Processions: Studies of Bronze Age Ritual and Ceremony presented to Robert B. Koehl

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Edited by
Judith Weingarten, Colin F. Macdonald,
Joan Aruz, Lara Fabian and Nisha Kumar

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Cover: Roll-out of upper part of black steatite rhyton, the 'Harvester Vase,' Royal Villa of Ayia Triada. Heraklion Archaeological Museum AE 184. Photograph: Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Heraklion Archaeological Museum.

Detail of the Procession Fresco, Knossos. Courtesy of Heraklion Archaeological Museum. Copyright: Hellenic Ministry of Culture - Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources.

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Robert Koehl in his office at Hunter College, 2019.

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List of Contributors

Joan Aruz
Curator Emerita, formerly Curator in Charge
Department of Ancient Near Eastern Art
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Valerie Bealle
Weaver and Fiber Artist

Philip P. Betancourt
Professor Emeritus
Department of Art History and Archaeology
Temple University

Marco Bettelli
Research Director
National Research Council (CNR)
Institute of Heritage Science (ISPC)

Fritz Blakolmer
Associate Professor
Institute of Classical Archaeology
University of Vienna

Elisabetta Borgna
Full professor in Aegean Archaeology
Department of Humanities and Cultural Heritage
University of Udine

Cynthia S. Colburn
Blanche E. Seaver Chair of Fine Arts and
Professor of Art History
Pepperdine University

Stella Chryssoulaki
General Director of Heraklion Archaeological Museum

Mary K. Dabney
Research Associate
Department of Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology
Bryn Mawr College

Jack L. Davis
Carl W. Blegen Professor of Greek Archaeology
Department of Classics
University of Cincinnati

Jason Earle
Assistant Director
The Institute for Aegean Prehistory

Lara Fabian
Assistant Professor
Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures
University of California, Los Angeles

Karen Polinger Foster
Retired Lecturer
Department of Near Eastern Languages and
Civilizations
Yale University

Luca Girella
Associate Professor of Aegean Civilization
Faculty of Cultural Heritage
International University Uninettuno, Rome

Bernice R. Jones
Independent Scholar

Eleftheria Kardamaki
Institute for Prehistory, Protohistory and
Near Eastern Archaeology
University of Heidelberg

Maria Kostoula
Institute for Prehistory, Protohistory and
Near Eastern Archaeology
University of Heidelberg

Nisha Kumar
Ph.D. Student
Department of Near Eastern Languages and
Civilizations
Harvard University

Brian S. Kunkel
Adjunct Assistant Professor
Department of Classical and Oriental Studies
Hunter College (CUNY)

Sara T. Levi
Associate Professor
Department of Chemical and Geological Science,
University of Modena and Reggio Emilia
Research Affiliate
Institute for the Study of the Ancient World
New York University

Easter Procession in Tinos. Photograph courtesy of ‘About Tinos.’

Introduction

Processions

How to plan a large-scale joyous procession (1 Chronicles 15:3–29, NIV]

> *David assembled all Israel in Jerusalem to bring up the ark of the Lord to the place he had prepared for it. He called together the descendants of Aaron and the Levites:*
>
> *From the descendants of Kohath, Uriel the leader and 120 relatives;*
> *from the descendants of Merari, Asaiah the leader and 220 relatives;*
> *from the descendants of Gershon, Joel the leader and 130 relatives;*
> *from the descendants of Eizaphan, Shemaiah the leader and 200 relatives;*
> *from the descendants of Hebron, Eliel the leader and 80 relatives;*
> *from the descendants of Uzziel, Amminadab the leader and 112 relatives.*
>
> *Then David summoned Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel and Amminadab the Levites.... And the Levites carried the ark of God with the poles on their shoulders, as Moses had commanded in accordance with the word of the Lord.*
>
> *David told the leaders of the Levites to appoint their fellow Levites as musicians to make a joyful sound with musical instruments: lyres, harps and cymbals.*
>
> *So the Levites appointed Heman son of Joel; from his relatives, Asaph son of Berekiah; and from their relatives the Merarites, Ethan son of Kushaiah; and with them their relatives next in rank: Zechariah, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom and Jeiel, the gatekeepers.*
>
> *The musicians Heman, Asaph and Ethan were to sound the bronze cymbals; Zechariah, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah and Benaiah were to play the lyres..., and Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom, Jeiel and Azaziah were to play the harps. Kenaniah the head Levite was in charge of the singing; that was his responsibility because he was skillful at it....[T]he priests were to blow trumpets before the ark of God*
>
> *Because God had helped the Levites who were carrying the ark of the covenant of the Lord, seven bulls and seven rams were sacrificed.*
>
> *Now David was clothed in a robe of fine linen, as were all the Levites who were carrying the ark, and as were the musicians, and Kenaniah, who was in charge of the singing of the choirs. David also wore a linen ephod [sleeveless priestly garment].*
>
> *So all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord with shouts, with the sounding of rams' horns and trumpets, and of cymbals, and the playing of lyres and harps. As the ark of the covenant of the Lord was entering the City of David, Michal daughter of Saul watched from a window. And when she saw King David dancing and celebrating....*

From Latin *processio*, from *procedere*, 'to go forth, advance, proceed,' a procession describes an organized body of people advancing in a formal or ceremonial manner. This is an act of collective movement whose principal function is to unite people in a common ritual and a common purpose. In every part of the world, since time out of mind, processions played an important role in the religious cycle and religious events. Whether celebrating a civic event, such as a military victory, a harvest, or deliverance from disease, or expressing concern or desperation, as during an epidemic or military siege, processions were fundamentally religious in nature since all major life events were understood to result from divine beneficence or anger. Ceremonial processions also always refer to and impact social, cultural, artistic, and political structures and practices.

