Masks, Maidens and Men: Gender and Interpretations of the Cult of Artemis Orthia at Sparta

by

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Abstract

This interdisciplinary and intersectional thesis addresses the cult of Artemis Orthia at Sparta and particularly the 6th century BCE grotesque terracotta masks recovered there by the British School of Athens in the early 20th century. Using both material culture and literary data as primary sources, this thesis seeks to re-evaluate interpretations of the site and these objects through a deconstructive, post processual approach with a particularly gender based focus. Explicit archaeological findings and implicit references to the site in literature are first detailed in an overview of the accessible classical material. Grounding the objects and the site in both an ancient Greek context and a wider understanding of classical reception of Greece, Greek religion, drama, art, and the Spartan mirage in Western thought, this thesis then seeks to discuss both Artemis and Orthia as separate and assimilated. Perpetuated accounts of the site as solely concerned with the flagellation of young men, marriage, and coming of age ceremonies are opened to new questions regarding origins and purposes of the cult, participation by people with a diversity in age, gender, and social classes, and new questions regarding marginalized perspectives in both classical material and the classical tradition of scholarship. This thesis concludes with an argument against repeated assumptions about the purpose of the objects, the site, the participants, the nature of the goddesses, and Spartan exceptionalism; questions once thought to have been answered are once again drawn to the forefront of the discussion.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my friends and family without whom it would not have been possible. To my parents, Roy and Moira Suddaby, for their unparalleled support throughout my academic career and for providing me with the emotional, intellectual, and physical stability across counties, time zones, and the Georgia Strait. To my far away friends, Rachel Lee and Karina Resta-Fata, for crossing mountains and prairies to visit me during my studies and who provided me with empathetic ears and raucous laughter over delicious food, as well as to Samantha Richter who, though unable to spur me on in person would, entirely unprovoked, ask after my thesis and always offer to listen to my ranting and rambling when I felt stuck. To Judith Hendriksma, who surprised me by spending a semester abroad here at the U of A at my only half-joking suggestion and accompanied me to lectures, procrastinated her own thesis with me, and whose artistic representation of Artemis Orthia stands watch over me as I write this. Finally, I dedicate this work to the other two thirds of my triumvirate: my dear friend Alexander Ross for his kindness, his impeccable sense of humour, and getting me outdoors once in a while; and my dear friend and classmate Elizabeth Cytko, for her animated questions and discussions, her profound influence on my lines of thought, for making sure I ate well and had plenty of cats to pet, for chastising me when I needed it most, and for encouraging me to do all the things I never thought I would.

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1. Introduction

The sanctuary of Artemis Orthia at Sparta was arguably one of the most significant sites for the Lacedaemonians. Twentieth century excavators revealed the site in use from a third century Roman period theatre all the way back to an altar from the tenth century BCE. They recovered tens of thousands of dedicated offerings made of lead, ivory, bone, and terracotta. Among these votives, large deposits of locally crafted terracotta masks concentrated around the sixth century BCE and hundreds of their fragments appear in the archaeological record. These masks are said to have little to no parallels in the Greek world, and have been described as "grotesque" and "foreign" by the excavators and other contemporary scholarship. They range from heavily wrinkled, smiling faces to idealized youths and older figures, and include "bold, stylized portraits" as well as gorgons and satyrs. Little to no information on the masks exists in literature, and the sources that may provide valuable information are late and conflicting. Without an explicit purpose and many of them unwearable, these dedications provide a tantalizing yet much unexplored mystery.

Despite the fame and importance of the site and its polis, there is relatively little explicit information about the sanctuary, its rituals, and the people involved. The infamous flogging of Spartan boys to satiate the goddess' desire for human blood overshadows most discussion in both primary and secondary sources, and objects as unique as the Orthia masks may only appear as a footnote in both literary and archaeological discussions of the site. The masks instead become caught up in wider contextual problems of studying Sparta. Sparta's relative 'Otherness' constructed by external Athenian sources, perpetuated internally to create a 'Spartan Mirage', and maintained by post-classical scholars without due scrutiny is a pervasive issue.

The desire to speak of Sparta as a purely masculine and military state erases the presence of figures outside of the inconsistently recorded flogging ritual at one of its most votive-rich sanctuaries. Women and girls, typically the primary supplicants of the goddess Artemis and notoriously independent and outspoken in Sparta relative to their Attic cousins, are among these missing figures. Likewise, the typologies put forward by the excavation have coloured our perception of the genders of the masks themselves as well as their dedicators. This category of masks labeled as "Old Women" often accompanies a literary-based assumption of a Spartan ritual performed by crossdressing men. Because of this typology and association with conflicting reports of the gender of the wearers in primary sources, women often only appear as characters played by men for a goddess well known for her protection of the rites of adolescent girls and women in childbirth. There are several possible reasons for these

contradictions arising, among them a need for a re-evaluation of Orthia as a separate yet assimilated goddess, a re-evaluation of Artemis as a patron primarily for girls and women. There is also a need to re-examine the sources available to us on the site and their subsequent interpretations.

Using the masks as a starting point, I intend to address the data and current scholarship on the site of Artemis Orthia and re-open a discussion of the site as a religious and social centre of Spartan public life, not restricted to the young men reported to have been flogged for initiatory purposes and their audience. In doing this I also intend to address the larger question of the goddess or goddesses acknowledged at the site: how can we approach Artemis Orthia or the combination of those two goddesses to understand their role and sphere of influence on top of their origins and assimilation?

2. Methodological Approaches

Motivation

With a goal of re-evaluating modern interpretations of the site of Artemis Orthia and in particular the masks found there, I have taken a broad and interdisciplinary approach. I begin with a review of the archaeological material recovered from the site according to the original excavation report, closely followed by a collection of explicit mentions of the site in classical literature. Due to the sparse and fragmented nature of accessible material from the ancient world, both archaeological and literary, it is useful for my purposes to study them in conjunction rather than separately and out of context. A survey of the materials and writing available to us is not sufficient to reconstruct a ritual or a "belief". The materials, however, can contribute to a contextual "cultural database"[1] of Greek art, literature, and religion, and some inferences into ancient thought by extension. These primary sources naturally lead into a plethora of secondary hypotheses on the nature of the site and the rituals performed there, which I evaluate. Finally, this thesis concludes on the question "Who is Artemis Orthia?", relying on the assumption that they are two separate goddesses assimilated together, but also making a deliberate effort to understand the goddesses in combination rather than in a hierarchy. The complications of the reception of these archaeological and literary sources feed into this cultural database as well, and therefore can alert us to modern perspectives undercutting our perception of the ancients. In the course of this thesis, there remain several assumptions and biases about the ancient

[1] Karen Bassi, *Acting Like Men: Gender, Drama, and Nostalgia in Ancient Greece* (University of Michigan Press, 1998). 8.

world, Sparta, Greek religion, gender and sexuality, and related methodological lenses that should be clarified.

This gap between us and the classical world is illuminated only briefly by a select few voices and collections of objects virtually without meaning when unaccompanied through the dark with an explicit literary source or iconographical code. We know these sparse gleams of information could no more exist in a vacuum than artefacts of our own society, and we are often compelled to fill in those spaces ourselves. As Mary Beard writes, classical studies is not merely the study of the ancient world but a study of everything between that world and ourselves; she warns us both to be alert to which claims belong to whom and to be aware of "the inextricable embeddedness of the classical tradition within Western culture".[2] From here, I take a fourfold deconstructive approach in my methodology, taking into consideration the problematic perception of Sparta in a wider Greek context and an understanding of Greek "religion" as different from our own definitions; by extension, I begin a discussion of the role of mythology in that religion. Finally, I consider an analysis based in differing constructions of gender and sexuality, concluded with a theoretical framework on approaches to material culture.

Deconstructing Perceptions of Sparta

These two points – which claims are whose and the embeddedness of classical heritage - are arguably exceedingly more valuable for Sparta than her rival Athens; a great deal of information about both cities comes to us through a primarily Athenian lens, and that information carries an enormous cultural weight pertaining to how Sparta is perceived not only in the 21st century relative to antiquity, but from the medieval period to the Renaissance to the Second World War and so on. Furthermore, we struggle to tease apart these reflections of Sparta not only from each other but from Sparta itself; what aspects of Spartan society could be construed as "Spartan" rather than "Athenian" or "Panhellenic"? What aspects of Sparta's image, the 'Spartan Mirage' as coined by Francois Ollier in the 1930s and as Paul Cartledge extends to the modern era, was consciously projected or perpetuated, externally or internally? [3] How much can we really discover about a society when our sources are not only lacking or scattered through time, but primarily written through the eyes of its most infamous enemy?

Sketches of Spartan society emerge through primary sources and scholarship as portraying a radically different social, economic, and political center from Athens, our reference point and figurative

[2] Mary Beard, *Confronting the Classics: Traditions, Adventures, and Innovations* (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, a division of W.W. Norton & Company, 2014). 11-12.
[3] Cartledge, 26, 169.

lighthouse, and also perhaps radically different from the Greek world by extension. The image of Spartan militarism and austerity dominates all discussion from Xenophon to the 20th century excavation of the site of Artemis Orthia and beyond. The image of Sparta has served to illustrate many recent ideologies: communism by descriptions of collective ownership and educational institutions, fascism by images of state control and racial-purity, feminism by implications of a higher social status for Spartan women relative to Spartan men and Athenian women, and so forth; this Western consciousness of Sparta continues to persist into modern popular culture and the branding of both products and sports teams, visual symptoms of a larger and deeper cultural fascination. However, this "mirage" is created and perpetuated first and foremost by people geographically, culturally, and now temporally separate from Sparta.[4]

Sparta's connection to militarism and austerity is as embedded in our Western consciousness as Athens' connection to democracy and philosophy, and thus it can continue to colour our perceptions of antiquity. The site of Artemis Orthia is no more immune to this despite its rich deposits, and much scholarship surrounding it has no choice but to weave disparate threads into tapestries of unconnected events, misinterpretations, and images of Sparta as it is imagined: cruel and bloodthirsty or stoic and disciplined, but never creative or educated on the scale of Athens. As much as they can illuminate the dark chasm of the ancient world, our sources cast shadows that warp and distort themselves, and our own points of reference will dictate how we will see and interpret these reflections across the divide.

Deconstructing Greek Religion and Myth

Sparta, exceptional as it remains in scholarship, likely held a similar understanding of what we refer to as "Greek religion" to her counterparts in Athens and across the Hellenic world. While local customs will invariably vary across Greece, we can point to several traits and practices that Greek religion exhibits in a variety of places, including Sparta. There are several underlying assumptions about Greek religion that need to be illuminated, particularly due to Christianising or other modern religious preconceptions about the nature of religion that can distort our understanding. As difficult as 'religion' is to define, this thesis will work on the assumption that religion deals with the supernatural, a distinction between the natural and supernatural worlds or the sacred and profane that the Greeks would not necessarily recognize. The Greeks themselves did not have a word to refer to a concept of "religion", nor did they have a word for someone who did not participate in it. A Greek may not have distinguished

[4] Cartledge, 169-170.

between sacred, 'hieros', and profane in the same sharp divisions as in Western culture; a person who was "atheos" was less "atheist" in the modern sense and rather someone who simply lacked a strong relationship with the gods.[5] The supernatural in this case centres on the existence of anthropomorphic gods and goddesses, communication with whom is facilitated by ritual.[6] It is not particularly useful in Greek religion to distinguish between "religious" and "secular", as the "embeddedness" of Greek religion in art, drama, and other aspects of life is one of its defining characteristics.[7] Greek religion, while embedded, is not a singular monolithic entity with a clear "canon" or "heresy"; it does not have a priesthood that enforces either of these concepts, nor is Greek religion solely created and enforced by a state.[8] Depending on the locality of the cult, Greek religion could be "open" or "closed" to certain members or participants based on factors such as citizenship, age, gender, class, or other factors. It could also be "open" to practices and deities from other pantheons or cultures, deities perhaps like Orthia of unknown origin who became assimilated to a more local and recognizable goddess. For instance, there is a well studied history of cultural transmission between Greece and the Near East; when we read this transmission as static, as top down or one way, or as a transmission between unhelpful modern constructions of "Europe" and "Asia", we may run into narrow perceptions of how cultural exchange occurred.[9]

Unlike Christianity, Greek religion is not centred on the idea of "belief"; it appears to be more participation-based, that is, focussed on the dedication of votives, the pouring of libations, or the offering of sacrifice, often 'public' where such a distinction from private is helpful, and may include a performative aspect such as athletic competitions, music and dance, or dramatic enactments.[10] All of these aspects of Greek religion are encapsulated by "ritual", defined by Bremmer as repetitive representational behaviour, which may be performed for a specific life cycle event or rite of passage, annually in honour of a recurring festival, a prayer in exchange for a reciprocal action by a deity, or day

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[5] Jan N. Bremmer, *Greek religion* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006). 2-3.
[6] Colin Renfrew, "The Archaeology of Ritual, of Cult, and of Religion," in *The Archaeology of Ritual*, by Evangelos Kyriakidis (Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, University of California, Los Angeles, 2007). 113-114.
[7] Bremmer, 1.
[8] 6-8. Note that while religion and politics were certainly intertwined, as Bremmer mentions referring to a struggle of power in Sparta between the magistrates and the kings (pg 3), there was no regular top-down imposition of an organized religion from the polis. Whether Sparta even fits the definition of a 'polis' is an entirely different question! See also: Parker, 47-48 on religion and politics.
[9] Scott B. Noegel, "Greek Religion and the Ancient Near East," in *A Companion to Greek Religion*, ed. Daniel Ogden (Malden: Blackwell, 2007), accessed July 6, 2017, http://www.blackwellreference.com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/subscriber/tocnode.html?id=g9781405120548_chunk_g97814051205486.
[10] Bremmer, 39.

to day as part of a routine.[11] Ritual in Greek religion was not typically "fixed" and it was not considered an "impiety" to adjust ritual according to the needs of the circumstances; as long as it was "felt to be traditional", to exist in a mythic time, ritual could be modified accordingly.[12] Moreover, rituals are not limited to Greek sanctuaries and may be in theory performed anywhere, and do not always require the presence of a religious official. While no organized priesthood existed for Greek religion, priests and priestesses did participate in religious functions, often on a temporary appointment to an office that may or may not have had certain prerequisites; it was also one of the few offices in which women and men were held to equal standards.[13] The priest's responsibility was no more to disseminate a canon than that of an epic poet such as Homer, but both appear to play important roles in religious canon.

No canonical text exists for Greek religion in the biblical sense, but mythology repeated orally or recorded as text still holds a prominent place in the study of Greek religion. Homer and Hesiod were Panhellenic epic poets, recognized across the Greek world and often memorizing them was considered the basis of an education; this is as close as Greek religion gets to a unifying or "canonical" body of text, and yet these poems are contradicted or changed in multiple mythological interpretations over the centuries. Mythology should not simply be dismissed as "storytelling" or discounted because of its tendency to self-contradict; it is not simply a "fancy wrapping paper" over religion.[14] Poetry remains the largest body of evidence for Classical scholars on Greek religion, and its tendency to be ignored as confusing or contradictory for the "real belief" underneath reflects a discomfort over a lack of modern boundaries between sacred and secular as well as a perceived lack of modern rationality.[15] Easterling details these prejudices further, focusing on the religious aspects of the feelings poetry and performance can invoke, warning us not to try to peel away a religious veneer to discover 'What did X really believe?', and reminding us that anthropomorphic polytheism should not be considered as "[limiting] [the divine] to the merely human". We cannot excavate or recreate a "belief" system, but we can discuss what values are expressed through the material available to us.[16]

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[11] Ibid, 38.
[12] Parker, 29.
[13] Bremmer, 7; Joan Breton. Connelly, *Portrait of a Priestess: Women and Ritual in Ancient Greece* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010). 2, 28-29; Parker, 48-49.
[14] Robert Parker. *On Greek Religion*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011. *eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)*, EBSCO*host* (accessed July 4, 2017). 29.
[15] Patricia E. Easterling. "Greek Poetry and Greek Religion," in *Greek Religion and Society*, ed. Patricia E. Easterling and J.V. Muir, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). 34.
[16] 44, 47.

Myth is not synonymous with a sacred text or with "belief", nor should "belief" be considered the foundational focus of all religion as it is in Abrahamic tradition; myths were not a unified category of "canon" or "standardization" but did provide histories, attributes, and names to an expansive world of gods, goddesses, heroes, and other entities.[17] Aetiologies for practices may seem artificial as ad hoc explanations and tropes, but they were not isolated stories and could fuse with and influence practice nonetheless, just as practice could influence its aetiologies.[18] For our purposes, mythology functions as an aspect of cultural identity of human groups.[19] They can reveal popular literary tropes and explanations as well as an insight into the moralities and the thought processes of the people who created, repeated, and expanded upon them; myth therefore is a vital portion of our cultural database, particularly where a variety of practices and perspectives are concerned.

Deconstructing Gender

Once again, our perspective provided by our classical sources is limited by the limited nature of its authorship. A large proportion of our sources on literature and myth remain in the hands of educated citizen men, often but not always from Athens. Because of this, we have little to no direct or explicit traces of practice or storytelling from non-citizens, foreigners or slaves, children, or women. Furthermore, the 20th century archaeological report and subsequent interpretations of the evidence, also tended to be written by educated men and here with biases stemming from a British colonialist past, may tend to ignore or misinterpret this lack of alternate perspectives as impossible to determine or as unimportant. The ancient world has often functioned and continues to function as a "tableau" for contemporary ideas – that is, nostalgic images of an "ideal", yet static, selective, and erased past – of those who appropriate it; as Page Dubois writes, "We need a picture of the Greeks that is more accurate, multifaceted, and variegated than [the image conservatives portray]", rather than presenting history as non-historicized, absolute and enduring, or that the human condition is that of the white European male.[20] While this thesis briefly addresses slaves and foreigners, the majority of its focus is reliant on perspectives on gender as it relates to the site and the objects of Artemis Orthia. Gender, and its relation to other human groups defined by origin, status, or age, is a focus point to begin to allow a wider variety of perspectives to refresh and reinvigorate interpretations of this site.

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[17] Parker, *On Greek Religion*, 25.
[18] 27-28.
[19] 25.
[20] Page DuBois. *Trojan Horses: Saving the Classics from Conservatives.* New York: New York University Press, 2001. 19, 54-55.

Gender studies and feminism, as they have been applied to classics, were primarily pioneered in philology. Catch up work must continue to be done in classical archaeology. Gendered perspectives were not a strong concern when a lot of archaeological material, including the Orthia material, was first excavated. These perspectives, lacking in many archaeological reports, should be employed as we re-examine excavated material such as this in order to broaden our understandings and possibilities for interpretation that our own preconceptions or the preconceptions of the societies excavating the materials have hidden from our view.[21] This thesis relies on an understanding of gender and sexuality that is particularly characteristic of third wave feminism from the 1980s onward. Third wave feminism, as Joan Connelly describes, is separated from the homogenous and "inherent" qualities of women and men that were explored by second wave feminism in the 70s and 80s by a new focus on "difference, plurality, ambiguity, the transitory, and the disruptive."[22] Certainly difference must be assumed at some level in classical studies; perhaps the notion of difference as it is applied to gender, sexuality, and their associated roles for a spatially and temporally removed culture from our own can add another dimension to the previous study of "inherent" qualities of gender, lest women remain a static, homogenous, and voiceless minority in classical scholarship.

Our secondary scholarship will often contain biases that assume or project gendered iconography, roles, and norms that did not necessarily exist for the ancients. For instance, the archaeological report tends to associate certain objects with men or women more reliant on contemporary biases than the objects themselves: the "Old Women" masks are a prime example of reading "feminine" features onto ungendered objects and using "masculine" features such as beards to identify some objects that sport them as "masculine" and not others with similar features. Moreover, votive objects may become "gendered" due to assumptions about their votaries. Where male citizens have the purchasing power for elaborate dedications, women are identified in the archaeological record as dedicators of small, personal objects such as mirrors or objects that do not survive such as clothing. Even if a statue is inscribed solely with a woman's name as a dedicator, it is assumed that a male artisan or a male commissioner had a role in its dedication.[23] This thesis is heavily dependent on an understanding of gendered perspectives in terms of how they are assumed or imposed on the

[21] Connelly, 21.
[22] Connelly, 22.
[23] Matthew Dillon, *Girls and Women In Classical Greek Religion.* London: Routledge, 2002. 14.

worshippers, how they are constructed and used in ritual, and how they are understood in relation to either Artemis or Orthia as female divinities.

In this thesis, I rely on the assumption that "male" and "female" were recognized categories of gender in the Greek world. However, rather than imposing a modern western construction of a binary upon the Ancient Greeks, I instead choose to understand gender as inextricably linked to age and class. While the majority of extant literary sources are by adult male Greek citizens, there are several literary and archaeological indications that Greek religion often included the participation of women, and by extension there could be versions of myth and ritual as well as perspectives and religious experiences including or even exclusive to women and other groups, whether they are extinct or extant, attributed or anonymous. Children too, while "gendered" in the ancient Greek language as male or female, may also have existed along a spectrum of gender in relation to their status according to their age that would change upon their entrance into different age classes. Where "male" and "female" were recognizable categories to the Greeks, they may have assigned a more gendered understanding to age classes, where "maiden" and "woman" or "youth" and "man" were linked yet separate categories of "gender".[24] This understanding is vital to the worship of Artemis as a goddess concerned primarily with women and children, if not Orthia.

