n. 64.

a theatrical mask.[17] Likeness, gesture, and voice were all forms of performative encoding that made up the ancestral wax mask tradition.[18] During the public eulogy in honor of the newly deceased, the entire "choros" of mask-wearing actors took their seats on the *Rostra*, the public speakers' platform in the Roman Forum, where each revivified ancestor was in turn eulogized in chronological order by a male member of the deceased's family.[19]

A few practical matters regarding these wax masks have not been considered. For example, how did they preserve their form during the extreme heat of summer funerals? Unfortunately, there is no ancient commentary on this problem. Since uric acid hardens wax, it is likely that Romans used urine to harden the wax and make it resistant to the heat. Openings would also have been needed in the mask's eyes, nose, and mouth for the actors to see, breath, and speak. But why were actors hired to represent the revivified ancestors rather than slaves, clients, or even relatives of the nobleman's house (*familia*)? To be sure, anyone could have worn the clothes of the deceased and remembered a few lines of some famous sayings. Actors, however, were familiar with wearing masks — a crucial advantage since an inexperienced person wearing a funerary mask might have tripped during the procession, causing embarrassment that might also be interpreted as a bad omen.

THE ROLE OF WAX *IMAGINES* IN THE CULTURE OF MEMORY

The tradition of the ancestral mask plays an important role in the Roman understanding of *memoria*, that is, remembrance, particularly with regard to collective memory.[20] All living organisms develop strategies to survive, reproduce, and pass on characteristics and traits in order to preserve their kind. But only man, painfully aware of his mortality, has devised various mythologies and rituals in an attempt to survive beyond the grave. It is perhaps the ultimate irony that man, the rational animal, has problems rationally accepting the finality of death. Some religions envision the deceased enjoying places of bliss, where man will continue a happy existence in some form, or else suffering in places of eternal torment. These beliefs were undoubtedly devised as a way of imposing religious conformity and social control on earth. The business of death clearly has important ramifications for the way man interrelates with his fellow man and the way private and social memory is constructed and transmitted to future generations. Although burial through cremation or inhumation was intended as a way of disposing of the dead safely, funeral ceremonies and rituals were created for the living in an attempt to make sense of death and to give it meaning.

Unlike certain monotheistic religions that hold out the promise of a better life to come, traditional Roman — and Greek — religion had little sense of a well-defined hereafter. What passed for an afterlife was rather nebulous, something that was not eagerly sought. In Homer's *Odyssey* (11.487–91), for example, the great Greek hero Achilles declares that he would, in effect, rather be a serf among the living than lord of the dead. For the Romans, the way to survive death was to live on in human memory. The Roman poet Ennius once commented

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[17] The Greek is προσῶπον; the Latin *vultus*. See also Napier 1986: 8, 18–20, passim.

[18] Compare also Connerton 1989: 59.

[19] The *sella curulis*, or inlaid ivory seat, upon which each of the revivified ancestors sat was also very distinctive, for it bore the name "curule," the very term for high office. For the *sella curulis* in general, see Schäfer 1989;

Flower 1996: 77–79, 129, 204, passim. As noted, the right (*ius*) to hand one of these wax *imagines* to one's family, as well as to posterity, was accorded only to those who had achieved curule magistracies (Cicero *In verrem* 5.36).

[20] *OLD* 1096–97 s.v. "memoria," especially no. 7.

(*Epigramma Pyrrhi in templo Tarentini Iovis* 10) that there was no need to mourn his death because he would continue to live through his literary accomplishments. More well known is Horace's famous prediction (*Carmina* 3.30) that his work would be more lasting than bronze and more lofty than the pyramids; he would not altogether die, but a mighty part of him would escape death. The preservation of accomplishments in *memoria* was the essence of true immortality for the Romans, as evidenced also in Polybios (*Histories* 6.54.2): "Accordingly, because the reputation for virtue of good men is continuously being renewed, the glory of those who performed something noble becomes immortal, while the repute of those who performed services for the fatherland becomes well known to many and is transmitted to posterity" (ἐξ ὧν καινοποιουμένης ἀεὶ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀνδρῶν τῆς ἐπ᾽ ἀρετῇ φήμης ἀθανατίζεται μὲν ἡ τῶν καλόν τι διατραξαμένων εὔκλεια, γνώριμος δὲ τοῖς πολλοῖς καὶ παραδόσιμος τοῖς ἐπιγινομένοις ἡ τῶν εὐεργετησάντων τὴν πατρίδα γίνεται δόξα).

In the highly structured and status-conscious society of ancient Rome, there was a hierarchy of remembrance intimately bound to a hierarchy of power in the hereditary nobility. As Paul Connerton aptly put it, "Power speaks *through* blood."[21] And in ancient Rome it was this hierarchy of power that largely controlled and conditioned collective memory, that which is commonly shared by a given group or community.[22] Roman nobles who distinguished themselves in life by their achievements, especially in behalf of the State, were entitled to live on not just in the private memory of their individual families but also in the collective memory of the community. This memorialization took different forms, ultimately leading to the consecration and deification of the leader of the State, beginning with Julius Caesar in 42 B.C., the year of his official deification. But long before these late Republican developments, the Roman nobility had created for themselves a form of collective memory that found expression in the tradition of the ancestral wax masks.

In his book *How Societies Remember*, Connerton maintains that "remembering" is "not a matter of reproduction but construction; it is the construction of a 'schema,' a coding, which enables us to distinguish and, therefore, to recall."[23] However, reproduction and construction of memory are not mutually exclusive. In fact, one of the most effective ways that recollected knowledge is learned, shared, and passed on to future generations — the essence of what we mean by "culture" — is through reproduction, which often takes the form of ritualistic performances. By their very nature, rituals are repetitive, and through them a continuity is established with the past. The reiterative aspect of the Roman nobility's funereal rites, in which wax masks were paraded before the community, gave the past a sense of presentness.[24] Through such ritual reenactments — key in the shaping of collective memory — the Romans created, we might say, a rhetoric of ritualistic reenactment.[25] In his discussion of death rituals Richard Wollheim offered a psychoanalytic explanation for them and stressed that such rites are coded representations.[26] The performative nature of the Roman ancestral wax mask tradition in the context of public funeral rituals was certainly a way of encoding, as well as of reproducing, collective memory. That these rites were at public expense is important,[27] for in being sanctioned by the

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[21] See Connerton 1989: 86, following Foucault 1980: 147.

[22] For similar ideas, see Connerton 1989: 1–5.

[23] Connerton 1989: 2; however, later on (p. 35) he says, "Social habits are essentially legitimating performances. And if habit-memory is inherently performative, then social habit-memory must be distinctively social-performative."

[24] Compare Connerton 1989: 63.

[25] Compare Connerton 1989: 61, 68.

[26] Wollheim 1979: 23–33. See also Connerton 1989: 49.

[27] The award of a public funeral continued under the empire. See, for example, the funeral of Passienus Crispus, twice consul and married to Nero's aunt and mother; Suetonius, *Vita Passieni Crispi*.

Roman Senate, they became not only a shared social experience — that is, the participation of the community in the funeral — but also part of collective memory, reinforcing hereditary nobility and connecting in a highly personalized communal way with the deceased.

The eulogy (*laudatio funebris*) that Marc Antony delivered at Caesar's funeral in the Roman Forum is instructive in conveying the importance of lineage and dynasty, as well as the strong sense of a familial communality in Roman society and culture. In modern Western cultures we tend to emphasize the uniqueness of the individual, whereas in the strongly clan- and family-oriented society of ancient Rome, an individual was regarded as an extension of the family (*familia*) and the clan (*gens*). Given the intricate Roman client system, it is not difficult to understand the Roman State as an extended "family."[28] In his eulogy of Caesar, as reconstructed by Cassius Dio (44.37.3), Antony speaks the following words:

> οὐ μὴν ἀλλ᾽ ἔγωγε οὐ τοῦτο μάλιστα νῦν ἐπαινῶ τοῦ Καίσαρος, ὅτι τὰ μὲν
> νεώτατα ἐκ πολλῶν καὶ γενναίων ἀνδρῶν ἔφυ, τὰ δὲ ἀρχαιότατα ἐκ βασιλέων
> καὶ θεῶν ἐγίγνετο, ἀλλ᾽ ὅτι … μὲν τῆς πόλεως ἡμῶν ὅλης συγγενής ἐστιν (ἐκ
> γὰρ ὧν οὗτος ἐγεννήθη, πρὸς τούτων ἡμεῖς ᾠκίσθημεν …

> Truly I praise Caesar now, not so much because of his recent descent, on the one
> hand, from many noble men, and, on the other hand, his ancient origins from kings
> and gods, but because … he is a kinsman of our whole city, for he is a descendant of
> those who also founded our city.

Also indicative of the notion of a communal kinship is the way the Roman people are addressed in Antony's speech — as they are in other authors delivering solemn addresses, appeals, and prayers — as *Quirites*, descendants of their common founding ancestor Romulus, who according to tradition was called Quirinus after his "translation" into heaven.[29] In a similar manner Vergil speaks of the Romans as the *Aeneadae*, the descendants of their common ancestor Aeneas, and as *nepotes*, literally "grandchildren," of Aeneas.[30] Names like *Quirites* and *Aeneadae* are more than mere synonyms for Romans; they qualify and stress the Romans' common ancestry and kinship. In so doing they evoke the concept of a "national family." Hence, participation on the part of the Roman public in the mourning of the death of a high office-holder is an expression of communal familial loss, while the achievements of the deceased enter the common consciences to be preserved in collective memory. Illustrating the concept of communal kinship is the official title of *parens patriae* ("parent of his country") that Augustus received during his lifetime from the Senate,[31] an honor that underscored his relation to the Roman people as *paterfamilias* ("father of the family").

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[28] Meslin 1978: 53–55, 126–32, 203–19; Hales 2003: 18–19.

[29] In prayers offered on the occasion of the *Ludi Saeculares* (CIL 6. 32323 = ILS 5050), Augustus made frequent use of the term *Quirites* in the context of the Roman people, himself, his house, and extended family in order to stress the past, present, and future in terms of a common national bond.

[30] See, for example, Vergil, *Aeneid* 1.257–96, 6.755–853. For the use of *Aeneadae*, e.g., 1.157, 8.648; for *nepotes*: 3.409, 6.757, 8.731.

[31] Appian, *Bella civilia* 2.106.442 (45 B.C.); Cassius Dio 44.4.4. On this title, which is like that of *pater patriae*, see Weinstock 1971: 200–05. For the titles *parens patriae* and *pater patriae* in general, see Alföldi 1971.

WAX *IMAGINES* IN ROMAN RELIGION AND MAGIC

Focusing on the political dynamics of ancestral masks, Flower concluded that they served no religious or magical purpose.[32] However, given the strong relationship between politics and religion in ancient Roman and in the ancient world in general, I would argue that the wax *imagines* did have an important religio-magico dimension, for which there is both direct and circumstantial evidence. Every aspect of a Roman's life — from the cradle to the grave, from morning to night — was governed by religion. The Roman house aptly has been likened to a temple and the father of the family, to its chief priest.[33] This religious dimension is all the more true in the case of a nobleman's house, the vestibules of which were decorated like temples with the *spolia* of victorious conquerors.[34] In the Roman home the gods were present everywhere, watching over the threshold, the door panels, and door hinges and even numinously present in everyday household tools.[35] The veneration of ancestors was evident in various forms of domestic worship of the spirits of the dead, the *Di Manes*, or *Di Parentes*, and of the divine generative force of the head of the family, the *Genius*, as well as of the gods of the home and pantry, the *Lares* and *Penates*.[36] Varro (*Censor* 2.2) connects the ancestors to the *Genius* in the ritual consecration of wine and notes that in Virgil's *Aeneid* (5.62–63), Aeneas honors his father Anchises with funeral games to which the Trojan *Penates* were also summoned.

At the funeral of a Roman nobleman, it is likely that the mask-wearing actors accompanied the corpse to the grave and stood by as sacrifices were offered to the *Di Manes*, or *Di Parentes*, whom the ancestral wax *imagines* represented. This scenario is at least suggested by Polybios,[37] who reports (*Histories* 6.53.4), "Following these things [i.e., the eulogies in the Forum], after they interred the body and performed the customary rites, they put the image [i.e., wax mask] of the deceased in the most prominent place of the home [i.e., the atrium], placing them in wooden shrines" (μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα, θάψαντες καὶ ποιήσαντες τὰ νομιζόμενα τιθέασι τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ μεταλλάξαντος εἰς τὸν ἐπιφανέστατον τόπον τῆς οἰκίας, ξύλινα ναΐδια περιτιθέντες). The performance of the customary rites after the body is interred must refer to sacrifices at the family tomb, which was the locus of the cult worship of ancestors. Directly after these funeral rites, the masks worn by the actors would have been returned to their shrine-like cupboards in the atrium.

The *Genius* of the head of the family was worshiped not only on a daily basis while he was alive but also on the anniversary of his birth after his death, when he became one of the ancestors. The *Lar Familiaris* is the divine tutelary spirit of the family, of which ancestors were an integral part, while the *Penates* were believed to be guardian spirits of ancestors. In a nobleman's house, all these domestic divinities were generally worshiped together, usually in the context of the *lararium* ("household shrine") in the atrium,[38] where the wax ancestral

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[32] Flower 1996: 209–11, although she does admit (p. 211) that there is evidence for family inscriptions of the *cursus* of the deceased being kept in the *lararium*.

[33] Turcan 2000: 14.

[34] For the similarities between the homes of the nobility and temples in the ideology of the elite, see Wiseman 1987: 393–99.

[35] For domestic religion and its complexities, see Orr 1978; Harmon 1978; Scheid 2003: 165–70; and especially Turcan 2000: 14–50.

[36] As Turcan (2000: 26) notes, "These *Manes* were present in the house through the images of the ancestors, or in the tutelary powers of the *Lares*."

[37] *Pace* Flower (1996: 210), who says, "There is no evidence at all to suggest that the *imagines* were ever present at the grave or played any role there."

[38] The cult of the *Genius* and the cult of the *Lares* and *Penates* were not always centered in the atrium, as evidenced especially in the case of homes of the non-noble classes at various sites, including Pompeii and Herculaneum. See in general Orr 1978: 1575–90; Fröhlich 1991; Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998.

masks were also on display. The domestic shrines of the non-noble classes contained images of their own ancestors, as in the House of Menander at Pompeii (fig. 13.3A–B) and a house at Herculaneum.[39] However, the images from the House of Menander are not themselves wax masks, but instead crudely carved wooden heads that were once covered over with a layer of wax-modeled facial features in imitation of the ancestral wax masks that remained the exclusive right of the Roman nobility.[40] In the case of a relief from the non-aristocratic Tomb of the Haterii in the Museo Gregoriano Profano of the Vatican, the bust of a family's ancestor is placed in an aedicular or cupboard-like structure (fig. 13.4) reminiscent of the *armaria* of the Roman *nobiles*.[41] Wrapped about the base of the bust is a snake, symbolic of the dead man's divine *Genius*.[42] Also found in the context of domestic *lararia* are scenes showing ritual meals in honor of deceased ancestors (fig. 13.5).[43]

The wax *imagines* of Roman noblemen were displayed not just in the home and at funerals but also during special festivals and public sacrifices. The historian Polybios (*Histories* 6.53.6), who came to know many noble Romans during his stay in Rome (167–150 B.C. and perhaps for some years after 146), notes that the wax masks displayed at public sacrifices were carefully decorated: ταύτας δὴ τὰς εἰκόνας ἔν τε ταῖς δημοτελέσι θυσίαις ἀνοίγοντες κοσμοῦσι φιλοτίμως ("Displaying these *imagines* during public sacrifices, they eagerly decorate them"). The decorating of the wax masks on these occasions must be a reference to their being crowned with wreathes or garlands,[44] since there is specific mention of the nature of this adornment in Cicero (*Pro Murena* 88).[45] Wreathes and festoons were normally an important part of sacrificial ritual, as they are found in the context of private and public altars and sacrifices,[46] as well as represented surrounding portraits in funerary monuments.[47] Despite Polybios' comment about the display of wax *imagines* at public sacrifices, little to no attention has been focused on the nature of these ceremonies. The public sacrifices must surely be the *feriae familiares*, the family cultic festivals of the leading families of the old Roman aristocracy. These ceremonies sometimes became public cults after being gentilicial, or clan, cults.[48] On the eighth day after a funeral, noble families also celebrated the *novemdialis cena*, or "ninth-day meal," which took the form of a lavish banquet that might be attended by the whole Roman people and often included gladiatorial games.[49]

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[39] For both these houses, see Fröhlich 1991: 47, fig. 25.3 ("Casa a Graticcio" at Herculaneum) with further bibliography. See also Drerup 1980: 98–99, 121, pl. 50.1; Flower 1996: 42–46, passim, pl. 2 ("Casa del Menandro").

[40] The wood of these heads appears to have been largely displaced by the hot volcanic ash/mud that engulfed them in Pompeii. It has not been definitively determined whether there is any trace of wood under the volcanic mud. At Herculaneum, on the other hand, there is carbonized evidence for wood used for similar crudely fashioned images of ancestors set up in a *lararium*. See especially Drerup 1980: 98–99, 121.

[41] For the Tomb of the Haterii from the Via Labicana and its sculptures, see Giuliano 1957: 47 (no. 51), 48 (no. 52), pls. 32–33; Helbig I⁴* 1963: 773–81 (nos. 1071–77) and 773–74 (no. 1071; E. Simon). The two portrait busts of a male and female member of the family are dated to the Trajanic period. These, too, are in the form of stone busts and do not represent the wax masks of the Roman nobility. See also Zadoks-Josephus Jitta 1932: 42.

[42] For the relationship of the *Genius* and snake, see Orr 1978: 1572–74, passim.

[43] Fröhlich 1991: 445–46, 154, 273 (L 55), figs. 29.3; 37.1.

[44] For the use of garlands in the home in connection with religious rites, see Turcan 2000: 29. For the laying down of wreathes during the joint worship of the *Manes* and *Lares*, see Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 21.11; see also Turcan 2000: 31.

[45] The wreathes described by Cicero are of laurel.

[46] For their presence in domestic *lararia*, see Fröhlich 1991: 46, fig. 29.3.

[47] See, for example, the funerary relief of the Antistii in the British Museum; D'Ambra 2002: 226, fig. 2.

[48] Turcan 2000: 36, 43–50; Scheid 2003: 145–46, 166–67.

[49] Scheid 2003: 169.

As for the question of a possible magical function of wax *imagines*, it is important to remember that in most religions magic plays a significant and intimate role, even though it might not generally be perceived as such.[50] For example, the transubstantiation of the Eucharist in the Catholic mass is essentially an act of magic: In Catholic theology the transformation of the host (bread) and wine into the body and blood of Christ is not symbolic, but literal. In a similarly magical way, the ancestors of the Roman elite were revivified at funeral rites through the medium of mask-wearing actors. Anthropologists have long recognized the magical nature of ancestral reenactment ceremonies in other cultures, such as that of the Yuma Indians of Colorado, in which actors also wear masks and imitate the deeds and gestures of their ancestors.[51] In a number of cultures, wearers of masks represent ghosts or spirits of the dead.[52] As Lucien Lévy-Bruhl pointed out long ago, the very term "represent" in its literal etymological sense means a "re-presenting," that is, causing that which has disappeared to re-appear again.[53] The mask-wearing actor becomes, in effect, the ancestor, whom he re-presents. In the case of the West African Nupe people's *ndakó gboyá* cult, which involves performative ceremonies in which individuals wear ancestor masks, anthropologist Siegfried Nadel noted that "once the performer is inside the mask, he is inseparable from the thing he 'represents'; he *is* the *ndakó gboyá* [the 'Grandfather' or 'Ancestor'], the people insist, and no longer so-and-so, whom you know and have talked to."[54] In *Masks, Transformation and Paradox*, A. David Napier discusses the paradoxical and transformative nature of masks, pointing out that "the mask is a means of transgressing boundaries *because it provides an avenue for selective personification in manipulating certain recognized paradoxes*."[55] Those who wear masks, especially in the context of performative rituals, mediate magically between the natural and supernatural realms.[56] In short, both direct and circumstantial evidence indicates that the wax *imagines* of the Roman nobility would also have had a religio-magical dimension.

ORIGINS OF THE ANCESTRAL WAX MASK TRADITION

When and why the Roman ancestral wax mask tradition came into being are important questions that have not been fully studied or understood. Because a number of customs and insignia of political office appear to have been taken over from the Etruscans, scholars have in the past sought the origins of this tradition in Etruscan funerary practices.[57] Although ancestor worship and various forms of portraiture, including non-wax masks, are certainly found among the Etruscans and other early Italic peoples, not to mention other Mediterranean peoples,[58] the wax mask itself seems to have been a totally Roman invention. Our earliest literary evidence for it dates to the beginning of the second century B.C.: In the *Amphitruo* (458–59), a comedy by Plautus, the god Mercury takes on the appearance of Sosia, a slave of Amphitryon, and confronts Sosia, trying to convince him that he (Mercury) is really Sosia. Mercury's life-like guise is conveyed by the term *imago*, the same word for an ancestor's wax mask. Sosia, moreover, says that this *imago* of himself, which stands before him in life, he will never have in death; that is, as a slave, Sosia would not be entitled to have a wax mask of himself at his funeral, as this right was reserved for the Roman nobility. The second oldest reference to the ancestral

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[50] See *OCD*[2]* 637–38 s.v. "Magic" (especially no. 7).

[51] See Caillois, cited in Connerton 1989: 68.

[52] Napier 1986: xxiii, 18, passim.

[53] Lévy-Bruhl 1935: 123–24.

[54] Nadel 1954/1970: 189, see also 190–91, 198–201, 208–23.

[55] Napier 1986: 17.

[56] Compare Napier 1986: 16. For the form and function of masks in general, see also Lommel 1972.

[57] For this view and problems with it, see Flower 1996: 339–51 (Appendix D).

[58] Zadoks-Josephus Jitta 1932: 11–21.

wax images of the nobility is found about a half century later in the *Histories* (6.53–54) of Polybios, a Greek who became a friend of one of Rome's most prominent aristocratic politicians, P. Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus, and who was therefore in a position to have intimate knowledge of Roman aristocratic practices. It is clear from Polybios' description that the tradition of wax *imagines* was long established by the mid-second century B.C. Since the primary audience for his *Histories* were Greeks unfamiliar with Roman customs, he provides us with more information about the masks than would have been the case if his primary audience were Romans.

A considerable body of circumstantial evidence indicates that internal political, legal, and religious factors, as well as external foreign artistic impulses, combined to give rise to the wax ancestor mask in the second half of the fourth century B.C. This was a period of great social and political change, resulting from conflict between the two major social orders, the patricians and the plebeians.[59] Prior to this time the plebeians were greatly disadvantaged by being denied high political offices and land and by being reduced to debt bondage. Two new laws in particular enacted from the mid- to late fourth century B.C. redressed the inequities suffered by the plebeians, though the actual implementations of these new rights would take time. One of the significant outcomes of this process was the creation of a new plebeian nobility of wealthy plebeians, who often had close political ties to ambitious patrician families interested in strengthening their own position in the State. The new alliances forged between politically powerful patricians and plebeians gave rise to what modern historians have termed the "new Roman nobility."[60] A number of the old and hitherto powerful patrician families did not adjust to this new political reality and went into decline at this time. Among these losers was the old Julian clan, which would not regain power again until the late Republic, with the rise of Julius Caesar and his adopted son Octavian, the future Augustus Caesar. Because of their need for wealth, power, and status, the new plebeian nobility had far more in common with the new patrician nobility than with lower class plebeians. Thus, the new patrician and plebeian nobility made it difficult for non-noble plebeian "outsiders" to gain access to political power.