1 Chronicles 15 describes a celebratory procession organized to mark the momentous religious event when the Ark of the Covenant was carried into the Sanctuary in Jerusalem. The procession reflects the key role of the tribe of Levi, including leaders of the lesser lineages and the people ('all Israel').

1. King David plans this all-important event but the procession order is determined according to tribal hierarchy: the male descendants of Aaron are first in their inherited role as priests, followed by the leaders of the six other Levite descent lines. The priests and leaders have the honor of carrying the Ark.

2. The leaders appoint the musicians: those of highest rank play the cymbals, those of lower rank play lyres and harps. Kenaniah, described as the head Levite, was in charge of singing and choirs.

3. The Levites sacrifice seven bulls and seven rams.

4. The religious-socio-political elite, i.e., king, priests, and Levites carrying the ark, as well as the musicians and Kenaniah wear robes of fine linen; only the king also wears a linen *ephod*.

5. The king, ark, musicians, and singers were followed in the procession by the population, walking, dancing, playing instruments and singing through the streets.

6. Finally, women watched the procession from their windows above the streets.

7. The day ended with the king distributing *a loaf of bread, a cake of dates and a cake of raisins* to each Israelite, man and woman (1 Chr. 16).

The procession of the Ark into Jerusalem is a spectacular example of how processions entwine religion, governing authority, and public entertainment, all accompanied by music. The movement of marching, sometimes in a dancelike manner, is accompanied by singing or chanting of prayers (according to the purpose of the procession), while musical instruments shrill, bang, strum, or rattle, contributing further to the procession 'as a sonic as well as a physical and visual phenomenon' (Kurtzman 2016: 50).

Ancient texts also provide details regarding processions with similar features. Stefano de Martino (1995: 2666) describes the procession on the 16th day of the spring festival in Hittite lands: 'The king and queen leave the palace preceded by several officials and a bodyguard. Behind them come all the court dignitaries...Next to the king, a group of performers dances to the accompaniment of the lute; other performers in colorful clothes first dance near the king and then encircle him.' When all assemble in front of the temple, they are greeted by a dancer and then proceed inside. During another festival procession, musicians and dancers 'imitating the movements of leopards' greet the king and queen. 'The king takes his place at the entrance of the palace from which he watches a parade of oxen-pulled wagons carrying precious cultic ornaments.' Dance troops follow and then come the priests and the presentation of sacred animals (the leopard, lion, boar, bear), fashioned out of precious materials, along with 'gold and silver images of four stags, one of which is without antlers.'

Ancient pilgrimages often included or even morphed into similar processions. Such events are well known from Mesopotamia, where they were most commonly undertaken by kings and other members of the elite, sometimes with [statues of] gods leading the way. Abundant evidence from Mari documents royal pilgrimages, mass attendance at major festivals, and cultic travel to foreign sanctuaries. People in the towns they passed through must have seen these processions even if they did not officially take part. One may think of their effect as 'elaborate forms of signalling, where the agents and organizers advertise their devotion to the gods as a way of demonstrating their status and power' (Rutherford 2022: 250).The mighty were well aware of this impact on spectators, high-born or low. Burna Buriaš II, king of Babylonia, complained to Amenhotep IV that he had not arranged a proper escort for his daughter to be brought to Egypt: *But as to the one taking her to you .... Are they going to take her to you with 5 chariots? Should I in these circumstances allow her to be brought to you from my house, my neighboring kings would say, "They have transported the daughter of a Great King to Egypt in 5 chariots." When my father allowed his daughter to be brought to your father, ... 3000 soldiers with him...*(Moran 1992: 21, EA 11)

Ample evidence also exists, both in texts and art, for festival, funerary, and tribute processions in ancient Egypt (see Kumar in this volume). Yet, despite their iconographic and textual ubiquity, processions have yet to be examined comprehensively and cross-culturally as a Bronze Age social phenomenon. Indeed, it may be the only common, large-scale activity that was practiced across the ancient Mediterranean. While animal sacrifice, libations and anointments, and feasts were surely practiced everywhere, processions seem to hold a unique place as *large-scale* social celebrations. The idea of processions also raises many questions: how they were organized and by whom; what actually occurred (their performative nature); their transitional nature by moving large groups of people from one place to another. All processions seem to have a beginning and an end, thus a route. While, until recently, it would have been inconceivable to hold a procession that was not, to some extent, a religious event, a procession similarly could never simply travel from point A to B. Rather, it physically moved through the space of the community, traversing symbols of the past visible in buildings, woodland, springs, and ritual structures in a continuing interplay between procession and place (Latham 2016: 15–21). Quite possibly one of the ways in which elites could boost their relative status was to erect new structures along the route of traditional processions.

The honoree has long considered processions to have played an integral role in Bronze Age societies,

particularly that of the Aegean. And it was he who suggested the theme of Processions when we, the editors, decided to assemble a volume in his honor. He expressed some of his ideas to us which we summarize below, although we cannot pretend that this volume answers all his questions.

Processions are a unique social phenomenon in that they engage large groups with a singular purpose or outcome in contrast to sporting events, for instance, which involve conflict/competition, or feasts which have an inbuilt hierarchy in terms of who eats, who serves, who drinks from which sort of cup and the like. Thus, processions can be more democratic expressions of social unity even if they include a strong hierarchical element, namely the order of the procession and feasting afterwards. They do, however, act as a cohesive force in societies.

Processions also seem to be universal and ubiquitous and thus may be useful for comparative purposes in viewing contemporary societies, such as Neopalatial Cretan, 18th Dynasty Egyptian, Mittanian, or Hittite. They can provide a window into the differences between these societies and what they prioritize.