Gender, age, and class in turn bleed into heterosexualizing assumptions about "male" and "female" roles, including their interactions with Greek religion and the gendered polytheistic deities it is concerned with. As we will see, Artemis and Orthia are both often interpreted as goddesses concerned with fertility and sexual activity. By this notion, secondary scholarship will often assign ritual involving both "male" and "female" participants with a "marriage" label. These assumptions rely on several presupposed and even harmful notions about gender and sexuality, particularly the notion that gender is governed solely by biological sex as well as the notion that the presence and role of women and girls is "marked" and "other" from a "default" male perspective and participation.[25] Marriage and childbirth are assumed to be the most important if not the only purpose of female participation in ritual, even though neither Artemis nor Orthia are exclusively or even explicitly concerned with either. As I will elaborate

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[24] Thomas Paul Bonfiglio. "Winckelmann and the Aesthetics of Eros." *Germanic Review*. no. 2 (1998). 133-5. Bonfiglio conceptualizes Greek choice in sexual partner according to "Erotic blindness", using culturally variable colour blindness as an analogy. To backread a gender-based organization of sexuality, or to backread manliness as incompatible with homosexuality, is to be blind to factors of selection or taboos the Greeks actually saw and considered, in this case dynamics of power according to age and class rather than simply biological sex or gender.

[25] Margarita Diaz-Andreu; Sam Lucy, *Archaeology of Identity* (Routledge, 2007), <http://www.myilibrary.com?ID=115786> (11 July 2017) 14, 18.

further on, marriage and childbirth, despite being well represented by deities such as Hera and Eileithyia, can be promoted in scholarship as qualities assigned indiscriminately to "female" deities, and efforts are made to separate or combine and confuse Artemis and Orthia based on their perceived relationships to fertility, sexuality, childbirth and "femaleness". I intend to reject these structuralist assumptions about female deities and their "limited" roles in my analysis of the site in relation to the community it served.

This assumption that the Greeks understood gender as a simple binary separate from age and class also misconstrues notions of ancient Greek "heterosexuality", a concept that was not considered "default" or "inherent" if it was conceived by the Greeks at all.[26] Heterosexuality could indeed be understood alongside marriage, but it could also be understood in terms of age and class. The assumption that heterosexual marriage was a marker of the transition to a heterosexual adulthood from a heterosexual or asexual childhood is not necessarily an ancient one; Greece and Sparta in particular were "notorious", to use a negatively loaded term, for pederasty and homosexual relations between men and boys. Pederasty was also attested for the relationships between women and girls, as some Greek sources and many modern scholars by extension tend to deny or ignore.[27]

Homosexual and heterosexual relationships in a Greek context, if they were considered at all, were not constructed as "fixed" orientations in the way modern western society now understands, but intimately connected with age. Class too played some role in the respectable pursuit of sexual partners: the relationship between a citizen adult male and a citizen youth of the same gender class might be considered acceptable where a relationship between two citizen adult males could be considered unusual if not deviant. Women as a gender were not considered to be the same class as either citizen men or youths, and slaves in turn regardless of their gender were also a separate class; these are both reflections of how intrinsically linked gender was to class and age.[28] In this way, age and class could be considered far more important in one's choice of partner in the ancient world than gender, distinctions the modern perception of sexuality and modern biases against non-heteronormative expressions of

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[26] Dubois, 89.

[27] Plutarch, *Lycurgus*. 18.4; Xenophon, *Spartan Constitution*, 2.13-2.14. Plutarch illustrates that not only do Spartan youths have male lovers who take responsibility for them, but that the girls also "find beautiful and good women to love" (ὥστε καὶ τῶν παρθένων ἐρᾶν τὰς καλὰς καὶ ἀγαθὰς γυναῖκας). Xenophon on the other hand describes pederastic relationships as forbidden as incest; this is possibly more out of a Socratic sense of self-control to emphasize the nobility of the Spartans than simply "homophobia", as he stresses the chaste relationships between men and women as necessary for producing the best offspring due to their increased longing when apart in 1.5. These two sources represent perhaps the two extreme interpretations of pederasty, reality somewhere between.

[28] Dubois, 90; Diaz-Andreu, 14-15.

sexuality will miss, dismiss, or ignore. This is why it is necessary, as Adrienne Rich calls for, to study heterosexuality "as a political institution" rather than take it for granted as an inherent human "default".[29]

Deconstructing Material Culture

Archaeological Problems

The theoretical bedrock of New Archaeology is positivism, a philosophy that relies heavily on the scientific method and empirical data from the archaeological record. A "scientific" approach proposes verifiable generalizations, and anything untestable or unverifiable is not "scientific". A scientific approach – that is an approach based in the "natural" sciences of biology, physics and chemistry that some have suggested social sciences such as sociology and archaeology should emulate – implies that archaeological methodology should be divorced from subjective analyses or value judgements.[30] These are notions that may be part of more mainstream global archaeologies and anthropologies but are largely inseparable from Classical archaeology due to the history of the discipline, as we shall see.

Structuralism, a method of analysing and simplifying difference and relationships, was applicable to the New Archaeology that developed over the course of the 20th century. It was never coherent enough to have more than a slight impact on the field of archaeology, and yet its versatility and close relationship with semiotics remained appealing and influential.[31] However, a particular criticism of structuralism in archaeology is that in spite of its versatility and relative added nuance to systems theory, is that it is not a rigorous analysis of empirical data despite claims to be such.[32] Structuralist analyses may make attempts to consider invisible, static, underlying structures as empirical and observable and explain away any exceptions to these "rules" as "transformations" without explaining how or why these changes might occur.[33] Subjectivity and agency are both seldom considered in a structuralist approach despite subjectivity remaining "a necessary component of all archaeological analysis".[34] Attempts to avoid "subjective" labels may merely do more to obscure an archaeologist's

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[29] Adrienne Rich. 2003. "Compulsory heterosexuality and lesbian existence (1980)." *Journal of Women's History* 15, no. 3: 11-48. *Alternative Press Index*, EBSCO*host* (accessed July 11, 2017). 17.
[30] Matthew Johnson, *Archaeological Theory: an Introduction* (Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011). 40-41.
[31] Ian Hodder and Scott Hutson, *Reading the Past: Current Approaches to Interpretation in Archaeology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). 45.
[32] Hodder, 46.
[33] 63.
[34] 51.

process of categorization than to illuminate; meaning is still being assigned to an identified mark as long as that mark is identified as a semiotic unit.[35]

Structuralism's association with semiotics, while helpful, can lead it to considering signs as completely arbitrary relationships between signifiers and the signified, the object itself often subsumed under these relationships.[36] Entire worldviews may be extrapolated from these relationships and overgeneralized, whether the remains are indicative of a specific worldview or not.[37] Structuralism can only be considered "rigorous" if it is used in conjunction with content and context, and would benefit from considering the "arbitrariness" of signs in a wider historical context as they come to hold less and less arbitrary meanings over time.[38] A methodology relying too little on context becomes dangerous when applied cross culturally without regard for it; as an example, the identification of objects as having "male" or "female" associations is an assumption made consistently by archaeologists and the generalization is explained away as a "transformation" the moment an exception to the "rule" comes to light.[39] For this reason in particular, I again reject a structuralist approach to material culture and rather align myself with a post-processual approach that accounts for a greater emphasis on subjectivity towards the archaeological record and less on absolute generalizations.

Classical Archaeology

Classical archaeology occupies a strange space, rooted in art history and philology, ignored by historians for its lack of literature and glossed over by pre-historians for its relative abundance of it. As James Whitley writes, classical archaeology "has different objects, in both senses of the word" from other types.[40] Its origins in the Renaissance and Enlightenment have seen it grown to be inextricably linked with the rise of European nationalism as well as Western colonialism; as a result, the archaeology of the 'Classical'- already a narrow and loaded term itself – has accumulated a great deal of cultural importance, particular associations, and baggage.[41] Classical archaeology tends to think of itself as a celebration of high art as Classical studies celebrates high literature, and the "banausic" realities of daily life or philologically unilluminated practices are often ignored in favour of objects that can more readily

[35] 50.
[36] 52.
[37] 55.
[38] 58, 62.
[39] 70-71.
[40] James Whitley, *The Archaeology of Ancient Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). 11.
[41] Ibid.

be regarded as "art".[42] Classical archaeology, like art history or philosophy, is descriptively subjective by nature, and it is my intention to trace some of these subjectivities in the excavation and interpretation of this site.

While Classical Archaeology has broadened its scope in recent years to focus on the banausic, the domestic, and the regional, there remain some biases that may colour our reception of objects like the Orthia masks. The study of Laconian art and archaeology has suffered because of this; there is a larger focus on the "decline" of Laconian art relative to Attic. The evolutionist model proposed by Johann Joachim Winckelmann in the 18th century, though it has been modified and "disproven" to an extent, still is deeply influential on our categorizations of Greek art and its perceived "evolution" from Archaic to Classical followed by its "decline" in the Hellenistic and Roman periods.[43] The art of Sparta and the surrounding area is also framed in similar evolutionist terms, described as a bud killed by frost before its inevitable bloom.[44] In this particular case, the frost is Spartan militarism, thought to be the complete and utter antithesis of an Athenian creative spirit. This construction of Laconian art as "primitive" or "destroyed" directly impacts the archaeological categorization of the masks of Artemis Orthia; it is clear which objects the excavators considered to be "important" or "artistic" and which were "degenerate". While I intend to not put the object before the context and I acknowledge that Spartan militarism is an important such context, it is not the sole contributor or detractor from Spartan art and should not govern every discussion without a consideration of Sparta's wider Greek context, or without a consideration of the origins, purposes, and agencies creating and using the objects.

Conclusion

To summarize: the nature of classical studies and our lack of sources from the perspectives of Spartans as well as the perspectives beyond the adult male Greek citizen make interpretations of this site difficult. Furthermore, I intend to combine an understanding of Greek religion as embedded in all aspects of "secular" Greek society, including the spheres of women and children, with a particularly feminist, post-colonial, and non-heteronormative lens in order to reveal gaps or alternate interpretations of secondary scholarship on the goddesses, their site, and their rituals. Finally, I approach this material with a post processual focus on subjectivity, conscientious of biases and

[42] 10.
[43] 21-22.
[44] Guy Dickens, "The Art of Sparta," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 14, no. 68 (November 1908): accessed January 18, 2017, http://www.jstor.org/stable/857666. 67. Notably, this is the same Guy Dickens who was responsible for the chapter of the excavation report regarding the Orthia masks.

influences the early 20th century excavation report projects and perpetuates. Artemis' assimilation to Orthia causes a lot of controversy: it implies a focus on youth, but not necessarily entirely focused on marriage as a rite of passage; it implies a "Hellenization" of a "non-Greek" goddess rather than two entities associated by similar attributes; it implies a goddess who is more concerned with "male" initiation than Artemis' "traditional" sphere of women in labour and young, sexually chaste girls. This consideration of ancient notions of religion, gender, and sexuality will greatly inform my subsequent analyses of secondary interpretations of the goddesses and the rituals surrounding them.

3. The Sanctuary

In Archaeology

The sanctuary was excavated by the British School at Athens between 1906 and 1910 and the report published by R.M. Dawkins in 1929. The site lies in an area called Limnai, one of the four Spartan *obai* on the eastern suburban perimeter of Sparta along the right bank of the Eurotas River, a marshy area prone to flooding and filled with oleanders and agnus castus.[45] The flooding was helpful in depositing a trail of figurines and other objects as clues to the site's location,[46] but in matters of stratigraphy and preservation of materials, bronze in particular, the flooding quickly becomes quite harmful. Floods were also a problem in antiquity, but a layer of sand deposited after one such flood that destroyed the site around the 6th century BC aids in the protection of not only some stratigraphy but also rich deposits of objects, as does the 3rd century Roman theatre adjacent to the remains of the temple.[47] The chronology remains a tenuous subject, but the relative chronology between the Geometric and Archaic period site below the sand and the Archaic through Roman site above the sand remains sound. John Boardman's later chronological re-evaluation of the site pushed the excavators' original dates later and added a dimension of specificity, but both chronologies remain heavily dependent on pottery styles for their dates.

As of completed excavations in 1910, the site layout is as follows. The sanctuary itself lies approximately 100 meters south of the river bank, the "Early Temple" remains and the "Later Temple" above it lie on the western side of the site, the pronaos of the "Later Temple" at the eastern side of the temple. The remains of the earliest Geometric altar, the Archaic altar, and the Roman altar are east of the temples in the center of the sanctuary, and remains of the First Enclosure Wall surround the temples and altars. A retaining wall sits just outside the first wall on the western side behind the temples at the edge of the sand, and the Later Enclosure Wall remains outside these two earlier walls; it stretches from the bank of the Eurotas to the large drain towards the southern edge of the sanctuary on the western side, and part exists just behind the altars and first enclosure wall on the eastern side. The foundation of the Roman Theatre sits facing the altars and pronaos of the Later Temple in the south east of the sanctuary overtop the large drain, extending past the Later Enclosure Wall. On the eastern edge of the

[45] R. M. Dawkins, *The Sanctuary of Artemis Orthia at Sparta: excavated and described by members of the British School at Athens 1906-1910* (London: Published by the Council of the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies ... by Macmillan, 1929). 2.
[46] Dawkins, 4.
[47] 163.

sanctuary are the foundations of buildings, perhaps 5th century BC houses according to the excavators, and a well. A mill stream ran across the entire site at the time of excavation, and was diverted to facilitate the expedition.

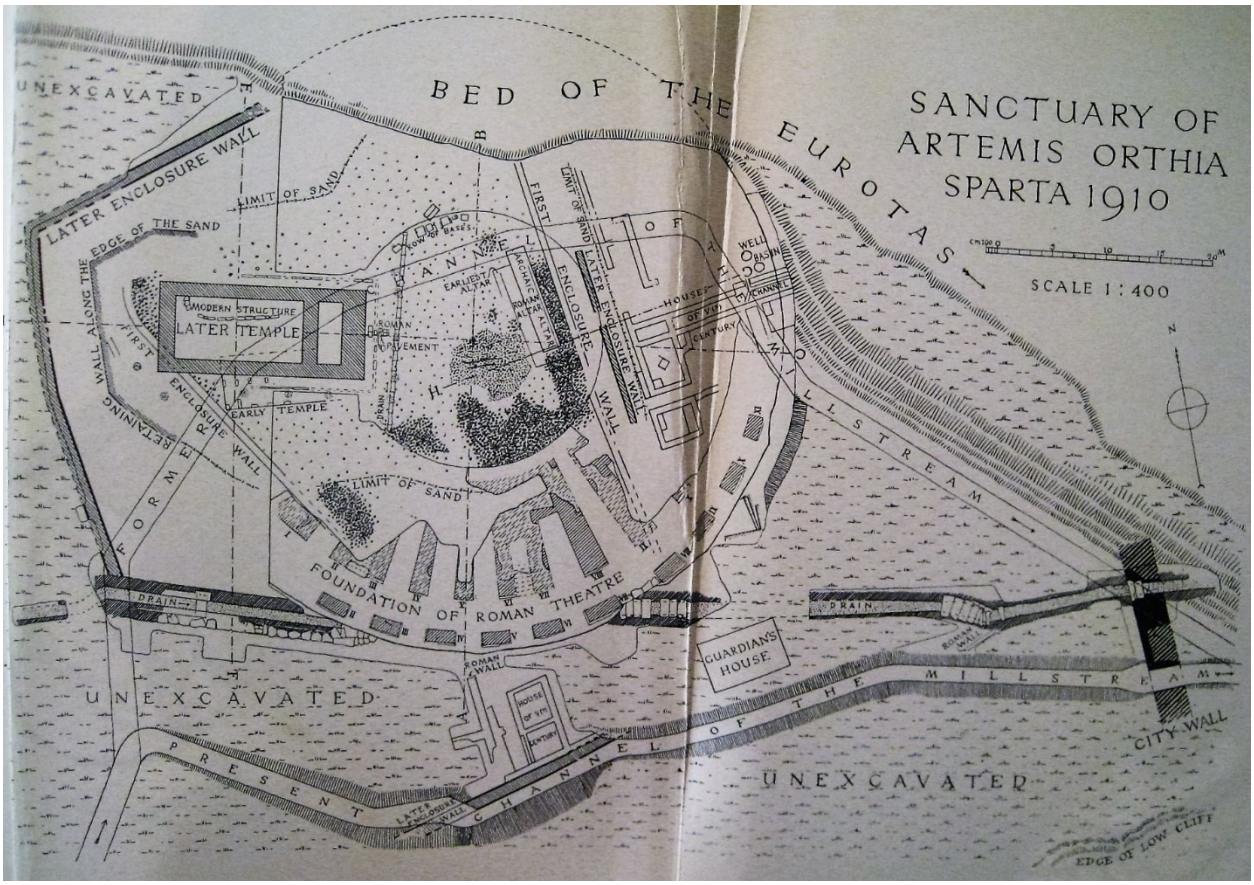

Figure 1. The Excavation Map

Site History and Deposits

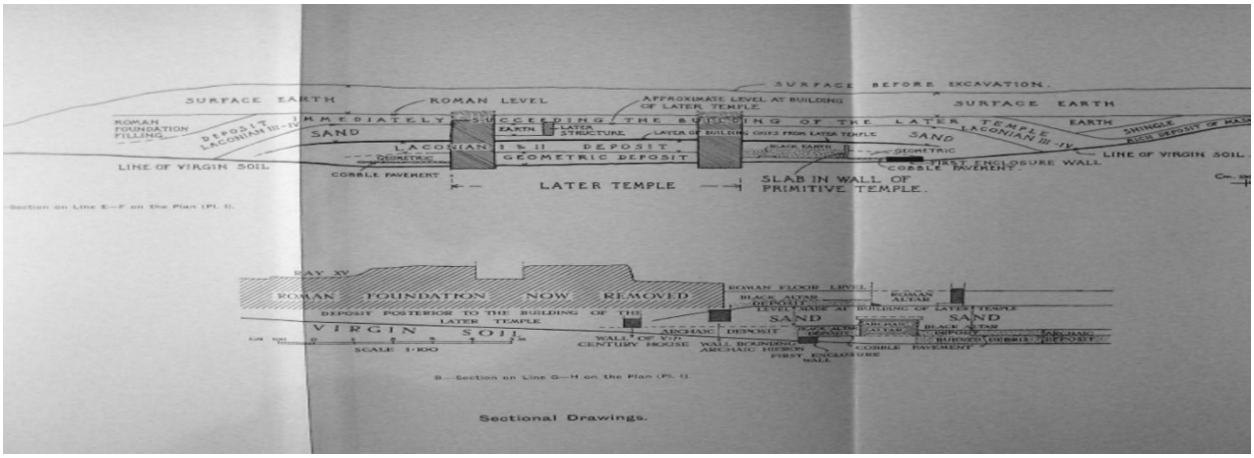

Figure 2. The Stratigraphy of the Site

The site appears to have been occupied from the 10th century BC traces of ash, geometric shards, bronze, and charred animal bones to at the very least the 3rd century AD Roman theatre and an unknown abandonment afterwards.[48] The excavators dug two trenches – Trench A across the Roman building and south of the temple, Trench B parallel ten metres away from the first and completely within the Roman foundation. Trench B uncovered part of the archaic altar underneath the Roman altar, but recovered comparatively fewer objects.[49] The excavation team, having cleared part of the Roman theatre down to virgin soil, discovered a series of altars, early houses to the east of these, an early and a later Archaic temple, the sanctuary walls, and a great drain.[50] There were no remains of the earliest temple which likely would have been made of wood, but some foundations of the small "Early Temple" survives corresponding with an "Archaic Altar".[51] South of this, the excavators discovered the "Later Temple", hereafter usually referred to as simply "the temple". The votive offerings are mostly concentrated around the remains of the Early Temple, but none of these objects outside the temple were found *in situ*; all were thrown out.[52] These include a large number of bone and ivory objects, a large number of small painted pottery vessels, carvings in limestone, bronze objects, inscriptions stamped on tiles or inscribed on other objects, and of course a large number of terracotta masks.[53] Most of these objects, particularly the clay objects and save for some imports such as ivory, are likely made locally using local materials.[54]

[48] Dawkins, 1, 6.
[49] 4.
[50] 5.
[51] 8-9.
[52] 14.
[53] 9, 12.
[54] 52, 126, 146, 169, 250