Since the founding of the Republic shortly before the end of the sixth century, the patrician class dominated the highest offices of the State.[61] Although a few non-patricians achieved the highest magistracies early on, their sons — unlike the sons of patricians — generally did not follow in their footsteps. Only in the patrician class was there a sense that access to political power was a hereditary right, with 99% of high offices being held by patricians by the end of the fifth century B.C.[62] Discontented with this virtual monopoly, the plebeians were eventually able to force the patriciate to make various political concessions. In 376 B.C. two plebeian tribunes, C. Licinius Stolo and L. Sextius Lateranus, brought forward legislation that included admission of the plebeians to the consulship.[63] Although the patriciate opposed this steadfastly, after about a decade of turmoil they were finally forced to make concessions, with the *Lex Licinia Sextia* mandating in 367 B.C. that one of the two consuls be a plebeian.[64] At that time a new curule office — the praetorship — was created that was held only by patricians until 336 B.C., when the plebeian Q. Publius Philo was elected to that office. As a result of the Licinio-Sextian legisla-

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[59] For the so-called "conflict of the orders" (the two "orders" referring to the aristocratic patricians and the non-aristocratic plebeians), see, for example, Hölkeskamp 1987, 1993; Cornell 1995: 242–71, 293–344.

[60] Some have also proposed in vague terms a possible connection between the creation of the new nobility and the beginnings of the wax *imagines* tradition. See, for

example, Hölscher 1978: 325, 1990: 73–84; Hölkeskamp 1993: 27–30; Flower 1996: 339–51.

[61] See especially Hölkeskamp 1987, 1993; Cornell 1995.

[62] Cornell 1995: 254, table 6.

[63] Hölkeskamp 1987, 1993; Cornell 1995: 330–40.

[64] Livy, *History of Rome* 6.35–42. See also Cornell 1995: 334, passim.

tion two new curule aedileships were added to the magistracies, which were at first monopolized by the patriciate, but not long after also held by wealthy and powerful plebeians.[65] With the passage in 342 B.C. of a plebiscite introduced by the tribune L. Genucius that was known as the *Lex Genucia*, it became legal for both of the consuls to be plebeians,[66] although not for both to be patricians. In 339 B.C. another law, the *Lex Publilia*, was passed mandating that one of the censors — another curule magistracy — be from the plebs. Because of the political gains of plebeians who became *nobiles* by virtue of attaining curule magistracies for which they were newly eligible, competition for the highest political offices dramatically increased, for despite their power and influence, patricians still had to canvas for votes in public elections.

Meanwhile, Roman expansionism in Italy was resulting in spoils of war that victorious office holders could bring back to embellish the City and their own homes.[67] As time went on, the setting up of statues of honored military victors in public places became more and more commonplace.[68] Already in 338 B.C. honorific statues were set up to L. Furius Camillus and C. Maenius, the consuls and generals in the war with the Latins, while a generation later Sp. Carvilius set up a colossal bronze statue of Jupiter on the Capitoline and a smaller one of himself at its foot for his victory over the Samnites.[69] Because success in battle often led to gaining or continuing to hold political offices, such public visual imagery became a powerful reminder of successful individuals and their families.[70]

Throughout this time there were innovations in the representational arts, as well as architectural projects to honor individuals and families.[71] Many of these projects took the form of temples as thank offerings to the gods for the victories and successes they brought to the Roman people. Triumphal displays, including parading the conquered and spoils of war, as well as "triumphal paintings" in which the military achievements of office-holding generals were graphically represented, also played an important part in the competition for political offices. We have a sense of the role of images in electoral rhetoric from an incident involving "triumphal paintings." Pliny (*Naturalis historia* 35.23) tells us that after storming Carthage in 146 B.C., the Roman commander L. Hostilius Mancinus commissioned paintings showing his exploits that he displayed in the Roman Forum and personally explained to onlookers. This display made such an impression on the electorate that Hostilius Mancinus was elected consul at the next assembly.[72] But since the right of triumph, the setting up of honorific statues and paintings, and architectural projects were not the exclusive prerogatives of patricians or plebeians, how could the patrician nobility gain a political advantage over the plebeian nobility? In this new politically charged atmosphere, new strategies had to be devised; one of these, I believe, took the form of wax ancestral *imagines*, which at least initially and for some generations to come certainly advantaged the patrician aristocracy over the plebeian nobility.[73]

The second half of the fourth century B.C. saw not just political and social change, but also important artistic developments that I believe played a key role in the creation of the wax

[65] Cornell 1995: 334, 341.

[66] Livy, *History of Rome* 7.42. For various reasons, however, it was not until 173 B.C. that two plebeians held the consulship together: see Cornell 1995: 337–38.

[67] See Gruen 1992: 84–103. For the Roman conquest of Italy, see Cornell 1995: 293–326, 345–68.

[68] For this tradition, see Hölscher 1978: 315–44.

[69] For these honorific statues and the ancient sources recording them, see Gruen 1992: 88, 90. See also Lahusen 1983: 7–12 (Carvilius), 56–59 (Camillus and Maenius).

[70] As already noted, the concept of individuality, although valued in Roman culture, was strongly subordinated to the family.

[71] Hölscher 1978, 1980, 1990. For the role of art during the Republican period, see in general Gruen 1992: 84–182.

[72] For triumphal paintings, including that of Hostilius Mancinus, see recently Holliday 2002: 104–12, 213–19.

[73] For what constitutes a *nobilis*, see Brunt 1982.

imagines of the Roman nobility. The employment of hired actors to wear the ancestral masks and the *choros*-like appearance of these revivified ancestors in the funeral procession logically point to a strong connection between the ancestral *imagines* and theatrical performances. This association, however, need not be anything more than simply the concept of wearing a mask to impersonate some specific being, whether real or fictitious. These wax *imagines* were, to be sure, quite different from theatrical masks (*personae*), which took the form of stock characters, whether caricatures or idealized, usually with large mouths to convey effectively the sound of the actor's voice.[74] Theatrical masks also usually covered the entire head, rather than just the face, as did the wax masks.[75]

It is uncertain exactly how early some form of theatrical performance and the use of theatrical masks were introduced into Rome, but they were most likely known by the middle of the fourth century B.C.[76] According to the Roman historian Livy (*History of Rome* 7.1–7), the first theatrical performances sanctioned by the Senate were the *ludi scaenici* in 364 B.C. These performances were put on in an attempt to appease the gods because of a pestilence that had been raging in Rome at the time. Livy specifically mentions that *ludiones* (performers), who were brought to Rome from Etruria, danced to the accompaniment of flute players.[77] The relationship between a dancer and an actor was especially close, as is made clear by the Etruscan word *ister* ("dancer"), from which is derived the Latin *histrio*, or "masked ritual performer."[78] Although Livy claims the *ludi scaenici* were a new thing for the warlike Romans (*nova res bellicoso populo*), they would certainly have been aware of masked performances long before this time, given Rome's close contacts with Etruria and the period of Etruscan kingship in Rome beginning in the sixth century B.C. Etruscan tomb paintings portraying performers and masks go back at least to the late sixth century B.C., the very time that dramatic performances were taking root in Greece.[79] In fact, the Latin term for a theatrical mask, *persona*, is derived from the Etruscan word *phersu*, which has a specific reference to a masked performer depicted on the walls of late sixth century Etruscan tombs (e.g., fig. 13.6).[80] In the fourth century, masks would also have been known to the Romans not only from the neighboring Oscans' Atellan farces (*Atellanae*), which appealed to the early Romans and were taken up by them, but also from crude Greek-style farcical dramas (*phylakes*) from Southern Italy.[81] Although Greek-style plays were not translated and performed in Rome until 240 B.C.,[82] it is likely that Roman patricians would have been at least somewhat familiar with the more sophisticated masked performances of Greek theater in Southern Italy (Magna Graecia) and Sicily through travel and contacts with these areas. At this time, too, we find temples to abstract divinities and

[74] For numerous representations of theatrical masks in both Greek and Roman art, see Bieber 1961.

[75] Bieber 1961. See also *OCD*[2]* 934–95 s.v. "masks" with further bibliography.

[76] For the early history of theater in Rome, see Beacham 1992: 1–26. Masks were certainly in use by the third century B.C., as is evident from P. Scipio Africanus' borrowing a mask (*persona*) from Terence: Suetonius, *Vita Terenti* 3. Masks may have fallen out of popularity some time between the third and first centuries B.C. because of the growing interest in mimes, only to be reintroduced by Roscius in the first century B.C. On the problem of masks, see Gratwick 1982: 83–84; Beare 1968: 303–09; Beacham 1992: 183–84.

[77] See Bieber 1961: 152; Gruen 1992: 185 with further bibliography.

[78] Gratwick 1982: 83.

[79] See Pallottino 1968: 328, 338, 430, pl. 69; Bieber 1961: 147–48, figs. 542–43; and recently Haynes 2000: 232–33, fig. 190.

[80] See references in previous note. See also Rheinfelder 1928: 1–26; Haynes 1963; Pallottino 1968: 328, 338, passim, pl. 69.

[81] Beacham 1992: 4–6.

[82] These first translations of Greek plays into Latin were made by L. Livius Andronicus, who came from Tarentum in Magna Graecia: *OCD*[2]* 876–77 s.v. "Livius Andronicus, Lucius"; Bieber 1961: 152, passim; Gruen 1992: 185, 230, passim. For the influence of Greek dramatic meters on funerary inscriptions, see Rawson 1985: 22 with n. 13.

patriotic myths and legends as a result of Greek influence, especially from Southern Italy and Sicily.[83] Therefore, by the second half of the fourth century the Roman patriciate was certainly well aware of theatrical masks and their impact on a general populace eager for entertainment. Moreover, we have evidence at least for the third and second centuries B.C. that the voting public was influenced by Roman style plays, the *fabulae praetextatae*, dealing with historical personages and situations.[84] The curule *aediles*, who were just beginning their political careers, were for the most part in charge of putting on these plays during public holidays. Like the ancestral wax *imagines*, such plays were a useful way of honoring particular families, whose prominent members figured in the plays.

An important artistic innovation of the later fourth century that undoubtedly played a key role in the tradition of the wax *imagines* of the Roman nobility was the creation of life-masks for portrait sculpture. This Greek invention is attributed to Lysistratos, the brother of the great master sculptor Lysippos.[85] Remarkably, no one has made a direct connection between the origins of the Roman wax ancestral masks and Lysistratos' new technique in producing more accurate portraits.[86] This development was, in my opinion, one of the principal catalysts in the creation of Roman ancestral wax masks. From at least the fifth century B.C. we know that Greek artistic impulses were already being felt in Rome, whether indirectly through their influence on the Etruscans or directly through Greek artists working in Rome. The earliest Greek artists known to have been working in Rome were Damophilos and Gorgasos, who decorated the temple of the goddess Ceres in the Circus Maximus in 493 B.C. (Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 35.154). Both direct and indirect influence from Greece is also apparent in Rome in the portraiture of the fifth and fourth centuries.[87] Important information about Lysistratos' new approach to portrait sculpture in the second half of the fourth century B.C. is provided by Pliny the Elder, who wrote in the first century A.D.[88] In his *Naturalis historia* (35.153) Pliny states the following:

> *Hominis autem imaginem gypso e facie ipsa primus omnium expressit ceraque in eam formam gypsi infusa emendare instituit Lysistratus Sicyonius, frater Lysippi, de quo diximus. Hic et similitudines reddere instituit; ante eum quam pulcherrimas facere studebant. Idem et de signis effigies exprimere invenit, crevitque res in tantum, ut nulla signa statuaeve sine argilla fierent.*

> The first individual, moreover, to mold a human portrait out of plaster from the face itself and to introduce a way of correcting [the end result] from the wax poured into the plaster mold was Lysistratus of Sicyon, brother of Lysippus, about whom we have [already] spoken. Lysistratus introduced a way of rendering likenesses, for before him they would take pains to make [portraits] as beautiful [i.e., idealized] as they could. The same [Lysistratos] invented making casts from statues, and [this] practice grew to such an extent that no figures or statues were produced without clay [models].

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[83] See Hölscher 1978: 349–50, who places the beginnings of temples to abstract divinities in Rome in the fourth and third centuries B.C.

[84] The earliest known example of a play written specifically for funeral games (*ludi funebres*) is Terence's *Adelphoi*, in connection with the funeral of L. Aemilius Paulus in 160 B.C.; Williams 1982: 3–6.

[85] See, for example, Pollitt 1974: 185–87; Stewart 1990: 80, 293 (T 133), passim. Death- or even life-masks may have been used as a basis for portraiture in early pharaonic Egypt, but there would not have been any connection between this early period and fourth century B.C.

Greece. For the use of masks in Egyptian portraiture, see Breckenridge 1968: 63; Rockwell 1993: 137.

[86] Compare Drerup 1980: 120, who briefly mentions Lysistratos' invention and the availability of this new technique, but sees the origins of the wax mask tradition in the free-form funeral masks of the Etruscans.

[87] See in general Hafner 1969, 1970.

[88] Pliny's information for this statement probably goes back to Xenokrates, a sculptor and art critic associated with the Sikyonian School, to which Lysippos and Lysistratos belonged; Pollitt 1974: 73–81.

Before Lysistratos, a portrait was generally conceived as an ideal type that was modified to some degree towards a person's likeness or individuality. Lysistratos' approach represented a radical change, an inversion, so to speak, of the old notion of what constituted a portrait. Starting with an exact likeness, produced in wax from the plaster mold of an individual's face, he modified the image to create an aesthetically pleasing work of art in bronze or marble. In short, he improved upon the mere physical representation of the individual who was to be portrayed.

Greek artistic developments in creating more accurate likenesses were no doubt an out-growth of an increasing Greek interest in writing various forms of literary biographies, encomia, and autobiographies (i.e., memoirs) of important men, forms of which can already be found in the fifth century.[89] Fourth-century works like Xenophon's *Agesilaus* and *Cyropedia*, as well as Aristoxenos' lives of various philosophers, had a considerable impact on the development of biography as a literary genre.[90] Such Greek biographical and encomiastic efforts would have been known to the Roman aristocracy, who employed in their own funeral culture even before the fourth century a home-grown form of *encomium* to extol the virtues of their illustrious dead.[91] These distinctive early Roman eulogies, known as the *laudationes funebres*, were kept in the *tablinum* ("master's study") of noble families and were characterized by Cicero (*Brutus* 61–62, *De oratore* 2.341) as crude in form.[92]

Because of trade, it is very likely that Lysistratos' new technique in producing portrait images caught on in Rome soon after its invention in the later fourth century, the very time when honorific images in bronze were being set up in Rome. The only significant difference between Lysistratos' artistically altered life-masks as the basis for portrait sculpture and the Roman nobility's ancestral wax masks — other than the final material — was the Romans' insistence on exactitude in their wax masks. The desire for verisimilitude in ancestral *imagines*, specifically commented on by ancient writers, is underscored in the hiring of actors to wear the wax *imagines* who were like the deceased in height and general appearance. The mask-wearing actor's repeating of sayings or even jokes and gesturing were important in revealing the character and virtue of the deceased.[93] As the biographer Plutarch noted (*Alexander* 1.2), the difference between writing biography and history was that biography highlights the virtues and vices of an individual and that "a slight thing like a phrase or a jest often makes a greater revelation of character than battles where thousands fall, or the greatest armaments, or sieges of cities" (πρᾶγμα βραχὺ πολλάκις καὶ ῥῆμα καὶ παιδιά τις ἔμφασιν ἤθους ἐποίησε μᾶλλον ἢ μάχαι μυριόνεκροι καὶ παρατάξεις αἱ μέγισται καὶ πολιορκίαι πόλεων).

Since ancestral wax masks covered only the face,[94] an actor wearing a wax *imago* would have recalled a Roman *triumphator*, whose face was covered with a mask of red paint on the day of his triumph in imitation of the Archaic terra-cotta statue of Jupiter Optimus Maximus in his temple on the Capitoline Hill.[95] A sense of the red-painted face of this lost cult image

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[89] See especially Misch 1951; Momigliano 1993.

[90] Momigliano 1993: 43–64 (Xenophon), 73–89 (Aristoxenos). See also Misch 1951: 177–286, especially 208–30.

[91] Dionysios of Halicarnassos (5.17.2–3), in talking about the funeral oration of the first consul L. Iunius Brutus, notes that these funeral eulogies were already an ancient and native tradition at that time. See Flower 1996: 128–58, especially 132.

[92] Cicero also comments on the unreliablity of these *laudationes*, as families were accustomed to distort and exaggerate the deeds of their ancestors.

[93] See, for example, the funeral of Vespasian in Suetonius, *Divus Vespasianus* 19.2.

[94] See footnote 15.

[95] According to Pliny (*Naturalis historia* 33.111), the painting of the face of Jupiter with lead-red paint (*minium*) was repeated periodically on festival days (*festis diebus*), no doubt as part of a renewal ceremony. As von Duhn (1906: 20) probably correctly surmised based in his study of the traces of red paint found on urns, coffins, and skeletons (especially skulls) from Italian pre-Indo-European tombs, the intent in using blood-red was to impart a "pulsating and powerful life" ("pulsierendes,

is conveyed by a late fifth century B.C. polychromatic terra-cotta head of the Etruscan Jupiter (Tinia) from a temple at Lo Scasato (Falerii), now in the Villa Giulia in Rome.[96] As the *triumphator*'s actual facial features were preserved beneath the painted mask, so too the deceased's face was preserved in an *imago* made from his life-mask. There were also similarities between the triumphal procession (*pompa triumphalis*) and the funeral procession (*pompa funebris*).[97] Riding in chariots like the *triumphator* in his triumphal robes were the dressed-up and mask-wearing actors impersonating deceased ancestors in the funeral rites.[98] Etymologically, the Latin noun *currus* (chariot) and its adjectival form *currulis* (pertaining to a chariot) appear to be related to the Latin adjective *curulis* (relating to a curule magistrate), as in the *sella curulis*, or "curule chair" of office.[99] In any case, since the Roman triumph seems to have already been in vogue by the late Archaic period and therefore preceded the establishment of the wax mask tradition, it is likely that the painted face of the *triumphator* influenced at least to some degree the form of the ancestral *imago*.[100]

In the second half of the fourth century B.C., when the preponderance of evidence indicates that wax ancestral masks were produced for the first time, the new plebeian nobility finally began to be allowed to hold curule magistracies and consequently to have wax *imagines* of prominent plebeian office holders. But what would have been the special advantage offered by wax *imagines* to the patrician nobility in the competition for curule magistracies? The answer lies in the fact that patricians could claim a long and distinguished line of curule office holders within their families going back a number of generations, a distinction that the new plebeian nobility lacked. Although the consulship was open to plebeians as early as 367 B.C., they were initially denied other curule magistracies such as the praetorship, curule aedileship, and censorship.[101] The disadvantage that the new plebeian nobility must have consequently felt is mirrored much later on in the writings of Cicero, who was the first in his family to hold a curule magistracy and hence a *novus homo* ("new man"). Coming not from Rome but from the small town of Arpinum and therefore an outsider, Cicero constantly felt the need to prove himself and at the same time to belittle, when necessary, those who had long formed the inner circle of the Roman aristocracy. Knowing he was at a disadvantage because of his lack of a long aristocratic pedigree, he was impelled to overcompensate, to strive all the more to achieve great things both politically and intellectually.

It would take noble plebeian families generations before they could accumulate sufficient wax ancestral masks to impress a voting electorate. But the patricians had a yet further

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kraftvolles Leben") to the cult image. For the painting of the face of both the *triumphator* and the cult image of Jupiter with lead-red, see, for example, Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 33.111; Servius, *ad Verg. Ecl.* 6.22; Isidorus, *Originum libri viginti ex antiquitate eruti* 18.2.6; Tzetzes *Epis.* 97 (after Cassius Dio). For these passages, see also Versnel 1970: 59–60, 78–82, 115–16, passim; Künzl 1988: 88, 94–96.

[96] For this head, see Brendel 1978: 319, fig. 240. For an excellent color photo of it, see Cristofani 1979: 102.

[97] The similarity of the two was already noted in antiquity by Seneca (*Ad Marciam, De consolatione* 3.1: *funus triumpho simillimum* ("the funeral [is] very much like the triumph"). For a review of the evidence, see Versnel 1970: 115–31.

[98] For the actors riding in chariots during the funeral procession, see especially Polybios, *Histories* 6.53.8.

[99] See Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae* 3.18.4; *OLD* 476 s.v. "currulis" and "currus," 478 s.v. "curulis," especially no. 3; *OCD* 1382 s.v. "sella curulis." For the "curule chair," see footnote 19.

[100] The painting of the *triumphator*'s face with lead-red paint in imitation of Jupiter Capitolinus probably did not predate the creation of the cult image of Jupiter on the Capitol in the last years of the sixth century B.C. The earliest representation in art of what appears to be a Roman triumph or some form of it is found on the so-called bronze Praeneste *cista* (toiletry container), now in the Altes Museum in Berlin, that probably dates to around the third century B.C.; Künzl 1988: 99–100, fig. 62.

[101] Compare footnote 64.

advantage that they could exploit through the vehicle of the ancestral *imagines*. They might commission wax masks of legendary heroes to whom the ancient families claimed kinship, as well as masks of actual ancestors who had held high office long ago.[102] The facial features of such invented *imagines* would probably have been generalized or endowed with some distinctive or familial physiognomic trait. The Greeks, after all, had invented images of Homer and other noteworthy individuals who lived long before portraiture existed as an art form in Greece.[103] Although Polybios does not speak of the making of wax masks of legendary or remote ancestors, several ancient sources refer to the existence in their own day of wax masks of such legendary figures as Aeneas, the kings of Alba Longa, Romulus, and Numa Pompilius (fig. 13.7A–B), as well as an actual historical personage, L. Iunius Brutus (fig. 13.8), the so-called tyrant slayer and one of the first consuls of the new Roman Republic.[104] All these characters from Roman legend and history lived — or were said to have lived — long before realistic-looking portraiture existed in Italy. At family funerals and public festivals at which wax *imago*-wearing actors appeared, patricians would thus be assured of the most impressive display of ancestral glory possible, one that could not help but impress the electorate by comparison with even the most prominent members of the new plebeian nobility.