There are obviously different kinds of procession including military and victory parades with the procession of captives. But can we distinguish the different kinds of procession within the archaeological record? Were diplomatic processions, so clearly depicted in 18th Dynasty Egypt, limited only to that period? Are formality and tradition characteristics of processions along well-trodden routes, beginning and ending in time-honored locations. Is it possible to reconstruct and locate processional routes? Is the absence of formality and solemnity a disqualifier for the relief scene on the Harvester Vase from Phaistos? Later Dionysiac processions were ribald affairs, with processions of enormous phalli. Joyous as well as solemn feasts may well have formed the end of many processions in large open spaces as in Minoan Central Courts, or on top of mountains in the peak sanctuaries of Minoan Crete.

The idea of processions also raises many other interesting questions: how they were organized and by whom; what actually occurred, that is their performative nature or their transitional nature when large groups of people moved from one location to another: is there a transformation that occurs individually from beginning to end (like Eleusis). In some Aegean images, the processions culminate in front of a seated figure, whether divine or royal. Are such processions trans-cultural or confined to the Aegean?

Robert Koehl himself (Koehl 2006: 289) recreated a procession at Neopalatial Gournia after he had observed that many rhyta occurred in pairs. Thus, he was able to imagine two lines in processions that linked cult repositories with local town spots. He further elaborated that there may have been libations with wine or anointments with oil. This illustrates that imagination is needed when trying to reconstruct processions in different archaeological contexts in the absence of pictorial representations. When rhyta are depicted, as in the Procession Fresco from Knossos (painted pale blue perhaps to imitate silver), he suggests that the illustrated vessels might have formed part of the actual palatial cult repository. Koehl builds on this idea to review the evidence for large clusters of rhyta stored in cult repositories, usually located next to, or near, open public areas as possible evidence for the use of 'Rhyta in Processions' (Koehl 2006: 330–332).

The authors of this volume address the subject of processions, an elusive subject both in Aegean art and texts, from various viewpoints, providing evidence of ritual and ceremonial places, pathways and practices, based on archaeological and, in one instance, textual evidence. Artistic depictions in a variety of media provide a means of identifying settings, participants and the possible roles they play, while specific ritual objects are the subject of some contributions, their context and imagery offering another means of enhancing our picture of processions. Papers concentrate mainly on evidence from Crete, the Cyclades and the Greek mainland, with additional perspectives from abroad, these geographic divisions forming the basic outline of the volume.

The Aegean World

Crete

Malcolm Wiener provides an overview of the subject of Minoan processions and the investment of resources required to accomplish them. He examines aspects of short, medium and long-distance processions, with destinations from palatial centers to peak sanctuaries, and the activities, rituals and paraphernalia that would have been included in these major and frequent occasions in Minoan society. Other authors concentrate on specific types of processions and their settings. Artistic clues to the outdoor locations, particularly on Aegean seals and wall paintings, are the subject of the paper by Fritz Blakolmer, who notes the very generic character of depictions of processions. Architecture adds another dimension to the discussion of processional ways at Knossos, with its famous processional frescoes along a pathway that appears to be interrupted by the Theatral Area, as explored by Colin Macdonald. The garments worn by men depicted,

particularly the Cupbearer, are the subject of Bernice Jones and Valerie Bealle's paper, which illuminates the manufacturing techniques used to construct Minoan kilts. Jeffrey Soles, in a contribution focused on identifying processional ways without the benefit of processional frescoes as at Knossos, focuses attention on two avenues in the Neopalatial town at Mochlos and the pilgrims who walked those routes. Mochlos is also one of the sites discussed by Cynthia Colburn. Her paper concentrates on its Prepalatial period cemeteries in a study of funerary performance based on the identification of ritual and processional areas and exotic imports of precious materials that were deposited in burials.

Some authors focus on objects, whose imagery and findspots may add to our understanding of ritual processions. Luca Girella interprets the depictions on the famous fruit stand from Middle Minoan Phaistos as evidence for ritual performance and its discovery along with other objects bearing figural imagery as indicative of a revolution in art and architecture that signalled the growing power of elites in MM IIA. Brian Kunkel takes us further east to the sites of Gournia, Palaikastro, Pseira, and Zakros, where clusters of rhyta were found. Citing Robert Koehl's major contributions to the study of these objects, their use in Minoan processions, and their storage, he further explores the presence of these vessels in private residences as indicators of hierarchy in the organization of communal rituals. A novel interpretation of the famous Harvester Vase, with its detailed depiction of a procession, is offered by Alexander MacGillivray. Noting Koehl's elaboration on the harvest theme, 'a procession of youths setting out to harvest the community's olive trees, perhaps under the supervision of a priest,' he reconsiders this interpretation in light of the original view that this was a military parade and identifies the participants as a troop of mariners.

Michele Mitrovitch peers under the sea to examine the octopus, both as a marine denizen and in its depiction in the Aegean Bronze Age. There is little doubt that the cephalopod fascinated Aegean artists, probably more than any other sea creature. Mitrovitch delves into the anatomy, physiology, and behavior of the species, combined with iconographic analysis to elucidate its long-lived prominence in Minoan-Mycenaean art. Simona Todaro examines the early (Late Neolithic) use of a triton shell at Phaistos, either as a call to people living in the valley to take part in ritual ceremonies, or even to announce the arrival of the soul of the deceased in the afterworld.

Cyclades

Thera and Phylakopi are the subject of papers that concentrate both on the imagery and architecture of processions. Philip Betancourt takes up the military theme introduced by MacGillivray, in a study of the line of warriors depicted on the north wall of the Ship Fresco at Thera and notes the benefits to society of armed military processions. Jason Earle, in a study based on cult building and cult objects at the Late Bronze Age town of Phylakopi, emphasizes local aspects of ritual activities and religious beliefs that appear to differ from Minoan-Mycenaean practices. Karen Foster focuses on traces of psychedelic experiences or substances in the eyes of thirteen cult participants (small blue or red marks in the whites of the eye) on wall paintings in Xeste 3 and the House of the Ladies on Thera and in the eyes of the male 'Rhyton Bearer' from Knossos and female figures in mainland Mycenaean frescoes. She argues that these marks indicate heightened states or ecstatic possession engendered by visually powerful experiences and/or the use of psychoactive substances.