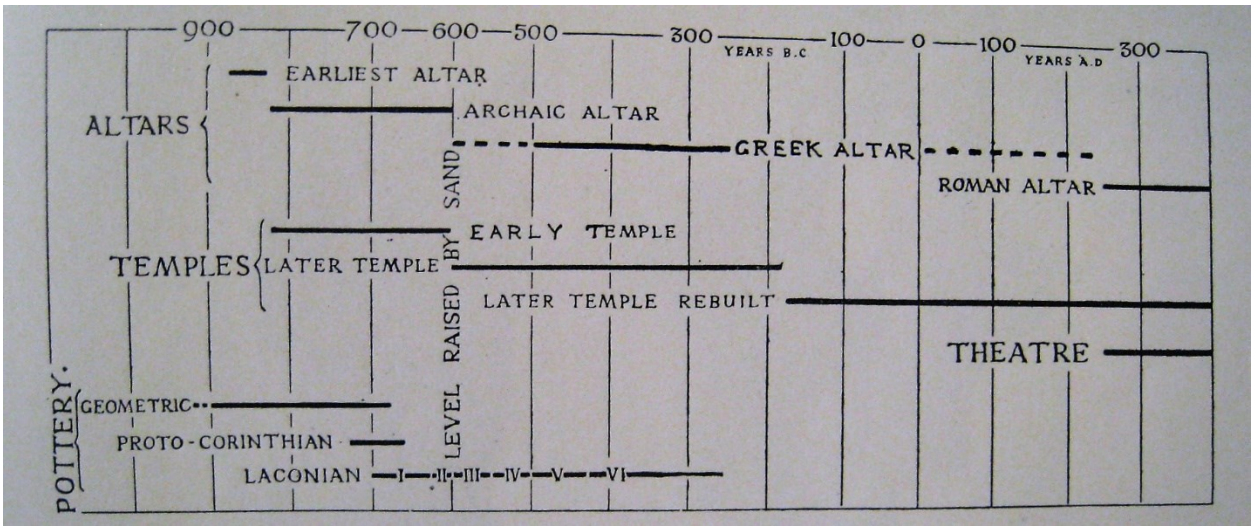

Figure 3. Chronology of the Excavation

The pottery is remarkable for its continuity in fabric, one fabric comprising at least 90 percent of the finds, but also because the excavators found the fabric, sheer quantity of ware relative to other locales, and its identification with the clay masks and figurines to be a convincing basis for the assertion that there was an original and local school of pottery at Laconia. The clay varies between red and pink in colour to light or red brown depending on the firing, and all colours in certain periods bear a characteristic white slip.[55] The excavators consider Laconian III to be the pinnacle of Spartan ware, though examples of intricately painted sherds exist from the Geometric through to Laconian VI. Plates, oinochoai, kylikes, lakainai cups, and other such vessels feature geometric designs, figures including those who may or may not be identified as the goddess, and a plethora of animals both real and mythical: birds, deer, lions, sirens, sphinxes, and so on.[56] Though the excavator's dates have been disputed by John Boardman, as we will see below, the stylistic categories and relative chronology remain sound in his reassessment. Some imported Corinthian ware and other foreign pieces are present amongst the Laconian pottery, and the style is said to end with Hellenistic sherds.[57]

Aside from pottery and the masks, the latter of which will be discussed in a separate section below, local clay was used for terracotta architectural pieces (disc-acroteria, antefixes; either decorated or plain) and figurines. The architectural terracottas were a principal ornament for the temple(s) in the 7th and 6th centuries BC according to the report, most likely manufactured locally in Sparta, and similar

[55] 52-3.
[56] 80-85.
[57] 115.

objects have been found in other Spartan and nearby sanctuaries. No other type of architectural terracotta décor had been recovered at the time of the excavation from any of these sanctuaries. These decorations are similar in pattern and style to Laconian ware, with the same slips and glazes, and black, dark brown, purple-red and white paints.[58]

The figures begin in the Geometric period and continue to 4th century Laconian VI pottery. The only later terracotta figurines found are in the walls of the Roman amphitheatre, likely mid third century AD according to the excavators. Unlike the masks, the figurines were not concentrated in special deposits. They can only be dated according to similar pottery styles and the general context of the deposit and were often found broken and mended by the excavators. The norm was for figurines to be made in moulds and not by hand, but in some cases parts are made in moulds and added to others by hand. Many seem to have been painted though not much of this survives due to the dampness of the soil. All varieties of colour are local and easily distinguishable from the clay of other localities. They are classified primarily in terms of whether or not they represent Orthia, but as she has no iconography established with certainty, the excavator's claim that she can be identified is dubious. The report notes in defense of the identification of Orthia that "there is no reason to suppose that the practice of making dedications to the goddess was commoner amongst women then men,"; this confusing assertion that votives fall into the category of either representing the divinity or the dedicator is not very convincing. These draped female figures are standing, with animals, enthroned, or on horseback. Other categories include nude male and female figures, broken heads, miniature masks, terracotta plaques, handmade human and animal figurines, and vases in human or animal form.[59]

Among the other categories of the clay figurines are miniature masks, not classified with the larger and more famous examples of the same material, but thought to have some relation. The eyes are sometimes pierced, some wear crowns, and nearly all were found with Laconian VI pottery and common among the house walls east of the altar. It is difficult to find unbroken specimens of these. Six heads are earlier and found with Laconian III and IV, less fixed in type than the others.[60] In addition there are 8 fragmented terracotta plaques and one relatively preserved, the one representing a presumably female and male figure each grasping one side of a wreath in one hand while the others are clasped together. The fragments include representations of horses, a griffin-headed sphinx, a man and a chariot,

[58] 117, 126, 128.
[59] 145-6.
[60] 153-4.

a man's feet and shins, a fragment of a sphinx's wings and hindquarters, a pair of legs and a spear shaft, and a spear and helmet plume.[61] Another category includes handmade figurines, less broken than the moulded ones and too fragmentary to be classified. They are rare before Laconian I and equally rare after 500 BC. The figurines are identified by the excavators as primarily bearded males and one "undoubted" female figurine. Some figures appear to have satyr-like characteristics and others are ithyphallic. A type of handmade female figurine with the legs apart makes the pudenda conspicuous, but it seems generally difficult to tell the sex of a figurine without the presence of obvious genitalia. Of the handmade animal figurines, the horse "enormously predominated", greater than all other animals put together and are all the more popular in combination with the equestrian figures and limestone reliefs, but the category includes cattle, birds, dogs, goats, rams, sheep, tortoises, and others that are more uncertain.[62] The Roman period pottery, found above the top of the foundation of the theatre, continued the same mould-based method of making figurines, but they seem not to have been painted. There are some types of male nudes and a number of female figures identified as Artemis as well as a few animals, including examples of a dog, horse, and possibly a sheep.[63]

The limestone carvings include examples in the round, in reliefs, and some incised, and all are perhaps close in date to the building of the later temple due to their association with the sand layer covering the sanctuary and contemporary with Laconian II before this layer was put down, a few found above it and several in the sand itself. The first trial trench of the excavation running east and west touching the houses and altar revealed some carvings as well. Some were architectural, some were votives, and some were perhaps for amusement. All are small scale and are categorized according to whether they display humans, horses, lions, miscellaneous, or architectural carvings. Some human figures are men, some are women in similar style to the terracottas (and therefore associated with Orthia), and some are unidentifiable. The reliefs of horses, the largest class by far, appear to be quite standardized, generally flat, in profile, and with rough ground, some unfinished. The lions are similarly flat and either sitting or couchant. Other animals include boars, dogs, sheep, sphinxes, birds and other unidentified animals or human-animal combinations. One relief features a ship with a ram and square sail, similar to an example in ivory.[64]

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[61] 154.
[62] 155-157. Dawkins seems sceptical as to the certainty of the "undoubted" female figurine, "rendered with a chin hardly distinguishable from a beard, it is not possible to be certain on this point…."
[63] 161.
[64] 187-195.

The bronze figures, according to the report, were unlikely to attract attention at the time and required unique observations particular to the site. The first is that there is a complete absence of votive tripods and bronze spits, objects normally well represented in other finds elsewhere. The excavators identified a new spiral type of fibula and an unusually heavy type of spiral brooches well over one hundred. Amber and ivory as brooch decorations were found here more than had been ever before, and the ring hinge on some more elaborate brooches replacing a wire spring was also noticeable. The bronze objects were almost exclusively below the sand, and the humidity damaged the surviving examples so extensively that they required more effort to clean than was thought necessary. There are a number of pins, statuettes of numerous animals and a seated figure of a man. The bronze fibulae are more or less exclusive to the Geometric period and slightly beyond it with very few objects identified as from Laconian III and beyond. Other miscellaneous items include miniature jugs, objects that are perhaps seals, objects that could be weights, coils of wire perhaps for hair, a number of beads for necklaces or other jewelry, miniature double axes with a suspension hole, combs, and mirror handles.

Ivory and bone objects are numerous and diverse at Orthia, and the excavators claim this material find to be superior to any other excavation in Greece at the time. The chronology is also based on pottery styles, making the objects difficult to date. Ivory appears to cease as a material around the excavator's date of 600 BC, which they attribute to Tyre submitting to Nebuchadnezzar and the import of ivory through Syria to Sparta being severed. Ivory kohl needles in the lowest strata, "very oriental but quite un-Spartan"[65], are used as evidence for this. The ivory finds date from the Geometric period, but are concentrated most with Laconian I and II pottery and the late 8th and 7th centuries BC by the excavation dates. Before 600 BC, all objects in ivory are used for what the excavators term "finer pieces" and bone only for "the more stereotyped and less artistic objects", the latter category including seals, beads, pin heads, and stiff Orthia figures. Afterwards as ivory disappears, the excavators still consider the resulting bone carvings to be inferior to the older ivory and become limited to fixed types. However, there is much overlap between the subject matter in the two materials. The team organized the finds into categories of relief plaques, figures of Orthia and figures seated on thrones, personal objects, and miscellaneous carvings.[66] These categories are further subdivided by style. The earliest plaques tended to be fastened to fibulae, and others were on combs or the undersides of animal figurines. They feature human, divine, and mythological subjects: female figures that could represent Orthia, sometimes

[65] Dawkins, 203. It is implied that the application of kohl is un-Spartan, or at the very least that the objects used for its application were unusual.
[66] 203-4.

winged and grasping the necks of birds or on occasion a snake, for example. Women appear either paired with men and holding a wreath or standard, in groups with arms raised, or alone holding unclear objects. Men sometimes appear as warriors, occasionally on horseback. There is an example of a winged bearded man, another that has been identified as Prometheus and the eagle, and one of a man piercing the side of a centaur with a sword. Male figures are identified with dogs, on horseback, and fighting creatures such as gorgons and hydras. Other subjects include sphinxes, lions, griffins, reptiles and amphibians, a ship upon which a man and woman stand with a crew and a large bird, a chariot drawn by four winged horses and another two-horse chariot.[67]

The bone figures, usually identified as Orthia, are labeled 'xoanon-like' and sometimes are featured without arms. Many of them were found in 7th or 6th century deposits, but some were found with earlier Geometric pottery. Some figures feature a polos headdress and a range of hairstyles are depicted.[68] Birds and sphinxes- one sphinx apparently featuring a beard- amongst other designs are incised into some of these figurines as well.[69] Some figurines appear seated in pairs, identified as either two men or a man and a woman though it seems difficult to discern from any of the objects.[70] Several combs, pendants, rings, fibulae, pins, beads, seals, and animal figures were found of these materials as well, often featuring birds, sphinxes, and other animals. Bone flutes, two of which are inscribed, and plectras were also recovered along with game pieces or other miscellaneous unidentified objects.[71]

The excavators are confident that at least some of the ivory carvings were made in Sparta due to the presence of some unfinished works, while others have no apparent connection to other Spartan themes. It is not easy to discern which ivories were made in or simply influenced by foreign traders, but the trade of ivory to the Greek mainland certainly dates back before the foundation of the cult according to the quantities in Mycenaean tombs. Notably, the excavators link the two-disc fibulae with similar objects found at Ephesus as well as some small similarities in other ivory and bone objects, but attribute the similarity in casual trading between Ionian and Doric styles. There are also some similarities to Rhodian figures he excavators take note of as well. There is no Mycenaean presence on the site aside from a few heirlooms, but the excavators reportedly saw some similarities and influence on the Orthia ivories and bone figures from the period. Overall, the report stresses a strong local character in these

[67] 204-218.
[68] 218-19.
[69] 234.
[70] 221-222.
[71] 236-239.

materials despite the foreign influences, taking it for granted that Sparta would of course be so strongly individualized politically.[72]

Lead figurines make up one of the largest categories of votives at the sanctuary and seem to be characteristic of Spartan sanctuaries in particular, found in excavations at the Menelaion and the Amyklaion and since recovered from almost every site at Sparta. In the rest of the Peloponnese, only the Argive Heraion, Bassae, and Phlius have produced findings of lead figurines. The predominance of lead is owed either to a local supply or the Spartan's repute for banning the use of precious metals; the excavators conclude the former is more likely. Lead figurines are more plentiful than cheap terracotta figurines that are the norm in Greek sanctuaries, and it is likely that a supply of lead was both cheap and accessible enough for all worshippers to take advantage of. Over 100,000 lead figurines were recovered from the Orthia sanctuary, often pulled from the riverbank by schoolboys during the excavation and used as clues to the location of the sanctuary. The material differs very little over time and styles tend to appear Archaic across periods, though they represent a great variety of types and are found through the Proto-Corinthian to the Hellenistic deposits of pottery, the 8th to 4th century BC.[73]

[72] 245-248
[73] 249-250.

Figure 4. Examples of Lead Figures for Orthia

These figures could themselves be used in tandem with pottery for dating layers of materials, both according to a carefully determined stylistic sequence. Earlier styles were found in the area

between the early temple and archaic altar, some 7th century figures immediately below the sand layer in the northern part of the early sanctuary contemporary with a deposit south of the early temple. 6th century figures were found above the sand immediately after the building of the second temple on the south and north sides of it and included those found in the river bank. The 5th century votives were on the east of the altar and near the houses outside the sanctuary wall, some just southeast of the temple and towards the drain. The last category of figurines, from the mid 5th century to perhaps the mid 3rd century BC according to the publication, included deposits in the houses, along the northern arc of the arena, and towards the north end of the Greek altar.[74] The first period, Lead 0, consists mostly of imitations of jewelry, such as earrings. Human and animal subjects begin in the Lead I, but also include ornamental types such as double axes and spiral designs. Lead II is distinguished by a frequency of women, winged or otherwise, warriors, and ball wreaths, some types of which have been found at other sits such as the Menelaion. There is an overall decrease in types, especially jewelry and animal subjects, by Lead III and IV where spike wreaths dominate. Some types are identified with Athena, Poseidon and Hermes by the excavators. The deer seems to appear for the first time, its connection to Artemis not overlooked in the report. The spiked wreaths remain popular into Lead V and VI and only deer and roosters take precedence over other animals. There are very few jewelry types, but the winged women figurines and the other divinity-types identified previously remain. The excavators tend to view the changes in votives as reflective of changes in the cult: Mycenaean styles hint at a goddess older than the sanctuary who gradually "succumbs" to Artemis, represented by the increase in deer shaped figurines and the multiplication of "ordinary" votives of wreaths, winged goddesses, women and warriors at the expense of other types. They attribute a great change to the 6th century, during which a merger or an eclipse between the two goddesses was taking place.[75]

Inscriptions found on the site are divided by their size and the type of material. The largest portion of them are dedications by victors who won prizes, who the excavators say are mostly boys, the implication being they are either not exclusively young or not exclusively male. The votive stelai normally include a dedication to the Goddess Orthia or Artemis Orthia, never to Artemis alone. Some dedications inform the reader that an iron sickle was the prize for the contest and would be dedicated in sockets on the stone itself. Nine examples are wholly or partially metrical rather than prose and are unusual in this respect. The competitions did not seem to be segregated by age class by the excavator's

[74] 250-252.
[75] 282-3.

interpretation of the terminology used to refer to the boys. Some of the named contests are well known athletic and musical competitions, while others have more disputed meanings and are often associated with the infamous flogging ceremony.[76]

The rest of the inscriptions on marble or hard stone are small in number and are unfortunately mostly fragments. They include writings relating to ritual components such as libations, Imperial period statue bases, lists of magistrates, names of masons, tombstones perhaps used as building material, and so on. Inscriptions found at other sites referring to the site include a recording of the erection of a statue to a priestess of Artemis Orthia, supplying her name and titles. Another woman also received a statue at the site of Artemis Orthia, but there is nothing to indicate her rank, occupation, or connection with the sanctuary. Votive objects bearing inscriptions are summarized briefly in the report, but not described in detail in this publication.[77]

Finally, a miscellaneous category encompasses finds of engraved stones, gold and silver jewelry, objects in vitreous paste, amber, glass beads, sculpture fragments, and iron spits and coins. The engraved stones and precious metals are of particular interest for the excavators. The stones, for example, reflect Mycenaean types and artistic influences that predate the sanctuary. The jewelry was found below the sand and often detached from lost pieces that been damaged or naturally expired.[78]

The Masks

The masks are found in small quantities below the second ('Later') temple and the sand that separates the pottery styles of Laconian II and III.[79] This sand layer dates to around 600 BC according to the excavation team which Boardman more or less affirms within a century, dating Laconian II to the sand between 620 and 560 BC.[80] After the completion of this temple, they appear in far greater numbers. They are found under the river bank and south of the temple, a few fragments in the theatre and the temple foundations, and finally a great store of masks between the temple and the riverbank. The largest deposits were in two rubbish heaps to the north and south of the temple, clearer stratigraphy on the southern heap away from the riverbank. Casts of these masks from the same mould were found above and below the sand layer, though not all masks utilized moulds. Though there are

[76] 285-289.
[77] 294-296.
[7878] 378-382.
[79] 163.
[80] John Boardman, "Artemis Orthia and chronology," *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 58 (1963): , accessed May 5, 2017, doi:10.1017/s0068245400013721. 4.

fewer masks below the sand, they are better preserved because of it; masks to the north of the temple and below the sand were assigned museum numbers from 77-100, those north and above from 1-60. The south side contains a great deal of closely packed masks, but they were shattered into fragments too small for the assignment of a number.[81]

Style	Excavators	Boardman
'Geometric'	9th cent. – 675 BC	8th cent. – 650 BC
Laconian I	700-635 BC	650-620 BC
Laconian II	635-600 BC	To the sand: 620-570/560; As a style: 620-580 BC
The sand	600 BC	570/560 BC

Figure 5. Chronology of the Site according to Dawkins and Boardman.

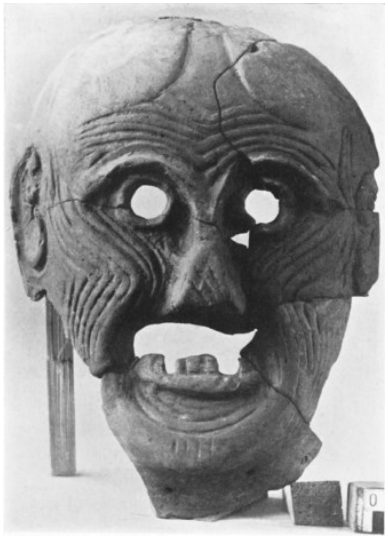

Figure 6. Type A: "Old Woman"

It is difficult to assume the period of the construction or dedication of the masks relative to their already stratigraphically complicated deposition. These assumptions are almost entirely limited to their relative chronology and stylistic categories. Overall, the masks are primarily limited to the 6th century BC.[82] Earliest remain some masks associated with the late Geometric and Laconian I periods and some of the better preserved masks under the sand are Laconian II or III. The masks considered to be "at best" by the excavators are associated with the Laconian III style, between 600 and 550 according to the

[81] 164.
[82] Ibid.

excavators[83] or some time shortly after this according to Boardman's updated timeline.[84] Laconian IV is "poor and hasty" and by Laconian V and VI the masks are miniatures with "no special individuality" and have parallels in most ancient sites.[85] Certainly, there are few masks that parallel the earlier "bolder, freer" grotesques at Orthia in Sparta that captured the attention of the excavators.[86]

The excavators assigned each of the masks as best they could to one of seven categories they created for them. These categories are as follows:

A. Old Women: Clean shaven, bald, wrinkled, possibly female
B. Youths: Normal unbearded male
C. Warriors: Normal bearded male
D. Portraits: Realistic
E. Satyrs: Satyric type, pointed ears
F. Gorgons: Medusa type with tongues and tusks
G. Caricatures: Fantastic exaggerations, a sort of miscellaneous category[87]

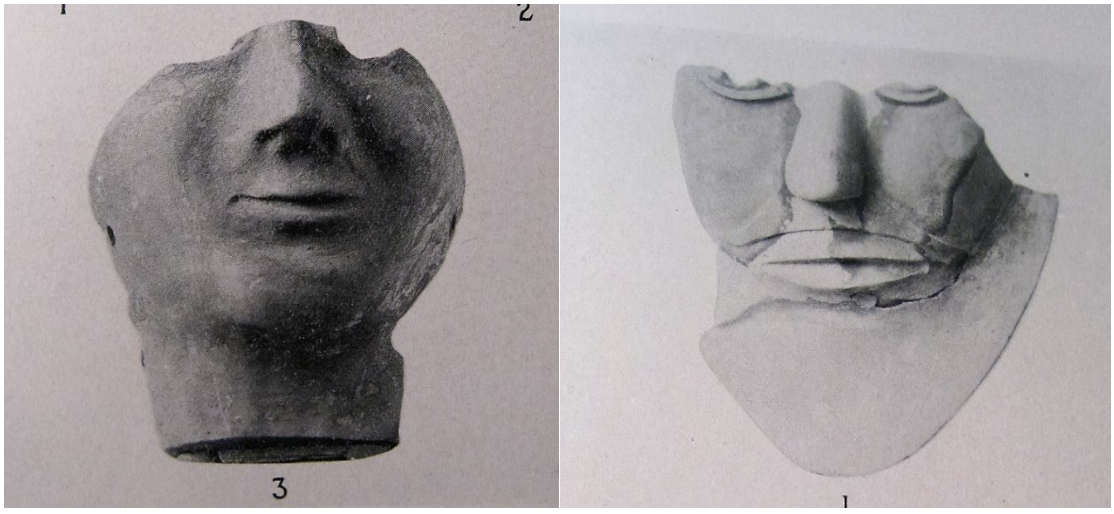

Figure 7. Type B: "Youth"; Figure 8. Type C: "Warrior"

[83] Ibid, 165.
[84] Boardman, 4.
[85] Dawkins, 165.
[86] Ibid, 166.
[87] Ibid, 165.