THE ROLE OF WAX *IMAGINES* IN ROMAN VERISTIC PORTRAITURE

It had long been argued that the Roman nobility's wax ancestral masks — in the past generally taken as death-masks — gave rise to Roman "verism" in late Republican portraiture.[105] Already in 1792 Ennio Quirino Visconti proposed that ancestor masks inspired the Roman sculptural portrait bust.[106] Later on Otto Benndorf, going back to Theodor Mommsen, suggested a connection between wax death-masks and Roman portrait sculpture.[107] Some scholars, however, doubted that the wax ancestral masks were in fact death-masks, while others dismissed the idea that Roman death-masks had anything to do with veristic portrait sculpture because of the differences between late Republican life-like portrait sculpture and death-masks,[108] which reflect the dramatically altered facial features of the deceased after *rigor mortis* has set in.[109] Very few images produced in the late Republic really resemble death-masks, and the few that do, like the terra-cotta head from the Campana Collection in the Louvre (fig. 13.9),[110] are not associated with the Roman aristocracy.

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[102] For these figures, see below. See also Drerup 1980: 121.

[103] For these invented images, see footnotes 135–36.

[104] Tacitus, *Annales* 4.9.2 (Aeneas, the Alban Kings, and Romulus); Dio 56.34 (Romulus); Livy, *History of Rome* 1.34.6 (Numa Pompilius); Cicero, *Orationes Philippicae* 2.26 and *De oratore* 225–26 (L. Iunius Brutus). In some cases, the Senate voted that those who had attained divine status (e.g., Caesar and Augustus) were not to have a wax mask. In other cases, this seems not to have the case (e.g., Aeneas, Romulus, Vespasian). On this matter, see Flower 1996: 243 n. 94.

[105] For the term "verism," or "verismus," see Hinks 1934: 232; Richter 1955: 41; Kaschnitz von Weinberg 1965: 105–34; Jackson 1987. See also Gruen 1992: 153 with n. 90 for further bibliography.

[106] Visconti 1792: S.X. See also Drerup 1980: 82.

[107] Benndorf 1878. See also Drerup 1980: 82–83 for Benndorf and his influence on later studies. See further Kaschnitz von Weinberg 1965: 43–47.

[108] For a discussion of the various views, see Zadoks-Josephus Jitta 1932: 79–88. See also Drerup 1980: 124–29; Lahusen 1985; Jackson 1987: 44–45; Gruen 1992: 154–56 with further bibliography.

[109] See, for example, the comments of Zadoks-Josephus Jitta 1932: 47–48, quoted above (footnote 7).

[110] De Kerauson 1986: 10–11 (no. 1 bis). See also Zadoks-Josephus Jitta 1932: 48–49; Hiesinger 1973: 815–16, fig. 7; Bianchi Bandinelli 1970: 93, fig. 101; Drerup 1980: 99, pl. 50.2.

If the majority of wax ancestral masks were in fact life-masks, as seems to be the case, then we must reconsider the role of the wax ancestral mask tradition in the creation of what has come to be called Roman veristic portraiture. It is not my intention here to rehearse all the pros and cons with regard to the origins of Roman "veristic" portraiture, a subject with which others have already dealt.[111] Instead, I indicate some of the problems with the term "verism"/"veristic"[112] and present my own views on the main line of development of this form of Roman portraiture, especially as it relates to "realism" in Greek portraiture.[113] With our new understanding of the Roman nobility's desire to accurately reproduce the facial features of a curule magistrate through the medium of life-masks, it would appear that the wax ancestral mask tradition did play a catalytic, central role in the creation of true-to-life portraits in various media from the late fourth century B.C. on.

Scholars have traditionally regarded Roman "verism" as a type of hyper-, or super-, realism, a brutal "warts-and-all" form of realistic portrayal.[114] The images used as examples of Roman verism are typically portraits of homely or ugly middle-aged or elderly individuals from the late Republican and early Imperial periods. The term "verism" can certainly be used to describe a factual, descriptive, or literal approach to representing all the blemishes, imperfections, or defects of the physiognomy of an actual person. However, not all Romans would have been homely or ugly, so if a portrait of a Roman represents him in an accurate way as rather good-looking, would such a likeness qualify as a veristic image? The *Oxford English Dictionary* indicates that verism is "the rigid representation of the truth or reality,"[115] a definition which does not require that the subject's facial features be unattractive.

The Roman concept of *veritas* ("truthfulness"), from which "verism" derives, loomed large in the rhetorical, moral, and ethical disquisitions of Roman authors, even though "truth" was understood in subjective terms. The Roman architect Vitruvius, a staunch supporter of *veritas* in figural representations, railed in his *De architectura* (7.5.3–4) against the untruthful *monstra* ("monstrosities") that were to be found in Roman wall paintings of his day.[116] Even in the early imperial period, when idealizing or classicizing trends in portraiture became dominant, some Romans continued to desire exactitude in representing individuals as they actually looked. Pliny the Elder (*Naturalis historia* 35.4), for example, bemoans the fact that by his time (i.e., the third quarter of the first century A.D.): "Even the painting of portrait images by which especially exact likenesses were transmitted through time has entirely gone out of fash-

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[111] See Gruen 1992: 152–82 for an excellent review of the issues and problems, with further bibliography and new ideas expressed. However, here too, as in so many other works, the wax ancestral masks are regarded as "death masks." For earlier surveys of the evidence, see Breckenridge 1968: 143–86, 1973; Hiesinger 1973.

[112] Compare Bianchi Bandinelli 1937: xix, who criticizes in passing the use of the term "verism."

[113] See Hinks 1934: 232, who distinguished between Greek realism, a subjective term (in relation to the artist), and Roman verism, an objective term (in relation to the work).

[114] Kaschnitz von Weinberg 1926: 179 n. 1 was one of the first to use and define the term "verism."

[115] *OED* 3612.130 s.v. "verist."

[116] *Sed haec, quae ex veris rebus exempla sumebantur, nunc iniquis moribus inprobantur. <Nam pinguntur>*

tectoriis monstra potius quam ex rebus finitis imagines certae … Haec autem nec sunt nec fieri possunt nec fuerunt. Ergo ita novi mores coegerunt uti inertiae mali iudices convincerent artium virtutes "But these [paintings], which took their models from real things, are now rejected [as being] in bad taste. For monsters are depicted on frescoes rather than true images from real things … These things, moreover, neither exist, nor can they exist, nor have they [ever] existed. Therefore, [these] new fashions have brought things to such a state that bad judges have condemned artistic excellence as boring." Motivated by issues of *veritas* in representation, Horace at the very outset of his famous treatise on writing poetry, the *Ars Poetica* (1–13), compares painting and poetry in terms of what constitutes good and bad taste. On the issue of truth in Roman art, see Elsner 1995: 54–57, 75, 83, 85–86.

ion" (*Imaginum quidem pictura qua maxime similes in aevum propagabantur figurae, in totum exolevit*). His nephew Pliny the Younger also wrote to a friend (on behalf of another friend) to ask him to commission an artist to make copies of painted portraits of the historian Cornelius Nepos and the Epicurean philosopher Titus Catus "without departing from the originals even to improve on [i.e., idealize or ennoble] them."[117]

The terms "verism" and "veristic" were coined in attempting to explain why so many images of Romans in the late Republic looked so different from portraits of Greeks.[118] Roman verism could thereby be distinguished from late Classical and Hellenistic Greek "realism."[119] At the time that the terms "verism" and "veristic" were coined to describe Roman portraits, Roman art in general had long been considered derivative or inferior to Greek art. Although this rather simplistic view is still current in some quarters, it ultimately goes back to eighteenth-century art historical theory, as propounded by Johann Joachim Winckelmann, who pedestal-ized Greek art — sculpture in particular — and viewed Roman art rather negatively, regarding it as "imitative." When Winckelmann wrote his highly influential work, *Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums*,[120] he was unaware that a number of the works that he praised so highly as original Greek masterpieces were copies or adaptations of lost Greek originals that were produced in the Roman period.[121] By holding up Roman verism in portraiture as something distinctly and uniquely Roman, scholars more sympathetic to the Roman achievement could claim that the Romans were capable of producing something new and important in its own right in art.[122] Partly for this reason,[123] Roman portraiture is generally regarded today as one of the two great artistic achievements of the Romans, the other being architecture. However, scholars like Gisela Richter took issue with the idea that Roman "verism" was something distinctly Roman, claiming that this form of hyper-realism can also be found in Hellenistic portraits of Greeks and of Romans in Greece and pointing out that the majority of marble sculptors working in the service of Rome — whether in Greece or in Rome itself — were Greeks.[124] For Richter, verism was a dry form of realism, for which she coined the expression "veristic realism."[125] According to Richter and others who have followed her, the only apparent difference between Greek and Roman verism derives from the fact that Romans looked racially different from the Greeks.[126] One scholar even went so far as to postulate that Greek sculptors, who had a negative view of Romans, caricatured them by creating portraits that exaggerated their physiognomic features.[127] This "subversive" interpretation of Roman verism is scarcely credible and has understandably not found much favor.[128] Although it is true that Romans often look different from Greeks, it is

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[117] Some Romans also criticized the lack of exactitude in portrait images. For examples, see Pollini 1987: 11.

[118] For the term "verism" in its application to Roman portraiture, see Kaschnitz von Weinberg 1926: 179 n. 1, 1965: 105–34.

[119] Richter 1968; Breckenridge 1968: 87–142.

[120] This 1764 work has very recently been retranslated into English as *Johann Joachim Winckelmann, History of the Art of Antiquity* (Winckelmann 2006). For Winckelmann's assessment that Roman art was "imitative" first of the Etruscans, then of the Greeks, see Part 1, Chapter 5 (pp. 283–94, esp. p. 284).

[121] Winckelmann 2006: 283–89, passim.

[122] See, for example, Kaschnitz von Weinberg 1926: 179 n. 1, who, following Studniczka, makes a distinction between "verism" and both "realism" and "naturalism." See

also Breckenridge 1973: 826; Hiesinger 1973: 805; Jackson 1987: 32–33.

[123] Roman "verism," however, accounts for only one aspect of Roman portrait art.

[124] Richter 1951b.

[125] Richter 1955: 45–46. See also Toynbee 1934, who uses "realistic" and "veristic" interchangeably.

[126] For the so-called racist theory, see especially Richter 1951a: 60. See also idem 1951b, in which she argues that there are no names of Latin sculptors working at the time veristic portraits appear, whereas we know the names of many Greek artists working for Roman patrons in Rome and elsewhere.

[127] For this view, see Smith 1981: 34–38.

[128] See, for example, Gruen 1992: 165–67.

due in part to the Romans' distinctive close-cropped hairstyle, which contributes to their look of a *negotiator*, or businessman.

Part of the problem in understanding the differences between Greek and Roman portraiture concerns the terms "realism" and "verism." Realism in Greek portraiture is already evident in such fourth-century B.C. images as those of Plato (427–347 B.C.)[129] and Aristotle (384–322 B.C.)[130] that were produced during their lifetimes[131] and are now known to us only through Greco-Roman copies. Although the original lost portrait of Aristotle, made when he was around sixty years old, has been attributed to Lysippos, it may have been the work of his brother Lysistratos, who created artistic likenesses from the life-masks of actual individuals.[132] An epigram in the anonymous *Life of Aristotle*[133] mentions that Aristotle was bald, but in copies of his portrait that have come to us he is shown with thin wavy strands of hair brushed down over his forehead to suggest balding. Portraits like those of Plato and Aristotle would have a profound effect on realistic portraiture to come.

Caution should always be exercised when discussing images like the very realistic-looking portrait of Aristotle's contemporary Demosthenes (384–322 B.C.) that was made by Polyeuktos some forty-two years after Demosthenes' death and was probably not based on a life-mask.[134] Although there may have been a contemporary literary description of Demosthenes, the realistic-looking image of him that has come down to us in a number of Greco-Roman replicas of the lost original may very well be an essentially invented likeness that captures his bitter and harsh character, mentioned by Plutarch in his *Comparison between Demosthenes and Cicero* (1.3.6). Unlike verism, which implies that the image is based on the actual physiognomic features of the individual being portrayed, a naturalistic-looking portrait of a named person can be characterized as realistic even if it is not based in any way on his actual features. In short, the term "realism" can be applied even to invented but highly naturalistic images like those of Homer (fig. 13.10)[135] and the so-called Pseudo-Seneca, who is most likely Hesiod (fig. 13.11).[136] Both Homer and Hesiod lived in the late eighth century B.C., long before portraiture existed as an art form in Greece. The realism of both these Hellenistic baroque interpretations of Homer and Hesiod is certainly equal to what is seen in most portraits that have been classified in the past as examples of Roman verism.

As noted above, we know from ancient literary sources of the existence of wax ancestral masks of legendary Roman characters like Numa Pompilius, who is said to have lived in the late eighth century, and actual historical personages like L. Iunius Brutus, who lived in the early fifth century, again before true realism existed in either Greek or Roman art.[137] The sculp-

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[129] *POG* II 1965: 164–70; Breckenridge 1968: 101–02, passim.

[130] *POG* II 1965: 170–75, especially 173 (no. 7), figs. 976–78, 985, for the best extant portrait of Aristotle, which is in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. See also Breckenridge 1968: 120–24, passim.

[131] As seems likely in the case of Plato and is virtually certain for Aristotle.

[132] Although the name of the sculptor of the portrait of Aristotle is not stated, the assumption is that it was a creation of Lysippos, whose patron Alexander the Great commissioned Aristotle's portrait to be set up in Athens; see *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum* 136. See *POG* II 1965: 171; Breckenridge 1968: 124. If Lysippos were the sculptor, he might have used his brother Lysistratos's

life-mask technique as the basis of his portrait of Aristotle. Both Lysippos and Lysistratos were from the Sicyonian School; see Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 35.153. See also Pollitt 1974: 186.

[133] *POG* II 1965: 170.

[134] *POG* II 1965: 215–23; Breckenridge 1968: 127–28.

[135] *POG* II 1965: 50–53 ("Hellenistic Type"), 51 (no. IV. 20), figs. 102–04 (marble head in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston).

[136] *POG* II 1965: 56–66, 59 (no. 12), figs. 165–66 (for the bronze head from the Villa of the Papyri outside Herculaneum, now in the Naples National Archaeological Museum).

[137] For these wax ancestral masks of Numa Pompilius and L. Iunius Brutus, see footnote 104.

tural and numismatic portraits of Numa Pompilius (fig. 13.7A–B)[138] are rather idealized, while the coin image of L. Iunius Brutus (fig. 13.8)[139] appears somewhat realistic. In addition, a number of portraits of actual unknown Greeks created in the late Hellenistic period (e.g., figs. 13.12–13)[140] are in some cases indistinguishable from so-called veristic portraits of Romans (e.g., figs. 13.14–16).[141] Here, too, we must allow for a two-way process since artistic currents rarely flow in only one direction. As Evelyn Harrison noted in the case of a veristic marble portrait of an Egyptian priest in Athens that was created around the middle of the first century B.C. (fig. 13.13), "It would seem that in the middle years of the first century B.C. two opposite processes were going on on the two sides of the Adriatic: at the same time that the Roman portrait was being Hellenized the Greek portrait was being Romanized."[142] By comparison with their Roman counterparts, however, Greek portraits of a veristic nature were by no means common, tending to be more the exception than the rule.[143]

The earliest extant image of an identifiable historical Roman personage is that of T. Quinctius Flamininus, who had his portrait struck on gold staters minted in Greece following his victory over Philip V of Macedon at Kynoskephalai around 196 B.C. (fig. 13.17).[144] Since Flamininus was in Greece at the time the staters with his image were minted, it is likely that he sat for the presumably Greek die engraver, who would have needed little time to sketch his profile. The resulting portrait certainly conveys a sense of reality, such that Flamininus' image would qualify as a veristic likeness. His physiognomy on this coinage would probably not have been appreciably different from that in his bronze portrait statue set up next to the colossal image of Apollo opposite the Circus Flaminius in Rome (Plutarch, *Flamininus* 1). Flamininus' three-dimensional likeness may have been based on his life-mask, possibly made when he became consul in 198 B.C. at the age of thirty-one.[145] In the first century B.C. it became com-

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[138] This marble statue of Numa of second century A.D. date, most likely in the period of Antoninus Pius and based on a statue of Numa set up on the Capitoline Hill in the first half of the fourth century B.C., was found with statues of the Vestals in a corner of the atrium of the House of the Vestals in the Roman Forum where a lime kiln was also found. See Becatti 1949: 100–02, who correctly surmised that the statue of Numa was probably not set up in the area of the atrium but in the Regia and that it and the statues of the Vestals were torn down as a result of Theodosius' decree to close down the temples of the gods. The odd rough area beneath the beard and neck was undoubtedly for the addition of stucco to complete the beard. For the denarius of C. (Marcius) Censorinus (88 B.C.) showing Numa (foreground) and Ancus Marcius (background), see Crawford 1974: 357–60 (no. 346.1a); Kent 1978: 268 (no. 48) pl. 15.

[139] Denarius of Q. Servilius Caepio Brutus (54 B.C.), showing L. Iunius Brutus; Crawford 1974: 455–56 (no. 433); Kent 1978: 271 (no. 72), pl. 19.

[140] Johansen 1994: 56–57 (no. 16: inv. 2032); Harrison 1953: 12–14 (no. 3) pl. 3.2. See also a portrait head of a Greek from Corinth (Harrison 1953, pl. 43c). Verism did not die out with the late Republic in Greece, as a veristic style head of Trajanic date from Athens makes clear (ibid., pp. 28–30, pl. 13).

[141] Johansen 1994: 64–65 (no. 20: inv. 3158), 68–69 (no. 22: inv. 1936), 72–73 (no. 24: inv. 1788). Com-

pare also the bronze statue of the so-called Hellenistic Ruler, which has been taken as either some unknown Hellenistic potentate or a Roman general: Helbig III⁴* 1969: 185–88 (no. 2273) (H. von Heintze); Himmelmann 1989: 126–49 with further bibliography. See also Stewart 1990: 231, fig. 862–63. The racial ambiguity of this image points up the problem for those who believe that we can distinguish between Roman and Greek racial types; cf. Smith 1988: 168 (cat. 61) pl. 41, who takes a statue, long regarded as Marc Antony, as representing a late Ptolemaic ruler.

[142] Harrison 1953: 85.

[143] One portrait, the so-called Euthydemos I, King of Bactria, in the Villa Albani (from the Torlonia collection, museum inv. 133), has been singled out in particular as showing a "veristic" treatment of the facial features. However, his portrait features do not agree closely enough — especially in the form of the nose (the lower tip of which is restored) — with coin portraits of Euthydemos I to make the identification likely. H. von Heintze dismissed this as a portrait of Euthydemos I and took it instead to be some Roman commander of the late Republican period; Helbig IV⁴* 1972: 335–37 (no. 3260). For a more recent summation of the arguments, see Smith 1988: Appendix IV.

[144] Crawford 1974: 544 (548.1a–b); Kent 1978: 266 (no. 23) pl. 9.

[145] *Kleine Pauly* II, 563–64 s.v. "T. Quinctius F."

mon to represent portraits of ancestors on coins, with naturalistic images in all likelihood being based on a wax ancestral mask and/or sculptural image. Among the earliest actual historical personages to be so represented is M. Claudius Marcellus, consul of 222, whose image appears on *denarii* issued by P. Lentulus Marcellinus around 50 B.C. (fig. 13.18).[146] This representation of Claudius Marcellus would have been in keeping with trends in portraiture in the second half of the third century B.C.

Beginning in the late second century and continuing through the first century B.C., we find a substantial number of extant veristic portraits of the upper classes. The majority of these images are carved in marble, while the number of portraits of the non-elite in stone, especially from the second half of first century B.C., testifies to the rising affluence of the non-elite classes for the first time not only in Roman history but also in Western civilization. Literary sources suggest that in Rome marble portrait sculpture began in the second century B.C.,[147] when cult images of the gods, carved in marble by such Greek sculptors as Timarchides and Polykles (Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 36.35), were also being created. Dating to the late second century B.C. is the earliest known temple in Greek marble (Pentelic), the so-called Round Temple by the Tiber.[148] Even when the marble quarries at Luna (Carrara), Italy, were opened on a great scale under Augustus, most of that marble was used for architecture and architectural sculpture, as in the Ara Pacis.[149] In the case of high quality portraits like the statue of Augustus from the Via Labicana in the Palazzo Massimo in Rome, Parian marble was used for the head, Luna for the lesser quality body.[150] It was not until the mid-first century A.D. that, according to Pliny (*Naturalis historia* 36.14), a good and abundant source of statuary marble was found at Luna for high quality statues.

The question that is often raised is where are all the veristic portraits prior to the late second/first century B.C.? As noted earlier, Roman commanders were setting up images of themselves already in the fourth century B.C., if not earlier. Although terra-cotta was a popular medium of artistic expression, especially for pedimental sculptures and funerary portraiture, at least in the Etruscan world,[151] we know of relatively few clay portrait statues of the nobility being set up in Rome. For the aristocracy, the most popular medium until the first century B.C. was bronze, which was especially favored for life-sized and under life-sized sculpture destined for public places. Even in Greece, which had good sources of marble, bronze remained the preferred medium for statues in the Classical period. In Italy, the Etruscans were especially skilled in producing bronze sculptures and decorative items that were much sought after. As Rome expanded, numerous Etruscan bronzes were brought back to be set up in the City — 2,000 bronzes images alone from the Volsinii in the year 264 B.C. (Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 34.34). Representative of bronze craftsmanship from this period is the bronze head known today as the "Capitoline Brutus," possibly from an equestrian statue, which stylistically seems to date

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[146] Crawford 1974: 460 (439.1); Kent 1978: 271 (no. 75), pl. 19.

[147] See, for example, Cicero, *Pro Archia* 9.22 (62 B.C.), who mentions a marble portrait of the poet Ennius being set up in the context of the Tomb of the Scipiones on the Via Appia, although the one head from this tomb, the so-called Pseudo-Ennius, is in a tufa from Aniene; Coarelli 1976: 24–26.

[148] Maischberger 1997: 17. The oldest known marble inscription in Luna (Carrara) is from Luna itself and dates around 155 B.C. Not until around 64 B.C. is there inscrip-

tional evidence for Luna marble at Rome (Gordon 1983: 7). This type of Luna marble was used only for inscriptional and architectural purposes.

[149] Maischberger 1997: 18.

[150] For the Labicana Augustus, see Helbig III⁴* 1969: 216–18 (no. 2300; H. von Heintze); La Regina 1998: 61–62.

[151] See Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 35.157–58, for pedimental sculpture in clay that he reveres. For Etruscan funerary sculpture in clay, see Gazda 1973.

between 350 and 250 B.C. (fig. 13.19).[152] The unknown Roman portrayed, recently suggested to be an ancestor of Augustus, wears a beard, which began to go out of fashion in Rome around 300 B.C. according to Varro (*De lingua rustica* 2.11.10).[153] This portrait certainly has an air of individuality and is realistic-looking enough to qualify as veristic. By 158 B.C. so many images of this sort had been set up in the Roman Forum that the censors decreed that all be removed except those that had been set up by order of the Roman People or Senate (Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 34.30).[154] That so few of the many portraits from this period have come down to us is probably due to a large extent to the material from which most were made: Being recyclable, bronze was often melted down in later times, especially in the Middle Ages.