Greek Mainland

Michael Nelson furthers the discussion of architecture and procession, specifically at the site of Iklaina in the western Peloponnese, where in its final phase the Monumental Building Sector appears, in part, to have served as a stage for communal activities that involved processions. At the nearby site of Pylos, in the tomb of the Griffin Warrior, with its astounding riches, Sharon R. Stocker and Jack L. Davis discovered a gold Vapheio type cup with close parallels to one carried by a man of Keftiu in a processional scene in the Tomb of Senenmut. They present its analysis and interpretation in the larger context of Aegean-Egyptian interconnections. One other paper, by Iphigeneia Tournavitou, also discusses the Pylos region as part of a survey of processional scenes and their participants at non-palatial sites such as Iklaina and in nonpalatial buildings surrounding Mycenaean palaces. Ritual objects and practices such as feasting, a possible indication of processions, are the subject of the paper by James Wright, who presents evidence derived from excavations in the area of the Late Bronze Age settlement on Tsoungiza hill in the Nemea Valley. In another non-palatial context in the Argolid, an unusual rhyton-jug was discovered in the lower town of Tiryns. Noting Koehl's masterful study of Aegean rhyta and the role they played in ritual performance, Eleftheria Kardamaki, Maria Kostoula, Joseph Maran, and Alkestis Papadimitriou offer a detailed study of this unusual object and its function, speculating about its

religious significance. Finally, Tom Palaima presents rare Mycenaean literary evidence for the paraphernalia and performance of ritual ceremonies, on a series of tablets in the archives of the Palace of Nestor.

Mary Dabney reexamines later Greek practices and modern bereavement studies to consider how Mycenaean mortuary rituals may have evoked the deceased. She then relates the physical form and contents of Mycenaean chamber tombs and small tholos tombs, as well as evidence for post-burial ceremonies, to their suitability in the light of such rituals. Stella Chryssoulaki and Ioannis Pappas present the results of recent excavations in the Phaleron Delta where an extensive cemetery of the 7th and 6th centuries BC was uncovered. Why this place was chosen as the cemetery site and the funeral processions involved are discussed. Lack of space necessitated the arrangement of burials in dense clusters that would otherwise have created problems for the funerary processions of the dead.

The Eastern and Central Mediterranean

Cyprus, Syria, the Levant, and Egypt

Two papers address the nature of processions on the island of Cyprus. Eleni Mantzourani provides a comprehensive survey of archaeological evidence for religious or other ceremonial practices, with an emphasis on the architectural remains of sanctuaries and imagery in a variety of artistic media. One particular medium, that of seal carving, is the central focus of the paper by Joan Aruz and Judith Weingarten on processions beyond the natural world both in the Aegean and on Cyprus. They bring attention to scenes of ritual procession depicting both natural animals and hybrid creatures behaving like humans, exploring the role of the Minoan Genius and the possibility of distinguishing masked humans from animal-human mixtures. K. Aslihan Yener presents a Middle Bronze Age Syrian style cylinder seal impressed numerous times on a pot from Alalakh to provide another perspective on a topic discussed above – military processions – with the representation of a winged deity in full regalia holding a sword that may represent the defeat of enemies, probably as part of a victory parade. Another weapon, the fenestrated axe, has a long history in the Near East. Assaf Yasur-Landau traces its appearance in Bronze and Iron Age contexts and the relationship of its distribution to Phoenician expansion across the Mediterranean. Eastern Mediterranean interconnections and the significance of ritual objects in foreign contexts are topics that are addressed in the paper by Morena Stefanova, who examines an unusual Egyptian faience bowl with an offering scene, discovered in Level V at the site of Alalakh.

Illustrations of Egyptian texts relate to a plethora of processions in ancient Egypt. Although they stretch back far in time in the artistic repertoire, the depiction of peoples from the Aegean only occurs in the 18th dynasty. Examples come from the tombs of high officials at Thebes and Nisha Kumar argues that such subject matter was becoming part of a burgeoning courtly culture.

Italy

Expanding our view of the evidence for processions, Marco Betelli, Elisabetta Borgna and Sara Levi recognize the lack of religious building and sanctuaries in Bronze Age Italy. Rather, they build a picture of 'ritual mobility' through an overview of outdoor sites with monumental natural features, addressing the nature of funerary rituals and specifically the practices of ritual hoarding and animal sacrifice.

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Tributes

A Short Note of High Esteem

Andreas G. Vlachopoulos

It gives me great pleasure to write a few words in honor of my dear friend Robert Koehl, and particular delight to direct them towards the people who honor him for his work and contributions in this volume. I am truly sorry that, for reasons beyond my control, my contribution is confined to this note.

The volume *Processions: Bronze Age Ceremonial Studies presented to Robert B. Koehl* appears to be a fortunate unicum: the rich, multi-thematic contents of the Festschrift for Bobby also comprise a veritable procession of scholars, who with celebratory enthusiasm offer pages of academic authority on the archaeology of Aegean ceremonies.