While stylistic categories will remain eternally subjective, I find the categories used by the excavators for these masks to be misleading at best. The excavation report admits some blurred lines between categories B and C, the beard one of the few differentiating factors between them. Furthermore, the beard being the main distinguishing feature between ages and genders produces complications. Regarding category B, "Youths", is there any absolute certainty that a beardless face in the classical style- particularly when fragmented- is male? Likewise, the "Old Women" are identified as female ostensibly due to their clean shaven, beardless faces despite containing examples where some incised "wrinkles" could easily also be interpreted as beards.[88] The lines between the miscellaneous category G of "Caricatures" are also blurred- this category shows "exaggerated" types of all other categories, but at what point should a mask be categorized as an exaggeration or parody? Could this be a deliberate exaggeration by the artist, or is it a factor of period, taste, or artistic competence? Are masks that fall into category D, "Portraits", truly more veristic or accurate renderings of human beings than the "Old Women"? The subcategories, including "barbarous" for "Old Women" or "mild" for "Satyrs" and "subhuman" or "grotesque" for caricatures, only seem to complicate the matter further. The excavators have comparatively little to say about the "Satyrs" and "Gorgons" against the other masks, but this absence of information perhaps points to a mundane or standardized iconography in other Greek sites. Generally, the Archaic typology of Gorgon iconography, though holding some exceptions in style and associations with masks, does not appear to be an easy match with the grotesques such as "Old Women". The emergence and development of the Archaic Gorgon portrayed with fangs, protruding tongue, flat nose, bulging eyes, and stylised hair and sometimes beards began in the 8th century BC and was established enough by the deposition of the masks that "typical" examples are found there, while the "Old Women" usually only meet the requirement for wrinkles around the forehead and mouth, if to a more exaggerated degree.

[88] Ibid, 167.

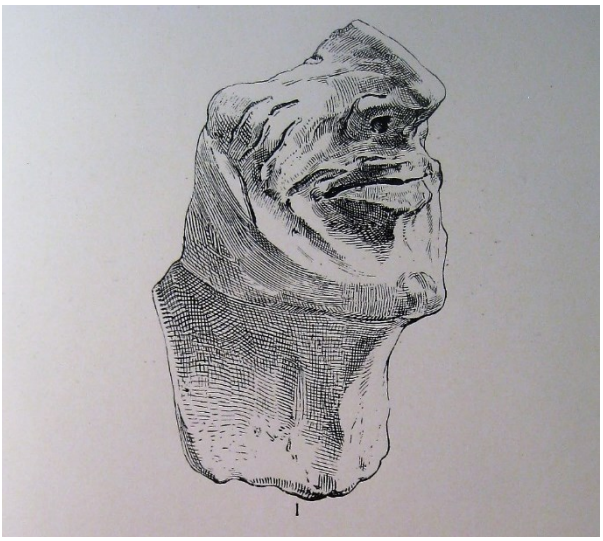

Figure 9. Type D: "Portraits"

Regardless of my personal frustrations with these categories, I recognize that any sort of stylistic categorization of objects such as this will inherently be subjective. However, I have made it a point to glean as much information from the report as the British School saw fit to publish at the time. I have looked for other less subjective aspects of the artefacts given museum numbers to concentrate on: their location, size, whether they are pierced or unpierced, whether they belong to a specific mould or are free-form, whether they contain traces of paint, which pottery style each mask is associated with and by association their relative dates. This data is scattered throughout the report, but the majority of the charts and counts are based on the seven categories rather than any other feature which might prove helpful.

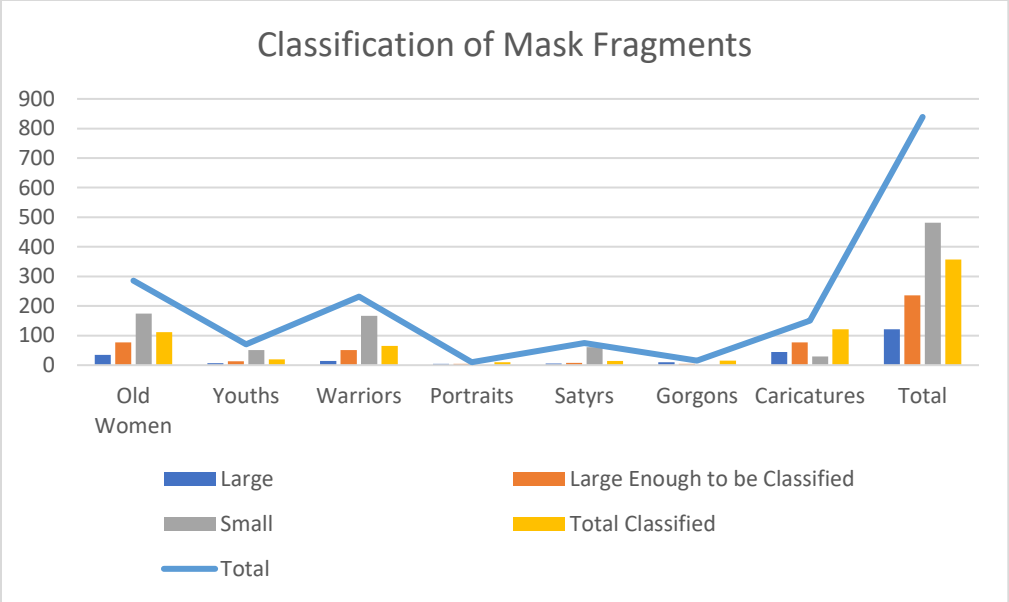

Figure 10. Number of mask fragments as accounted for by the excavation team (Dawkins, 177). Here 'classified' involves identifying the fragment with a museum number.

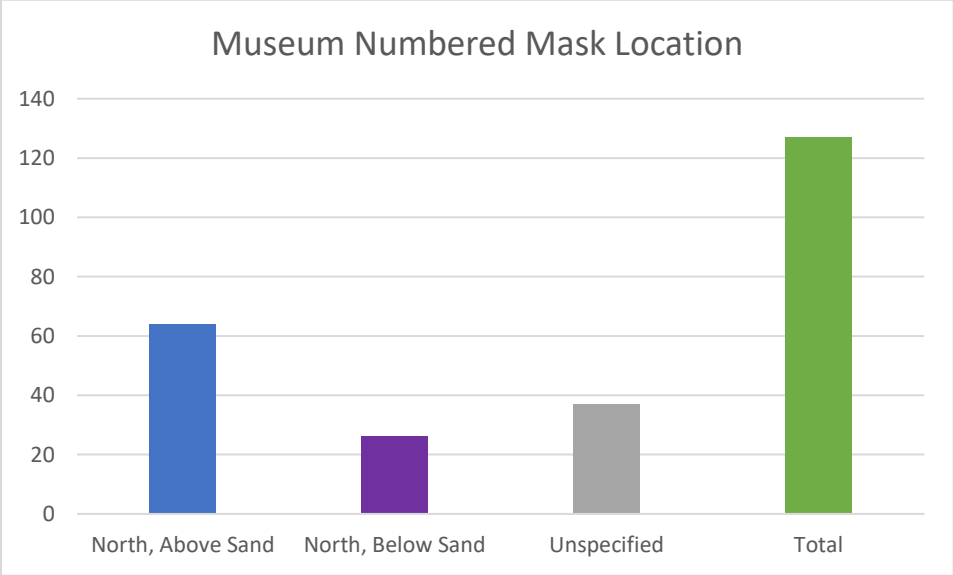

Figure 11. Number of Museum Numbered Masks and their locations as specified scattered throughout the report, the majority on the North side of the temple. Presumably, the Unspecified Masks were found in the deposit South of the Temple and most of them above the sand (See Dawkins 164), but they are not as well quantified.

There is almost no category I have listed that has a complete set of data; even looking at which items are pierced or not based solely on the images provided in the report becomes difficult and the data tends to overlap when it is unclear from a fragment whether the eyes or mouth have been pierced

or simply broken off. While there were four major deposits of masks, the report only clearly accounts for masks that were in the Northern deposit and whether they were above or below it. No complete list of which pottery styles were attributed to which masks was provided in the excavation report either, despite pottery style being the key identifier to the dating of these objects. Size was also not clearly defined, terms like “life-size” or “nearly life-size”, “small” or “miniature” were not clearly quantified. Only a few pieces of interest warranted descriptions of their slips and paint or any other striking features, such as the ambiguously defined “Spartan Nose”. At the very least, the most complete sets of data are also the most unhelpful: the categorization and subcategorizations of masks and the numbers and proportions of masks that fell into those categories. A more accurate account of the data cannot be discerned from the report or even the photographs alone: these objects would surely benefit from a more rigorous examination of the objects themselves and the fieldnotes of the excavators.

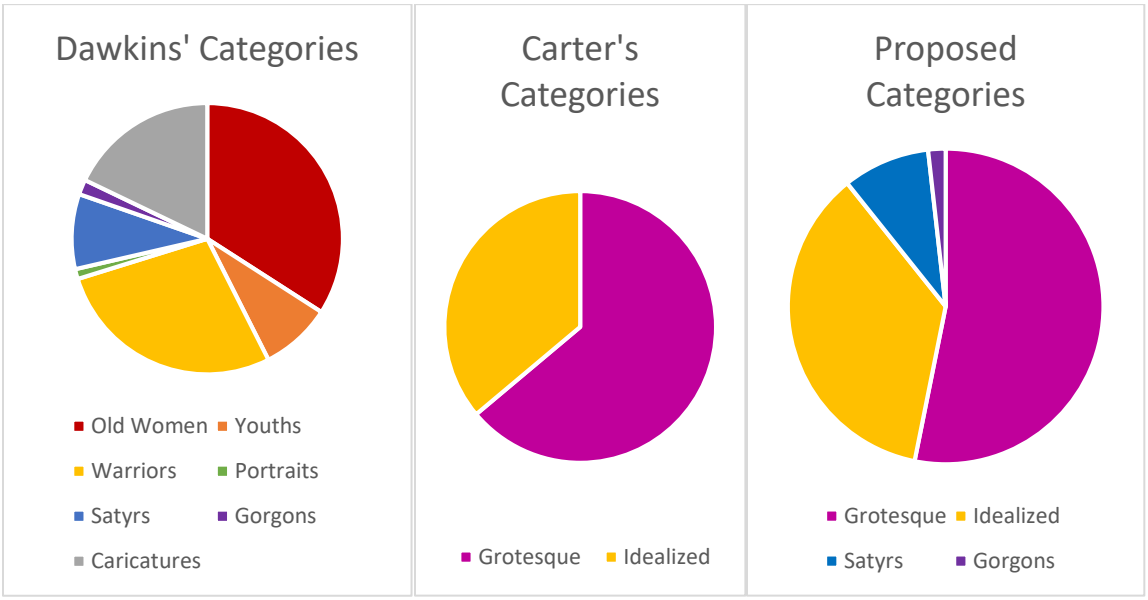

Figure 12. Charts of the proportions of Masks as categorized by Dawkins in the excavation report, Jane Burr Carter's categories, and my own.

Jane Burr Carter’s division of the masks into “grotesque” or “idealized” easily accounts for all of the masks while avoiding the gendered terminology of “Old Women” and neutralizing the categories of Portraits, which the excavators considered to be artistically more interesting than the others, and Caricatures, which only serves to make the sub categories of each other category seem completely unwieldy.[89] However, Carter’s category completely dismisses Gorgons, the plates of which

[89] Jane Burr Carter, "The Masks of Ortheia," *American Journal of Archaeology* 91, no. 3 (July 1987): accessed January 18, 2017, doi:10.2307/505359. 356.

match the iconography that, by the time of their deposition, had already been established. Satyrs seem to be primarily identified by pointed ears, which while not absolute confirmation of the name seems to me to be enough of a significant characteristic to keep them separate.

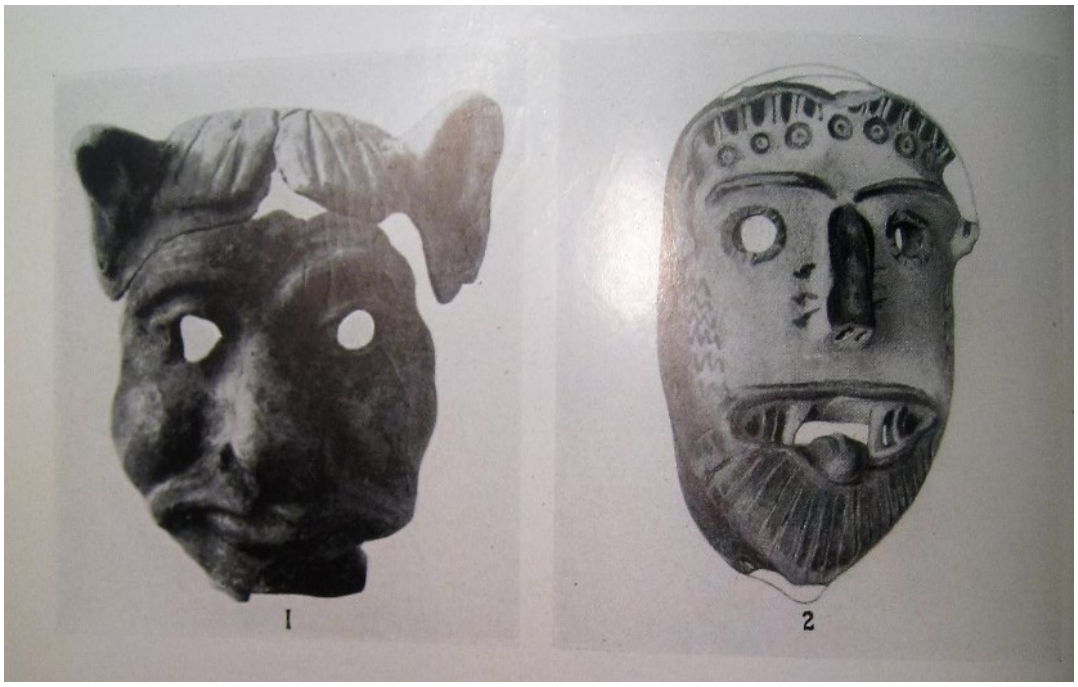

Figure 13. Type E: "Satyr" and Type F: "Gorgon"

While Old Women, Caricatures and Portraits are represented by a single “Grotesque” category, Warriors and Youths remain combined into a single idealized category: the presence of a few fragments of hair and smooth skin, in my opinion, is not enough to assign either an age or gender to each fragment. Idealized masks that have beards, if this is indeed a mark of an adult male, are not necessarily “Warriors” though crests of what appear to be helmets have appeared on some. Beards remain a problematic identifier: where they are used to identify men in the idealized category, and are a standard iconographical feature of female gorgons, their attribution to female faces among the Grotesques seems relatively arbitrary.

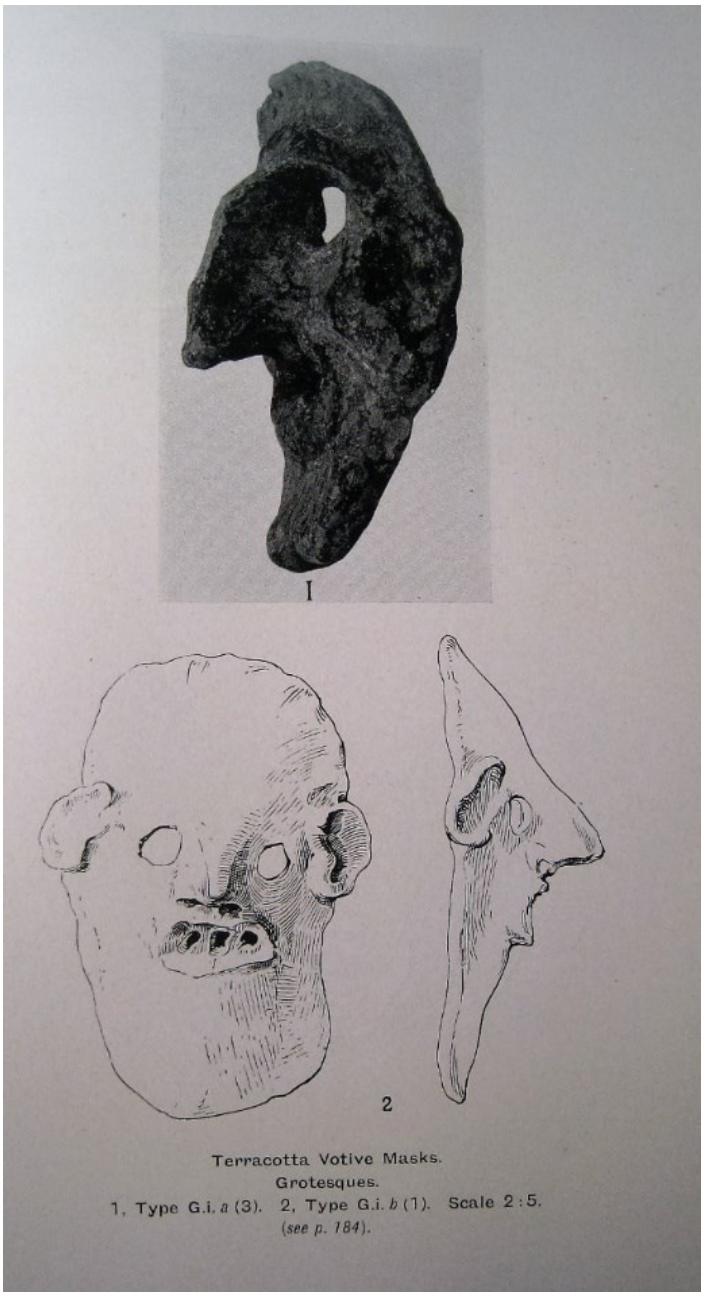

Figure 14. Type G: "Caricatures"

Grotesque remains a loaded term, particularly because it could imply a deviation from a conception of “typical”, “Attic” Greek art as standardized, idealized rather than individual, monochrome, and anatomically proportioned as it exists in Western imagination. However, Grotesque seems appropriate for masks which at this time are among the most visually arresting and unique finds in Greek archaeology; if these masks were indeed meant to inspire a visceral and emotional reaction or at the very least a discomfort, their categorization of Grotesque should stand.

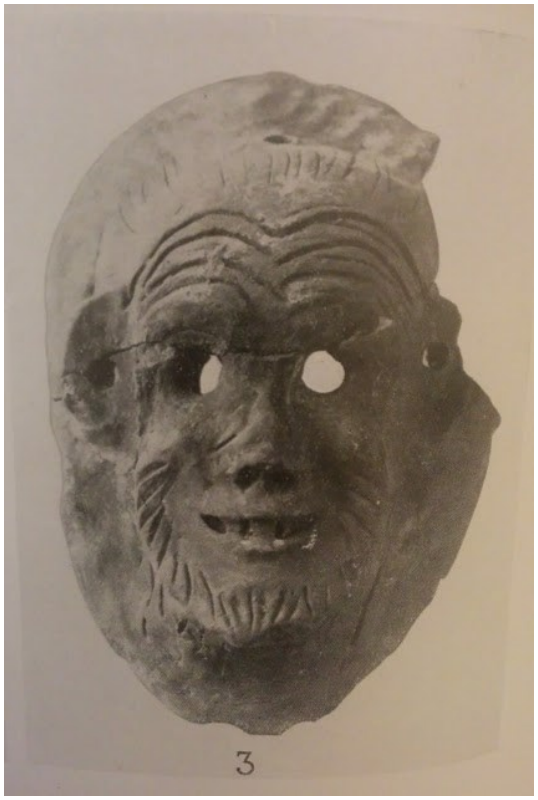

Figure 15. Type A: "Old Woman", bearded, labeled as "Probably Female"

This new categorization of masks divided into Grotesque, Idealized, Satyrs and Gorgons is partially divided on gendered lines: Satyrs, if the categorization of the masks withstands further iconographical scrutiny, are an exclusively male category, while Gorgons, beards or not, are exclusively female in Greek art. Grotesque and Idealized masks, whether human or anthropomorphic, each represent an area where gender could be reconsidered. Perhaps the bearded “Warriors” are clearly both human and therefore male enough that they can represent their own sub-category, but with closer attention paid to the accoutrements that earned them the martial categorization. Helmets, as we are familiar with in representations of Athena and even other gods and goddesses as they are represented locally in Sparta,[90] are not an exclusively “male” identifier any more than a beard might be in Greek art. “Youths” on the other hand, while it can be read as a non-gendered title, is more or less exclusively presented as male in the report without any concrete evidence. There also remains the possibility that the gender intended by a mask could change with its wearer or remain ambiguous in performance, if

[90] Robert Parker, "Spartan Religion," in *Classical Sparta, techniques behind her success*, ed. Anton Powell (London: Routledge, 1989). 146.

they were in fact meant for such an activity. A categorization system that avoids overly gendered terms may account for that ambiguity and transitional nature of masks that cannot be seen without use.