Because of the Roman nobility's pride in their wax ancestral masks and the social privilege of passing these masks down to posterity, it is reasonable to assume that the wax ancestral mask tradition predisposed the nobility to commissioning images of themselves that were also very true to life to be set up in prominent public places, as well as in the home. To create a veristic bronze image, a sculptor had to first model his figure in clay with an overlay of wax in which the final features were modeled. After molten bronze was poured into the mold, the wax was displaced (the so-called *cire perdu* or "lost wax" method) by the bronze.[155] To produce a life-like bronze portrait of an individual, the sculptor would only have to produce a wax facial mask from the same mold that had been used for the wax ancestral mask. This wax countenance would then be overlayed on the clay core, with the ears and hair modeled around the face. There was also a further, practical reason for making a bronze image or images soon after the wax mask: If the plaster mold or the wax mask were destroyed in a fire or natural disaster, having one or more bronze images in another location would facilitate the production of new molds and masks. When the grown children of the family left the house of the *paterfamilias* to set up their own homes, they would have been able to reproduce the wax ancestral masks for their own abodes.[156] The wax copies could be made either from the original plaster mold or from a bronze sculpture, if the original plaster mold were no longer available.[157] We know that plaster molds were made from three-dimensional sculptures from at least the late fourth century B.C.; Pliny (*Naturalis historia* 35.153) notes that in addition to making life-masks, Lysistratos made casts of statues: *Idem* [Lysistratos] *et de signis effigies exprimere invenit* … "The same [Lysistratos] invented making casts from statues …."[158] The very process of replicating the wax ancestral *imagines* for subsequent generations, as well as making bronze and eventually marble replicas of these masks, would have served to keep alive veristic imagery.

In portraits of the Roman aristocracy and of culturally discerning Roman and Italian businessmen like the individual portrayed in a portrait from Delos (e.g., fig. 13.20),[159] we

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[152] Helbig II⁴* 1966: 268–70 (no. 1449; T. Dohrn). See also Brendel 1978: 399–400, fig. 308A–B. For another bronze head, that of a young man from near Fiesole now in the Louvre, often dated to the second half of the third century B.C., see Brendel 1978: 398, fig. 306. However, this head has also been dated to the first century B.C. (de Kersauson 1986: 8–9, no. 1).

[153] Varro claimed that barbers first came to Italy from Sicily 453 years after the founding of Rome (i.e., ca. 300 B.C.) and that P. Titinius Mena introduced them. Before this time it was common for adult males to have long hair and full beards. For the connection of the "Brutus" to an ancestor of Augustus, see Parisi Presicce 1997.

[154] Pliny discusses these images in his chapter on bronze sculptures.

[155] For the technical process of making an ancient bronze portrait, see Pollini 2002: 2–3 with further bibliography.

[156] See Flower 1996: 48, 103.

[157] It was also possible, though more difficult, to make a mold from the original wax mask if something happened to the original plaster mold. It would have been much easier to make another plaster mold from a bronze portrait.

[158] For the context of this quote, see the passage cited above.

[159] See Stewart 1979: 65–98 (especially 68–69, figs. 18c, 22a), with further bibliography.

find more often than not a form of ennobled verism. These images embraced a range of styles in their emotional content and surface treatment. This spectrum is evident even in the many marble portrait replicas created in the early imperial period, but based on some lost Republican prototype that may in turn have been based on a life-mask. Some of the portraits of the Roman aristocrats show their subjects with dramatically turned heads and powerfully modeled physiognomic features (the so-called *Pathosbild*), as in two marble portraits of unknown Roman aristocrats in the Munich Glyptothek, the so-called Marius (fig. 13.21)[160] and the also so-called Sulla (fig. 13.22),[161] which reflect the high baroque tradition of Hellenistic art. Other sculptural likenesses are presented as sedate-looking, with heads facing forward and with classicizing tendencies to various degrees. One such image, a bronze portrait bust from Volubilis, now in the Musée des Antiquités préislamiques, Rabat (Morocco), represents Cato the Younger (Uticensis) (fig. 13.23).[162] The only comments that have come down to us about Cato's physical appearance are generalized, though certainly in agreement with his facial features as preserved in the Volubilis portrait. Lucan, for example, says in his *Pharsalia* (2.373) that Cato "admitted no joy to his rigid countenance" (*nec … duroque admisit gaudia vultu*). Likewise Plutarch commented (*Cato Minor* 1.2) that "in countenance" (τῷ προσώπῳ) he was "unmovable, stoical, and altogether steadfast" (ἄτρεπτον καὶ ἀπαθὲς καὶ βέβαιον ἐν πᾶσιν). The bronze portrait bust from Volubilis was most likely based on a lost three-dimensional prototype reflecting Cato's life-mask, probably created around 54 B.C., when he became praetor at the age of forty-one.[163]

Showing modified forms of verism are two portraits now in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen from the Tomb of the Licinii Crassi in Rome:[164] a portrait of Pompey the Great (fig. 13.24)[165] and an image of the fabulously wealthy M. Licinius Crassus (fig. 13.25).[166] The late Republican style of the lost prototype of Crassus' portrait is conveyed somewhat better by a replica in the Louvre (fig. 13.26)[167] than by the more idealized early imperial image in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek. Although we have no description of his physiognomy, his portrait shows him at about sixty years of age, the time when he was consul for the second time with Pompey.[168] The *gravitas* and *severitas* associated with Crassus are conveyed well by these likenesses. As for Pompey, Plutarch (*Pompeius* 2.1) remarks on his "affable dignity" (ἐράσμιον ἀξιωματικὸν), while noting that "there was a certain gentle swelling up of his hair and a suppleness of the contours of his face around his eyes, producing a resemblance — more talked about than apparent — to the images of King Alexander" (ἦν δέ τις καὶ ἀναστολὴ τῆς κόμης ἀτρέμα καὶ τῶν περὶ τὰ ὄμματα ῥυθμῶν ὑγρότης τοῦ προσώπου, ποιοῦσα μᾶλλον λεγομένην ἢ φαινομένην ὁμοιότητα πρὸς τὰς Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ βασιλέως εἰκόνας).[169] In the Copenhagen portrait, which is in agreement with Plutarch's description, Pompey appears to be in his early fifties, the age at which he became consul for the second

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[160] Giuliani 1986: 176–89, passim, figs. 48, 50.

[161] Giuliani 1986: 176–89, passim, figs. 49, 51–52.

[162] For the Volubilis portrait and others, see Massner 1982: 19–20, passim, pls. 4b, 7a–b; Riße 2001: 98, fig. 148.

[163] *Kleine Pauly* I, 1088 s.v. no. 10 "M. Porcius C. (Uticensis)."

[164] For the tomb and its sculptures in general, see Kragelund 2002; Kragelund, Moltesen, and Østergaard 2003.

[165] Johansen 1994: 24–25 (no. 1: inv. 733). See also Giuliani 1986: 56–100, passim, figs. 1–3.

[166] Johansen 1994: 162–63 (no. 69: inv. 749). See also Giuliani 1986: 223–38, passim, figs. 62–63.

[167] de Kersauson 1986: 106–07 (no. 47: inv. 1220). See Giuliani 1986: 223, figs. 60–61.

[168] *Kleine Pauly* I, 1329–30 s.v. no. 2 "M. Licinius C. Dives."

[169] Plutarch provides the only useful description of Pompey's features. For other ancient sources, see Giuliani 1986: 270 n. 44.

time (55 B.C.).[170] Behind the sculptural images of both Pompey and Crassus were probably their life-masks.

Presenting a more harshly rendered version of verism are a few portraits of the Rome elite, such as the marble likeness of C. Iulius Caesar from Tusculum, now in the Museo d'Antichità in Turin (fig. 13.27A–B).[171] This sculptural image, the only one of Caesar to have survived from shortly before or shortly after his death, conforms very well with his numismatic images as well with the general description of him as having a distinctive clinocephalia (a saddle-shaped dip in his skull),[172] which Caesar liked to conceal by wearing the laurel wreath granted to him for life by the Roman Senate.[173] The Tusculum head was probably based on a portrait created at some point between the time he became dictator in 46 B.C. and *dictator perpetuus* in 44, when he was between the ages of fifty-four and fifty-six.[174] This image of Caesar differs markedly from later Augustan reinterpreted replicas like the marble head in the Chiaramonti Museum in the Vatican (fig. 13.28).[175] The classicizing Chiaramonti portrait reformulates Caesar's veristic image, modifying it toward the classical ideal for ideological reasons, in keeping with Augustan classicizing tendencies.[176]

In late Republican portraiture we sense — or at least can allow for the possibility — that some so-called veristic images even went beyond the bounds of the descriptive or literal representation, exaggerating the blemishes and wrinkles of a person's face. Without the aid of photography, there is no way, of course, to determine how accurately a portrait represents someone. But since Roman portraiture was a medium encoded with moral and ethical values, it would have been understandable for an individual of "the old school," who saw himself as the embodiment of such Roman virtues as *severitas, gravitas, constantia,* and *dignitas*, to commission a portrait of himself in which the sculptor was to exaggerate the wrinkles of the time-worn face of his subject in the belief that the greater the number of wrinkles, the greater the virtues and accomplishments of the individual represented. A portrait of an old man of the late Republican period in the Palazzo Comunale, Osimo (Italy), suggests this form of exaggerated imagery (fig. 13.29).[177] Because this portrait appears to exceed the boundaries of true verism (i.e., what the person actually looked like), we might classify it as "super-" or "hyper-veristic." Of course not all cultures interpret defects of the flesh in the same way. For example, in our own day American artist Robbie Conal creates super-veristic billboard portraits of noted politicians (e.g., Ronald Reagan, fig. 13.30), whose grimness of expression and mass of wrinkles are intended to portray mean-spiritedness and moral bankruptcy.[178] A Roman of the late Republic would have had an altogether different interpretation of Conal's imagery!

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[170] *Kleine Pauly* IV, 1025 s.v. "Gn. P. Magnus." Compare an earlier type of Pompey represented by a head in Venice that probably shows him at about the time he became consul for the first time at the age of thirty-six. In this earlier type, the turn of head and uplifted gaze were undoubtedly intended to recall an early image of Alexander the Great by Lysippos (Plutarch, *Alexander* 4.1, *De fortuna Alexandri* 2.2). For the Venice head, see Giuliani 1986: 200–01, figs. 57–58.

[171] See recently Pollini 2005: 96 with further bibliography, figs. 8.18–19.

[172] Suetonius, *Divus Iulius* 45.

[173] Pollini 2005: 95–96.

[174] Caesar became praetor in 62 B.C. at the age of thirty-eight and consul in 59 B.C. at the of age of forty-one.

The Tusculum head represents Caesar in his mid-fifties; (*Kleine Pauly* I, 1002 s.v. "C. Iulius Caesar").

[175] For the "Chiaramonti-Camposanto" type, see Pollini 2005: 98 with further bibliography, figs. 8.20–21.

[176] This idealized type may have originally been commissioned by Octavian/Augustus for the cult image of Divus Iulius in his Temple in the Roman Forum. The ennobling of Caesar's features would have conveyed his new status as a state divinity. For this interpretation, see Pollini 2005: 98.

[177] Zanker 1983: 263–64, fig. 27.

[178] In the words of the artist in a lecture and a conversation that I had with him, "The corrugation of their flesh is a metaphor for the level of their corruption." See also Pollini 1990: 8–9, fig. B.

But what of the late first-century B.C. images of freedmen (*liberti* or *libertini*) on grave stelae that have so often been cited as examples of Roman verism? In treatment, they show an affinity to certain local Etruscan workshops that produced equally crude funerary sculpture.[179] Although some have seen Etruscan influence on the Roman freedmen reliefs, it is more likely that the reverse was true in the later Republican period, when the Etruscans continued to be Romanized and assimilated into Roman culture.[180] Many of the stylistic similarities between portraits of Roman freedmen and Etruscans have more to do with a comparable lack of ability on the part of local sculptors and the limitations of similar types of local stones, most notably limestone, which often accounts for the rough woodcut quality found in both late Etruscan and Roman funerary portraiture.[181] Some have interpreted this crude style as merely a simplification of Hellenistic realism in portraiture.[182] Certain so-called veristic images even seem to be stereotypical, as in the case of a portrait on a grave relief in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen (fig. 13.31) and a sculpture in the round in the Chiaramonti Museum in the Vatican (fig. 13.32), both of which were created at the end of the first century B.C. As P. Zanker has pointed out, the similarity of features in these two portraits may be in part a result of their having been produced in the same workshop.[183]

There would certainly have been ateliers that catered to the growing market in funerary portraits of freedmen, many of whom may have been more interested in fitting in than in having their facial features represented faithfully. Although their imagery varied in minor details, many of these male and female funerary portraits have a certain communal Roman look that was defined by the Roman nobility. The "wannabe" aspirations of freedmen encompassed all aspects of their appearance in their grave images — facial features, hairstyle, pose, dress, and gestures.[184] Because freedmen were socially disadvantaged even after receiving Roman citizenship and/or accumulating great wealth, there was all the more reason for them to want to look Roman in their funerary portraiture, which was to define and perpetuate their "Romanitas" through the ages. And in Roman portrait imagery, nothing conveyed a "Roman look" better than the Roman nobility's veristic wax ancestral masks, which were denied to freedmen.[185] In seeking out the best Greek sculptors to translate their countenances into bronze and marble, the Roman nobility made Hellenistic visual culture their own. These aristocratic symbols of "Romanitas" Roman freedmen sought to imitate in their own funerary portraiture. However, in the local workshops' mass-produced crude or less refined freedmen portraits, the visual language of the nobility was reduced to an imagery of utter banality.

If human nature teaches us anything, it is that the more unobtainable the goal, the more it is desired. In his *Satyrica*, Petronius captured well in his fictional freedman Trimalchio the lower classes' desire to ape the Roman elite, not only in life but in death.[186] We might say that Trimalchio sought to "out-Roman" what it meant to be Roman. Such imitation of the elite class is of course hardly an exclusively Roman phenomenon. D. Freedberg notes, for example, that the non-elite classes of European society used wax masks and wax images, following in the

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[179] See in general Gazda 1973.

[180] See Zanker's criticism of Gazda; Zanker 1976: 594–98. See also Gruen 1992: 156–58.

[181] See also Zanker 1976: 594.

[182] Zanker 1976: 598.

[183] Zanker 1976: 593–94, compare figs. 3 and 4. For the grave reliefs of freedmen of the late Republican and early Imperial periods, see also Zanker 1975.

[184] For funerary monuments of the non-elite classes, see in general Kleiner 1987; Zanker 1975; von Hesberg 1992; von Hesberg and Zanker 1987; Lahusen 1985: 282–85.

[185] Compare the words of the fictional slave Amphitryon in Plautus' *Amphitruo* (458–59) cited above.

[186] Other Roman authors also comment on the lower classes' imitating their betters, even in their vices. For the ancient literary and archaeologoical evidence, see Wallace-Hadrill 1994: 143–47.

tradition of their own aristocracy.[187] In his study of funerary inscriptions, G. Misch has pointed out that the Roman lower classes even copied the style of the epitaphs of the nobility.[188] In grave reliefs freedmen also added the *praenomen* (personal name) and *nomen* (clan name) of their former master to their own *cognomen* (family name), thereby adopting another symbol of *Romanitas* — the *ius trium nominum* (the right of the three names) associated with a Roman citizen. But perhaps nowhere is the imitation of the Roman aristocracy by both the provincial elite and wealthy freedmen more manifest than in domestic architecture and its artistic decoration.[189] A. Wallace-Hadrill has shown in his consideration of wall paintings from houses of Pompeii and Herculaneum that as time progressed and as certain wall schemes proliferated, most notably fourth style wall decorations, the paintings in the homes of all but the upper class declined in quality.[190] As Wallace-Hadrill hypothesized, "One might argue that as the demand for decoration spread to the less well-off, the ateliers of decorators responded by reducing the quality of a former luxury; or that the ateliers deliberately introduced simpler and cheaper schemes of decoration in order to tap a wider market."[191] We may posit a similar scenario for the production of freedmen relief portraits by local workshops, as the lower classes' demand for grave reliefs grew in response to a changing economic situation.

The rather uniform "Roman look" of freedmen in their funerary reliefs is all the more remarkable when we consider the many different ethnicities of those who came from all over the Empire. For example, about a million Gauls were enslaved as a result of Julius Caesar's conquest of Gaul,[192] yet where are the images of Gallic-looking peoples, who surely made up a good portion of the freedman class? Neither could all freedmen have been homely or unattractive, contrary to the evidence of the vast majority of grave monuments. In short, the veristic Roman look seems to have been by and large an affectation on the part of freedmen, who saw themselves as *novi Romani*. But like the *novus homo* Cicero, who joined the ranks of Roman nobility through hard-won political success, even freedman who achieved great personal wealth continued in the end to be viewed as outsiders.

In summary, Roman verism is in essence a form of realism based on the actual features of a historical person. Veristic portraiture could be expressed in a variety of artistic styles ranging from the highly modeled forms of Hellenistic naturalism of the aristocracy to the rough, sometimes woodcut-like style mass-produced in local Roman workshops for the non-elite. But no matter the style or the clientele, the preference for verism in Roman portrait sculpture appears to have been ultimately inspired by the ancestral wax masks of the Roman nobility. This ancient cultural tradition was thereby perpetuated in an altered form in more enduring media.

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[187] See Freedberg 1989: 218 (and pp. 212–24 for his discussion of wax masks and images in various cultures). See also S. R. F. Price 1984: 108, who notes, "Even in the more complex society of nineteenth-century England, members of the working classes, to the annoyance of the Marxists, tended to conform to the ideology of the ruling class."

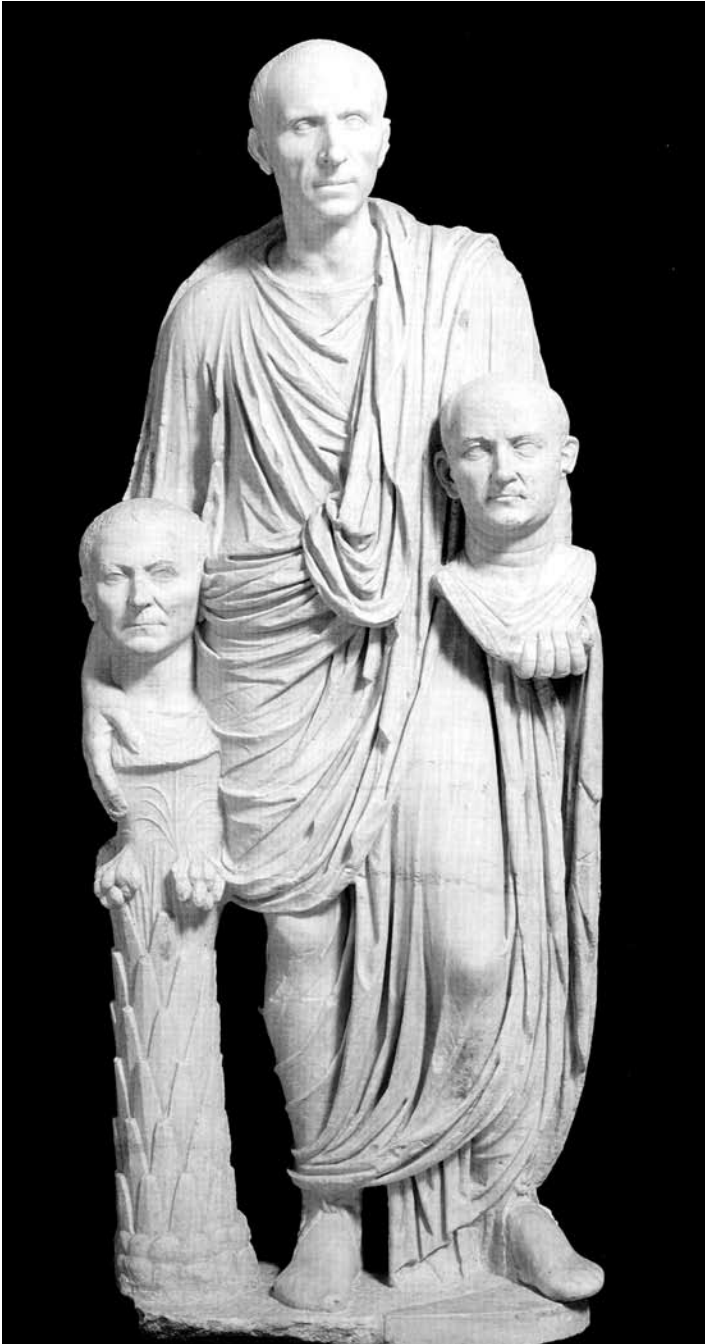[188] Misch 1951: 223–24.

[189] See especially Hales 2003: 1–20.

[190] Wallace-Hadrill 1994: 147–74.

[191] Wallace-Hadrill 1994: 168–69.

[192] *OCD*[3]* 781 s.v. "Iulius Caesar, Gaius."

