

## **Mycenaean Reminiscence in the area Samothrace – Hemus**

**Valeria Phol**

**(Summary)**

The report represents the hypothesis about the Samothrace as an area center between Ida in Phrygia, Aton and Thrace of the oral mysterious – consecrated belief, formed during the Mycenaean period in the Aegean Sea cultural area. In the earliest period the ceremonial is implemented in rock formed belief topos, modified and updated during and after the Classical Era in Hellenes cultural – linguistic area. In Thrace clear clues from the Mycenaean period are preserved because of the social – political kingdoms structure. Because of the Samothrace location against the outflow of Maritsa river – “the door” of the Aegean Sea toward the European Thrace, it can be characterized even in the Mycenaean period as a key center of oral mysterious belief and the king ideology with influence onto wide group of believers until the Early Christian Era.

(TEXT)

The Mycenaean traditions in which belongs the Thrace are stick in belief topos from the Ancient times, which fall into the Hellenes cultural – linguistic area through the first 2-3 centuries of 1 millennium B.C. The traditions accepted their Hellenes Classical character around 5 century B.C. In Thrace the Mycenaean traditions in political structure and religiosity continuous their existence even after 5 century B.C.

The process of cultural – historic and religious continuity, which is implemented by Hellenization between Mycenaean, Geometric, Archaic and Classical Eras are not interrupted during the following periods. In Southeast Europe they can be followed with relatively enough written, archaeological, graphic, and epigraphic materials for a long period of time of one of the most important belief toposes, in which is the transition from abstract belief toward the personified religiosity. These most important belief toposes are Delphi, Samothrace and Elevsina, each of them enrich the transition mosaic with their specific clues. While the prophetic communication probably creates productive research position under review of the Delphi sanctuary [1], mysterious relations between believers and divine visions determine the Samothrace and Elevsinskoto operation.

The hypothesis about cultural and economical interactions of the Minoan town Crete and Mycenaean centers with North Aegean Sea areas, Thrace and Troad are confirmed by discovered in the regular excavations – ceramic fragments and Linear A texts – in Tundzha river, in Troad and in Samothrace island [2]. The Thrace connections with the Mycenaean world are proved by archaeological excavations [3]. The Thrace development to Ancient Greece is proved with the researches of the

ceramic production – old forms and decorations are produced with cult aims until VIII century B.C. [4].

The archaeological researches of Samothrace and to the downstream of Tundzha River over the Edirne region during the last two decades of XX century depicted the relations between Thrace and Samothrace even in the Minoan Period [5]. Discovered products with linear A letter in the Samothrace coast near Micro Vuni and near village of Drama, municipality of Iambolsko showed that even during the Late Helladic period are depicted the North Aegean Sea contact zone, with European Thrace and Troy – Troad, as well as other Anatolian littoral centers [6]. Rock chipped monuments of the Aegean Sea islands and in Thrace are typological similar with the Anatolian ones and formed ethno cultural zone. In this zone to the beginning of 1 millennium B.C. the belief is related with the stone and rock sacred in this huge region is similar [7]. The connection Thrace – Troy – North Aegean region is transformed in myth through Samothrace with the history of migration of Dardanus [8].

The Samothrace sanctuary is preserved, to the late period, its character of rock topos of belief near sacred rocks and alters [9]. The island doesn't has good natural port, but take place between Troada and the mountain Ida, The Dardanelles, Thrace cost against the mouth of Maritsa river and the mountain Aton in Chalcidice island [10]. K. Lehmann, the first leader of systematic excavations in the island during 1938, relate the native ceramic, the earliest sanctuary structures, rock altars, rock furrows and ruins from the "Cyclopes Wall" with "pre – Greek population". K. Lehmann think that "pre – Greek population" of the island from the end of 2 and the beginning of 1 millennium B.C. "seems to have belonging to the large family of Thracian people which at the dawn of history dominated the southeastern part of the Balkan peninsula" [11]. Rock altars with different sizes are discovered in each Samothrace regions. This is big, natural exposed rocks, which color is green, red and blue to gray. According to K. Lehmann, around and onto them is implemented a ceremonial in honor of the Great God, called from him Mother of the Rock, because she demonstrated the power which is consisted in the rocks [12]. This Great God – Mother of the Samothrace is honored under a lot of names and showed proximity with Anatolian Great God (Mother of the Mountain) Cybele, with Aphrodite Zerinthia, with the Lemnian Great God [13]. The closest parallels of the rock cropped monuments are discovered in the Rhodope Mountain [14]. The literature discussed rock altars are these which are discovered in the territory of the sanctuary and are included in the later constructions, but the most famous of them are four: one in the basic of temenos, two in the region of rotunda of Arsinoe and one in the big altar yard. I will mention that the function of the sacred fireplaces – from clay, constructed from stone and adobe (circled and rectangular), Eshars (in temenos and hieron), ceremonial halls [15] – are still a subject of often interpretations, especially for the time, in which they stopped having significance for the ceremonial activity and the native population and new people meetings.