In this processional festivity, the corpus of the iconography of Crete, the Cyclades, and the Mycenaean world is multifaceted, with colorful clothing, resplendent in jewellery and hair styles, full of symbolism and allegory, made of many of the finest materials, and executed at many different scales; yet it remains silent. Archaeology, while it brings to light whatever wonders are paraded in this book, can never be present at the ritual gatherings that took place in the Aegean of the second millennium BCE, witnessing the sound of activities, the chants of the priests, the Dionysian ecstasy of the participants, the cries of the crowd, and the lyrical music that accompanied the universal joy or mysticism of the liturgies. Let the 'Archaeology of Sounds' be the only one we will never conquer.

The small 'illustrated' gift for my dear friend and colleague is a piece of gold-foil covering found in 1965 by Spyridon Marinatos in the Late Helladic IIA (c. 1500 BCE) Tholos Tomb 1 of Peristeria, an emblematic early Mycenaean seat of power at the northern borders of Homeric Pylos (Fig. 1). This very fine gold foil, the two surviving sections of which hardly measure 10cm in length, covered an elongated object, probably the handle of a funerary vessel of display. The delicate object bore an impressed representation of a group of seven male figures, each with similar features but of differing scales, that faced left gesturing forcefully, in a 'processional' arrangement of some performative action, which takes place in a rocky landscape of the standard 'Theran' iconography.

As with every artifact displaying Bronze Age iconography, the gold-foil of Peristeria is silent. Yet the male group of 'ephebes and children' (according to Marinatos' penetrating eye), may well prompt a reassessment of the organized crowd scenes of this period, with the Aegeans having shared and

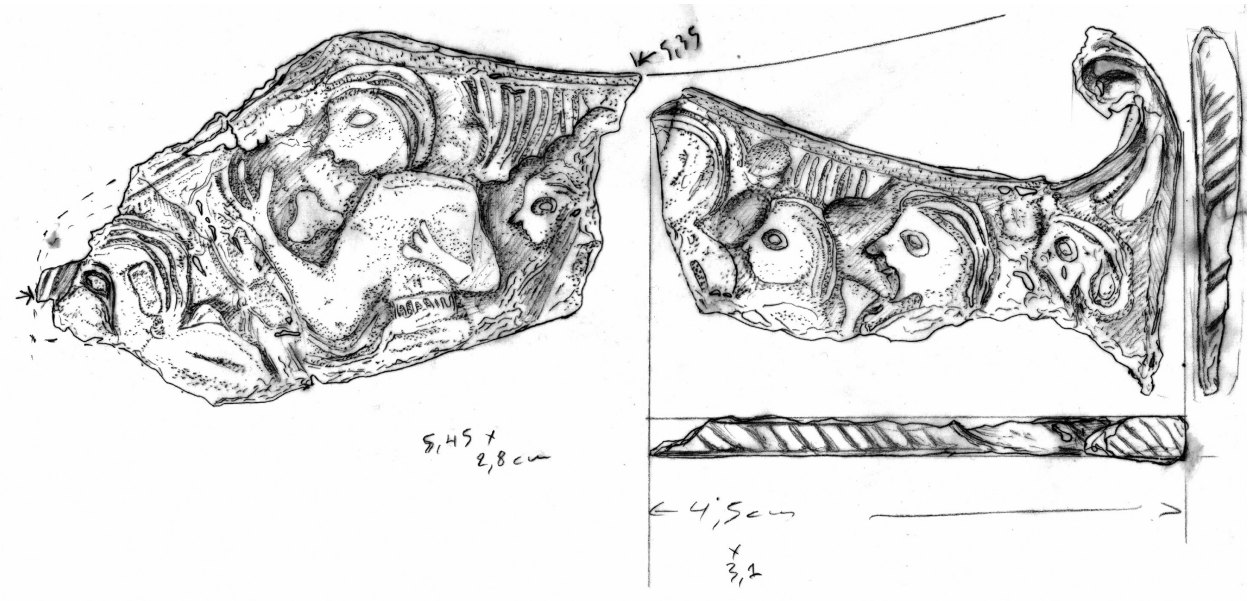

Figure 1. "δύο συναπτόμενα χρυσᾶ φύλλα ἐξ ἐπενδύσεως σκεύους τινός, ἅτινα διασώζουν τμῆμα σπουδαίας παραστάσεως"
"Two joining pieces of gold foil from the inlay of a vessel, preserving part of a remarkable representation"
Spyridon Marinatos, *Praktika* 1965: 113–114.

communicated by means of a common lexicon of images. Its representation, here illustrated as a 'drawing in progress' by our skilful artist Ioannis Nakas and as the first outcome of my own 'study in progress,' challenges us to discuss anew the influence of Crete and of the Cyclades on the physiognomy of early Mycenaean art and culture in the southern Peloponnese. It also offers the opportunity to make a scholarly homage to its ingenious excavator, who two years before living his Minoan dream at Thera, was excavating the treasures of Pylos and was fortunate enough to be able to decipher them through the lens of the art of Crete.

Ροβέρτε, φίλε, ἔρρωσο! Robert, my friend, fare thee well!

Robert B. Koehl and Alalakh: An Avowed Aegeanist in the Near East

Kutlu Aslıhan Yener

When I moved to the Amuq valley in southern Turkey to direct the site of Tell Atchana, since I was primarily an Anatolian prehistory expert, I quickly realized that I would need a whole different array of regional specialists in order to adequately investigate the finds from the renewed excavations of Alalakh, the Bronze Age capital of Mukish. Legendary due to its multicultural remains found previously by the first director, Sir Leonard Woolley, it was going to require ceramic experts from all over the eastern Mediterranean and Aegean, not just specialists of Anatolia. Without delay, I initiated an extensive search for an Aegean ceramic expert and recommendations flooded my email account beginning in 2000. I interviewed quite a few and high on the list was Professor Robert B. Koehl from CUNY Hunter, a renowned scholar of Aegean ceramics. When he arrived, I immediately recognized him, having crossed paths at similar seminars and colloquia in New York over the years. Selecting him was a no-brainer and Robert joined our team. At first, he told me to call him Robert, but after traveling with him to Crete on a side-trip from Alalakh, I realized everyone there enthusiastically called him 'Bobby' and so do I now. After realizing the prodigious nature of his knowledge of Mycenaean and Minoan art styles and motifs, I and my colleague Joan Aruz nicknamed him Furumark Jr. The name stuck.