Figure 13.1. Roman Grave Relief, National Archaeological Museum, Copenhagen
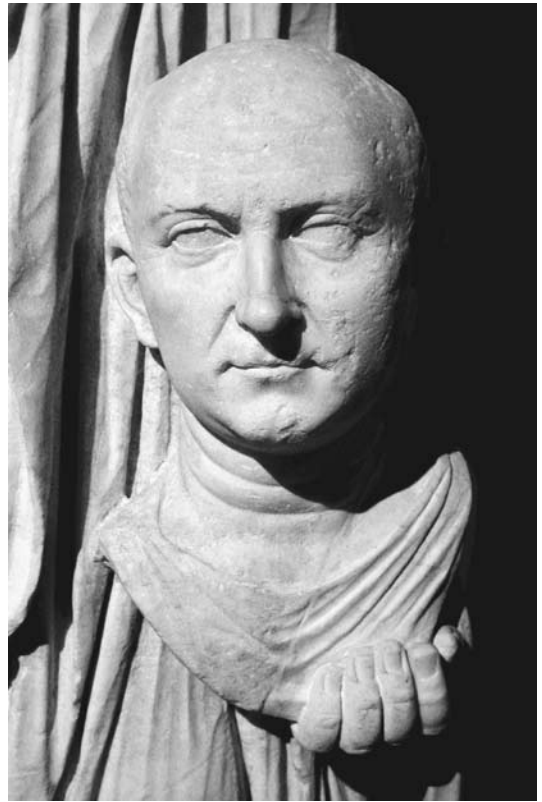(from Johansen 1994, fig. 9)

A

Figure 13.2A. Barberini *Togatus*, Museo Montemartini Centrale, Rome (Photo by Author)

B

C

Figure 13 (*cont.*).2B–C. Barberini *Togatus*, Museo Montemartini Centrale, Rome (Photos by Author)

A

B

Figure 13.3A–B. Domestic Shrine, House of Menander at Pompeii (Photos by Author)
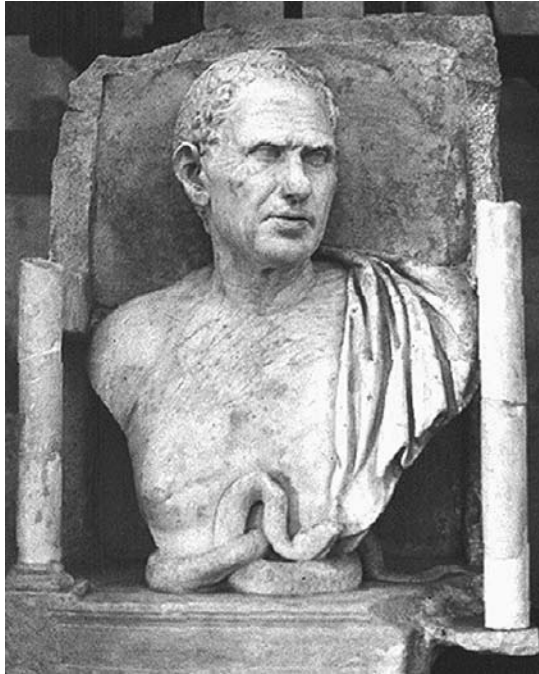
Figure 13.4. Portrait Bust in Aedicula from the Tomb of the Haterii, Museo Gregoriano Profano, Vatican (Photo by Author)

Figure 13.5. Wall Painting of a Ritual Meal for Deceased Ancestor with Overhanging Garland from a Domestic *Lararium* at Pompeii (VI.1.1; after Fröhlich 1991, pl. 37.1)
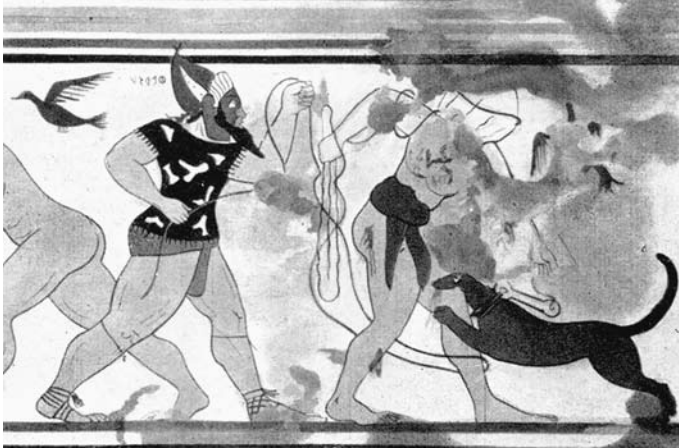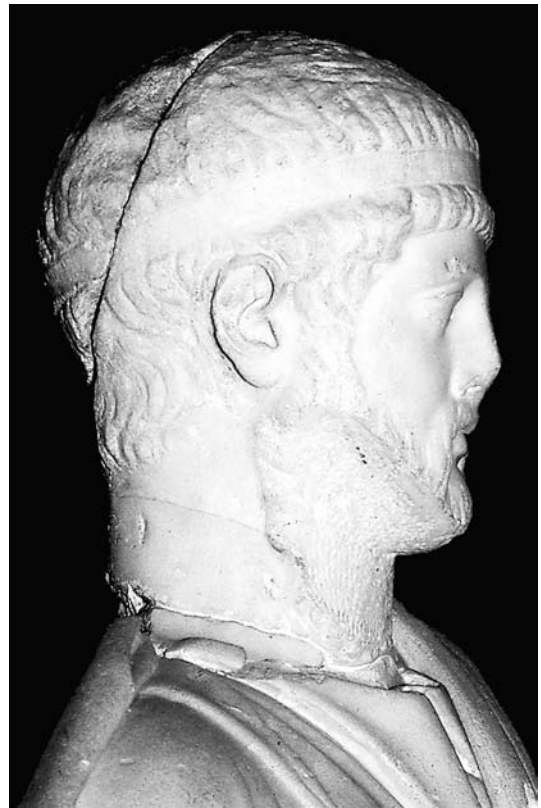
Figure 13.6. Masked Performer, Phersu (so inscribed), from Wall of Late Sixth-century B.C. Etruscan Tomb of the Augurs (after Pallottino 1968, pl. 69)

A   B

Figure 13.7A–B. Statue of Numa Pompilius from the Atrium of the House of the Vestals, Roman Forum (Photos by Author)

Figure 13.8. Denarius (54 B.C.) Showing Image of L. Iunius Brutus (after Kent 1978, pl. 19.72)

Figure 13.9. Terra-cotta Head from the Campana Collection, Louvre, Paris
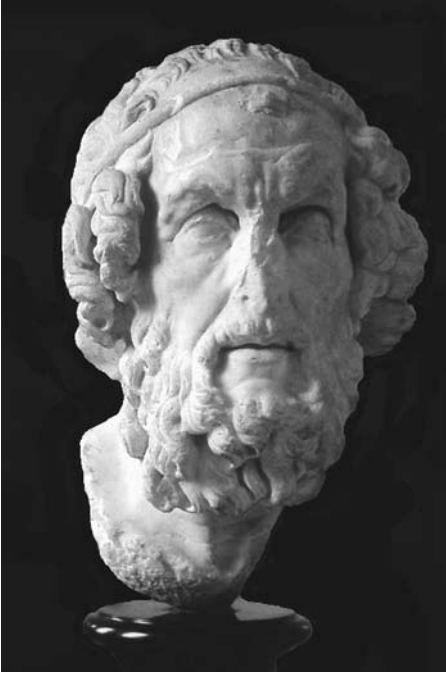(after Bianchi Bandinelli 1970, fig. 101)

Figure 13.10. Invented Image of Homer, Museum
of Fine Arts, Boston (Photo by Author)

Figure 13.11. Invented Image of Hesiod(?),
Museo Nazionale Archeologico, Naples
(Photo by Author)
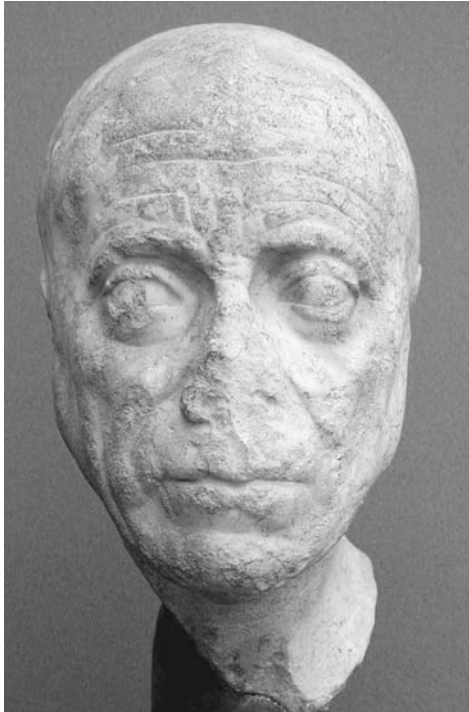
Figure 13.12. Hellenistic Portrait of a Greek,
Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen
(Photo by Author)

Figure 13.13. Hellenistic Portrait of an Egyptian
Priest from the Athenian Agora
(Photo by Author)
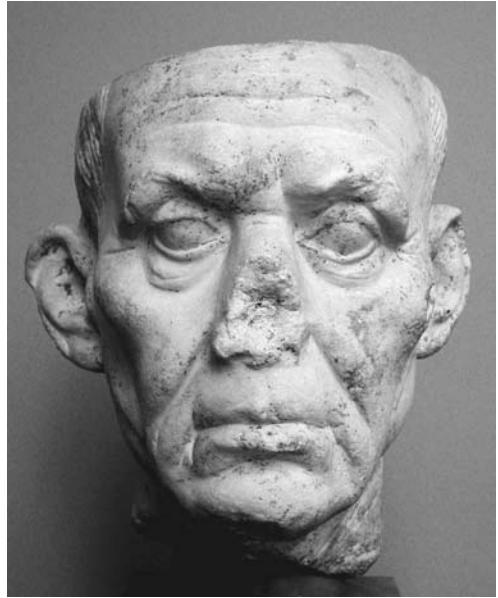
Figure 13.14. Roman Republican Portrait of a
Man, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen
(Photo by Author)
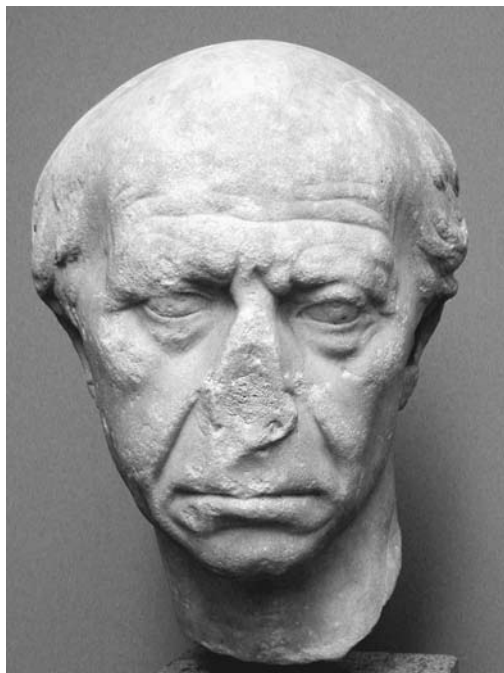
Figure 13.15. Roman Republican Portrait of a
Man, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen
(Photo by Author)

Figure 13.16. Roman Republican Portrait of a
Man, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen
(Photo by Author)

Figure 13.17. Gold Stater (196 B.C.) with Portrait
Image of T. Quinctius Flamininus
(after Kent 1978, pl. 9.23)

Figure 13.18. Denarius (50 B.C.) with Portrait
Image of M. Claudius Marcellus (Consul, 222
B.C.; after Kent 1978, pl. 19.74)
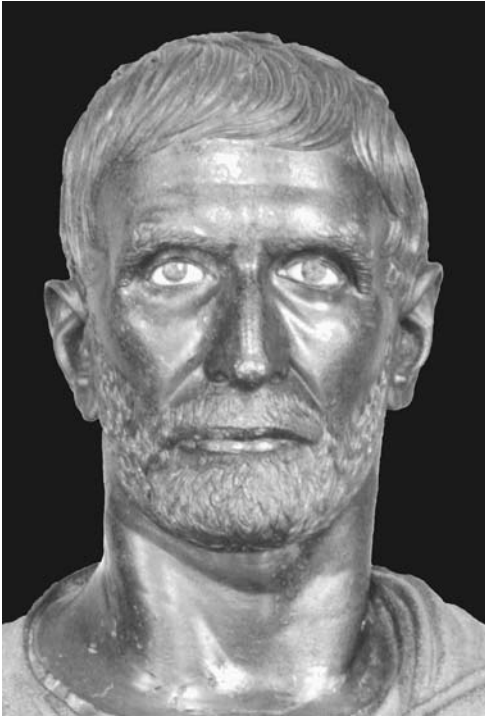
Figure 13.19. "Capitoline Brutus," Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome (Photo by Author)
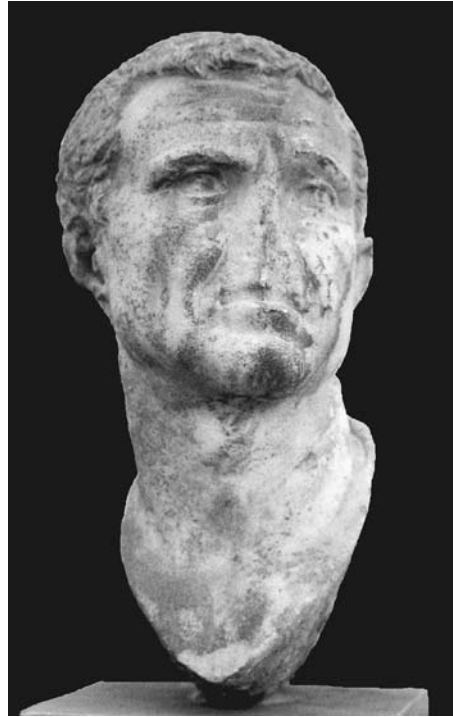
Figure 13.20. Republican Portrait of a Roman or Italian from Delos (Photo by P. Butz)
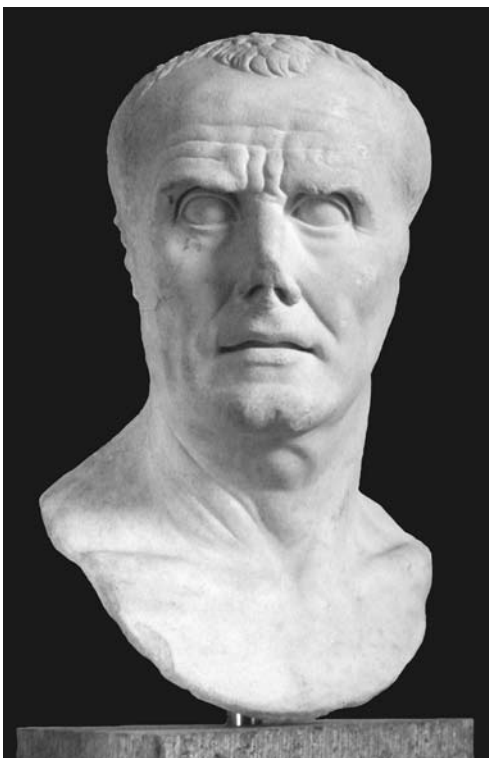
Figure 13.21. Portrait of "Marius," Munich Glyptothek. (Photo by Author)

Figure 13.22. Portrait of "Sulla," Munich
Glyptothek (Photo by Author)
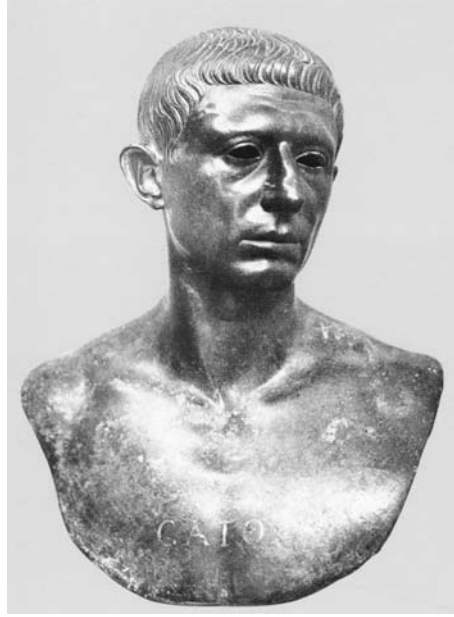
Figure 13.23. Portrait of Cato the Younger
("Uticensis"), Musée des Antiquités
préislamiques, Rabat, Morocco
(after Riße 2001, fig. 148)

Figure 13.24. Portrait of Pompey the Great, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek,
Copenhagen (Photo by Author)
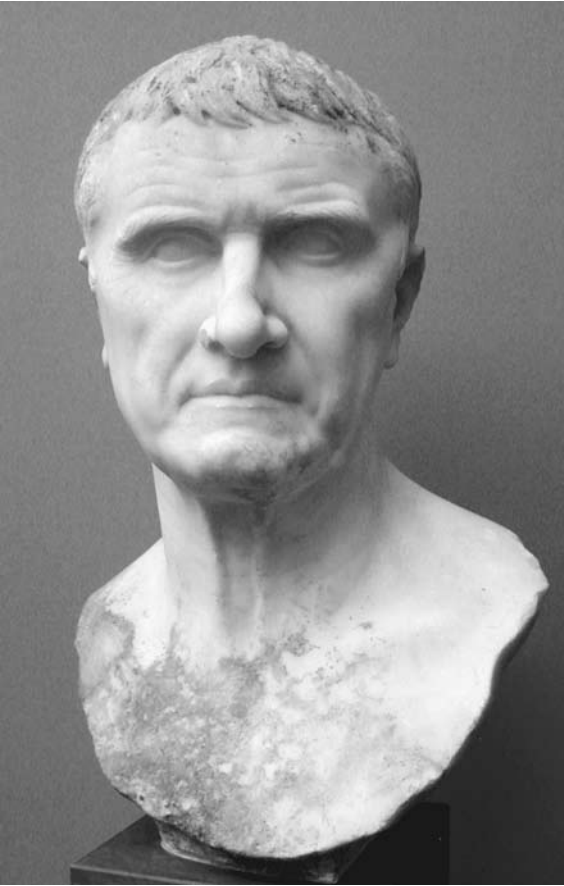
Figure 13.25. Portrait of M. Licinius Crassus, Ny
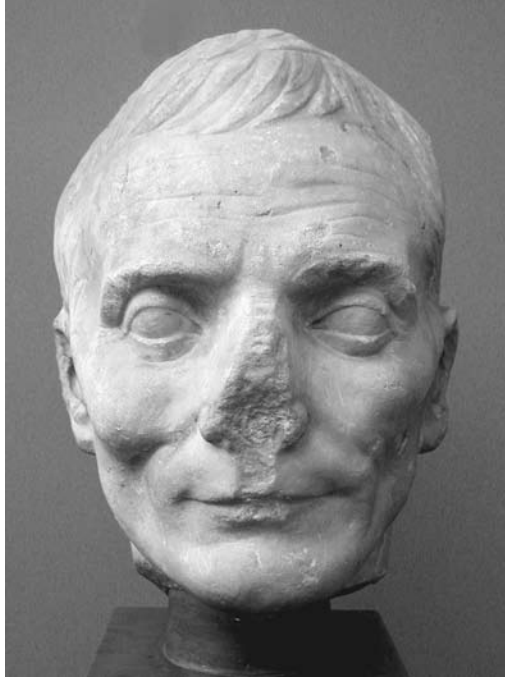Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen
(Photo by Author)
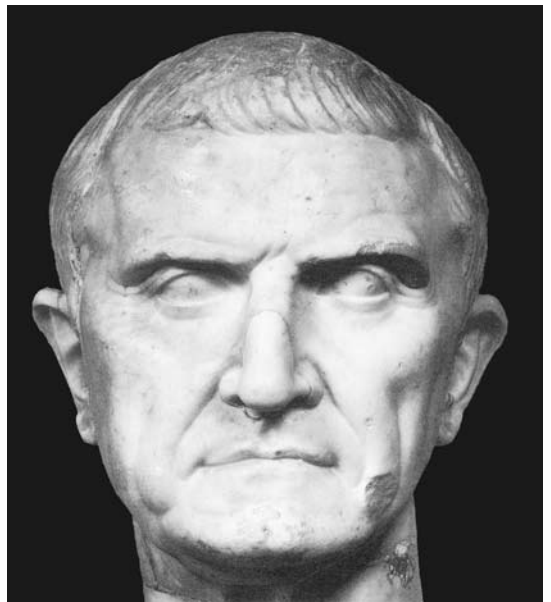
Figure 13.26. Portrait of M. Licinius Crassus,
Louvre, Paris (Photo by Author)
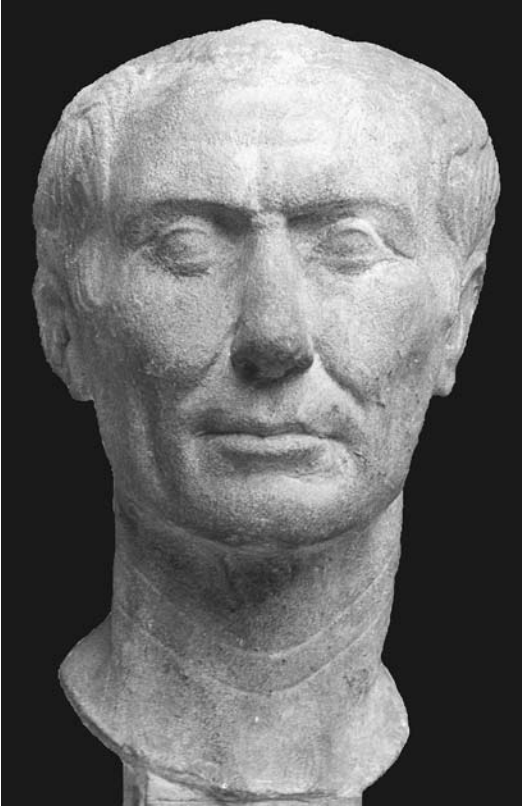
A
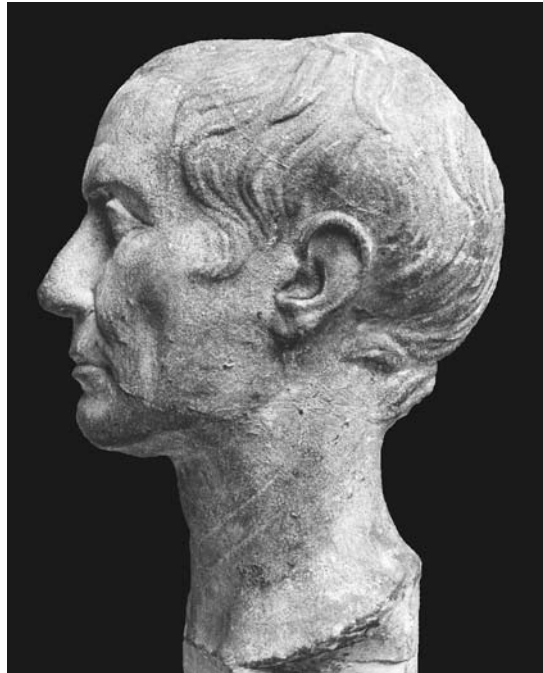
B

Figure 13.27A–B. Portrait of C. Iulius Caesar from Tusculum, Museo d'Antichità, Turin
(after Pollini 2005, figs. 8.18–19)
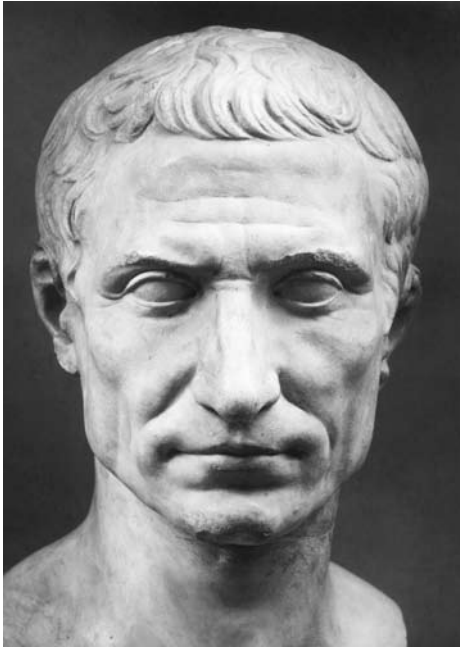
Figure 13.28. Portrait of C. Iulius Caesar,
Museo Chiaramonti, Vatican
(after Pollini 2005, fig. 8.20)
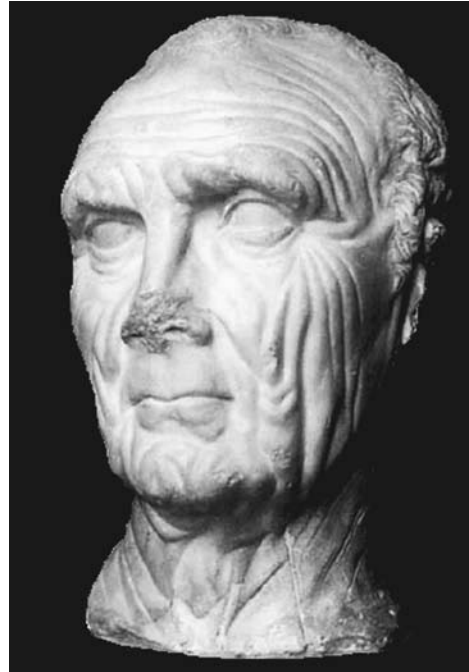
Figure 13.29. Male Republican Portrait, Palazzo
Comunale, Osimo, Italy (Photo by Author)

Figure 13.30. Portrait of Ronald Reagan by
Robbie Conal (after Pollini 1990, fig. B)

Figure 13.31. Portrait from a Roman Grave Relief,
Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen
(after Zanker 1976, fig. 3)
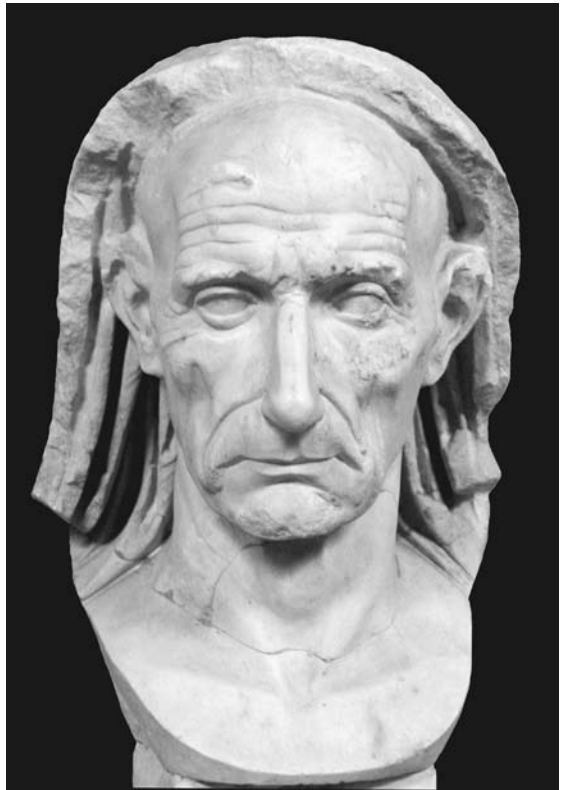
Figure 13.32. Portrait of an Unknown Roman,
Museo Chiaramonti, Vatican (Photo by Author)

ABBREVIATIONS

cat.	catalogue
Helbig I–IV⁴	W. Helbig, *Führer durch die öffentlichen Sammlungen klassischer Altertümer in Rom*. Fourth edition, supervised by H. Speier. Tübingen, 1963–1972.
inv.	inventory number
Kleine Pauly	*Der Kleine Pauly* I–V. Munich, 1979.
OCD	N. G. L. Hammond and H. H. Scullard, editors, *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*. Third edition. New York, 1996.
OED	*Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford, 1971.
OLD	P. G. W. Glare, editor, *Oxford Latin Dictionary*. Oxford, 1982.
POG	G. M. A. Richter, *The Portraits of the Greeks*, Volumes 1–3. Ithaca, 1965.
s.v.	*sub voce*, under the word

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14

BURIAL TREATMENT AS TRANSFORMATIONS OF BODILY IDEOLOGY

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WHAT IS BURIAL ABOUT?