In Literature

The site of Artemis Orthia is mentioned in several different primary sources in different periods, but little information on the site, the rituals, the goddess, and the objects remains. A scant number of references to the masks themselves exist, and there is virtually nothing extant from explicitly Spartan sources. Xenophon, the earliest major source and the most reliable due to his residence at Sparta, describes a ritual at the site featuring young men. One group of youths would steal cheeses "from Orthia" while another group would beat them with whips, a sport Xenophon says instructs the youths in lasting glory after a short endurance of pain. Any citizen could watch this event, and Xenophon uses it primarily as an example of the youth of Sparta's physical superiority over their age mates in other parts of Greece, as perhaps the Spartans intended the performance to be viewed.[91] This is less of a punishment by flagellation or a quietly endured test of constitution here; Xenophon seems to portray it as a contest of speed and skill.

Plutarch, writing almost five centuries after Xenophon during the Roman period, uses the site of Artemis Orthia (here: Diana Orthia) as the setting of the mythical abduction of Helen by Theseus. Helen was dancing in the temple, according to Plutarch, perhaps alone or with other girls of her age. Her age itself is not clear and changes in artistic depictions, but according to Plutarch's account she was too young to marry at the time. Plutarch also mentions the whipping rite, which seems to have survived and evolved or to have been restored in some form. He not only mentions having witnessed the rite first hand, but that he had witnessed many Spartan youths die under the whips.[92] This ritual seems less like Xenophon's contest or game and more like a bloody spectacle of endurance.

Pausanias, after but almost contemporary with Plutarch, writes about the etymology of the site, which he refers to as Artemis Orthia. He describes Orthia as deriving from ὀρθός, 'straight' or 'upright', as the original wooden image was said to be. The image itself according to legend arrived in Sparta with Iphigenia from the land of the Taureans, a claim the Athenians also made about one of their own sites to Artemis. The Spartan claim, according to Pausanias, is more convincing as the Athenians did not mention

[91] Xenophon, *Spartan Constitution*, 2.9. "παρ' Ὀρθίας" suggests the cheese was dedicated to the goddess before the contest; see Lipka's translation pg. 128.
[92] Plutarch, *Theseus*. 31.1-31.2.

this when evacuating the city during the wars with Persia.[93] The statue itself was said to cause madness, quarrels, or disease as it did between the four Spartan villages or *obai*, which Pausanias uses as evidence that it was from this foreign land.[94] This wooden image was reportedly held by the priestess to Orthia during the now infamous whipping ceremony and would grow heavier if the whips were spared for a boy's beauty or rank. The goddess required human blood to stain the altar as retribution for some quarrel or misconducted sacrifice, a practice that began with sacrifice until Lycurgus substituted the whipping ritual.[95] Pausanius also mentions another name for the goddess, Lygodesma or 'willow bound', as the statue was said in myth to have been found in a thicket, held upright by the willows.[96] Finally, Pausanias mentions the site's proximity to a sanctuary to Eileithyia, confirmed in the archaeological records by some dedications to the birth goddess found at Orthia

Explicit mentions of the site aside, there remain sources that may or may not refer implicitly to the practices and objects associated with Artemis Orthia. The only sources that mention Spartan rituals and masks, not explicitly connected to the Orthia site, are two entries between the 2nd century and 5th or 6th century AD by grammarians Julius Pollux and Hesychius, which will be discussed further below. The late dates, seven to ten centuries after the deposition of the artefacts, already casts a shadow on a pair of isolated, decontextualized and contradicting pieces of information. Regardless, their existence remains valuable even if the site, ritual(s), or objects in question do not wholly intersect. There is one source that is both contemporary to the masks and written from a Spartan perspective, however: Alcman's *Partheneion*. No explicit mention of the site, the objects, or the goddess is made, although the appearance of the word ὀρθρία has led scholars to associate the poem with the site. The nature of lyric poetry, both in terms of its generic conventions and style as well as its physical fragmentation over time preserved on papyri and in quotations, does not easily lend itself to an explicit understanding of either the site or the objects from an archaeological perspective, but any contemporary source from Sparta should not be hastily discounted. Analyses of these potentially implicit references to the site will be discussed further in a chapter on secondary interpretations. The masks, however, remain almost a complete mystery beyond mentions 1200 years after their creation and are more frequently overshadowed by the bloody flagellation spectacles that so easily draw the attention and repetition of our sources.

[93] Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 3.16.7-3.16.8.
[94] 3.16.9.
[95] 3.16.10-3.16.11.
[96] Ibid.

4. Interpretations

Dawkins and the Cult of Orthia

The site report makes some general conclusions on the nature of the site and the goddess: the origins, etymologies, and the rites performed there. The report describes the site in use by the 10th century BC and no earlier, and connects the cult primarily with the Dorian invasions in that period and not with any earlier Mycenaean or Helladic cult prior.[97] There are a variety of spellings of the goddess' name and epithets: Ὀρθία, Ὀρθεία, Ὀρθέα, Ὀρθαία, and so on, which the report like Pausanias associates with the word ὀρθός, 'straight' or 'upright'.[98] This etymology is connected with the 'correct' upbringing of children or the appearance of her cult statue, but the report also adds (and disputes) a suggestion of phallic imagery.[99] Orthia was worshipped outside of Sparta in other parts of the Greek world, according to both literary and archaeological sources: Orthia, Orthosia, or Orthasia cults existed in Athens, Megara, Epidauros, Akradia, Elis, Byzantion, and possibly Thera.[100] Orthia is identified with but not identical to Prehellenic Artemis due to the fact she is usually given both names or only referred to as Orthia. The temple roof tiles at Sparta were stamped ἱεροὶ Βορυείας or some variation of it, but never Ἀρτέμιτος Βορθείας ἱεροί. This completely contrasts with other temples at Sparta which give both name and epithet of a deity.[101] The report concludes this "Persian Artemis" is not identical to pre-Hellenic Artemis of the Mycenean civilization, but the two appear to share some spheres of influence, particularly the fertility of men and animals.[102] Orthia appears to occupy a space between Artemis, Eilytheia, and Aphrodite as a goddess of fertility, birth, and sexuality, perhaps as a result of Doric or Oriental influences.[103]

The report illustrates some of the rituals mentioned by name at this site, including the infamous flogging ritual which here relates to three mentions from inscriptions: καρτερίας ἀγών, μάστιγες, and διαμαστίγωσις. This rite is associated with initiation or purification of some kind in the report, and a

[97] Dawkins, 399.
[98] 400.
[99] 403.
[100] 400. The report suggests on the following page that Sparta's prestige led to cults established within the Dorian sphere like Elis and beyond it as in Athens. Nearly all of the cults were Dorian, however.
[101] 401.
[102] Ibid. So called "Persian Artemis" due to the attributes of wings and grasping an animal in each hand. This does not refer to a particular deity, but a sort of catch-all term for a πότνια θηρῶν (mistress of animals) "who seems to have been worshipped in one form or another, and doubtless under many names, throughout the Aegean and the neighbouring Asiatic coasts."
[103] 402.

wreath is granted to the participant who displays the most endurance. Here, the report reminds the reader that all mentions of this ritual, at least in this particular form, diverge from the Classical thefts of cheese and are Hellenistic or later.[104] The theatre on the site was supposedly to watch this particular ritual, but there were at least three separate competitions named in inscriptions that took place here as well, collectively called τὸ παιδικὸν. Μῶα or μοῦσα appeared to be related to song or dance, κελῆα implies some sort of oratory contest, and κασσηρατόριον is some kind of hunting game for boys.[105] Overall, the report concludes the cult had some significance for fertility, both animal and vegetable due to the presence of ploughs and sickles as awards for such contests.[106]

Questions and Other Interpretations

Origins and Early Development

Paul Cartledge provides some valuable historical context to the history of the cult, the sanctuary, and the goddess. He agrees that the cult at the site emerged around the 10th century BC with the arrival of the Dorians, and as at many Greek sanctuaries the goddess received animal sacrifice and libations. Between 900-700 BC, Sparta gained influence over the entire Eurotas Valley, the Laconian perioikoi, and would go on to subjugate the population of Messenia as helots. [107] At the end of this period, the elite of Sparta used their accumulated wealth and spoils of war to build the first temple to Orthia, perhaps to protect valuable offerings made by an emerging bronze industry. The largest class of bronze votives during the 8th century at Sparta were horses, symbols of the ruling aristocracy and descendants of Herakles, and these have been found all over the Spartan sphere of influence in the Peloponnese, central Greece, Taras, and Samos.[108]

The late 7th century marked a flourishing in Spartan creative writing, Tyrtaios and Alcman in particular at Sparta, but presumably poets from all over Greece would visit Sparta for lyrical performances. Cartledge points to the bone flutes and the 6th century dedication of the masks as marking this period, and underlines the value of music and dance in Spartan society as both exercise and rhythm for war.[109] The Messenian conquest was settled around this period as well, and though Spartan

[104] 405.
[105] 406. Κασσηρατόριον, according to the report, derives from κατὰ + θηρᾶν. It likely featured boys around the age of ten years old.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Cartledge, 173.
[108] 174-175.
[109] 177.

attempts at further expansion were defeated, the emerging Peloponnesian League indicated a powerful sphere of influence centred at Sparta.[110]

Cartledge is careful in his portrayal of reputed Spartan austerity, noting that though Sparta was perhaps not minting silver coins that they were not barred from use.[111] Production in Laconian wares actually began to increase around the mid 6th century onward, and it was at this time that Orthia's first stone temple was constructed followed by the temple to Athena Chalkioikos and the Menelaion.[112] Furthermore, the major export of these goods reveals an interest in the outside world counter to Sparta's xenophobic and austere persona. Exportation can also imply importation, either of goods, artistic styles, or less tangible ideas and religious practices.

Jane Burr Carter addresses Sparta's foreign relations during this period in much more detail. The perception of Sparta as an introverted and isolated self-sustaining city state often ignores a pivotal point in Greek archaeology, namely the Orientalizing Period in Greek art. Carter stresses that Sparta was no exception to trade with the Phoenicians, and yet simultaneously seems to imply that they were. While the Archaic Spartans, "cosmopolitan and artistic… under the militarism of their descendants"[113], were no strangers to Near Eastern trade partners and their artistic influence, Carter supports the opinion that the entire cult of Orthia was an import from an older Mesopotamian tradition rather than a local, Dorian one.[114] The masks, which Carter simplifies into two categories representing grotesques and idealized visages, bear some resemblance to Babylonian, Canaanite, Cypriot, Phoenician and Punic examples of grotesquely furrowed masks.[115] Orthia, she concludes, is actually a Spartan interpretation of some manner of Near Eastern goddess, Asherah-Tanit.[116]

Carter is correct in trying to avoid the pitfalls of simply taking the connection between the artefacts and the late Roman references to old women for granted, indicating that there is nothing overtly feminine about any of the grotesques the excavators placed in this category.[117] However, the gaps in her analysis leave ample room for scepticism. First of all, the Near Eastern masks she uses as

[110] 178.
[111] Ibid.
[112] 178-179.
[113] Dawkins, 52.
[114] Carter, "The Masks of Ortheia" 355.
[115] Carter, "Masks of Orthia" 356.
[116] 378.
[117] 356.

examples often predate the Spartan examples by a millennium.[118] While it is possible that the masks reflect some "lost" mythology between representations of idealized Gilgamesh and grotesque Humbaba or their Greek counterparts in Perseus and Medusa, there are no explicit written connections in any of our sources to definitively prove this connection between the objects and this particular mythology, nor is there particularly strong evidence for Orthia's Phoenician origin over a Dorian origin.[119]

Secondly, the Greek examples Carter gives of grotesque masks has her correlating Orthia more to Hera at Samos, ignoring and dismissing Orthia's assimilation to Artemis as arbitrary and late to her argument.[120] Carter does not make a definitive attempt to explain why this Ancient Near Eastern mythology and artistic influences only seem to express themselves in this way at Sparta and virtually nowhere else in Greece, ignoring other examples of the Artemis Orthia cult attested from Argos to Tegea.[121] She only asserts that either the Spartans recognized such an affinity with this foreign goddess or the Phoenicians for an unknown reason installed a cult to their own goddess at Sparta, a goddess who seemed to have been worshipped in a relatively typical Greek expression.

Finally, Carter while dismissing the connections to Hesychius as "a classic example of looking at artefacts through literary spectacles without seeing the actual objects", still misrepresents the archaeological report.[122] Carter portrays the masks as "most" being life size and "virtually all from moulds" that "could have been worn" or "held in front of the face".[123] None of these "facts" for the majority of the objects are effectively backed up by her citation of the report, and thus her argument has been repeated without consideration of the artefacts themselves, dependent on a potential but extinct wooden original.[124] While Near Eastern influence is certainly possible and should be taken into consideration lest we consider Sparta to exist in a vacuum of exceptionalism, there is still no definitive

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[118] 355.
[119] 365-6.
[120] 379, 375.
[121] Michael Lipka and Xenophon, *Xenophon's Spartan Constitution: Introduction, Text, Commentary* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2002). 127.
[122] Carter, "Masks of Orthia" 356. She also states "an individual may simply have held the mask in front of his face," implying that the wearers were male by default.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Carter cites Dawkins, 165; This citation covers the typologies, the chronology and distribution of the masks, but says nothing about sizing or whether they were wearable. Carter ignores Dawkins, 174: "…many of the Spartan masks have nose and mouth unpierced, while some have even the eyes blocked. The majority of the masks are too small to be used even by children, and many have no holes for fastening." Carter also mentions in the same citation that she is making an assumption that "life-size" is smaller than for modern humans, but continues to disregard the miniature masks that were too small even for children. While she acknowledges the masks were less wearable later in the series, she does not represent the proportion of life size, wearable masks accurately at all to the point of misrepresentation.

proof that this argument for a Near Eastern connection should take precedence over a local, Dorian tradition or vice versa.

Participation

The sanctuary of Artemis Orthia was supposedly one of the most important and certainly one of the archaeologically richest sanctuaries in Sparta, and the unique social and political stratification between Spartiates, perioikoi, and helots adds a dimension to speculation about which cults were "open" or "closed" to participation on top of other factors relating to age, gender, citizenship and initiation that often played roles in participation elsewhere in Greece. A more specific question concerns the masks: who would have made or dedicated them, and who might have worn their potential perishable counterparts? The cheap, local materials straight from the riverbed make the objects widely accessible as votives, and if a dimension of artistic competence or lack thereof is involved it does not seem likely that there was a single workshop that supplied moulds for each and every mask, and therefore some variation in style or skill could just as likely have come from amateur dedicators as from professionals. In short, there is nothing explicitly limiting about the material or styles of the objects to pinpoint a specific type of manufacturer or dedicator at this point.

The site's importance to the youth of Sparta is a major factor in analyses of its participants. Young men are explicitly mentioned in connection with the site over and over again in literature, even if merely to highlight the whipping spectacle, and the report considers Orthia's role as a kourotrophos, a protector of youth, to be interesting if unusual.[125] Young girls too emerge in analyses by extension, perhaps a colouring associated with the goddess's assimilation with Artemis but also repeated in literary sources in terms of myths about girls, Helen for instance, dancing at the sanctuary.[126] The ages of these boys and girls are subject to controversy, but it is also likely that different age classes could have participated in many rituals at the same site, segregated or otherwise. The site and the whipping rite in particular is often connected to members of the agoge and even put forward as the site of its origin, but it is not necessarily limited to that age or gender class. Youth, either at any point in the process of growing up or particularly at the age of initiation to the world of adulthood and marriage, were most likely a major pillar of participation at the site.

[125] Dawkins, 403.
[126] Plut. Thes. 31.2.

It is also possible that older men and women, the parents or other family members of the Spartan youth or the boys' older lovers as suggested by Cartledge,[127] were allowed to participate as well as spectators if not taking part in the rites themselves. Though no major women-only festivals were reported to exist in Sparta, Spartan women and girls certainly took part in both choral and athletic competitions which had no Athenian counterparts.[128] Old men and young boys would compete against each other at Spartan Gymnopaediae, another unparalleled phenomenon in Greece.[129] In light of these attestations, it is difficult to impose a limit on either the ages or the sexes of worshippers allowed to participate at the site beyond the flagellation associated with young boys.

There is certainly evidence for the existence of a priestess to Artemis Orthia, though there is little indication as to who was eligible to fill this role and for what sort of term.[130] Priests and priestesses were not necessarily always an essential part of worship in Greek religion and certainly were not an organized or elite class in a Christian sense of priesthood, but their role, participation, and eligibility should not entirely be taken for granted. It is not necessarily true that there was only one role for a female priestess of a certain age or background, for instance, just as it is not necessarily true that her presence was required at each rite or festival throughout the long history of the site.

Some curiosity remains surrounding the nature of the division between citizen and non-citizen. Spartan youth undoubtedly participated in the whipping rites, and non-citizen spectators like Plutarch were able to participate at that later rite. By extension, it is feasible that both Spartan citizens and perioikoi could have been spectators even before the construction of the Roman theatre, and perhaps even full participants in other rites on the site. The helots however are an interesting case: while technically slaves of the Spartiate population, they were not explicitly banned from the site of Artemis Orthia and were allowed to participate in certain other Spartan religious festivals, most notably the Hyacinthia where they were said to dine together with Spartiates in a sort of role-reversal capacity.[131] While there was no known religious rite or deity reported to be exclusive to or particular associated with slaves in Greek religion, their participation in other famous rituals and initiations was not wholly

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[127] Cartledge, 98.
[128] Michael A. Flower, "Spartan 'religion' and Greek 'religion'," in *Sparta: Comparative Approaches*, by Stephen Hodkinson, Timothy David Barnes, Andrew J. Bayliss, and Dorothy Matilda Figueira (Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2009). 208.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Dawkins, 404.
[131]Andrew Bayliss. "Polykrates (588)", in: *Brill's New Jacoby*, Editor in Chief: Ian Worthington (University of Missouri). Consulted online on 13 July 2017.

discouraged or unknown.[132] The Eleusinian Mysteries were open to anyone who spoke Greek, for example, and it cannot be assumed that slaves would be barred from all religious activities at Sparta as either temple staff, spectators, or full participants.[133] At the same time, there is no explicit source for the encouraged or mandatory participation of either the perioikoi, foreign visitors, or helots either and the opposite cannot be so lightly taken for granted. It was certainly conceivable that any of these classes, genders, and age groups could have made the objects or dedications even if they were not participants in all or any of the rites and rituals associated with the site.

For what role?

The next idea to be addressed is the meaning of the rites, the goddess, and the sanctuary to the community as a whole. Primarily, most secondary sources agree that initiation of youth must play one of the most major roles of the sanctuary and are again mostly concerned with the whipping of the young men. Highlighted over and over is the marginal, transitional position of youth, and the necessity for ritual to reflect that integration. Burkert phrases this necessity in three stages: preparation, trial, and investiture. Youth are separated from the society, where they may be instructed in adult activities, songs, or dances, and this may be accompanied by a role reversal, marked by clothing, or ended with a metaphorical "death" before a "rebirth" and reintegration into the community is possible.[134] De Polignac calls the flagellation of Spartan ephebes a sort of initiatory death (of childhood?) necessary, and also points to the site's mythical connection to the unification of the four Spartan obai as necessary for the rituals to reinforce.[135]

Luginbill emphasizes this period of transition in terms of marriage, though perhaps with "excessive martial colouring"[136] as will be discussed in tandem with Alcman's *Partheneion* below, as well as the reputed teasing and jeering of Spartan girls towards their male age mates reported in literary sources. Women, both Luginbill and Figueira illustrate, play an important role in social control of Spartan boys and men, sanctioning them positively or negatively in song or snide humour as the situation calls for.[137] Neither of course go into detail about the socialization of Spartan women, however, nor do our

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[132] Parker, *On Greek Religion*, 237.
[133] Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985). 286.
[134] Burkert, 260-2.
[135] François De. Polignac, Cults, territory, and the origins of the Greek city-state (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995). 62.
[136] K. Tsantsanoglou, Alcman, and Alcman, *Of Golden Manes and Silvery Faces: the Partheneion 1 of Alcman* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012). 138.
[137] Robert D. Luginbill, "The Occasion and Purpose of Alcman's *Partheneion*," *Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica* 92, no. 2 (2009): 29, accessed June 13, 2017, http://www.jstor.org/stable/25676811.; Thomas J. Figueira,

sources dwell heavily on the specifics of social control of girls and women beyond the overwhelming Athenian bias: how shockingly lax the Spartans were with control over their women compared to the rest of Greece as documented thoroughly in Aristotle's *Politics*.[138]

The masks may have had a role to play in this form of social control, if they were indeed representative of wearable objects. Whether worn by girls or boys, men or women, citizen or slave, many secondary sources have associated the grotesque masks with barbaric and base behaviour, and by implication the typically idealized masks of youths and warriors with complementary behaviour. Burkert links girls with gorgons and the masks, an accompaniment to the bloodthirsty connection between human sacrifice or its substitutes and Artemis in particular, bringing "the harshness of pre-civilized life into the civilization of the polis".[139] Lars and Parker both agree that the masks were used as a performance of humorous, lewd and base dances beneath the character of an initiated Spartiate, but disagree on the actors behind them. David suggests these dances were beneath the character of a Spartiate and that the helots were made examples of and forced to wear the masks, as they were forced to perform drunken, dehumanizing dances in literary sources to deter Spartan youth from acting in a similar manner. The Spartan youth themselves would don the 'Portraits', 'Youths', or 'Warriors' instead.[140] Parker on the other hand suggests that, though it was perhaps beneath them, the Spartan initiates themselves were meant to perform with these masks as a lesson in humility, understanding and rejecting the base by being compelled to engage with it. They would also wear the more idealized classes of masks on other occasions, becoming virtuous by imitation.[141]

The site and its rituals, as at perhaps other Greek sanctuaries, could play a political role as well. The sanctuary was near the eastern limits of Spartan territory, a transitional border space that marked the physical boundaries of the city[142] as well as the metaphysical boundaries between such groups as age, class, and gender. Moreover, if spectators or participants from other Greek city states were permitted, the contests or indeed bloody spectacles performed there likely played a role in perpetuating perceptions of lyrical and rhythmic skill as well as the physical superiority of Spartans and their youth

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"Gynecocracy: how women policed masculine behavior in Archaic and Classical Sparta," in *Sparta: The Body Politic*, by Anton Powell and Stephen Hodkinson (Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2010), 283.