The attractiveness of Alalakh for Aegean scholars was obvious. Woolley, driven by his desire to understand the development of Minoan culture on Crete and its links to the 'great civilizations of history,' sought to find the connections between the Aegean, Mesopotamia, and Anatolia. Woolley initially approached the problem by tackling the port site of al-Mina and a Late Bronze Age mound called Sabuniye, located in the delta of the Orontes River, near present-day Samandağ in Hatay. But, disappointed that al-Mina yielded primarily classical and Iron Age levels, he moved his operations upriver to the inland Amuq valley and chose to excavate Tell Atchana (ancient Alalakh), one of the 178 sites surveyed by Robert Braidwood and his teammates from the Oriental Institute (site AS [Amuq Survey] 136). In his subsequent publications, Woolley articulated with typical narrative flair the importance of Alalakh as gleaned from the cuneiform tablets he found there:

> It involves continual reference to the great empires of ancient Sumer, of Babylon, and of Egypt, to the Hittite empire centered on Boğazköy in Anatolia and to the less known powers of Hurri and Mitanni; it bears on the development of that Cretan art which astonishes us in the palace of Minos at Knossos, it is associated with the Bronze Age culture of Cyprus, bears witness to the eastward expansion of the trade of the Greek islands in the proto-historic age, throws an entirely new light on the economic aspects of the Athenian empire and even, at the last, suggests a Syrian contribution to the Italian Renaissance (Woolley 1953: 15).

Bobby worked at both Woolley sites, Alalakh (on site between 2006–2010, 2015) and briefly (in 2000) with Professor Hatice Pamir of Mustafa Kemal University in Antakya at the new Sabuniye excavations (Yener, Harrison, Pamir 2002). This important site near the mouth of the Orontes River was the Bronze Age port of Alalakh before it silted up and al-Mina further downstream became the Iron Age port for Tayinat (ancient Wa(Pa)listin). I have fond memories of seeing how happy he was while staying at a beach-side residence in Samandağ with his partner, Stelios, during his investigation of the Mycenaean pottery of Sabuniye. But his heart was always at Alalakh.

The mound of Atchana is located at the southern end of the Amuq valley close to the bend of the Orontes (Asi) River and now measures 22 hectares, and when taken together with Tayinat al-Sughir and Tell Tayinat 30m away across the stream, it functions as a three-mounded mega-city of Bronze Age 'Alalakh' (or Alahtum of the Ebla texts). Tell Atchana was excavated from 1936 to 1939 and from 1946 to 1949, the sequence of palaces, temples, private houses, and fortification walls with impressive gate structures defines the architectural legacy of Alalakh (Woolley 1955). For Bobby Koehl, this was the right time to re-examine the relationships between the Aegean and Alalakh from many perspectives, especially in the Middle and Late Bronze Ages. Without a doubt he was certainly correct in his observations stressing the shared stylistic traditions of Alalakh with the Aegean, especially in view of the iconographic similarities.

Figure 2. Atchana 2007 Team, © Alalakh archives, photo Murat Akar.

Investigations began at Alalakh in 2000 with a thorough documentation of the previously excavated finds in the depot of the Woolley dig house as well as the old Hatay Archaeological Museum in Antakya. Atchana ceramic specialist, Bobby Koehl pointed to several important Anatolian and Aegean issues stemming from the stored sherd collections. Even Cypriot pottery did not escape his keen eyes and ever generous, he gave his notes on these to our Cypriot ceramic specialist, Ekin Kozal. Among several items of archaeological interest were unpublished fragments of a Mycenaean pictorial style amphoroid crater depicting horses, small stirrup jars and vertical globular flask sherds, which reflect a distribution pattern typical of the imported Mycenaean pottery found in Levantine contexts. Koehl noted that in the Levant, only Ugarit had yielded a larger number of Aegean pottery and that its relative frequency at Tell Atchana might suggest that trade between the Aegean and the Levant was organized to reflect local preferences for specific Mycenaean commodities stored in these vessels (Koehl 2005; 2010).

During the 2006 and 2007 seasons (Fig. 2) at Alalakh, we unearthed new bull-leaping scenes on several Mycenaean krater fragments. Bobby dated the amphoroid krater to the Late Bronze II period (LH IIIA:2), that is, the fourteenth century BC. Together with the Alalakh illustrators, he reconstructed the dynamic motif depicted on the krater fragments as a bull-leaping scene painted in red on a beige background (Fig. 3). A speckled galloping bull is shown moving to the right. Flying in the opposite direction is the leaper or acrobat. He noted that the krater is probably an import from the Argolid Berbati region of Greece. He wrote the full study of the krater which appeared in the newly published volume 2 of Alalakh (Koehl 2019). The depiction of a bull and bull leaper is a scene that is unique among the repertoire of early Mycenaean pictorial vase painting. At Alalakh, other pictorial kraters, including one depicting a chariot and another whose decoration has been attributed to the 'Atchana painter,' were found in the Level II Temple during earlier excavations and were recently reconstructed with his help for display in the new Hatay Archaeological Museum.