What is burial about? Why do almost all human societies carry out rites over the dead? One answer — the dominant one in archaeology for three decades now, since the so-called Binford-Saxe program (Binford 1972) — is politics. Funerary rites furnish a locus for legitimation of a social order, or for struggle and contestation of one. As many of the papers in this volume illustrate, this is clearly a highly fruitful line of interpretation, particularly in explicating the extraordinarily elaborate funerary rites at the top end of the social pyramid. However, politics is not the only key for unlocking burial. Moreover, it is not necessarily the first resort for interpretation. As critiques going back several decades illustrate (Parker Pearson 1982; Ucko 1969), the extent to which funerals will be used to make status claims depends in part upon how death and burial are understood as meaningful (see also Brown this volume, 1995). For example, we ourselves live in a highly class-stratified society, and the zealous analyst might perhaps uncover manifestations of inequality in the spatial organization and material apparatus of burial, but expressing relative status is not actually the goal of our relatively muted and uniform deathways; conversely, if burial furnishes an oblique ideology to mask inequality, it certainly is not fooling anyone! Symptoms of political functionalism or reductionism in burial studies include a lack of consideration of the fundamental symbolism and emotion of death and burial as opposed to their trappings, a tendency to conflate identity with hierarchical status and social order with elite dominance, and an almost-complete neglect of "ordinary" burials which merely furnish a tedious baseline for interpreting "elite" ones.

Thus, we are unlikely to understand even the cases in which burial is about politics unless we understand its meaning as a symbolism of affect, bodily constitution, and relatedness generally. We need to understand how deathways are constructed culturally before we can understand how they were harnessed politically. According to M. Bloch (pers. comm.), the distinction between a living human body and other categories of object is universally recognized; even when the non-living body is understood as a sentient continuation of the living person, it is seen as a categorically different kind of being, and one of the principal motives for funerary ritual is to accomplish this transition. The approach is broadly structuralist; in this paper, funerary ritual is treated as a sequence of ritual operations intended to effect a meaningful transition between two incongruent states (van Gennep 1977).

Within this umbrella meta-thesis, I present one approach — by no means the only possible one — which might be useful for archaeological analysis. All societies have multiple burial treatments and these can be understood better as a coherent, meaningful mortuary program than as isolated practices. Through three brief examples, I argue that these variants reflect structured transformations of each other which reflect different biographical contingencies and are predicated upon cultural ideas of the body.

BIOGRAPHY, BODILY COMPOSITION, DISPOSAL

Three distinct lines of thought converge in this hypothesis. One is the idea of the human biography as a narrative which structures the process of self-fashioning and hence represents a point of articulation between the cultural traditions we live in and the lives we lead. The second is the body as a social construction and locus of social reproduction. The third is the idea of disposal as a cultural act.

To begin with biography, all societies hold narratives of what a human life should be: how it should begin, how it should unfold, and how it can end. In structural-functionalist ethnographies, this tended to be termed the "life-cycle," but this presents it merely descriptively and understates its power as a directive narrative. Cultural biographies effectively provide understandings of what goals are appropriate for different kinds of persons at different points in their lifespans, they motivate action and structure social relations, and, critically, they provide evaluative standards for judging and acting (Robb 2002). Death provides a major punctuation in the human lifespan (an epithet perhaps inappropriate, given that social being continues beyond life in many biographical narratives). Moreover, death is not a simple and absolute fact of life but one which affords qualities and contingencies; there are appropriate ways to die for people with different biographies, and conversely, the manner of death affects how a particular biography is understood. This point has been made by Gnoli and Vernant (1982) in discussing the "good death" fitting for a particular life. Why else do newspapers always print the age of the victim? And why else do we react differently upon hearing of the deaths of a ninety-five year old man and a ten year old boy in identical circumstances (say, from an accident or sudden illness), given that neither one wanted to die?

Secondly, biographies are the story of a particular body, and as such they depend upon how that body is understood. A wide range of social theorists have made the point that the body is not only both a physical entity but also a social construction, both in terms of social ages and genders and in underlying concepts of how the body is constituted and how it related to the social person. To take an example, in modern Western societies, we understand the social individual as equivalent to a bounded, autonomous body. Underlying this are two fundamental beliefs. The first is that the body is a material machine (our master metaphor for it, thanks to medical science, since at least the nineteenth century), which either houses a spirit separate from it or whose mechanical working gives it the subjective experience of ensoulment. The second is that personhood is defined in terms of bounded, individual bodies (Shilling 2003; Strathern 1988). The individual thus consists of a sharply bounded material entity occupied by a reasoning volition. Bodily ideologies such as this are normally tacit and not stated in so many words but are enforced through a wide range of practices that give them an inescapable cumulative power (Foucault 1977). For example, ideas about bodily autonomy underlie discourses of privacy, and these in turn generate pervasive distancing technologies and etiquettes that serve to arrange bodies in a correct order (these range from separate beds at inns, an innovation of the last few centuries, to the complicated architecture of bathrooms, houses, and hospitals, and the intricate structure and etiquette of ATMs and supermarket checkout lines). Portraiture affords another example; since the seventeenth century, we have considered the person as having an inner, affective self, so that the goal of the artist is to penetrate the exterior shell and reveal this. A third example is the bioethical problems we have contemplating new medical technologies that breach the boundaries of individual bodies: cloning, stem cell research, organ transplantation, genetic engineering, and so on.

Finally, disposal. Throwing things away is anything but a transparent act (Hodder 1987; Moore 1982; Russell and Martin 2000). How we channel material things through our lives is

a complicated act of categorization, and one in which we often have surprisingly little choice. Consider the highly varied ways in which material things exit our lives: the rubbish bin, donation to second-hand shops and charities, sale, deposition in archives or museums, transmission as heirlooms to kin and friends, recycling, the backyard compost heap, reuse for a completely different purpose, quite distinct plumbing pathways of "gray water" and "waste water." These form a complex and highly structured disposal program; how particular items are routed depends upon their semantic connotations (e.g., it is common to throw away or recycle old paper and telephone books while considering that unwanted books cannot be simply torn up but must be passed on to someone who will, potentially, read them). Disposal of a dead body forms an outstanding example of this; the ways in which it is socially possible to dispose of a dead body are highly prescribed and differ sharply from ways of disposing of a dead pet, a dead cut of steak, a dead television, or a dead letter. Moreover, following upon this, and using Gell's (1998) concept of the agency of material things, disposal thus forms one locus of the agency of dead bodies (Williams 2004); the mere presence of a dead body, by virtue of what we think it is, triggers and structures often intricate and extended chains of action.

BODIES AND PERSONS IN MODERN WESTERN DEATHWAYS

Modern Western deathways illustrate well the close relationship between the cultural construction of the body, biographical pathways, and mortuary ritual. As noted above, at the heart of our notion of personhood is the definition of the social person in terms of their physical body. Our deathways reflect the rise of this belief (Tarlow 1999, 2002). Early modern deathways, in a predominantly religious framework, emphasized death as the shedding of the material component of the person's material-spiritual duality; death was a liberation from earthly cares. Dead bodies were presenced; for instance, bodies were laid out for burial at home, and *memento mori* symbolism was common. With the withering away of the spiritual half of personhood, material dissolution of the body became increasingly fraught with anxiety as it connoted the final dissolution of the social person as well. Increasingly, from the nineteenth century, the dead body was aestheticized and distanced through metaphors such as death as sleep and practices such as undertaking.

Given the contingent relations of body and person structure, what is of interest here is how dead bodies are dealt with. Given the equation of physical persons and social bodies, discrepancies pose a particular challenge. On one hand, we sometimes are confronted with the death of social persons in the absence of a physical body. In such circumstances, we experience an overwhelming mandate to provide not only a collective physical referent for the dead, but a particularly individualized one. Suppose there is a mass disaster like an airplane crash or a catastrophic fire. We often know exactly who has died and we are certain that there are no survivors, but we nonetheless go to great lengths to identify every bit of human remains as specific individuals; it never even occurs to us not to. In human rights investigations, we try to establish the identity of the anonymous disappeared, even when it will never help bring to justice those who killed them. Thirty-five years after Vietnam we are still identifying and repatriating the bones of servicemen killed there. When we are unable to locate an individual body for the social dead, as a last resort we erect surrogate bodies such as cenotaphs and memorials. Because we in the modern West define people in terms of their individual physical bodies, we are unable to resolve the death of the social being without the presence of the individual, identified physical body.

Conversely, when we possess a dead physical body without a social person attached to it, we have two possible reactions. The principal strategy is to re-personalize or re-individuate the dead, to re-establish their identity as a social person. An unidentified murder victim, for example, is subjected to an exhaustive battery of techniques to reconnect him or her to a social identity via establishment of age, sex, genetic profile, habitual activities, facial appearance, and so on. It is the presence of the physical body itself which acts a catalyst for this act; an extreme case is the Ice Man of the Alps, whose body inspired a huge research agenda whose principal goal, arrived at generally without reflection, was simply to re-establish a personal identity for him much as we would expect any modern body to have. The second strategy, when re-individuation is not possible or appropriate, is to de-personalize the body, to treat it in such a way as to change our relationship to it from that with another human to that with an object. Bodies dissected for medical training and research, for example, usually have their names and biographies suppressed. Archaeological skeletons, even when treated with respect, are labeled, curated, and boxed much as other archaeological collections. Agencies that mediate organ transplants from dead donors normally try to minimize the personalization of the relationship between donor and donor's kin and the recipient.

Although we think of single primary burial as our normative, almost universal rite, we have as wide a range of mortuary treatments as any society (fig. 14.1). Some are clearly political, as with the extended lying in state of important public figures. Others, while less explicitly political, nevertheless allow the expression of status and identity; recently, there is the flourishing variety of how one's cremated ashes may be disposed of which allows a final expression of "lifestyle" choices. Such variants work within the expected framework for the death of the body and the conclusion of the social person. However, other mortuary treatments are generated by contingencies in death that disrupt this assumed relationship. In particular, a range of specialized institutions, technologies, and practices kick into play in those circumstances when we have either dead physical remains without identifiable dead social persons, or dead social persons without identifiable physical remains.

THE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY HURON

The Hurons lived in seventeenth-century Ontario. One of the largest Eastern Woodlands groups, they lived in large villages where they farmed, hunted, and traded widely. They are among the best-known Native American groups of the early colonial period, thanks to the detailed reports of Jesuit missionaries who worked among them for three decades until their dissolution following devastating Iroquois attacks in 1649 (Heidenreich 1971, 1978; Pomedli 1991; Sagard 1939; Thwaites 1898; Tooker 1964; Trigger 1969, 1976).

In burial, the Huron are famous for the "Feast of the Dead"; it provides one of the best ethnohistorical descriptions of a large secondary burial event. While practices were changing (the scale and importance of the "Feast of the Dead" increased with the Huron's integration into European trade networks [Trigger 1976]), it clearly predates the colonial era and similar rites were used in other Eastern Woodlands groups. As people died, the Huron would bury them in individual graves or expose them on scaffolds. Then, every ten or twelve years, they would hold a large "Feast of the Dead." Many guests would be invited from far and wide, many cer-

emonial gifts would be exchanged, and the remains of the dead would be gathered up, bundled up, and deposited in large communal ossuaries.[1]

The Feast of the Dead was built upon ideas of how humans were constituted and what their biography was. The Huron believed that people possessed multiple souls, some of which were corporeal and had a physical life much like the living did. Hence people persisted after death as souls whose life was very much like those of the living, though on a different but not too distant plane of existence. The burial program represents the soul's progress. Following death and the first burial, the soul remained around the settlement, close to the body. This was a mixed blessing; souls could be helpful but also could be very dangerous and harmful, particularly if angry or filled with unfulfilled desires. This was a temporary state. After reburial in the Feast of the Dead, souls were supposed to undertake a long journey to the land of the dead, which the Hurons thought was far to the west. Hence the Feast of the Dead, rather than constituting an ancestral community as an ongoing local presence, was really a rite of farewell as they departed.

The best-made plans go awry, however, and this normative rite suited only those dying in completely unexceptional ways (fig. 14.2). Other rites coped with other contingencies. If a person died on a trip away from home, he or she could be cremated or buried anywhere. If captured by enemies (principally the Iroquois), a person would be either adopted and follow an Iroquois life and death path thenceforth, or would be tortured and killed. Their physical remains would finish up as trophy skulls, scalps, or scattered bone in village middens. Conversely, captured or killed enemies — male and female, adults and children — were brought back to Huron villages as trophy heads or scalps, or as prisoners to torture, kill, and sometimes eat. This resulted in trophy heads stored in communal rooms and various burnt and dismembered human bones scattered around village middens. People drowning on the Great Lakes were buried away from villages, as it was thought that the spirits of the waters were angry with them and it was dangerous to keep them too close. People dying a violent death would also be buried elsewhere, or cremated, lest their angry and vengeful spirits would remain threateningly near settlements. Finally, the very young and the very old were not considered strong enough to undertake such a long journey to the Land of the Dead, so they were not reburied in the Feast of the Dead. However, newborns were sometimes buried by pathways so that their soul could re-enter passing pregnant women and get back into circulation.

NEOLITHIC SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL ITALY

As a final example, let us turn to Southern and Central Italy in the Early and Middle Neolithic, the world of early farmers in the Central Mediterranean between about 6000 and 4000 B.C. (calibrated). This example, already discussed extensively (Bagolini and Grifoni Cremonesi 1994; Grifoni Cremonesi and Radmilli 2001; Grifoni Cremonesi 2003; Grifoni Cremonesi, Mallegni, and Tramonti 2003; Robb 2007, 2002, 1994; Tunzi Sisto 1999) serves a different purpose. The two cases noted above illustrate the close relationship between beliefs about bodily constitution, biography, and means of dealing with dead bodies; this example serves to illustrate how one might approach these themes in a completely prehistoric case.

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[1] While secondary burial has been interpreted in much recent archaeological literature, particularly for the British Neolithic, as a way of establishing an ancestral presence, in this case secondary burial was really more about establishing a collective community in the present which mirrored one in the afterlife. For example, there seems to have been little attention paid to presencing the ancestors as timeless ancestors, or to revisiting and re-manipulating remains of the dead following their secondary deposition.

When I started researching Italian Neolithic burials about fifteen years ago, it seemed clear to me that the basic burial rite was flexed single inhumation in a small pit without any grave goods somewhere around a village. One problem with this view is that, statistically, these are not the most common burials at all! Over half the human remains known turn up as disarticulated bone around villages and caves (and this is probably an underestimate, as the tendency has been to publish things that look like burials to us while ignoring "stray bone"). Some burials have clearly been disturbed in the 6,000 years since the Neolithic. But it is clear that Neolithic people effected some of the disturbance themselves, some bone would have been loose around sites that were still occupied, and in some cases we can actually document the gathering up and redeposition of loose bone (e.g., Samari). Hence, burial here is probably best understood not as a permanent, sacrosanct deposition, but rather as a stage of active memory which would have often ended after some time in the casual disturbance and scattering of bone. What did such burials mean? The key is their location and memory. For much of the Neolithic, people were buried mostly in and around villages, among houses, or in ditches and pits. Theoretically, such simple on-site burials can be understood by considering the role of burial in constructing memory. In the Italian Neolithic, people identified themselves and their group with their resident village. One progressed through a normal lifespan, becoming a gendered adult and dying in expected circumstances. Burying people around the village both merged their personal history with the longer-term history of the group and endowed the place with a sense of group — not individual — ancestry. As with the Huron example and in Bronze Age Jordan (Chesson this volume) burial served principally to reconstitute the social community in a world of the dead.

Yet there were several variants upon this rite. It could be abbreviated. Juvenile bones are disarticulated far more often than are those of adults. This probably reflects the fact that their graves may not have been marked or remembered to the same degree as were adults; in effect, their depositional history reflects a cultural judgment that they were less socially central than adults. However, the burial process could also be prolonged by retaining bone for commemoration. Usually it was the skull, which was removed from otherwise complete burials in two cases (Cala Colombo, Madonna del Loreto), buried under houses at several other sites (Marcianese, Balsignano), perhaps as a foundation rite, and cached, collected, or reburied in several other sites (Masseria Bellavisa, Girifalco, Grotta Scaloria).

These two variants are basically extensions or truncations of the basic social life of the body. At least three other mortuary rites were also used. In a handful of sites, something completely different was done. For example, at the Grotta Patrizi near Rome (Grifoni Cremonesi and Radmilli 2001), a young adult male was buried in a ritual cave with very strange assortment of grave goods, including cups, bowls, broken grinding stones, flint blades, pebbles, a bow, a bizarre assortment of small animal bones such as six fox tibias, and a quartz crystal. In the heady days of processualism, this man was interpreted as a chief, but such a bizarre one-off, particularly in someone with a trepanation and a facial dysplasia, probably represents ritual-related variation instead. Other unique depositions include the Grotta Continenza and Madonna delle Grazie. The point is that in a minority of cases, something was done which bore very little relation at all to the normal burial rite, and the best explanation probably lies in the ritual status either of the dead person or of the circumstances of burial themselves.

Then there are two cases of non-burial where bodies were simply left exposed (Ripa Tetta II, a young adult male left exposed in a village ditch; Passo di Corvo tomb 11, a young woman found face down in a well). As Papadopoulos (2000, cf. Richardson this volume) has argued for Classical Greece, such inversions are meaningful and may indicate stigmatized individu-

als. Were these victims of raids or of internal politics such as witch executions? Either way, they have been denied the normal death-path, excising them from the normative history of the group. Finally, there are two cases of mass burials (Diga di Occhito, Grotta Pavolella). Unfortunately, neither has yet a published skeletal or taphonomic report, but these may represent epidemic deaths or Neolithic massacres like the famous sites of Talheim in Germany and Schletz in Austria.

Thus, in Neolithic Italy, we have up to six variant routes to eternity — or at least to the twentieth century. These include a baseline normal rite whose main goal was to reconstitute the living village community in death, an abbreviated version for juveniles, a prolonged version based on skull commemoration, and at least three inversions, negations, or optings-out to create appropriate meanings of death for unusual people or circumstances. The data are poor, with every category besides official "burials" underreported, probably some completely invisible burial treatments, and probably some quite distinct burial routes finishing, equifinally, as "scattered bone." But as far as one can tabulate, these "normal" burials, leading to either articulated single burials or scattered bones, account for half to three-quarters of the dead.

SOME CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

All societies have multiple ways both of dying and of burying. Different ways of death are often evaluated with reference to an ideal ending to a life story which the structuralist Vernant calls the "good death." Moreover, variant burial treatments cope with how people died in relation to central moral values and are interdependent with each other in structured burial programs. Methodologically, it is useful to see how one creates variant treatment. In general, there are four tactics which can be seen in the examples discussed here.

(1) Abbreviating the burial pathway for people of lesser social centrality, often children but also paupers and people without social networks

(2) Extending it or elaborating it for people of greater social concern whose remains act as a focus of memory, which may involve keeping and using either entire bodies (as with permanently embalmed political leaders) or human bone (as with skull commemoration cults)

(3) Opting out of it for completely different pathways for people in qualitatively different statuses and circumstances, as with plague pits, mass graves, or unique burials for people to whom usual categories do not apply

(4) Denying it ostentatiously for people excised from moral communities, as with witchcraft executions, heretics, suicides buried in unconsecrated ground, and so on

Looking at burial variation in terms of such transformations of a basic biographical story may be a useful way ahead in understanding what people in the past meant and did through burial.

Funerary ritual is first and foremost cultural action. A rite of transition, it puts a closing stamp upon a human biography, even as it may at the same time open up a new chapter in the social life of the dead. It may sometimes be mobilized in the service of political hierarchy; but equally well it may be used to establish and experience other kinds of meanings, such as collective solidarity (M. Dietler pers. comm.), or to do other kinds of tasks, such as to keep the potentially dangerous dead happy, harmless, and in their place (M. Bloch pers. comm.). Studies of burial as meaningful practice, however, have tended either to be narrowly particulariz-

ing, focusing exclusively upon one group, or to apply one-size-fits-all interpretations such as the equation of burial with ancestors without methodological underpinning.