[138] For further discussion on Aristotle and the licentiousness of women, see: Cartledge, 109.

[139] Burkert, 151-2.

[140] Ephram David, "Laughter in Spartan Society," ed. Anton Powell, in *Classical Sparta, techniques behind her success* (London: Routledge, 1989). 11-12. David goes on to say that the masks are reminiscent of three Spartan divinities: Fear, Death, and Laughter.

[141] Parker, "Spartan Religion", 152.

[142] Cartledge, 16.

abroad. The appearance of the flagellation as a Roman period development, in Parker's words, may represent a "nostalgia for real or imagined machismo" that the earlier generations of Spartans had a reputation to possess, but that should not be understood as a clear reflection of a classical festival.[143] As has been established earlier, Greek ritual can be understood by its participants as "historic" as long as it has the appearance of being "traditional".

Alcman's Partheneion

One important literary source that may be implicitly linked to the site of Artemis Orthia is Alcman's *Partheneion*, a lyric poem likely commissioned for an important religious event at Sparta around the 7th century BC. The poem itself has no direct reference to the site or the goddess save for the word ὀρθρία.[144] This word is etymologically linked to 'dawn', also mentioned as Aotis in the poem, and too close in spelling to immediately dismiss as mere coincidence. In translations by Page, Ferrari, and Tsantsanoglou, the word is either translated literally as 'the dawn' or as a proper name of a goddess.[145] Some scholars explicitly deny an etymological connection identified by Denys L. Page between this goddess and Orthia, a link that remains controversial in scholarship.[146] The poem is seriously fragmented and missing roughly one third of the lines, but is comprised of two main thematic sections. The first concentrates on the mythical rivalries between the Tyndarids and the Hippocoontidae, which may be echoed by a "rivalry" between Agido and Hagesichora in the latter portion,[147] but its overall connection to the second half is obscured by the missing lines between them. The second half of the *Partheneion*, as the title suggests, focusses on a group of young maidens, most likely a chorus, one member of which plays the narrator, but the relationship between them and their goal remains subject to interpretation. Due to the fame and importance of the site even during the Archaic period, it is still a useful exercise to place the poem in a hypothetical relationship with it. Though a link cannot be definitively proven, it is necessary to use the few extant tools left in our "cultural database", and especially because sources from Sparta herself are few and far between.

Luginbill uses the *Partheneion* primarily as evidence for a sort of agoge graduation ceremony held at the site of Artemis Orthia. While this ceremony would concentrate primarily on the transition of ephebes (melleirenes) to full Spartiate status (eirenes), Luginbill underlines the importance of girls and

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[143] Parker, *On Greek Religion.* 213.
[144] Alcman, *Partheneion*. 61.
[145] Page, 71-72; Ferrari, 70; Tsantsanoglou, 40.
[146] Claude Calame, *Choruses of Young Women in Ancient Greece* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997) 5, 169;
[147] Page, 55-57.

women at such a ceremony, as a response or in a complementary role to the initiation of young men.[148] The cheese-stealing ritual as an athletic competition, Luginbill asserts, would be an appropriate final "test" for the graduating class of melleirenes.[149] The girl's chorus, implied to be involved in a physical race against the dawn, is a complementary test of physical endurance. The beauty of the "chorus leaders", Hagesichora and Agido, though sung from a girl's perspective and often interpreted as homoerotic in line with Alcman's contemporary lyric poet Sappho,[150] becomes an inducement for heterosexual marriage in Luginbill's interpretation.[151] For Luginbill, the poem is filled with puns and double entendres, ὀρθρία amongst them, which he places in a wider context of Spartan fame for wit and jokes as a method for social control. These puns can refer to metaphors for (heterosexual) sex and marriage, as he suggests for the word φάρος which can either mean 'cloak', the marker of an initiated Spartiate and perhaps a literal, physical prize held by the girls, or the more sexual 'plough', a reference to agriculture and domestication. Luginbill specifies it could refer to the sharpened edge of the plough, which could also double as a weapon, adding another martial twist to the marital. Finally, it could be intended to evoke the agricultural implements found at the site of Artemis Orthia as prizes. This convoluted series of meanings to Luginbill portrays a word integral to the Spartan state: the union of agriculture and military; the protection of a domestic life that echoes and underscores a marriage.[152]

Though the rituals are intended to induce heterosexual marriage, Luginbill leaves space for some gender play in his interpretation of the *Partheneion*. Taking his lead from the stereotypical military characterisation of Sparta, he outlines a series of words that could be taken in different directions. He describes the chorus as a 'girl's phalanx' commanded by Hagesichora waging a military battle against

[148] Luginbill, 28.
[149] Luginbill, 31.
[150] See Page, 66-67; Tsantsanoglou, 76; Ferrari, 11, 80; All are either careful or disparaging of homoerotic connotations, allowing the words in question to have sexual connotations, but dismissing them or ruling a sexual reading out "according to context". Page remarks that romantic attachments would easily explain the possessive comments of the narrator but cautiously concludes "A certain playful and artless affection will be readily recognized; whether it is a token of stronger passions is not, on this evidence, to be determined." Ferrari at least acknowledges, homoerotic or otherwise, the theme is presented as by, about, and presumably for women. However, where she is able to read τείρω as erotic, she focuses on "the agonistic connotations" between the maidens and that "the expression may be best understood to say that, by comparison, Hagesichora's beauty makes that of her companions look dim." Tsantsanoglou is the most damning of homoerotic interpretations. The quote "However, one thing is certain, that we have to rule out any erotic or homoerotic references or connotations, as have been diagnosed in excess" sits uncomfortably; the word 'diagnosed' carries with it the connotation of homosexuality as a pathology.
[151] Luginbill, 48.
[152] 41-2.

time.[153] Φαρος again has multiple meanings: a crimson cloak as the most famous and visible marker of an initiated Spartiate, a plough as an agricultural implement or perhaps a type of cleaving weapon such as the iron sickles placed at Orthia. The girl's metal jewelry and Lydian miters could be representative of armour and horsehair crests, and the references to Nanno's long hair contrast with the Spartan tradition of clipping the hair of brides short like a man's while simultaneously referring to the long hair that initiatied Spartiates will be allowed to wear.[154]

This militarised girl's chorus, according to Luginbill, like the crossdressing of a bride on her wedding night, could feasibly be considered erotic in a Spartan context and likewise an inducement towards marriage. The themes of obedience and warning against hubris in the first, more mythological aspect of the poem would be appropriate to a ritual celebrating marriage and by extension duty to the state, as those who did not marry in Spartan society were reportedly condemned, humiliated and ostracized.[155] Luginbill's proposition is certainly conceivable, but there is no direct evidence that the *Partheneion* was written or performed in conjunction with the more infamous ritual of young Spartan men. The possibility that this ritual was separate or concentrated specifically on and between women does not appear in this interpretation.

Tsantsanoglou is less convinced that the poem is either depicting a race or meant to convey a primarily military atmosphere, but does concede there is a playful and punning sensibility to the poem and that it is likely relevant to an initiation ritual for young girls and possibly for men as well. The evidence is too sparse for Tsantsanoglou to conclude there is a definite connection to Orthia, but emphasizes that regardless the literary interpretation would remain unaffected by this.[156] For Tsantsanoglou, the reference to a dawn goddess or Dawn herself is undeniable; whether Orthia was such a goddess is not clear from established knowledge of the site or the rituals at Sparta, but 'Orthria' and 'Aotis' do not seem to be mentioned anywhere outside this poem to point in an alternate direction.[157]

A part of the numerous votive offerings at Orthia, particularly the horses which tend to have more standardized production, seem to Tsantsanoglou to be "tokens" to make the people offering the

[153] 46.
[154] 44.
[155] 34.
[156] Tsantsanoglou, 68-9.
[157] 69.

votives recognizable to the goddess as initiates, and less individual artefacts.[158] Likewise the word φάρος becomes important again here, a word which Tsantsanoglou takes as a pun deriving from φέρω, here meaning an offering. This word brings to Tsantsanoglou's mind the great number of lead wreaths as well which represent objects that appear in other instances of Alcman and could hold associations with the sun and by extension associations with the dawn and perhaps the etymologically linked Orthia.[159]

As for the ritual itself however, Tsantsanoglou finds nothing to suggest it is an explicit race or a competition due to the focus on beauty and singing rather than a reference to the sport, though such events for young women are well attested at Sparta.[160] Without addressing the masks of Orthia directly, Tsantsanoglou muses on whether the *Partheneion* could represent an emerging form of drama, citing some evidence of Laconian performances of 'indecent and grotesque character, which drama historians connect with the beginnings of comedy'.[161] Tsantsanoglou's overall conclusion suggests Alcman wrote and taught the performance of the *Partheneion* to new initiate girls. A nighttime procession before sunrise would precede a women's party, where the girls would then perform Alcman's song and dance. It is lighthearted and full of wordplay, and perhaps even a small dramatized production with specific roles.[162] Presumably, the performance is rooted in religion and could have been performed on the grounds of a sanctuary or elsewhere, but was the performance at all considered a "drama"? Would the masks have some link to this?

Gloria Ferrari describes 7th century Sparta as in the midst of an Orientalising phase in art and as one of the great centres of music.[163] Her interpretation adds another dimension, one perhaps very obvious yet neglected by the other interpretations: drama. Ferrari acknowledges a large difference between the drama that developed in Athens and that of ritual choruses, that is that Athenian actors portray specific, fictional personae whereas a civic chorus do not. The majority of interpretations of Alcman, Ferrari remarks, portray the role of the chorus members as being identical to the actors who play them, but this is not necessarily the border between drama and ritual mimesis.[164] For Ferrari, the Orthia masks - regardless of whether they were wearable - represent an awareness around the time of the 7th century for masks in a ritual context and mimetic performance by extension. It is possible, she

[158] 137.
[159] 68.
[160] 48.
[161] 133. Cited authors include Sosibius, Semus of Delos, Pollux, and Hesychius as principle sources for this.
[162] 139.
[163] Gloria Ferrari, *Alcman and the cosmos of Sparta* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2014). 8.
[164] Ferrari, 11.

surmises, that the chorus of the *Partheneion* assume the roles of archetypal dancers, here they play the roles of stars.[165] Ferrari argues the performance is centred on the cosmos of Sparta, the order of the universe as well as the organization of the festival calendar according to celestial events. Sparta was reportedly more concerned with celestial phenomena than any other polis.[166] As Tsantsanoglou relates, 'dawn' is an overall unhelpful hint as to what point the described event might fall on a festival calendar, and so little of the Spartan festival calendar is known to begin with.[167]

Though there is sparse information on the calendar, Ferrari stresses the importance Sparta placed on cosmic order, perhaps even exceptionally, and the central role it played in modeling a Spartan constitution. In this ritual context, Ferrari tackles the controversial mention of the "Pleiades", the group of stars, which for Page indicates a rival chorus,[168] for Luginbill implies a battle or race against the night before dawn,[169] and for Tsantsanoglou is a playful term of endearment as a pun on 'pigeons'.[170] In terms of the Spartan cosmos, Ferrari suggests that the girls are playing a mimetic role as stars, in part due to the importance of the Pleiades' rise in early May after an absence to mark the beginning of summer and later plowing season at the beginning of winter.[171] Hagesichora in this interpretation is the Moon, Agido is Dawn, and Aenesimbrota represents the Night, all distant and leading the rest of the chorus through their "labours".[172] As the sky is the stage of these celestial bodies, the civic stage of the sanctuary mimics it.[173] This "play within a play" could have even more layers, according to Ferrari's suggestion that men could also adopt these feminine roles and play the role of girls playing the role of stars.[174] Ferrari's interpretation of the *Partheneion* rests on the Spartan festival of the Karneia to Apollo rather than Artemis Orthia, but conclusions about the role and practice of ritual mimesis in Sparta could be applied beyond Karneian Apollo. The Orthia masks may not have been used in this performance or referenced in this lyric poem, though the poem could still reference her worship or form a basis of comparison to the worship of other deities in Sparta.

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[165] 16-17.
[166] 107.
[167] Tsantsanoglou, 136.; Ferrari, 129.
[168] Denys Lionel Page, *Alcman, the Partheneion, by Denys L. Page.* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951). 52.
[169] Luginbill, 40.
[170] Tsantsanoglou, 63.
[171] Ferrari, 85.
[172] 92.
[173] 116.
[174] 149-50.

Masks in the Greek World

The use of masks in Ancient Greece is studied primarily in terms of Athenian drama, which while considered to be starkly different and exceptional to ritualistic mimesis could contain some relevant elements in common and could provide a perspective into the gap between modern and ancient psychological associations with these objects. An initial misconception, perhaps, is the idea that Greek masks were primarily understood as hiding or concealing the actor from view. Greek masks in Athenian tragic contexts were understood first and foremost alongside the purpose of enactment, the act of becoming something Other, rather than the concealment of an individual identity.[175] An identity, and its relation to the face and body, is a concept that the ancient Greeks may not have even understood, either at all or framed in different terms. πρόσωπον, the word for both 'mask' and more generically 'face', literally means 'before the eyes'. A word to distinguish the object from the actor, 'prosopeion', was a later development. Greek art as well often depicted masks as portraying a face identical to the actor holding the object. As a comparison, Latin easily distinguished between a *vultus* 'face' and a *persona* 'mask', related to the modern English word by the same name. In Late Roman art came a trend to depict the eyes and mouths of actors behind their masks, distinguishing them from the role they played. 'Persona' in Latin carried a connotation of 'presentation' into the modern 'personality', but there is much ambiguity and mystery about how much 'personal identity' in modern terms applied to ancient masks.[176]

These were never isolated objects, nor were they objects only meant to be viewed on a face. Masks, according to Alfred Gell, hold agency and are "pointing to a reality elsewhere".[177] Athenian drama, as apparently separate as it was from ritual mimesis, still remained strongly embedded in Greek religion and usually associated with Dionysus; the mask might have functioned as a medium or transitional object between the human and divine.[178] There is a fluidity to even fixed, static masks when they are used in performance: expressions that can change according to the lighting or the angle of the object, for example, or their absence of an inherent gender.[179] Whether the performer on a vase painting is male or female behind the mask, in Wiles' words, "is not an appropriate question to ask."[180]

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[175] David Wiles, *Mask and performance in Greek tragedy: from ancient festival to modern experimentation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). 1.
[176] Ibid.
[177] Alfred Gell, *Art and agency: an anthropological theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).
[178] Wiles, 3.
[179] 30.
[180] 25.

Wiles describes masks as objects that do less to conceal than to make truth visible, to imbue an inanimate object with animacy, to connect the human and supernatural worlds, and to reflect the fluidity of Greek religion as combining tradition with change according to circumstance. Here is where the lines between Athenian drama and mimetic ritual become unclear; are actors in their full consciousness in sound mind, or are they being possessed and directed or inspired by a supernatural force?[181]

This fluidity was the source of the power and religious significance of theatre, and the ancients quickly recognized their own discomfort and even fear of the potential for the misuse of theatre. Plato touches on the problem of consciousness or possession in the *Ion*, concluding that there was never any compromise.[182] If the god was within during a performance of a work by one of the poets, the individual's consciousness and awareness of their actions was without. This uncertainty over the power of poetry and fiction is further sharpened in the *Republic*. Plato's *Republic* spends a great deal of time expressing anxiety over the dangers of mimesis, here better understood as 'enactment' rather than 'imitation'.[183] Plato, through the voice of Socrates, illustrates how best to educate the children of a perfect society by condemning mimesis and banning poetry lest either of these would damage the impressionable characters of youth. Socrates picks apart examples from such well known and widespread works as Homer's *Iliad*, warning that characters like Achilles who could not maintain their composure under great emotional duress were not fit to be imitated in any way, and that included on the dramatic stage.[184] Likewise, portrayals of gods in literature would have to be taken on with extreme care; no one would worship a Zeus that has no control over his sexual appetites, Socrates asserts.[185] Even if an average person were to enact something base for comedic effect, they would be subject to some sort of contamination of their souls.[186]

Duncan elaborates further on these anxieties, explaining how actors challenged a sense of personal identity, not only for the actors but for the audience, made to feel complicit by their observation.[187] An actor's otherness reminded the audience how masks and costume can contribute to

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[181] 2-3.
[182] Plato, *Ion* 542a-b.
[183] Eva C. Keuls, *Plato and Greek Painting* (Leiden: Brill, 1978). 9.
[184] Plat. Rep. 3.388a-d.
[185] 3.390b-c.
[186] 10.606c-d.
[187] Anne Duncan, *Performance and Identity in the Classical World* (Cambridge: Cambridge university press, 2011). 12.

the blurring of the stable and sexed personal identity of the human body.[188] It reminded the audiences that the body can lie, as in the case of the handsome and physically fit yet cowardly and incompetent Paris of the *Iliad*.[189] Actors could challenge perceptions of their age, gender, and by extension their class and status on the stage, and this deception threatened to allow actors to manipulate these attributes at will when off it. This perceived threat of upward social mobility of actors led to the marginalization of actors either socially with negative stereotypes or legally in terms of status. This marginalization occurred within the theatre as well, perpetuating the idea that actors who played low status characters – such as women, children, rustics, and slaves - were of low status themselves. [190]

The masks of Orthia do not exist in relation to this anxiety in our primary sources, and it is even possible that due to their primarily 6th century deposition that our later and primarily Athenian sources were not even aware of their existence. Perhaps the masks weren't objects of criticism in the sense that they represented objects used outside of Athenian drama, but they were still embedded, literally and figuratively, in a religious context. As objects, masks did exist beyond the Athenian stage in both archaeological finds and literature, even without an explicit connection to Orthia.[191] They were associated with Dionysus in particular, as a god who ruled over the theatre and as a god who encouraged ecstatic, out-of-mind experiences in his worshippers. His roles are perfectly encapsulated by Euripides' *Bacchae*, first prize winner at the Athenian city Dionysia in honour of the god in the starring role. Wiles tentatively places an epithet of Dionysus, Ὀρθός, in relation with Orthia, and suggests that the 6th century masks found in her sanctuary may have played a role influencing the Athenian use of the objects in their own dramas.[192] Masks were also not completely unknown in the sphere of Artemis either.

There remain several problems with the interpretation of the Orthia masks in relation to our "cultural database", the first and most pressing being the relative lack of extant literary sources, particularly those written by Spartans about Spartans, but also generally a lack of sources on the use of masks outside of Athenian drama. This leads to another large gap: the difference between Athenian drama and mimetic ritual in other parts of Greece. It is not clear how widespread drama in the Athenian

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[188] Duncan, 7.
[189] 8.
[190] 23-4.
[191] Carter, "Masks of Orthia" 365. Masks, particularly life-size ones, almost never appear in Greek sanctuary contexts in the 7th and 6th centuries. Several contemporary "hero" masks were found at the Samian Heraion, and other more grotesque or furrowed masks were found at graves in Samos, Taranto, and Thera.
[192] Wiles, 214. Wiles unfortunately refers to the masks as "often wearable", citing Carter (1987).

sense was, or whether the Spartans would have either condemned or even consciously participated in its evolution.[193] Perhaps mimetic ritual was not scripted or spoken in the conventions of Athenian drama, but it is unclear how "fixed" or "fluid" it was and the pace which it may have changed over time and circumstance. More particularly to the objects, which we have established are not necessarily wearable over the face and if worn during strenuous activity like dancing were likely to break, it is unclear how easily we can compare them with objects that were worn and used in performance. Moreover, these masks do not all easily fit into one size, one stylistic type or one period, and it is not clear whether any one interpretation of their use can cover each and every one of these objects regardless of whether the excavator's typologies were accurate or not. While there appear to be phases of "popularity" for certain types, this does not necessarily reflect the reality of objects that are missing, fragmented, or destroyed and therefore unaccounted for. There is no indication of whether these objects were used or dedicated together in tandem with others or whether they all represented one particular ritual or a complete dramatic cast of specific roles. In short, a dramatic use of these objects or their "originals" should not be ruled out, but it should take into account the objects as they exist rather than glossing over them all as "wearable" or pigeon-holing them all into one particular mimetic ritual, such as the decontextualized dances mentioned by the lexicographers.