Aegean-related ceramics continue to be found every year and recently Bobby identified the first Kamares Ware cup (Fig. 4) found at Alalakh in 2018, which had been on top of his wish list and had pestered me to find for years. Furthermore, in 2014 he successfully identified several LH IIIB fragments of stirrup jars, an elusive period in this region. Moreover, a large collection of Mycenaean ceramics excavated between 2003 and 2007, representing diverse typologies were identified as imports from the Aegean, probably all coming from the Greek mainland (Koehl 2019; 2020). When I held

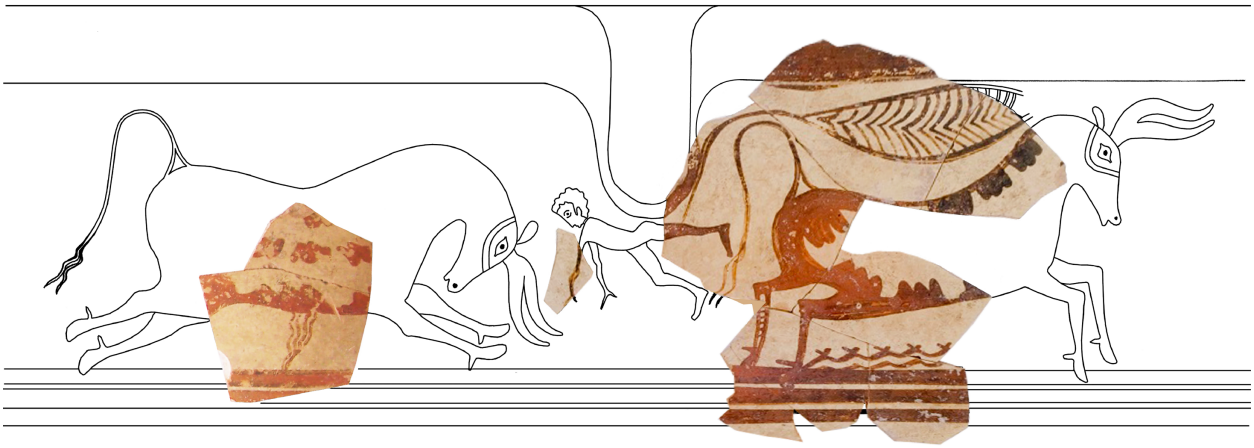

Figure 3. Reconstruction of the bull-leaping scene, AT 0281.25, 38, 41, 43 and AT 3498.1. © Alalakh archives, photo Murat Akar, illustration Robert Koehl and Özgecan Yarma.

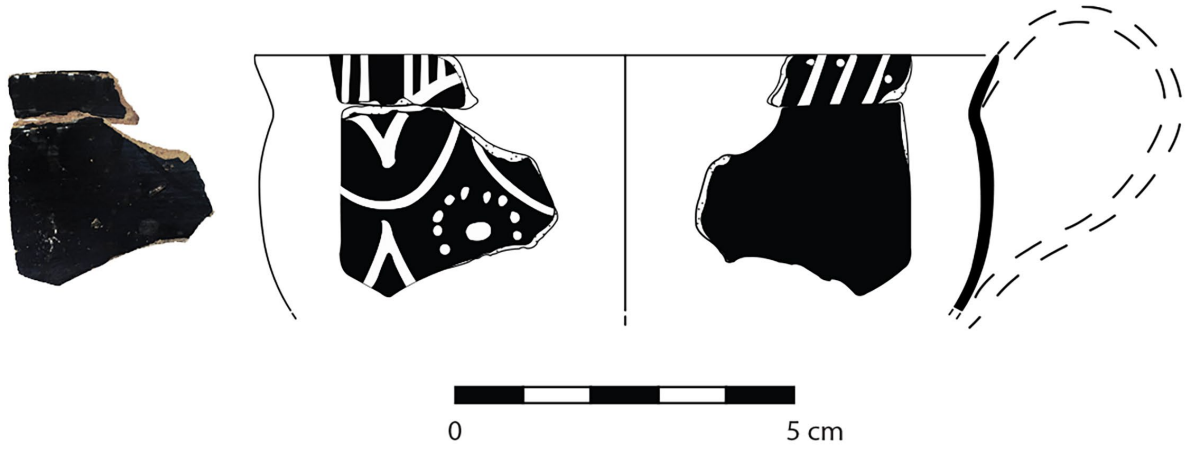

Figure 4. Kamares Ware cup. © Alalakh archives, photo Murat Akar, illustration Müge Bulu.

up a strange (to me) fragment of a terracotta object to ponder its function, Bobby immediately identified it as a wall bracket. He rattled off scores of parallels (he often does that). I feel very confident as a small finds expert when Bobby is on site to identify all the mysterious pieces, many of which are Aegean-related.

When an *in situ* collection of Mycenaean ceramics was found in the latest phase of the LBII (c. 1300 BC), Bobby immediately defined this as a 'household' assemblage (Koehl 2017), with important connotations about population movements, presumably from the Aegean peacefully coming to settle and not to maraud like the so-called 'sea-peoples' did in the southern Levant. I remember vividly how jarring this interpretation was to text experts such as the late Itamar Singer who during a symposium talk I gave, burst out asking 'but what about all those inscriptions about burning, raping and pillaging?' Tsk-tsking the narrative of peaceful migrating Aegean populations, he puzzled over this divergence from the usual interpretations of destructions and invasions. But Bobby Koehl was always known to push the boundaries of what we knew. And that is why I respect him so much.

Memoir of Robert Koehl

Malcolm H. Wiener

Robert (Bobby) Koehl has been a dear friend and colleague for the past 35 years. He succeeded me as Chair and organizer of the New York Aegean Bronze Age Colloquium, which met monthly during the school year at the Institute of Fine Arts in New York City, when I retired 20 years ago at the age of 65. The Colloquium

hosted distinguished prehistorians and archaeologists from many countries discussing recent discoveries.