At a more general level of conclusion, I would argue that we can generalize in mortuary theory more extensively than we do. But we should do so not by trying to devise new exception-proof rules like the Binford-Saxe agenda, but rather by expanding our theoretical vocabulary for interpreting burial. This paper presents an example of what such a process of theorizing might look like, by introducing terms and concepts to the vocabulary with which we can understand a given situation: culturally embodied death, the agency of dead bodies, and biographical narratives and contingencies. Like funerary rites themselves, it is also a beginning.
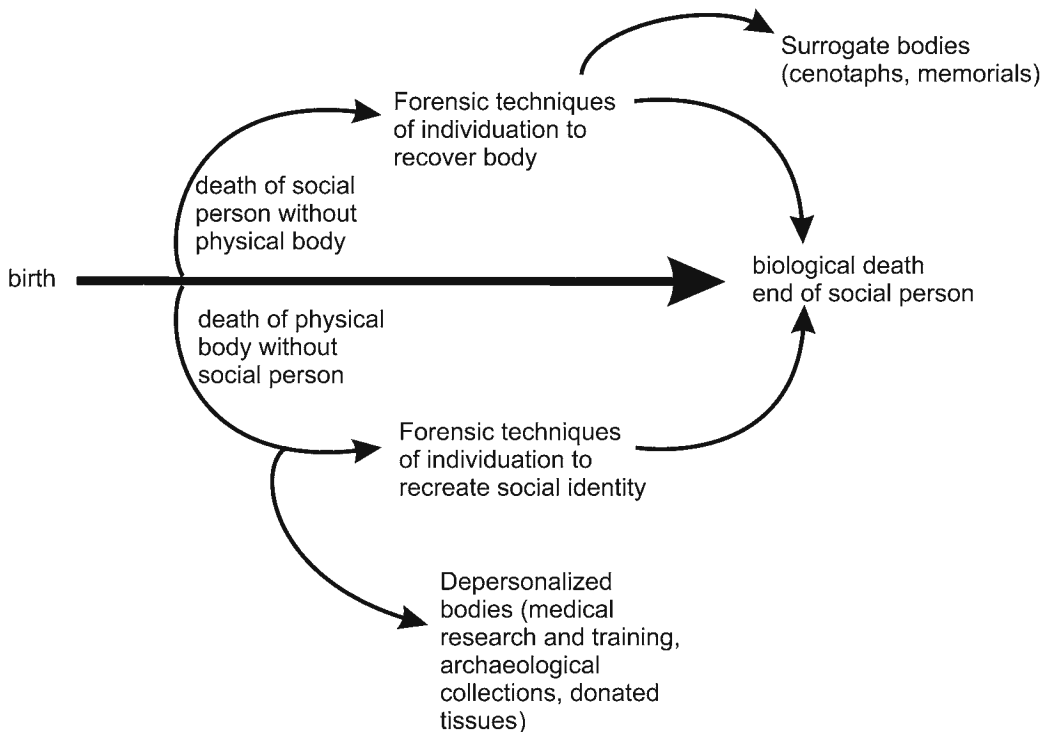

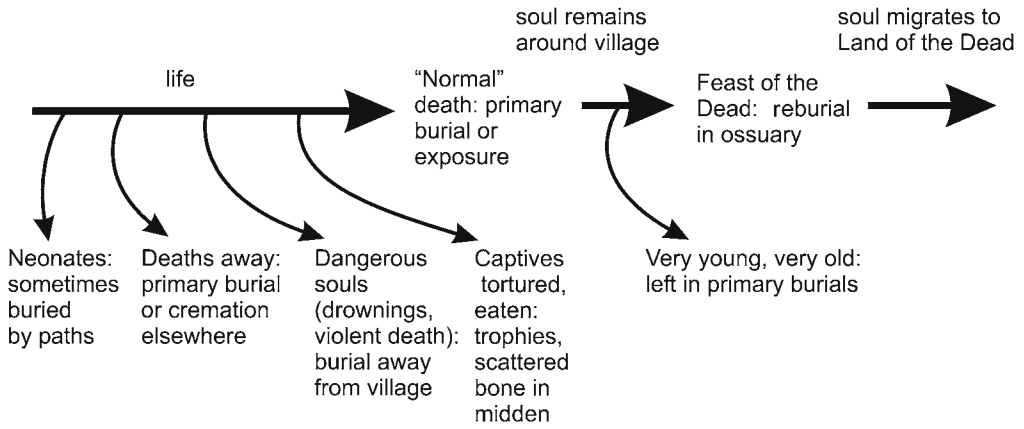Figure 14.1. Burial Pathways in Modern Western Societies

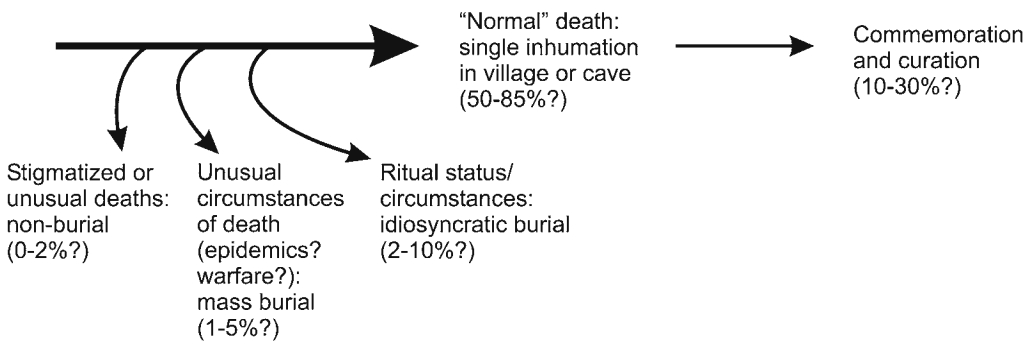Figure 14.2. Burial Pathways in the Seventeenth-century Huron

Figure 14.3. Burial Pathways in Early–Middle Neolithic Southern and Central Italy

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15

MORTUARY PRACTICES FOR THE THIRD MILLENNIUM: 1966–2006

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After four decades, the study of mortuary practices has moved closer to the center of archaeology. One need only consult recent textbooks on archaeology to note the number of instances in which human remains and their physical and cultural context exemplify a range of diverse topics (e.g., Renfrew and Bahn 2000). In part this change is a consequence of the new-found importance of osteology and bioanthropology in archaeological practice (Larsen 1997). Equally important, I contend, is the way in which the subject of mortuary practices continues to lie at the intersection of heavily debated areas in social archaeology (Parker Pearson 1999). For instance, major arguments over archaeological interpretation, the role of professionalism, and the even ownership of the past have hinged upon human remains, if only in part (Goldstein and Kintigh 1990; Hubert 1994; Klesert and Powell 1993; McGuire 1989). Debates visited upon the mortuary record extend well-beyond scholarly circles to affect the larger non-academic world. While scholarly papers strike a dispassionate air, the conclusions archaeologists draw from burials and mortuary evidence are of vital concern to non-archaeological communities. As claims and counter-claims mount within the broader affairs of the world, the importance of professional archaeological interpretation does not diminish but becomes increasingly critical to these debates. Something as academic as social analysis, among other considerations, is no longer a private conversation within a small circle of scholars but is one with potentially powerful political impact upon the archaeological record.

MORTUARY PRACTICE VERSUS BURIAL ANALYSIS

Advances in molecular biology, DNA analyses in particular, have had the effect of creating a personal world for human remains that have generally remained depersonalized (Bahn 2003; Jones 2001). Interestingly, the increased focus upon individual human remains was preceded by placing what at one time was simply a study of "burials" into a much more comprehensive field of mortuary practices. This step was heralded by the symposium, The Social Dimensions of Mortuary Practices, held in 1966 at the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, meetings of the American Anthropological Association. By forwarding the utility of making burials, tombs, and mortuary monuments parts of the same field of study, connections could be made between burials and other cultural categories. For instance, the remains of physical violence and accidental deaths could be integrated whereas previously they were left out when they could not be included in some category of customary practice. Miscellaneous teeth and bone need not be dropped from further study, nor do off-location preparations for burial. The formal marking of grave sites and associated places with objects and earthworks likewise opened up linkages through land-scapes. All this is illustrated by the way that mortuary analysis can proceed in the absence of a body/skeleton. How else could an often empty tomb be integrated with contemporary skeletal analysis? Analysis is not restricted to the physical locus of the remains; that place is simply the final resting place.

In the 1960s burials were conceived of as belonging to a limited set of formal types of customary treatment. Excluded were ad hoc treatments that were disarmingly placed into a simple category of "disturbed" burials. Formal types consisted of such categories as mummies, flexed inhumations, and piles of cremation. Inconvenient details blurring these categories had inscrutable ideographic significance, if they had any at all. The primary archaeological utility of burials was the objects associated with them. Here is where archaeologists could readily deploy their training as material culture specialists. In this object-oriented research perspective the most important feature of the grave record was conventionally reduced to a collectivity of items, called a grave lot. The disposition of the human remains itself was treated as an independent matter and was routinely used as an index of ethnic and religious identities. Any mixture of disposition types (e.g., inhumations with cremations) was regarded as signatures of ethnic mixture or outside ethnic influence (Binford 1971). Age sometimes took on social significance as in the cases of the "rich child burials." Today, these perspectives are regarded as simplistic, misleading, and arbitrarily exclusionary. Furthermore, false problems were generated that essentialized form and thingness.

PROSPECTS

The study of mortuary practices has moved closer to the center of archaeological research by demonstrating its wider applications. Ian Morris's (1987) ancient Greek application instructed us as to how changes in treatment of the dead help shed light on the historical and social contexts in which the Classic Athenian state arose. Showcased more widely was the New York African burial project that revealed the reality of slave abuse in the late eighteenth century. Slave health and morbidity told a harsh story in this urban setting (Blakey 2001; Cantwell and Wall 2001: 278–94). This contribution was all the more striking because the burial ground was in a northern city that had forgotten about its prominence in slave holding during colonial and early republic times.

Human remains hold a particular fascination that assures continued scholarly attention well into the future. The particularly human reactions invoked by viewing the tangible remains of the dead absorb our attention and tap into the observer's curiosity. This attraction, of course, cannot completely satisfy our inquisitiveness nor can it exhaust the reservoir of questions that we bring to the subject (Hallam and Hockey 2001). Battlefield casualties are one controversial topic (Walker 2001). The most morally loaded ones are the suspected presence of human sacrifice and cannibalism (Billman, Lambert, and Leonard 2000; Dongoske, Martin, and Ferguson 2000). The vehemence expressed in the extensive discourse over these topics indicates the depth of the sensitivity they evoke. Whatever the interpretation, these cases rightly elicit strong reactions. But avoidance of the topic strengthens barely examined biases about the subject that feed into archaeological interpretations.

Today, the way that human remains feed into identity politics has become an issue of major importance (Meskell 2002). Another is the way in which those remains become a focus for the politics of identity (e.g., Parker Pearson 1999). The virtual silence that greeted the subject in the past is just as much a signature of the social and personal aspects of the subject as the now commonplace way in which the subject has been the focus of research today.

HISTORY OF THE 1966 SYMPOSIUM

A little background will help provide a context for the symposium and the publication of *Approaches to the Social Dimensions of Mortuary Practices* (Brown 1971a). Prior to the 1966 meeting of the American Anthropological Association, burial practices were safely relegated to diffusion, historical inertia, or arbitrary significance. Whether the perspective was akin to Elliot-Smith's diffusionism or to evolutionary ones, the object was the isolated burial type. V. Gordon Childe (1945, 1963) saw evolutionary implications to trends in European burial practices that were pathfinding for their day. But they were ones limited to a single line of evolution out of the Near East. Otherwise the topic has been one to attract the attention of social scientists; archeologists generally left it alone (Metcalf and Huntington 1991).

Following World War II, attitudes toward the dead shifted within the Western World. As a consequence, grief and mourning generally became more de-personalized (Ariès 1981; Gorer 1965). In these contexts the study of mortuary practices gained momentum. The scholarly gaze now became more inclined to examine what had been left untouched before. More than one scholar has commented on the dearth of scholarly interest in archaeological burials. Lewis Binford (1971) stated that mortuary practice studies should have been far more common. He articulated a condemnation about this silence that spoke for the entire symposium.

> Human burials are one of the most frequently encountered classes of cultural feature observed by archeologists … Yet, while there exists a specialized descriptive lexicon (extended, flexed, or semiflexed burials, bundle or flesh burials; cremations or inhumations; etc.) which reveals a concern with the description of observed differences and similarities, there is a surprising lack of literature in which attempts are made to deal with burials as a distinct class of variable phenomena (Binford 1971: 6).

Some of this distancing from the study of mortuary practices reflected our Western cultural biases and our barely expressed aversion to what used to be regarded as macabre and even barbaric (Ariès 1981).

The appearance of the volume is easily recognized as part of the 1960s trend that has come to be called the "New Archaeology." In both its claims and motivations, the symposium was clearly part of this movement. Dissatisfaction with the then current use of mortuary information in the archaeological record was clearly a motivation. Looking back at the time, each of the participants had a different take on the solution, but the participants were united in their conviction that the time was overdue for a change in direction. Its background illustrates the point well. The conference that led to the Society for American Archaeology memoir was held at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, during the 1966 annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association. The planning took place the preceding May in a hotel room while the annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology was in session. Binford and a number of others were strongly interested in having this symposium and were committed to reading papers, but no one was keen on leading it. All backed away except for myself, who was duly delegated the task of getting the session together even though it was already organized.

An important impetus for the session was Binford's thinking about how the various forms in which burials might be displayed could articulate with dimensions of social life deemed culturally important for representation. He was fresh from writing up a summer's field project excavating a burial mound. Binford (1972: 390–420) found that distinctions in the placement or the disposition of limbs and body made sense of the burials he excavated from the Galley Pond mound. Only a few insiders knew about his success with formal analysis until the 1966 symposium. It remained for the publication, *An Archaeological Perspective* (Binford 1972),

to bring this fruitful approach to the public. The chapter devoted to Galley Pond developed the principles of formal analysis that were initially propounded in his salvage work report on a southern Illinois River reservoir project (Binford 1964). His work was part of a broader salvage operation by the Museum of Southern Illinois University in the Kaskaskia River valley of Southern Illinois. I dwell on this context to highlight the salience of the interpretive challenges raised by these rather ordinary field operations. In different hands the finds would not have prompted the interpretive posture the site excavation did. Well before this experience Binford had committed himself to an analytical approach that started analysis by finding contrasting fields of similarity and difference. Like other good archaeologists, he had a facility with pattern recognition, which in this case found fertile ground in the remains of a burial or charnel house entombed by a low earth mound. Grave goods at the site were too few for any analysis on their own, but they had plenty to contribute when combined with the patterns in which human bones were disposed. Mind you, the burials were entirely disarticulated, even including some reassembly within the charnel house structure.

Prior practice was to value burials either according to the degree that they measured up to some iconic standard (e.g., a standard set of categories, extended, flexed, bundled, and cremated) or as artifactual time capsules contributing to cultural history. Burials that were difficult to categorize were either forced into categories or ignored altogether. Grave goods were particularly valued because they were thought to respond to popularity trends. All thoughts of agency were dismissed then as beyond the bounds of "legitimate" archaeological interpretation. Popularity trends, influenced by Kroeber's non-ideological study of fashion, exercised a firm grip on contemporary archaeological thought. While the concept was appealing, few concrete demonstrations were available. Deetz and Dethlefsen (1971) stepped into the gap with a contribution that made use of dated inscriptions on New England tombstones to show how major iconic representations exhibited distinctive battleship curves in popularity through time. The timing of these popularity trends was proportionate to the local cemetery's distance to the city of Boston. As principal seaport and residence of the elite, Boston was in the position of promoting the latest ideological developments out of Europe. They reasoned that trends in tombstone carving iconography were responding to major religious movements because the timing and degree of change were inversely proportional to distance from Boston (Deetz and Dethlefsen 1971). The chronology marker aspect of this study found linkage with my own introduction to the *Social Dimensions* volume in which I addressed its influence in archaeological interpretation in the southeastern United States (Brown 1971b).

The incorporation of grave marker iconography was novel in both mainline archaeology and in mortuary studies. But the grip exercised by popularity trends is illustrated by the absence of any mention in the gravestone study of the prominence with which ornate chest tombs dominated the social landscape of the same New England graveyards (Benes 1977). By portraying the distinctions in tombstone design as simply a chronicle of temporal change, contemporary social distinctions were shortchanged (Dethlefsen 1981).

The most important contribution of the volume was its advocacy of the information-containing potential for the disposition of the body. Heretofore this subject was given inconsistent attention, if any attention at all. Even to this day it is given short shrift despite the benefits demonstrated by bioarchaeology. But details in the placement of the hands, feet, and limbs and the absence of specific bones have been demonstrated to signal culturally important information. What was insightful was a methodology that allowed an analysis of forms of burial disposition to be employed systematically throughout a cemetery population (Binford 1964, 1972). Binford's approach so influenced me that I incorporated it into my own report of an old

salvage excavation of a northern Illinois cemetery mound (Brown 1967). Such pattern analysis is now much more common (e.g., Shanks and Tilley 1982).

FORMALISM AND IDEOLOGY

Formalist approaches dominated the 1970s and early 1980s by emphasizing the analysis of burial patterning (e.g., O'Shea 1984). Saxe's (1970) work set the agenda and together with Binford's symposium paper created a perspective that still has influence today. In the post-processual debates that took off during the 1980s, the mortuary practices paradigm set in place by Saxe and Binford was labeled "processualist." Although the processual alignment is accurate, the processual label for the Saxe-Binford approach misses a key feature we need to keep in mind. Formal analysis occupies the central place in this paradigm. Social status, as well as ideology, was generally introduced after a formal study was accomplished on skeletons, grave location, and grave goods. The patterns that were produced were usually regarded as direct, "map-like" reflection of society (e.g., Peebles and Kus 1977; Saxe 1970). One might think of this perspective as very similar to the strategy of factor analysis. In this mathematical method, eigenvector loadings allow the identification of the significance of the factors after they have been extracted. In this perspective, age and sex of skeletal material was probably the most useful information. Unfortunately, accurate and reliable statistics on these osteological elements is frequently lacking. The critiques that were leveled at the Saxe-Binford paradigm insisted that ideology, and later context, had to be incorporated within any formal analysis, not as an addition or commentary. Because of the priority given to formal analysis, I think it clearer to label the approach as "formalist."

In keeping with the intellectual approaches of the time, a basically deductive strategy was adopted to break through the seemingly incommensurate features in the cultural geography and history of practices to discover the underlying commonalities. Its most enduring accomplishment was the Saxe-Goldstein hypothesis (Morris 1991). Stated simply, formal cemeteries were associated with claims to localized economic resources, and that where such claims were absent formal cemeteries were not maintained (Goldstein 1976; Saxe 1970; Saxe and Gall 1977). While this hypothesis has remained standing, it is probably fair to state that this deductive strategy had limited success in producing durable findings. What it did accomplish was to re-invigorate interest in mortuary practices past and present. This newfound interest among archaeologists was joined by a comparable rise in attention among social and cultural anthropologists, historians, literary scholars, and the general public.

REPRESENTATIONISM

The representationist argument holds that an individual is treated in death in accordance with one's social standing (e.g., O'Shea 1984; Peebles and Kus 1977; Shennan 1975; Tainter 1977, 1981). While the principle holds for many societies (Binford 1971), it does not for a significant number of others. A reason for the complexities involved can revolve around a simple matter of how funerals are conducted in many places. A clear example of how monument scale may lead to a false inference about social status comes from the Oceanic mortuary pattern. In this pattern relative monument size gave a misleading reading of the social standing of the deceased (Metcalf and Huntington 1991). Monument making was a testimonial to the deceased by the person standing in social obligation to honor his memory. While the strength of the host's resources were usually appropriate with the social standing of the deceased, quirks of

survivorship sometimes made a poor man the host for a rich man's funeral, and vise versa. The size and scale of the funeral rites was dependent upon the resources the host could muster. Hence, in a few cases small tombs could mark high-status dead, and the reverse held as well.

Reacting to this representationist perspective, post-processual archaeologists substituted ideology for the social (Hodder 1980; Pader 1982). When it came to the core issue of representation, post-processualists at first did little better that manage to substitute the ideological for the social (Kerber 1986: 48). Both are relevant, but a more persistent problem to overcome is the predilection to interpret formal patterning as representing anything concrete or specific. Hodder's (1987) call to privilege "context" marked a more important step away from representation. Under this umbrella concept subsequent effort has been to move toward the notion of context to provide the route for assigning analytical value to objects, burial positioning, grave locations, and other dimensions of mortuary practice (Goldstein 2001; Parker Pearson 1999). Context involves analysis of the histories of corpse treatment, the internal history of mounds and graveyards, and other archaeological and bioanthropological details. Obviously, this path of analysis is dependent for its strength upon the quality of archaeological and bioanthropological information (Chapman 2005). Although it appears to impose an impossible hurdle upon data collected under old standards, clever research projects have managed to overcome some of the obvious shortcomings of past excavation and the devastating effects of lax curation (e.g., Morris 1987; Pollock 1999).

For example, one analysis of the burial patterning of Hopewell mounds located in the lower Illinois valley had a large number of distinct status-indicative burial patterns (Tainter 1977). However this particular analysis ignored the internal contextual information that revealed the burial count and did not amount to an identification of independent social statuses, but, in fact, merely that of a sequence of treatments for a single social category — in short, a program of staged burial treatment (Brown 1979, 1981). A much simpler social makeup was the result. One immediately realizes that the manner in which status was modeled overlooked the variety of ways in which real status differences among the deceased can be translated into the material record (Metcalf and Huntington 1991). Much of current research has attempted to grapple with this problem (Goldstein 2001).

OLD STANDBYS

The centrality of context at all of its scales — from regional to graveside — is what makes possible contemporary interpretation of the material record. A rich diversity of contexts have been tapped by different studies, including demography and grave-marking landscape. Before the potential was developed, two applications stand out. The first is the significance of the rich child burial. In the hands of Childe (1943, 1963) it signaled a contradiction between the status and/or honor marking a youth or baby in death with that which could be earned by an adult. The implied contrast between the richly furnished young and the meagerly furnished adults was taken to indicate a source of wealth that was "unearned" — perhaps inherited. But whatever the source of wealth entombed with the young, it becomes an instance of preferential status marking (Saxe 1970: 8). This is a representational argument in the first place. Furthermore, the category of "wealth" is far too broad since sacred objects, precious materials, and large numbers of inexpensive items measure or mark significance qualitatively. The wealth category is misleading.

We are now accustomed to examining the unevenness with which objects were associated with the dead. Absence has significance. This means that graves with few or negligible remains

should not be dismissed as unproductive. As the use of the rich child burial demonstrates, patterning in grave offerings can highlight the rarity and hence the significance of those graves that contained grave goods, particularly those in an overblown hypertrophic form or ones made of "expensive" materials.