[193] David, 9. There was a Lacadaemonian comic actor named Nikon recorded in epigraphical evidence, but his performances seemed to be outside of Sparta. It is not clear whether he was a Spartiate or from the perioikoi; David suggests the Spartans would have ostracized him for his chosen profession had he been a Spartiate.

5. Who is Artemis Orthia?

Assimilation

Greek Religion is not fixed or closed. Beyond Homer and Hesiod, there is no canonical work similar to an Abrahamic holy book, nor is there a body such as a priesthood that enforces an orthodoxy. Greek Religion is flexible and can adapt or change according to the time period, the location, and the circumstance. The openness of Greek Religion allows for rituals to change over time, as perhaps the whipping rite of Orthia had undergone between the Classical and Roman periods. It allows for votives such as the masks to change style and size through the ages, and allows for such objects to be used in worship at Sparta and not necessarily used at other sites in its sphere of influence. The Greek Pantheon is also open to the adoption or assimilation of older or foreign gods, and at least one of these types of gods is thought to be the origin of Artemis Orthia.

In scholarship on the goddess, one of two approaches often prevails. Some analyses that use the site as a case study refer to her as Artemis Orthia, and may simply treat 'Orthia' as an epithet of Artemis due to lack of familiarity. Other scholarship will focus primarily on Orthia as a separate goddess, either referring to Orthia alone or with a brief acknowledgement of her later assimilation to Artemis.[194] However, simply understanding Orthia as an epithet of Artemis does not account for the goddess only being referred to in inscriptions at the site as "Orthia" or "Artemis Orthia", never "Artemis" alone. It was not typical at Sparta for any other gods, or any other local cults of Artemis, to be referred to solely by an epithet.[195] As in Carter's analysis, there is usually a strong concern with the origins of the goddess, either asserted as a foreign import or defended as a local Dorian or Spartan goddess. Neither of these approaches really address the combination or at least the association of the two separate goddesses as it had come to be known by the Hellenistic and Roman periods.

Robert Parker describes the assimilation of most local deities outside the Panhellenic pantheon as a "struggle to survive as independent" beyond as the 5th century BCE, with the exception of Aphaia and Orthia. Parker notes that the assimilation for Orthia, unknown in myth, to a Panhellenic goddess such as Artemis was necessary for the importance of the cult; a familiar name for an unfamiliar god.

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[194] The scholarship is not entirely clear cut: scholars such as Parker (*On Greek Religion*) will acknowledge Orthia as separate and also consider the site as a case study in examples comparing it with other Artemis sites. While scholars may fall in the middle, they do not often go into explicit detail on the assimilation, or they fall clearly into one of the above categories: Burkert and Polignac have the tendency to discuss Orthia under a general characterization of Artemis, while Carter ignores Artemis in her works almost altogether.

[195] Dawkins, 401-402.

Orthia, whether her origins were foreign or not, still represents local variation that the Greeks did not find conflict with and was rather taken for granted.[196] How much weight or importance should we place on the independence of these goddesses? Does Orthia represent a dying tradition subjected to a colonialist notion of "Hellenization"? Is Orthia truly more difficult to understand with a late association to Artemis 'in the way', or are the goddesses more complementary?

As mentioned earlier, Orthia does not have a clear or established iconography, and it was likely that her earliest statues were aniconic, like Apollo at Amyclae or Aphrodite at Paphos. While inscriptions at the site do not identify Artemis at all until the Roman period, some scholars argue that her assimilation could date back further to the 5th or even 6th century BC, which would place the assimilation closer to the deposition of the masks.[197] Even so, the scholarship edges around Orthia's association with Artemis in order to find other goddesses to fit the objects better. Carter points to Asherah-Tanit as the likely origin for Orthia due in part to the similarities in masks, and instead of offering an explanation as to why these goddesses became associated with Artemis, she looks for other Hellenic examples of masks to match. Hera at Samos and the Argive Heraion both offer examples of Greek masks dedicated in sanctuaries, but it does not account for the fact that Orthia was assimilated with Artemis and not Hera. The site, though archaeologically not explicitly connected with Artemis until late in its history, still is the locus of some known mythology and literature in Greek sources associated with the Panhellenic goddess.

Artemis in Greek Literature

Part of this general unwillingness to acknowledge Artemis could be a narrow perception of the goddess and her sphere of influence as depicted and perpetuated in earlier Greek literature and mythology. In the Greek literary works closest to a "canon", that is Homer and Hesiod, Artemis' role is very limited. In the *Iliad*, Artemis is childish and cruel but utterly ineffective compared to the other Olympians; she is swiftly beaten with her own weapons and made an utter fool of by Hera before she flees, crying, and later consoled by both her mother Leto and her father Zeus.[198] Artemis is invoked as a bringer of untimely death, the slayer of Andromache's mother and Niobe's children, the goddess invoked when Achilles wishes Briseis had died rather than cause a quarrel amongst the Greeks.[199] When she is forgotten or slighted, she sends beasts to slaughter men, only for the men to slaughter the

[196] Parker, *On Greek Religion*, 72.
[197] Lipka, 126-127; Flower, 221.
[198] Homer, *Iliad*. 21.470-21.513.
[199] 6.427; 24.604; 19.059.

beasts.[200] Her only mentions in the *Odyssey* are typically in comparison; the young and beautiful Nausicaa reminds Odysseus of Artemis surrounded by a band of nymphs,[201] Both Helen and Penelope often emerge from their bedrooms "like Artemis or golden Aphrodite",[202] but the goddess herself never appears in the story. She again is characterized in the *Odyssey* as a bringer of death, usually for women,[203] but she is nearly always referred to as having "gentle" arrows that Odysseus inquires after when he meets his mother Anticleia in the underworld and that Penelope begs for to release her.[204] Artemis and Apollo can also bring timely deaths, according to Eumaeus, killing the old with gentle silver arrows.[205]

Outside of Homeric epic, the *Homeric Hymns* to Artemis paint her in a more positive light, a youthful goddess who delights in the wild but occasionally puts down her weapons to enjoy music and dance.[206] In Hesiod's *Theogony*, the work one might suppose to flesh out the backgrounds of all the Olympians, there is barely a mention of Artemis and only in relation to the rest of her family tree.[207] *Works and Days* makes no explicit mention of the goddess, but her birthday is considered to be unlucky for the birth and marriage of girls.[208] Hesiod's *Catalogue of Women* mentions her victims: Kallisto, Iphigenia, Orion; she is a goddess who punishes quickly when slighted.[209] This relative lack of development for one of the most widely worshipped goddesses from the Olympic Pantheon forms the foundations for later portrayals of her in Greek literature.

Artemis appears a handful of times in classical Athenian tragedy, typically either as a silent foe or an ineffectual ally. She is perhaps most famous for her intervention at Aulis prior to the Trojan War and her relationship with Agamemnon's daughter, Iphigenia. Euripides addresses this story, unaddressed in the *Iliad*, in two different versions with an ambiguous relationship to each other; *Iphigenia at Aulis* focuses on the sacrifice of Iphigenia to Artemis in order to begin the voyage to Troy,

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[200] 9.532
[201] Homer, *Odyssey*. 6.102, 6.151.
[202] 4.127, 17.037.
[203] Artemis kills Orion at 5.123, Ariadne on Dia at 11.324.
[204] 11.172; 11.440
[205] 15.410.
[206] Homer, *Hymns*. 9, 27.
[207] Hesiod, *Theogony*. 918.
[208] Ivana Petrovic, "Transforming Artemis: From the Goddess of the Outdoors to City Goddess," in *The Gods of Ancient Greece: Identities and Transformations*, by J. N. Bremmer and Andrew Erskine (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013). 213; Hesiod, *Works and Days* 770-785.
[209] For Hesiod Fragments, see: Pausanias 1.43.1 Iphigenia; Pseudo-Eratosthenes Catast. frag. 1 on Callisto; Pseudo-Eratosthenes, Catast. fr. xxxii on Orion. In this version, Orion is described as a victim of Earth rather than Artemis, but she mourns for him all the same.

and *Iphigenia Among the Taurians* which describes an "alternate" or "possible" ending in which Iphigenia is saved by the goddess and brought to the land of the *Taurians*, where a barbaric version of the goddess is worshipped with blood sacrifice. Artemis is mentioned briefly in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* as the cause for Iphigenia's sacrifice as well, a capricious and cryptic goddess, but never appears as a character on stage in any of these tales.[210] She is also considered a possible suspect for Ajax's madness in Sophocles' play of the same name.[211] The only play that features Artemis as a character on the stage is Euripides' *Hippolytus*, where she is unable to intervene directly in the machinations of another goddess and only appears to swear revenge. There are no accompanying plays that survive in this lost trilogy, and there is no way of knowing if Artemis' revenge ever comes to fruition or her feud with Aphrodite to resolution.

Aulis was Euripides' last play and performed after his death, making its ambiguous relationship to the earlier *Taurians* all the more convoluted. Iphigenia's death is left vague, related only second hand and therefore less than trustworthy by the messenger to Clytemnestra as "for this day has seen your child both dead and alive."[212] Whether or not there was the divine intervention that is imagined in *Taurians*, the image of the goddess is the same in both plays when they are read as complementary. Artemis is portrayed as needlessly cruel, demanding, and bloodthirsty: an Olympian who plays only a minor and impotent role in the *Iliad* among the other gods is still powerful enough to pose a threat to mortals. While the sacrifice is eventually accepted in *Aulis* by Iphigenia herself as noble and on behalf of all of Greece lest they be ruled by barbarians,[213] *Taurians* adds another aspect of discomfort with Artemis' image. Though Iphigenia believes Artemis has come to her aid and made her to become her priestess in a far away land,[214] she is never in contact with the goddess herself during the course of the play. Artemis' will is revealed at the end of the play by Athena, who orders Orestes to build a temple to Taurian Artemis upon reaching Athens where human blood will be drawn in her honour and Iphigenia to continue to serve the mysterious goddess at Brauron.[215]

Iphigenia feels deceived by the goddess, who "normally" does not allow pollution from human blood or death near her altar but now demands it. She disbelieves that Artemis could take joy in human

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[210] Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*. 135-159.
[211] Sophocles, *Ajax*. 172. Here, Artemis is referred to as "Tauropolos", this is the Artemis of Euripides' *Taurians*.
[212] Euripides, *Iphigenia at Aulis*. 1611-12.
[213] 1395-1403.
[214] Euripides, *Iphigenia Among the Taurians*. 34.
[215] 1458, 1462.

sacrifice and blames it on the local custom of the barbaric *Taurians*; the irony is that she has lamented since the beginning of the play that her father so easily sentenced her to death in the name of the goddess back home in Greece.[216] Moreover, Thoas, leader of the *Taurians*, is horrified to learn from Iphigenia that the Greeks they were intending to sacrifice killed their own mother, exclaiming that "not even a barbarian would have dared to do that!"[217] Athena, a symbol of the civility and safety of Athens, does little to clear up the situation by requesting Artemis to continue to be appeased in Greece with human blood. In these two plays, Artemis is always silent, but reported and interpreted to be bloodthirsty and cruel. She never makes herself clear or apparent, and always exists on the margins of the human imagination. "Barbarian", "foreign" Artemis proves in reality to be little different wherever she was worshipped, as Iphigenia muses, she is always constructed by human beings. It is worth mentioning not only that Pausanias believes that the cult statue Iphigenia brought back from the land of the *Taurians* came to rest in Sparta at the sanctuary for Artemis Orthia,[218] but to concentrate on confirming "bloodthirsty Artemis's" origins through the literature as foreign is missing another point.

Euripides is perhaps revealing a well-known irony and anxiety about Artemis and her many contradictions. This anxiety is intimately connected to a more general fear of the world outside the safety of the polis, the natural and human worlds on the fringes of the Greek imagination. Artemis, a foreign import or otherwise, comes to be associated with these liminal spaces and "foreign" ideologies. Her presence in the polis is a constant reminder of the dangers that exist in the spaces between, but the threat of danger is tempered with an ironic familiarity. Regardless of Artemis' origins, she walks a similar path to Dionysus in the sense of skirting the boundaries of civilization and bringing those under her protection safely across them.

Artemis is vague and elusive in the plays about the house of Atreus, but she makes herself known in Euripides' *Hippolytus* as a character on stage. Hippolytus, the son of Theseus and the Amazon Queen Hippolyta, has completely dedicated himself to the goddess. In doing so, he becomes the locus of contradiction and contention between Artemis and Aphrodite, the latter whom he verbally slights and pointedly refuses to acknowledge and thereby sets in motion Aphrodite's machinations towards his death[219]. Firstly, Hippolytus by dedicating himself to Artemis has removed from her one of her most apparent roles in Greek Religion, that is, the safe guidance of youths (both male and female in this case,)

[216] 380-391.
[217] 1174
[218] Pausanias, 3.16.7
[219] Euripides, *Hippolytus*. 31.

to adulthood. In turn, what begins as a distaste and willful ignorance of sex and adulthood becomes verbalized as utter misogyny against his stepmother Phaedra,[220] compelled by Aphrodite to have uncontrollable feelings for the boy that are only resolved by her suicide. It is interesting to note that Hippolytus' hatred of women can also be interpreted as a hatred of adult women in particular, he has no such rancour against young maidens and comes to be worshipped primarily by that age group after his death. He himself has "the soul of a maiden",[221] and that is what seems to set him in opposition to Aphrodite, who would normally have a complementary role to Artemis by bringing a maiden safely through marriage and sex. It is also curious how closely Aphrodite and Artemis are associated by the women in the play; Phaedra's madness is immediately thought to have been caused and therefore perhaps eased by Artemis or another goddess of the mountains and wilds, while the true agent Aphrodite does not become suspect until Phaedra reveals her plight to the nurse.[222]

While Artemis appears in person in the *Hippolytus*, she and her motivations are not clear until the very end of the play. She confirms that she and Aphrodite are in opposition, but like her portrayal in the *Iliad* the goddess is unable to interfere with another Olympian.[223] She validates Hippolytus' rejection of Aphrodite, and her promise to protect him from the loss of his "chastity"[224] ends in his death. Artemis swears vengeance on Aphrodite, but without the remaining two plays in the trilogy we are left without a resolution. If Artemis does take the life of a mortal dear to Aphrodite, is Aphrodite proved powerless against her? Are these two goddesses, both humiliated in conflict during the course of the *Iliad*,[225] considered "women's goddesses" that have stepped out of their spheres? Is the audience granted a peace and resolution in the same vein as the Erinyes were by Athena in the *Oresteia*,[226] or is their feud constant and inherent in their roles? The lack of answers is frustrating, but they do reveal a great deal of questions and dimensions to Artemis' role and character in Greek Religion that he and perhaps his audience were aware of. It does not necessarily reveal a wide variety of perspectives on the worship of

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[220] 616.
[221] 1006.
[222] 142-169;359
[223] 1327-1334.
[224] *The Online Liddell-Scott-Jones Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. "σωφρονέω", accessed June 28, 2017. http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/lsj/#eid=105005&context=lsj&action=hw-list-click. Often translated as 'to be chaste', σωφρονέω can be translated as 'to be moderate, prudent' or 'to have self control'. These translations avoid more Christianising connotations of sexual purity, but the Greek can cover a sexual meaning. Given Hippolytus' animosity to love, sex, women, and Aphrodite, it is likely that "chastity" in the sexual sense is encompassed here. Chastity does not, however, have the same moral and pious senses in Ancient Greek as it would in Christian contexts; in his chastity, Hippolytus honours one god and slights another.
[225] See Above for Artemis' humiliation by Hera; Aphrodite is wounded by Diomedes in *Iliad* 5.330-340.
[226] Aeschylus, *Eumenides*. 880-915.

Artemis, as it was presumably limited to a male and primarily Athenian audience. Artemis' continued portrayal as a minor yet cruel, elusive and marginal goddess reflects more perhaps of a cultural anxiety over her domain than a multifaceted goddess among the most widely worshiped in the Greek Pantheon and indeed likely the most important and central goddess at Sparta.

Callimachus' Hellenistic *Hymn to Artemis*, previously overlooked in scholarship due to its "irreverent" tone, seems to deliberately undo or expand on the tropes established in older literature. This poem does more to expand on one of the oldest and most widespread goddesses in the Hellenic pantheon and to fill in the gaps of her lacking literary persona. Petrovic makes the argument that the *Iliad*'s "insolent girl had outgrown the epic", and Callimachus' hymn drew on and subverted Homeric tropes to draw attention to the wide variety of areas Artemis had influence over and deserved thanks for.[227] The girl at Zeus' knee from Homer still exists, but her father gives her domain over not only the wilderness but cities and harbours.[228] Artemis brings death and punishment to those who cross her, but she also blesses families with bounty and good health.[229] Artemis even is depicted "renouncing the rites of the Tauri"[230], no longer appeased by human sacrifice as she was said to be in earlier ages. Just as with any of the other literature supplied to us about Artemis, Callimachus' hymn does not clearly delineate between myth, poetry, and cultic reality. However, it remains entirely possible that this poem was deliberately written to subvert those past tropes and examine an alternate or at least expanded side to Artemis. This goddess makes her will explicit and clear to her father, and he gives her all she asks for and more. Zeus brings Artemis out of the wilderness and into the streets of the people who worship her: she is not exclusively a "foreign" goddess of the fringes of the earth, she is present in the homes of mortals and grants them children or untimely death justly and without ambiguity or malice. This poem is easily just as religious as a classical play or a Homeric text, and represents a perspective that has not survived in other periods just as able to contribute to an established literary character for the goddess if not a "canonical" one.[231]

Identifying Artemis

From these combined literary sources, we have a broader understanding of Artemis' role in Greek Religion and society. She is a *kourotrophos* for girls as well as boys and a *potnia theron* goddess of

[227] Petrovic, 222.
[228] Callimachus, *Hymn to Artemis*. 39.
[229] 122-135.
[230] 174.
[231] Petrovic, 226-227.

wild flora and fauna certainly, but that is not the limit to her sphere of influence. She plays a complementary if occasionally antagonistic role to Aphrodite as a gatekeeper of sexuality. Furthermore, she does not simply abandon children to adulthood; she keeps watch over women who feel the pangs of childbirth and sends gentle arrows to release mortals from old age or other suffering. Artemis can also be cruel and is suspect when adults like Phaedra or Ajax are afflicted with madness; she may demand the sacrifice of their children as with Agamemnon in recompense for slighting her. She can be petulant and ineffectual with other Olympians such as Hera and Aphrodite, but she enjoys the company of her brother Apollo and the gifts of her father Zeus. The goddess can be cryptic and difficult to identify or interpret as she may not communicate directly to the other players or the audience where gods like Aphrodite, Athena, and Dionysus will; Artemis is associated primarily with the domains beyond the safety with the polis, but she is not wholly excluded from it either.

This image of Artemis is much more developed than the simple, generic "fertility" label which has been applied to so many goddesses and gods would betray. If Artemis' role had to be specified in one word, I would propose Artemis to be a goddess that deals primarily with "transition".[232] The most obvious transition of course is youth to adult, but Artemis can also deal with those boundaries between life and death. She is not a psychopomp in the sense that Hermes is, guiding souls to the underworld, but she can ease or upset the transitions from pregnancy to birth or old age to death. Gender fluidity could be considered part of Artemis' domain, if there was indeed crossdressing in her honour as according to the lexicographers. The goddess straddles a line between the chastity of youth and the fertility and sexuality of humans and animals. It also lends well to her later association with figures like Hecate, goddess of crossroads.[233]

Artemis also represents transition in a physical, geographical and political sense of boundaries. Her sanctuaries are often swamps- liminal spaces between land and water- and often located on political borders.[234] This is in part perhaps why there is a common trope of maidens being abducted from these sanctuaries and taken away from their poleis to foreign lands.[235] Sparta's boundaries, for

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[232] Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood. "Artemis." *Oxford Classical Dictionary.* 28 Jun. 2017. http://classics.oxfordre.com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199381135.001.0001/acrefore-9780199381135-e-827. Sourvinou-Inwood stresses that this "transition" concentration may not be a "core" trait of Artemis and a culturally determined imposition on Greek Religion, but the possibility does hold promise for the purpose of this paper.
[233] Burkert, 171.
[234] Susan Guettel Cole. "Landscapes of Artemis." The Classical World. no. 5 (2000): 473.
[235] Cole, 472.

instance, are marked by the temples of Artemis Issoria and Artemis Orthia- if she is taken to be Artemis- in the east.[236] Her presence in the wilderness outside of the polis is part of this role; she is the goddess of the unknown and the foreign. Hunting, a traditionally masculine activity at least in the human world, is also part of this departure from the polis and wish for a safe return. Her role as a huntress can also be extended into a military one as well; her sanctuaries may form a part of a ritual transforming citizen to soldier on the polis borders.[237]

Artemis 'and/or' Orthia

In these respects, Artemis has a wider range of activities to preside over. The most important sanctuary in Sparta could hardly have been limited to one major festival once a year or whenever there were enough Spartan youth of age to warrant a 'graduation' ceremony. Artemis was already an important goddess in Sparta given the number of sanctuaries dedicated to her around the city, and access to her whether her different locations and epithets were for general or specific rites and requests seems to have been a priority for the community. Where Carter definitively claims Orthia "was not a virgin goddess"[238] or Dawkins that she "was not a healing goddess"[239] perhaps in an attempt to 'untangle' her from Artemis, we are still left without evidence for or against these assertions, each an argument from silence. We cannot know what Orthia would have meant to her worshippers or what her domain was without more information, but we can at least look at the sanctuary through the lens of the goddess she was eventually assimilated with in search of commonalities. Rather than attempting to separate the 'generic', 'Panhellenic' goddess from a unique original or explain away Orthia as a vestigial goddess overwritten and 'Hellenized', we can attempt to understand what roles they might have shared in their community.