Among Bobby's many accomplishments was his revelatory idea of a possible connection between the Ghassulian culture and that of Early Minoan Crete. Bobby noted the similarities between 1) the Ghassulian and Early Minoan burials in circular tombs (e.g., at Shiq'mim), 2) the so-called 'Ghassulian churn' and the Early Minoan tankard and 3) the red-on-cream decorated pottery of both cultures (Koehl 2008). The suggestion was generally ignored or dismissed by the archaeological community (e.g, Nowicki 2014). Recently, however, the discovery that the DNA of the famous Cretan agrimi and sheep resemble closely the DNA of the sheep from the Ghassulian culture strongly reinforces Bobby Koehl's original and daring insight (Bar-Gal *et al.* 2002).

Regarding Bobby the person, I recall in particular his devoted and loving care of our late colleague Professor Ellen Davis in her final years. Tragically, Ellen suffered from profound Alzheimer's disease, requiring among other things that she be accompanied on trips to the grocery store and elsewhere, a task to which Bobby devoted significant time and thought.

Robert Koehl is an extraordinary colleague and friend.

On the Aegean Bronze Age Colloquium

Jason Earle, Jerolyn E. Morrison and Michael Nelson

When Robert Koehl took over as director of the New York Aegean Bronze Age Colloquium (NYABAC) in 1999, the forum was already 25 years old. During those initial decades the NYABAC firmly established its roots in New York City's archaeological community and gradually matured into an internationally recognized lecture series; during Robert's tenure as director, it truly flourished. For 18 years he consistently composed robust and varied schedules of talks, bringing more than 100 scholars from around the world to speak at New York University's Institute of Fine Arts on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. One could chalk this astounding accomplishment up to the simple fact that Robert seems to know everyone working in the Bronze Age Aegean (and quite a few in the broader eastern Mediterranean). Yet extending an invitation and receiving a positive response are not the same thing. In this respect, it is undeniable that Robert's easy manner, enthusiasm, kindness, and intellectual curiosity made it hard for invitees to say no.

Audiences in the Institute's grand Seminar Room were intimate, regularly consisting of two or three dozen people, with a mix of professors, curators, students, and interested members of the public that always led to lively and wide-ranging discussion and debate. During each talk Robert's attention never wavered. He never failed to pose trenchant questions and comments, often kickstarting the question-and-answer period with some acute observation or encouraging word to the speaker. His ability to pluck some detail, some object, out of his boundless knowledge of Bronze Age Aegean archaeology and add it to the discussion was uncanny. He proved masterful at running these sessions, which at times could equal the presentations in length and erudition. Post-Colloquium dinners proved just as learned and lively, with conversation over food and wine forging friendships among those invited from near and far.

When Robert handed over the reins of the Colloquium to us in 2017, he was exceedingly helpful and supportive as we dedicated ourselves to meeting the high standards he had established. Now, with a few years at the helm of the NYABAC, it is clear to us what a challenge it is to stage a vibrant and successful lecture series. We stand in awe of what Robert accomplished with apparent ease during his extraordinary tenure as director of the NYABAC and we are honored to participate in this fitting tribute. Bravo, Bobby!

Thanks from a Student

Lara Fabian

I came to know Robert Koehl—Professor Koehl—in my time as a student at Hunter College, where I saw a side of him that few of his colleagues have direct experience with: As a teacher who inspired me and my peers, and on a more personal level, as someone who supported me as I pursued my own academic career as an archaeologist.

To understand Robert's role as a professor and the impact that he had on his students, it is important to give a bit of context about Hunter College, where he spent many years, eventually becoming the chair of the department of Classical and Oriental Studies. Hunter is part of the City University of New York system—a sprawling network of institutions serving an incredibly broad cross-section of New York students. Hunter West, the towering building in which Robert had his office, had a direct entrance from the 6 subway line, with escalators leading to classrooms and offices. As students streamed off the subway to attend classes (often coming, as I did, directly from full-time jobs), the escalators would regularly be so packed that one was swept off one's feet and simply pulled along with the crowd upwards. But what makes Hunter so special is that the education that happens inside of those classrooms is just as rigorous, engaging, and perspective-changing as any you could find at elite liberal arts colleges and universities.

I first heard about Robert from students in my evening ancient Greek class, who spoke often and rapturously about the professor of their Mesopotamian archaeology class. I had enrolled in this single ancient Greek class in the fall of 2008 on something of a whim, in my mid-twenties and testing the waters to see if college might be a good step for me. And after hearing my classmates wax poetic about their archaeology professor, I decided that perhaps I should take a class with him too. It was a good decision, and it set the direction for my academic life from that point forward.

Robert is a magnetic lecturer. His courses were surveys of vast swaths of time and space, in which he laid out both a framework for understanding societies in the past and the people within them, and also a flood of minute detail about their material culture and physical world. All of this was presented in lightning-fast but crystal-clear lectures, punctuated with perfectly timed anecdotes about the archaeologists who were responsible for all of this knowledge. It was an amazing introduction to the ancient world in all of its complexity, and it hooked me.

In the course of his classes, he would always invite us to come to meetings of the Bronze Age Colloquium, a meeting whose importance in the field I did not understand at the time. I don't remember when I first ventured over to the imposing Fifth Avenue Institute of Fine Arts building to attend one, but I do vividly remember how overwhelmingly, wonderfully intellectual it all felt: to be in this room with people who *wrote the books* we read in class; to listen to them talk about their research at a level of detail that seemed almost unattainable. Almost unattainable, but not quite.

In subsequent years, I decided to apply to graduate school in the field, and Robert's generous mentorship was absolutely crucial to my success. He urged me to aim higher than I would have dared on my own, and his confidence in me helped me find my own. I eventually ended up getting my PhD from the University of Pennsylvania (Robert's own doctoral institution)—an opportunity that he helped make possible.

Robert: Thanks so much for everything!

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