The most enduring preconception has to do with the significance of colossal monuments in the political economy. It has been routine to attribute their construction to the exploitation of human labor (Childe 1963). The Great Pyramids of Fourth Dynasty Egypt stand as the iconic case in point, partly because exploitation seems to be so self-evident. The origin of this perception is shrouded in history, but it had the support of Judeo-Christian teaching. Mark Lehner (1997) has argued that the conspicuous consumption enshrined in the size of the pyramids was repeatedly used by Christians and Muslims to fortify their line that the pagan ancient Egyptians deceived their subjects into undertaking laborious projects and that these projects were useless monuments to an obviously foolish religion. Just as obviously, no rational person would enter into this kind of backbreaking labor willingly. The long history of this line of thought enshrined in the Bible has led to an uncritical conclusion that all monuments were testimonies to exploitation. Only after a small pyramid was replicated was it discovered that the labor in building them, real though it was, was not the backbreaking task that many, following Herodotus, thought it to be (Shaw 2003). Exploitation has become a regular principle in mortuary analysis of conspicuous consumption. The problem lies not in the principle as such but recognizing the contexts other than sheer size that make it applicable.

CONTEXT AND OBJECTIFICATION

The turn away from formalism toward a focus upon cultural practices entails a line of thought that moves away from the "objectification" of burials, grave goods, and even the social and ideological contexts that archaeologists bring to them. The implications of this newfound focus have been slow to be recognized.

Context immediately exposes the cultural and situational particulars of the archaeological record. It poses a problem about the balance between universal processes and historically derived belief and practice that archaeologists and anthropologists probably will return to sometime in the future. In the meantime archaeologists have found that the details of context that once were regarded as arcane in the extreme can now be made to speak to a range of problems and issues that have been raised from other research directions.

Past controversies have focused upon social interpretation. While the social and cultural interpretations have been the major point of contention in mortuary studies, appropriate methods have been of a secondary concern. Methodological weaknesses detract from our capacity to translate burial patterning into credible social inferences. The absence of taphonomic theory left early models exposed to easy criticism (Binford 1971, 1972; Parker Pearson 1999). Theoretical perspectives obviously benefit by well-honed methods. But little headway can be expected when the depth and quality of archaeology are not recognized as crucial. The contextual details that new techniques allow us to uncover lead immediately to a whole series of considerations that previously would have been skipped over out of impatience, but now can be recognized as essential elements to a comprehension of a more complete pattern. Theory benefits by finding new arguments to make. Newly uncovered details force reconsideration of older explanations and even theoretical positions. A recursive interaction between them benefits both. This point has been made forcefully made by Alison Wylie (2002) as a back-and-forth tacking operation that is key to research objectives today.

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16
CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

M. Dietler:

Actually I had a series of not so much questions as comments that I think perhaps the speakers can pick up on and comment on themselves. I have a whole series of things, but I'll limit myself for the moment to perhaps two or three. The first one is, I just wanted to emphasize a further point in the distinction that Maurice [Bloch] made about memory and memorialization. I am also quite unhappy with this term "memory" used by archaeologists, because in addition to the reasons that he gave one of the problems that we have is that what we are actually observing is that the process of memorialization, practices of memorialization; but we don't really know what the effects of those practices were, memory is an effect. So, as I was emphasizing for some of the other aspects of ritual, it is very difficult for us to judge what kinds of memories might be produced by practices of memorialization; we can often define the kind of logic behind the strategy of the practice, but that is no guarantee that it produces a particular effect, and as we know from ethnographic experiences and our own life experiences, the effects tend to be highly variable and multiple and they change over time. So, again, I think that is a very important distinction.

D. Schloen:

Can I just ask you before you get on to your next point, Michael [Dietler], is that another way of saying that "memory" is a very sloppy word for the unknown symbolic framework in which certain practices are taking place and that we are fooling ourselves if we think that we are elucidating that?

M. Dietler:

I think that there is often a tendency with archaeologists, perhaps a slight optimism, to assume that we can read very directly effects from practices. And I think that we have to understand that the effects are not directly readable from practices, we have to find other ways of doing that. In certain circumstances that is possible, but in others it is more difficult, and with a phenomenon like memory I think that is really largely not accessible. We can certainly talk about the logic of practices of memorialization and the strategic attempts at this, and obviously in terms of centralized political authority, for example, there are very strategic kinds of memorialization practices that we can understand quite clearly. What we don't know is what effects those actually produced in the audience for those practices as monuments. And if you look at modern political ritual you will see that quite clearly there are a whole variety of different reactions. So anyway, that is just a distinction.

The other thing I wanted to pick up on is the issue of politics that was raised by John [Robb]. There I think it is important for us to make a kind of subtle distinction between what we might call "Politics" with a capital "P" and "politics" with a small "p." The first meaning is essentially a kind of formalized exercise of power by political bodies, institutions, and so forth, the kinds of things that we see on the large-scale political stage, and politics in the sense of a kind of relational phenomenon that is the construction of social relationships between people

which are always imbued with power. And clearly in the wake of Foucault and Bourdieu and others it is quite obvious that this is kind of a pervasive phenomenon in social relationships. And all the actions that we see, particularly things like ritual, I mean one of the reasons for saying that there is no ritual without politics is in that small "p" sense. That is, there are political effects of ritual, even if the events themselves are not self-consciously political. In fact, they are often much more powerful if they are not overtly political in the symbolism. So, I think it is important always to distinguish this because there often tends to be a kind of slippage between the "P/p" with the assumption that if it is not somehow directly concerned with large-scale political institutions it becomes not political. But I think that politics is a pretty pervasive thing. Now obviously there are, as I was mentioning earlier, there are differences in the kind of arenas of political symbolic action and certain ones take precedence over others, the importance of certain ones declines and diminishes, but all the actions always have a kind of inherent political nature to them in the sense that they are continually in the process of constructing and making commentaries about the nature of social relationships between people. There is this kind of shared sincere fiction if you like that underlies these things and we have to understand that people take these things very seriously, there is a sincere belief in the religious nature of these symbols, they are not necessarily self consciously manipulative in a political sense but that doesn't prevent them from having real political effects in its multi sense.

And the final thing that I wanted to say is that in many societies the dead still have agency. That is, we are used to, I think it is very important for use to step outside of our own cultural conception of the dead as somehow being disposed of and put away, because in many societies there is a strong cultural belief that the dead are still there and that they have very real effects in the world and they are constantly acting on the world, and that can be in either a benevolent way or a malevolent way and so a lot of funerary ritual and particularly post-funerary ritual is designed to either pacify the dead or to recruit them to various kinds of projects that one has in the present. And it is important for us to remember that the audience for these various kinds of rituals is not only the living, but is often the dead, not universally, but in many cases, that is the case.

J. Robb:

About that question of politics, I have to give the happy rejoinder that I think that you said something that was lurking in the back of my mind but that you said it far better than I could, in the sense that I think politics is always present in the background of social relations construction way, but what I was thinking is something like imagine a family funeral that's designed to reinforce a feeling of collective solidarity at a moment of sadness and to some extent that is not without politics, there is politics within the family, and there are politics of power being created by the experience but it may be, when you mentioned Foucault it is a reminder that it may be power in a different way than we ordinarily think of in macro politics it may be the power of the collective or the power to endure rather than to act or many other kinds. It is important to recognize that there are different wavelengths, different media, things could be happening on.

D. Schloen:

Could I just interject that I always worry when I hear power and politics that the conceptual vocabulary is too undifferentiated. I know Michael [Dietler], and others, you would make many distinctions, but, to the extent that Bourdieu for example draws on Weber's theory of legitimization when he talks about many different things, you know, to what extent do we need

a more differentiated vocabulary to talk about power in terms of modes of legitimization that can involve varying degrees of acquiescence and brute domination and maybe we'll come back to that and I put that out there because I wonder about the use of these terms in a less differentiated way.

S. Pollock:

I just want to return to this question of memory and memorialization, because I would also agree that memorialization is really far more what we are talking about typically and probably what we should be. But I wouldn't agree that we really can't sometimes, and I would highlight sometimes, understand the reactions to this memorialization by people and just to cite an example some of us were going through the galleries this morning and Joel pointed out on one of the Khorsabad reliefs where you can see where someone later took away the beard, took away part of the hairdo, took away part of the headband, and so on, presumably in a way of trying to change the representation of this person as another crown prince who was in competition with someone else. And we see this kind of thing quite frequently actually in the ancient Near East, you can see it when you go to Persepolis, and certain parts of the body are systematically removed from these reliefs and so on, places where statues and stelae have been schlepped from one place to another, and so on. So I think in some cases we can actually see some of the ways in which there were reactions to these acts of memorialization. And obviously we have to keep in mind that in many other cases we have no idea, but I think that it is not really the case that we can never see those effects and only conjecture.

S. Harvey:

Just a really minor question, I guess maybe for Michael [Dietler] or anybody, but I understand the concept of the agency of the dead as being but I don't understand and I take issue with the notion of agency of the dead body unless we are talking about a cultural context which imbues the dead body still during a transformational period, let's say like forty days like in the Islamic world, you know, with the presence of the spirit. I think that one thing that I find off-putting is this sort of over extension of the notion of agency where it loses its meaning as something inherently human, and indeed I mean to me the body does become an object. Maybe again that is too culturally defined and I'm too influenced by my own world, but I just think that one of the problems in the discourse in the past two days for me has been that we over extend a lot of these aspects to where they lose their relationship to psychology.

M. Bloch:

I entirely agree about the problem with agency, I dislike the word very much. But I think a much more interesting one, because it is much more defined psychologically, is intentionality. And it is quite clear that human beings cannot think of anybody, even if it is somebody whose name you just read on a tomb, or while you are doing a dig, without creating intentionality, imagining intentionality. And that you know ancestor worship used to be an extreme form of this, but as I mentioned, sometimes when you just say a name one can show that immediately people are thinking of an intentional being.

D. Schloen:

But I wonder if John [Robb] should get a chance to answer this because I suspect you are using the provocative phrase "agency of dead bodies" in a somewhat different sense. But, before we get to John [Robb] is there anyone else who like to comment on that particular issue?

M. Chesson:

In response to Steve [Harvey] and Maurice [Bloch], the first thing that sprang to my mind actually when you were talking about that is that Alfred Hitchcock movie called *The Trouble with Harry*, I don't know if you have ever seen it, but Harry is a dead guy, and he keeps getting reburied and unburied as everybody in the town tries to decide what to do with Harry. And it is all about the politics of the living, but Harry is a very powerful force, and what you do with Harry is also. People are fighting about what to do with Harry, and there is a little bit of an agency there, and you have a sense of people talking about what Harry would have wanted, and what's happening with Harry now, and that just sprang to mind as sort of an irreverent idea about what's happening to this dead body and how we think about it and intentionality. That's just my quick comment and I'll pass it on to John [Robb] now.

J. Robb:

That's sort of evolving to the stage of thinking that agency is an important thing for archaeologists to have thought through, and I'm not sure what the light at the end of the tunnel is yet. I think with the example that Meredith [Chesson] just brought up, that is very much the kind of thing that I had in mind when I was thinking about the agency of dead people, and that's agency in Gell's sense of initiating and directing a chain of causes and effects. I think if you follow that line of argument, it is unarguable that material things and dead bodies have agency, or you can end up questioning whether humans do. But the concept is actually quite slippery in the sense that we tend to map it onto our own human and non-human divide and thus the question of whether things that are not humans have agency is answered before its asked, and this is partly why it is hard for us to think. In my own personal thinking I'm evolving at the point to thinking that it is useful heuristic for understanding how events unfold, but it is more of a stepping stone to understand how practices work than it is a kind of teleological diacritical mark. I guess the other thing that I would add is that I have got to the point of thinking that agency is probably best conceptualized not as a quality of individuals in a sort of vitalist way that individuals can possess or exercise or dispose of or whatever, but a quality of relationships between people and other people or between people and things in which things can exert agency but they do so by virtue of what we believe about them, which sounds rather paradoxical, but I think also holds with relations between people as well. It is a question of what the relationship is constituted as which makes it possible to act.

D. Schloen:

Back to Michael [Dietler] I guess, but first, I keep intruding myself here, to say to John [Robb] something that maybe he and I can talk about later, most uses of the term agency imply a framework of meaning or a meaningful relationship as opposed to shall we say the causal relationship that you are talking about. You know a motivational model as opposed to a causal model and so the question would be, are we diluting, are we sort of gutting the term "agency" in terms of any specificity in terms of human action and human practices, but maybe that would seem to you to be evidence that I'm still caught up in this *a priori* decision about what it should mean, but I just wonder that it loses all utility as a conceptual tool at that stage.

M. Dietler:

Agency obviously is one of those terms that is rather complicated and people mean different things by it when they use it. When I was using it in this context I am perfectly happy to jettison it because it's not that valuable. What I was talking about here is not so much the

idea of bodies, but the dead themselves in some sort of spiritual form. And that they have real effects in the world for many people, because I think one of the things that we sometimes tend to forget is that for people who have deep religious beliefs or people in other societies who have beliefs about supernatural powers, these things are very real. For example, among the Luo people, where I did my ethnographic work, if people fall ill or they die or there are accidents of various kinds, there are only three possible explanations. There is no such conception of natural causes. It is either that they have violated a taboo, that somebody has bewitched them, or it is the ancestors causing problems, or the dead, not necessarily conceptualized as ancestors, but the dead. And, if it is the latter, then you have to find out why they are angry, who they are, and you have to propitiate them; you have to find ways of doing this, and a lot of the burial practices are designed in fact to prevent that kind of unhappiness, because if you don't do these things, they will be with you all the time, and there are a whole series of things that are involved around that, so they are a very real force. People believe that very strongly. So for those people, those dead spirits have very real effects.

D. Schloen:

But that raises the question of why one might emphasize death as Maurice [Bloch] pointed out and the frequency with which you have additional killing as a way to get over this cognitive hurdle. And I was just thinking when Michael [Dietler] was talking about the agency or act of force of spirits and so on, to ask Maurice [Bloch] whether one can really talk about emphasizing death through additional killing of animals or people without making reference to the cosmological and theological framework within which those practices would occur, you know that these killings are actions in relation to agents whether deities or the dead, that are part of a social world of gift-giving or what have you. I mean to ask you what do you think the connection would be between killing as a psychological therapy, or whatever it is, and this notion of cosmology.

M. Bloch:

Can I just say one thing about agency, it doesn't exist in France. What I mean by that is that word is untranslatable, into French or Italian, I think. It doesn't exist in the Mediterranean world, so you ought to be careful. And that's not just a joke. One of the most recurrent myths which pop up in different parts of the world in unrelated ways goes along the following lines. In the past, we used to eat our dead. Now, we've substituted that by instead killing animals, because it wasn't very nice eating the dead. And so what we are doing is we are eating the animals instead. So, we are killing the animals, you see, in the parallel, but we are actually … that is in order not to stop at death, but to transform it into life sustenance. You find that myth in China, in Africa, and in South America, amazingly.

N. Laneri:

Again to Maurice [Bloch], is killing sacrifice or not?

M. Bloch

I know about killing, but not about sacrifice.

D. Katz:

I would like to make just a small remark that in the Sumerian text about the death of Urnamma, it is stated very clearly, very plainly, that the king slaughtered many oxen and sheep

and made the banquet in the Netherworld, so it is a sacrifice and is for consumption, according to the Sumerian texts, it is very very clear, and so we have to take that into account that it is not just a symbol, but it is really food.

G. Stein:

This is more of a question for all of you, given the papers I think Maurice Bloch's point about our need to focus on death and funerary rituals as a kind of a transformation when the life-force leaves that kind of natural union with the body and becomes something else and that there is a need to sort of help it along in this transformation, so it becomes something else that is then safer, and you can say that in a way, so that when the ancestors or the dead person may still be out there, some part of them may still be out there, but that they can't or shouldn't be coming back in that direct way. My question is this, that once that life-force is separated from the body, it seems very important to start to think about the actual treatment of the body itself, and why then would there be the continued, these rituals like in Mesopotamia, continuing to feed the body, or give offerings to the dead body when the life-force is gone from it and when this transformation is complete, because that suggests then that separation is not as complete as people or culture might be trying to make it. I don't know how clear that is, but …

S. Richardson:

I think it is difficult in the case or the example to distinguish whether or not the statue which is fed regularly is being fed because it's *kispum* for a dead person or in fact it is a statue of a deified king, that it is because it is a god. And this is a feeding on a regular basis that you would carry out for a deity, whereas for a dead spirit this is an occasional, Day of the Dead type of thing.

G. Stein:

At least in Mesopotamia, I think that Irene Winter talked about this, that the tombs are set up in ways to allow repeated visits to actually feed or make offerings directly to the dead.

J. Pollini:

The slaughtering of animals, killing of animals, what you are doing is spilling the blood, the blood is the life-force, so it is a way of maybe giving back to the dead some kind of life-force. In the Odyssey, don't you have where they slaughter the animals, there is the smell, they are attracted to it. And in Late Antiquity the Christians wanted to do away with — and did away with — animal sacrifices because of the fact that this attracted the demons, which of course were the divinities, so they transformed the notion, but that was their great fear, too. So I think blood, smell, and that plays a lot in this kind of thing of sacrificial rituals.

D. Schloen:

This again raises the question I would say of whether there is some sort of fundamental cognitive basis for these generalizations or uniformities, a question we should address as well.

S. Pollock:

I just wanted to go back to Gil Stein's point, and I think it is something that we raised in a more general way yesterday, that is that the grave site is not always the site of commemoration. And, correct me if I'm wrong, my understanding of it is from Sumerian texts that there may be libations at the grave, but there are also other places where there are libations that had nothing to do physically speaking with the place of the grave.

D. Katz:

I would like to add that from some texts we see a notion that the grave can also be a door, a road to the Netherworld. If we have these libation pipes that go into graves and we don't have many attestations, there are few in Ur, you can explain it as simply going into the Netherworld, not into the body, the separation was complete. There is no doubt about that because the ghost is actually inherent to the body and it is released during this ritual, so the separation is complete. You could find ways to the Netherworld in order to bring down the libations and one way is to use the grave as a door.

G. Schwartz:

Well talking about this issue reminds me of what John [Robb] was saying about how burial isn't always about politics, and that we should consider the actual beliefs of these people about death. But the problem I have in that situation is archaeologically it is much more easy to look at politics or gender, things that are materially represented, as opposed to their beliefs about what actually death is all about and how to sustain the people after their death. In order to do that, then, you have to turn to the texts. I am always struggling with this archaeologically, how do you deal, how do you go beyond death as politics or politics to get to these issues or belief without trying to look at the texts, which are themselves quite problematic and of a very limited sample, and a biased sample often. I don't have an answer.

N. Laneri:

I agree with him, and I go back to the first session and the idea that material culture is ideology. It is very dangerous, it is risky, that everything is politics, everything is ideology. There are cultural actions, there is religion, it is more complicated I think than to just state that material culture is ideology or burial practices are politics, because that means that we don't care about texts, that we don't care about a lot of stuff, also about memory. And we look at what John [Pollini] said yesterday, there is something related to memory in the Roman period, we know through the texts, we know through artistic devices. We know that there is something related to memory and memorializing and remembering dead people. I think it is more complicated.

S. Richardson:

The first thing that I wanted to say was to respond to Dina [Katz] and Glenn [Schwartz], because this makes me think of the case of "The Incantation to Utu," which ought to give us the clearest example of the most explicit statement that cult should be carried out at the tomb. You do use libations, the offering pipe is at the grave, it is completely unambiguous, but when you come a few lines later, if this is an unlucky ghost, if this is a bad ghost, you don't go near the grave at all. You don't make an offering. You don't propitiate it. You don't do anything. You keep it sealed off. This is a case where the absolutely normative understanding we have of what you should do to take care of a hostile ghost is to propitiate the hell out of it, you feed it everything, you do everything you can, is actually explicitly rejected by this text. So there is a complete opposition within a single statement. Michael Dietler's first comment about perception and the creation of memory as this kind of social fiction that could be something like cultural memory made me think of the fact that two of the seven wonders of the ancient world are in fact tombs, the great pyramids and the tomb of Maussollos, and okay these are held up as sort of slightly ridiculous or failed examples of what a tomb ought to be by this list from Late Antiquity, that's not perhaps so relevant to synchronic observation of how different memories

could be produced simultaneously. But then it made me think that the function of that list is itself ambivalent because it produces precisely this "Ripley's Believe It Or Not" effect of how you are supposed to receive the message of what the tomb is. First you kind of shake your head and wonder that this thing could be so ridiculously big, and then you kind of laugh at it, and this is a simultaneous ambivalence at the level of the individual. So we have differences, synchronic and diachronic, in terms of the reception and that made me think, David [Schloen], of your comment, about legitimation, which is to note that legitimacy is something which is deployed situationally. It is not like the rug in your house which is always there. It is a piece of mail that you send out on a single day. It is instrumental, operational. What I liked particularly about John Robb's presentation was that it took note of a kind of time line during which different practices represent different moments at which different types of authority need to be deployed. The changes of these memories respond to those situations. So there is a history to each one of these. There is not a blanket kind of memory that is ever supposed to be created either for the group or the individual.

D. Schloen:

But in the social scientific mode one wants to come up with some sort of ideal, typical generalizations or, do we, I mean that's the question. But, sorry, I shouldn't be entering into this ….

M. Dietler:

I just wanted to say briefly that I think there is an important distinction between being interested in the political dimension of funerary ritual, and saying that funerary ritual is all or only about politics. Obviously there is a great deal of other meanings, of other actions, of other purposes, involved in funerary ritual, and all other rituals. So, one can be interested in the political dimension without making that kind of simplifying, essentializing statement. And one can be interested, for example, in whatever dimension, the economic dimension, the political dimension of a certain thing, without pretending to explain everything that is going on. One could take for example, something like academic conferences, which are ostensibly about the sharing of knowledge, and which certainly serve a function that is the goal with which many people come, but they are also simultaneously about politics. It is a dimension in which people perform and acquire certain kinds of symbolic capital as a result of that performance, or lose it. It is also a domain in which people make alliances, they do a variety of things which are very important for career advancement, for a whole series of other things. Now that is not to say that academic conferences are all about politics, that that is the only important dimension, but, I think it is perfectly legitimate to be interested in that dimension of these things.

N. Laneri:

I like your idea of differentiating between politics with a capital "P" and politics with a small "p," but why don't we call it a dimension of social relationships between individuals instead of calling it politics?

M. Bloch:

I just want to say very briefly that what you can find as archaeologists is remains of ritual, and the relationship between ritual and belief is extraordinarily complicated. I'd just like to mention some of the work of my colleague, which I think is sort of the only really careful study on beliefs about dead ancestors. She did a number of tests, psychological tests, which showed

that if change the context of the same people they assert that the dead are still active or not active. And what I think is interesting is that very few people say really the dead are still in some ways alive if you are outside ritual context. But those people can be brought in to participate in a ritual where you feed the dead. Nearly all the people whom she talks about would say of course the dead don't eat, but they are all willing to participate in a ritual where you feed the dead, just to show how complicated it is.

D. Schloen:

Thank you very much for attending. Let's thank Nicola Laneri and his assistants for organizing this conference.