A troubling theme with both goddesses is the tendency to reduce them to female goddesses concerned with fertility and sexuality; while these domains are important, they are already well accommodated by a wide variety of other deities. Aphrodite undoubtedly is concerned with human sexuality and Hera with marriage – why then would Orthia be assimilated with Artemis who remains well known as a goddess concerned with virginity and who spurned the advances of men? It is not to say

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[236] Cartledge, 16.
[237] Cole, 478.
[238] Jane Burr Carter, "Masks and Poetry in Early Sparta," in *Early Greek Cult Practice: Proceedings of the Fifth International Symposium at the Swedish Institute at Athens, 26-29 June, 1986*, by Robin Hägg and Robin Hägg (Stockholm: S.n., 1988). 98.
[239] Dawkins, 174.

that Artemis was purely a non-sexual goddess, but she was not particularly concerned with the domain of heterosexual marriages until of course a child was involved. Artemis is not typically associated with adult men or women unless a woman is about to give birth- she is not often involved in adulthood otherwise save for that boundary between it and childhood. In this sense, Artemis has a well-established reputation as a goddess of youth, and yet the scholarship I have addressed does little to concentrate on the perspectives, the anxieties and desires of the youths who would pay homage to her. Artemis' domain consists of the wild, the uncivilized, the uninitiated, and children can certainly be understood as holding some identification with that world outside of adulthood.

And yet, Artemis is so often associated with that singular transition between youth and adulthood in scholarship, as we have seen, some interpretations attempt to "fit her in" to civilized Spartan society by associating her with the virtues and obligations of marriage. Her position on the cusp of adulthood is pervasive to the point of eroticization: Burkert describes her as "a peculiarly erotic and challenging ideal" and her chorus appearing in myth "as a predestined occasion for rape".[240] This eroticization is rarely ever positive, and always appears to be more of a perspective sympathizing with the transgressions of adult men such as Actaeon. While perhaps this is a validly demonstrated ancient perspective, we simply do not have access to the perspectives of or alternate versions from sources other than the recordings of adult men. The perspective always appears to be focussed on a perceived violent overreaction from Artemis, whether she is punishing Actaeon or preventing Agamemnon's departure to Troy, never on the transgression. Virginity and chastity as they are represented in Hippolytus and in Greek culture were not virtues in the Christian sense, but they remain part of Artemis' domain of protection and will incur her wrath if violated.[241] Artemis seems to always be characterized as a goddess ineffective amongst her peers and dangerous to mortals, and her status as protector of children is understated. To put it another way, would Artemis not appeal to girls like those in her band of nymphs, alarmed by either a literal notion of rape or a figurative notion of being taken from her family and incorporated into her husband's when she came of age?

Artemis also struggles with a tendency to be pigeonholed in an "acceptable" and "heterosexual" role; as I have discussed earlier, heterosexuality if such a term can even be discussed in an ancient Greek context was not regarded as a static "orientation" as it has come to be understood in our society. Heterosexual behaviour was associated primarily with marriage and adulthood, while homosexuality

[240] Burkert, 150.
[241] Dubois, 123.

could express itself in pederastic relationships as a form of instruction. If heterosexual and homosexual behaviour were indeed acceptably expressed along lines of age, it seems relevant to a goddess who is concerned with youth and (heterosexual) "virginity". Artemis is not necessarily absent or separate from sexuality, but she may also be understood as "non-heterosexual". While she is not typically shown as explicitly homosexual in myth, the story of Callisto's seduction by Zeus in the guise of Artemis certainly calls into question what expressions of sexuality were or were not acceptable amongst Artemis' all-female band; Callisto's pregnancy was the cause of her expulsion, not her affection for Artemis. Furthermore, Artemis is also the patron of the Amazons, another all-female band that break all norms of a typical Greek understanding of heterosexual adulthood. In this way, it is curious that a poem such as Alcman's *Partheneion* associated primarily with Artemis and so often read with homoerotic undertones should be read as either only expressing platonic affection and jealousy or as expressing a prenuptial ceremony and nothing other.

Orthia too struggles with a heterosexualized portrayal despite having comparatively little material to Artemis. As I mentioned, her fertility label creates her image as "not a virgin goddess", where Artemis can retain her virgin status and still be concerned with the offspring of humans and beasts. Carter's attempt to associate Orthia with Near Eastern mythology also has Orthia involved in a *hieros gamos* with a male consort, accounting for her mask-based association with Hera but in spite of no male consort being easily identifiable from representations of men in votive offerings.[242] What proof is there that a male figure must be a consort of the goddess and not a representation of the dedicator or another god in a related role or mythology? If the presence of wreaths at the sanctuary was an indicator of marriage, as Carter implies, why then was Orthia assimilated to Artemis at all? Is Artemis primarily defined by her association with wilderness, or by her association with offspring? Did these priorities change over time? The lack of mythology and context for Orthia is certainly baffling, but I am hesitant to simply look for a male consort as I am wary about studying hypothetical "originals" that no longer exist; there certainly is a possibility, but without information it seems short sighted to simply assign one acceptable route to interpretations of this site.

We do not have to limit either goddess to one ritual, one origin, one aetiological myth or piece of literature, one object, or one demographic. As we have seen, Orthia's sanctuary potentially served a wide range of patrons from slaves to Spartiates, from men and women to children, and from citizens to visitors. Looking at the site from a perspective that allows her assimilation to Artemis does not negate

[242] Carter, "The Masks of Ortheia" 381-382.

that; Artemis was not a goddess limited to women or children, hunters or virgins, and was a highly worshipped and central divinity in cults from Sparta to her most famous site at Ephesus. We cannot find a single purpose or ritual to compress all of Spartan values and celebrations into one, but surely the site could have provided many different functions for the community; the exercises of association between the known rituals and known values of Sparta remain useful. These rituals could include but are not limited to the transition from youth to adulthood, marriage, and childbirth, but also perhaps Artemis Orthia's lesser-discussed potentials for commemorating rites of passage, major life events, and civic necessities. Menstruation, an important event for girls linked to but also separate from marriage, is a surprisingly little discussed event in relation to Artemis and her appeasement by blood.[243] Hunting, warfare, and travel outside the safety of the city limits too could provide a potential reason to offer sacrifice to Artemis for courage and safety. Greek sanctuaries were not only open to the public during large public festivals, they served their surrounding community every day for prayers, giving thanks, and dealing with the day to day confrontations with illness, untimely death, and the unknown.

Whatever her origins or the nature of her assimilation, Artemis Orthia certainly played a central and important role in the polis she protected and garnered an exceptional amount of votives over her centuries of service. Orthia's assimilation to Artemis should not simply be discounted as secondary, as one goddess being wholly subsumed by the other and therefore less important; scholarship should not treat Artemis as simply a mask- in the English sense- that the "real", "original" Orthia is concealed behind. Orthia was assimilated with Artemis, not Hera or Aphrodite or Eileithyia, and questioning what qualities the Greeks may have associated with the Olympian goddess provides an alternate perspective in conjunction with the origin of Orthia, a relatively unknown quantity.

[243] Calame, 163-164. Calame notes that Artemis cults are often associated with agnus castus trees, known in antiquity to have qualities relevant to the sexual life of women. The tree is both associated with decreasing sexual desire and stimulating menstruation and lactation; the dual associations with chastity and fecundity are not as opposing as they seem at first. Calame also offers the agnus castus and the rods used to beat the boys at the altar of Orthia in conjunction, suggesting that the bleeding of both boys and girls, the latter of whom "dedicated themselves to the goddess at their first menstruation", is related to fertility and "a symbolized representation of the transition of the young girl from the time of menarche to adulthood".

6. Discussion: Revisiting the Masks

All of the topics discussed and threads followed seem to have led us further and further from the objects themselves. I have discussed not only the objects and their archaeological and literary contexts, I have traced a number of interpretations, theories, and questions these objects have inspired. Furthermore, I have done some deeper investigation into the identity of the goddess or goddesses these masks were meant for, but a great portion of that discussion involves setting the objects to the side. Let us finally return to the Orthia masks and the way they have been presented as they came to us in the early 20th century.

Objectively Objects

The problematic part of the accessible archaeological data on the masks being category-based is its tendency to be repeated with less criticism and discrimination than perhaps required. While these typologies can lend themselves to a broad amount of interpretations and theories appropriate to a site with so little recorded about its rituals, it can also lead to the reinforcement of assumptions about the objects that are only built on sand (and perhaps also prone to metaphorical flood damage!). First, there are a number of assumptions about the use of the masks that are perhaps too quickly dismissed. The excavators struggle to place the masks as a whole beyond their typologies in an explicit existing category of use. They rule out a sepulchral purpose as the site has no tombs of any kind, an appropriate assessment. Honorific masks are also ruled out, as such masks are "never grotesque". Votives after illness are dismissed because "Artemis Orthia is not a healing goddess", but there is no evidence provided for this statement. Apotropaic masks become a possibility, but as the objects were dedicated and deposited at the temples rather than being placed in trees, the excavators tend to dismiss this category even though the ugliness of the masks and the gorgons in particular could be associated with apotropaic qualities.[244] Finally, dramatic masks are considered and are left as perhaps the most likely option, but the excavators stress that any Spartan ritual mimesis is not to be confused with Attic drama, drama "of that developed type" which they label as "unknown in Sparta".[245] Is this assumption that Sparta was a closed society without any exposure to Attic drama let alone a propensity to perform their own types of enactment entirely justified? The use and purpose of these masks, the majority of which were not wearable though perhaps representing more permanent models of existing wooden objects, is a topic I have discussed here.

[244] 174.
[245] 172.

Secondly, the typologies of the masks can be used to further several different interpretations by their names alone, the engagement with the objects themselves unnecessary. The "Old Women" are identified as the largest category of masks by the excavators[246], and whether the masks all fit this category is as much a problem as the category's name itself. It was created presumably due to two small references by lexicographers to masks of old women being used at Sparta in the performance of bawdy dances.[247] These sources are problematic for a few reasons: the references as they exist in Hesychius and Pollux are late in date to the Roman period, the sources themselves are unspecific in time period, the ritual here unmentioned by any surviving previous source, and the sources themselves are conflicting on the gender of the wearer. As is common in most surviving literature on Sparta, neither of these writers were reputed to be Spartan or to have spent time there. As is the nature of the discipline, these sources should not be hastily discarded when they are one of the few examples of Spartan ritual that survive for us, but it does not mean they should be applied wholesale and uncritically to a group of objects that had been buried seven to ten centuries before the approximate date of the literature.

While it is entirely likely that these masks could be symbolic votives meant to replace real objects that were worn and performed with,[248] this scant amount of literature should not be enough to lock them into one sole association, particularly because there is nothing explicitly gendered about these objects. The excavator's classification of male as "bearded" glosses over masks with this trait in the "Old Women" and "Gorgon" categories, for instance; Gorgons were well established as sporting beards in iconography in other parts of Greece, and the category tends to be exclusively female in the same way satyrs are an exclusively male category. [249] The "Old Women" masks, however, could simply be a Schliemann-esque attempt to find the objects 'hiding' behind the literary sources in the same way the famous "Mask of Agamemnon" became a misnomer. The excavators themselves suggest conflict in the sources too; a potential confusion with Athenaeus' report of a comic mimesis dance for Artemis Korythalia at Sparta, to start.[250] The gender of the wearers is perhaps as disputed as whether or not the objects represent one: Hesychius claims male dancers where Pollux asserts female. We are left with a number of possible routes: that one ritual, multiple rituals, or no rituals match both the site and the objects. If both are matched by one or more rituals, they are not necessarily true for all time periods and

[246] 167.
[247] Pollux iv.104.; Hesychius *s.v.* "βρυδαλίγα", "βρθλλιχισταί". See Dawkins, 172-173.
[248] 175.
[249] Stephen R. Wilk, *Medusa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). 31. As Wilk mentions, the Gorgon is almost as old as Greek art itself. Representations, including those with beards, date back to the 8th century BCE.
[250] 173.

certainly not for the majority of the objects excavated. These objects were usually small, unpierced, and those that are life size are not hollowed out to conform to a face and would be far too breakable to dance in.[251] Certainly the objects could be copies, symbolic representations of real objects cheaply made to commemorate a real dance or the memory of such a ritual, but they should not be so hastily bound and conformed to one literary source. The simple fact of the matter remains: the objects we have, separated from any hypothetical "originals", do not match and are almost completely incapable of matching any wearable objects that exist in literature.

Considering the masks as objects in themselves, another idea has yet to be addressed, that of the frontal gaze of the mask. Frontality may be an obvious quality of a mask, but in other types of Greek art such as vase painting, frontality can be exceptionally rare. During the Archaic and Classical periods of Attic vase painting, figures were almost exclusively drawn with faces in profile; the frontal face was a unique attribute only assigned to a few categories, most simplistically according to Yvonne Korshak in two: the first being satyrs, komasts and symposiasts, all tending to be associated with wine and its effects, and the second being combat victims and losing athletes.[252] Other categories may be linked to these two, of course, but Korshak concludes that both of them are reliant on a third: behind each frontal face "lies, ultimately the frontal face of the Gorgon."[253] This iconographical use of the frontal face appears to have developed around the 6th century BCE, the same approximate period as our masks.[254] To Korshak, strong emotion is an insufficient explanation; the pairing of the ecstasies of wine and the agony of death indicate a lack of self control, and Medusa as a victim herself embodies this.[255]

E.A. Mackay builds on this research, linking it with the arresting use of the second person in contrast to the more common third person narration in Homeric epic.[256] Referring to the audience as "you" or breaking the standard profile view of a piece of pottery – to break the fourth wall, as we are familiar with in film and comics today – is striking and arresting.[257] It can invite or implicate the viewer in the scene, and cause them to pause when contemplating a three-dimensional object. The artists, Mackay writes, must have been extremely aware of the three-dimensional stage these two-dimensional

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[251] Dawkins, 175.
[252] Yvonne Korshak, *Frontal Faces in Attic Vase Painting of the Archaic Period* (Chicago, IL: Ares, 1987). 5.
[253] Korshak, 44.
[254] 3.
[255] 20, 23. Mackay disagrees, noting that the frontal face is meant to emphasize her power, not weakness (26).
[256] E.A. Mackay, "The Frontal Face and "You": Narrative Disjunction in Early Greek Poetry and Painting," *Acta Classica: Proceedings of the Classical Association of South Africa* 44, no. 1 (January 1, 2001). 7.
[257] Mackay, 20.

images were set on, and this could be used either as standard iconography as Korshak outlines, a method to make certain objects and actions such as playing a syrinx more intelligible, or as "a traditionally sanctioned technique" to draw attention to certain aspects of the scene and to manipulate the audience's emotion.[258] Satyrs and masks are not iconographically linked to the frontal face the way gorgons are, but the frontal face can be used with them to create a rhythm or an emotion that sets a mood;[259] likewise, the practical frontal view for the syrinx can also mimic the punctuated, high pitched sound the instrument produces, like a visual representation of a melody.[260]

Both of these writers, though only Korshak explicitly, briefly address the Orthia masks, which include representations of both gorgons and satyrs. Korshak again treats the objects as all large enough to be worn, without paying mind to the material or the absence of fastening holes, of course, but points out truly enough that regardless of their ability to be worn the three-dimensional object is suggestive of performance. The masks, however, contribute but are not tightly iconographically linked to frontal faces in vase painting according to Korshak, and therefore they are not contemplated further.[261] Mackay footnotes a mention of the masks as not sufficient to account for komasts or the occasional satyr.[262] And yet, despite the brief gloss in terms of a grammar for vase painting, it seems almost necessary to consider masks and frontality as well as the arresting power of the Gorgon as a key component of visual and dramatic expression. The Orthia masks certainly could use more of an iconographical and stylistic perspective as objects themselves rather as reproductions of hypothetical originals in this sense.

The Masks and the Goddesses

Where do the masks overlap with the goddess? Despite attempts to link Orthia to a multitude of female deities, Greek or Near Eastern, Artemis or otherwise, she is and will likely remain an utter mythological mystery. Orthia has no clear or established iconography, she appears in no mythology, and yet the gaps are filled in by the ancients through her association with Artemis. Attempts to divorce her from Artemis still rely on either hierarchical assumptions about the relationship between the two goddesses, assumptions that Orthia is indeed separate from Artemis and is "supposed" to be read as such, or assumptions that she rules over a similar yet inherently separate domain from Artemis. Dawkins' evaluation of Orthia as a "fertility" deity remains excessively broad and have led to her

[258] 19, 23, 31.
[259] 26.
[260] 23.
[261] 19.
[262] 25.

association with goddesses concerned with marriage and sexuality, such as Hera or Aphrodite. While youth remains the domain of Artemis and presumably Orthia, it is always youth in the sense of being on the cusp of a sexual transition. Orthia, from a goddess of no myth, no history, and a multitude of dedications, becomes a sensationalized goddess with a sole ritual and a broad concern that could easily fall into the domain of a number of divinities from Aphrodite's sexual fertility to Dionysus' vegetable fertility. Is she as gruesome and bloodthirsty as the masks and the implicit mythology seem to imply? The masks, therefore, must fit this image, as they are made to fit references to "fertility" dances.

And yet, as we have discussed, these objects are not at all what they appear to be or have been reported to be in scholarship. Can we truly discuss these as wearable objects? Can we so easily attribute them to two contradictory literary sources centuries after their deposition? If they did commemorate wearable copies or a ritual that did take place at some point in time, what was the nature of the hypothetical "original"; are we hastily dismissing art or drama as simply "un-Spartan" attributes? Were these masks used to represent singular "characters" or "roles", or plural? Were they representative of "roles" at all, or did they occupy some ritual space in the ancient imagination relevant to embodiment of the divine or the ambiguous liminal space of transition? Would they have been worn or dedicated or made by the same demographics of people? What feelings would these masks have evoked for their viewers, and would they have even been meant to be displayed either performatively or as "art"? How important are the "origins" or "practices" of this cult in the interpretation and reinterpretation of this ritual in a religion that not only existed for centuries but abided by no canon and placed priority on rituals that only needed to appear "traditional"?

The point I have tried to make regarding this evidence is that there is so little of it- there is barely enough evidence to correlate these masks from the 6th century BC with the one ritual to be described at the site, let alone an entry or two in a late Roman lexicon, and yet both are vital pieces of information that is incredibly scarce. Ideas about "fertility goddesses" or about Artemis as a relatively minor figure in literature still heavily influence our interpretations of these objects, and they become truth as we repeat them. Returning to the original source material as well as the first modern interpretation of this material is a necessary step towards asking the right questions: the questions that have been asked, while incredibly valuable, have left trails of unexplored and unconsidered information that I have done my best to examine, re-evaluate, and refresh here.

7. Conclusions

I have argued for reopening discussion on the site of Artemis Orthia, and I have discussed the problems, achievements and limitations of current scholarship. In my discussion of the Orthia masks, I have argued for interpretations that allow space for perspectives on gender in particular to redress the functions and interpretations of these objects and to re-evaluate their tenuous connections to classical literature. In a broader sense, I have aimed to place these objects in the context of the site and its patrons, to place them in their original temporal position in the 6th century BC or earlier, and to place them in a wider context of Greek archaeology. In doing so, I have discussed how these objects have illuminated a need for a more in-depth understanding of the goddesses Artemis and Orthia in conjunction rather than in subordinate roles as well as their place in Greek religion and social life.

A deconstructed look at reports nearly a century old surely has benefitted and will continue to benefit from more nuanced perspectives that draw attention to gaps or assumptions repeated and perpetuated if not wholly misrepresented by the excavation and subsequent scholarship. Among such perspectives is a gender-based analysis, but these perspectives include a concern and understanding for other factors I have touched on briefly here, notably the colonial and cultural impacts of Classics' close ties to the identity of Western civilization and Sparta's position amongst these threads, and other lost voices marginalized by regionalism, age, or social class. A focus on the subjective leanings or subconscious cultural biases we impose upon the classical world, whether it be through the mis-gendering of "gendered" objects or the emphasis upon marriage as the singular event in an ancient girl's life that would require religious focus, has assisted me greatly in studying this material.

Gaps shall persist, of course, but a great deal of further research is required for a more nuanced understanding of the site of Artemis Orthia. The objects themselves, primarily accessible through the archaeological report or their scant mention as evidence or case studies, could perhaps use a more accessible and clear quantification based on the field notes and a direct physical analysis in order to dispel confusion and contradiction surrounding their number, categorization, and size. If this small section of objects yielded so many questions, it is doubtless that other materials found at the site – or their excavation reports alone! – could provide us with a great many more ideas in need of evaluation and re-evaluation. By deconstructing the attitudes that informed this excavation, we can add a greater deal of information or begin to explore deeper cultural questions: is Spartan exceptionalism always a valid assumption? How should we understand assimilation in Greek religion? What desires and fears did

Greek religion serve, not only for adult citizen men but for girls, women, and other participants? These are questions I have aimed to study and to provoke, if not to answer, in this study.

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