Scientists` effort allowed to be defined the ceremonial activity near the different altars. It is accepted that of the rock altar, preceding the altar yard is sacrificed for the name of Great Gods, but on the altar of temenos – of “Great Goddess – Kubele – Axieros in the form of Aphrodite Zerinthia” [16]. K. Lehmann believe that the altar in the temenos is dedicated of Hekata, even called it the cave of Hekata. He said that there are cave with spring near the stone [17]. He used the writing evidenced for the connection of the sanctuary with the cave of Hekata Zerinthia near Maritsa River. According to K. Lehmann, Hekata is honored on this place in Icon view, where he see in pyramidal marble piece, found near the altar [18]. His proposal is rejected later, when the marble piece is recognized as a piece from construction block. The hypothesis for honor of Hekata in the sanctuary is however again modern, because of the discovered in the excavations however not near the altar, marble head of the Hellenes period, identified as head of Hekata [19].

In his try to make “Concordia discors” between the literature and the archaeological evidences for the Samothrace sanctuary, W. Burkert note that according to the mythological evidences Samothrace belong not - Greek world and the island is with special meaning, because there the Gods meet the people and this make it sacral center, later famous with his mysterious [20]. The archaeology of “sacred center established by Zeus within the non – Greek world”, as well as W. Burkert defined that the Samothrace sanctuary cannot help a lot for the soaring of the Early ceremonial activity toward the time of meeting between the native population and the new people in this region. Moreover, he share his thinking that until 5 century B.C. when the first monument construction are lifted, the ceremonial is taking place around and in the rock altars and in the altar yard [21]. W. Burkert does not know the literature onto the Ancient Thrace and cannot handle with the materials from north of the island, he does not have relative data and cannot decide the importance of the outside ceremonial. In this reason he searched architecture place, in order to see “something special” in the ceremonial and in the belief.

W. Burkett connect the beginning of the secret mysterious ceremonials of Samothrace with the monumental circle structure from the second half of the V century B.C., received from the elevated steps, probably with altar in the center and with theater formed spaces afore the entrance. When analyze the information of Herodotus from whom the Greek people learned to honor the Olympian God Hermes [22] and his place in the Samothrace mysterious. W. Burkert does not add him toward the information about the Thracian kings, which separate from “the rest of civil people” honor Hermes and they swear in him as their own father [23].

This problem is directly connected with the interpretation of so called Cabeiri, i.e. of Thracian Tetrad of Gods on Herodotus and in Samothrace, especially Artemis – Axiocersa, Dionysus – Axieros, Ares – Axiocersus and Hermes /Kadmilos/ Kasmilos [24] and the question about the character of mysterious vision [25].

Samothrace represents functional rock belief topos, because the local Thracian character of the rock ceremonial is preserved and can be followed during the Classic

Era [26]. In the sanctuary is professed this belief – ceremonial, which is accompanied and locked from the mysterious visions and from the formulae of the sacred logos, as well as “under the sky”, and in the natural and semi processed cave sanctuaries. They produced “place of vision”, i.e. womb of the Great God – Mother, in which it is generated and consolidated the idea about the sacred marriage through the penetration of fertile light. The brightest parallels of rock sanctuary period are south from Hemus and the earliest rock toposes are in the Rhodope Mountain [27]. Samothrace is center of the oral mysterious belief, formed through the Mycenaean period in the Aegean Sea cultural area. She is modified and modernized through and after the Classic Era in the Hellenes cultural – linguistic area, but with strong preserved clues from their shrift in Thrace. This significance of the island sanctuary increased from its central location, for which we talked above. It is located between Ida in Phrygia and Aton of the Chalcidice peninsula, but also exactly against “the door of the European Thrace – mound of Maritsa river. Because of this location Samothrace can be characterized as key center of the oral mysterious belief and king ideology with influences onto the wide group of believers until the Early Christian Era.

#### **REFERENCES:**

[1] Levy 1997

[2] Fol – Schmitt 2000 for the spreading of the linear letter A outside the island Krite in Thrace, Troada and Samothrace

[3] Bozkova – Delev – Alexandrov – Vulcheva 2000 for Thracian center following the flow of middle Mesta river, operated for the middle of II millennium B.C. and maintain connection with the Mycenaean world; for this object look Popov 2002:60-71.

[4] Georgieva 2003.

[5] For Mycenaean Koine during the Late Bronze Era, in which are included Samothrace and Troy, look Mountjoy 1998 with literature, in which the map – direction of the spreading of the influence of Achaiwa from north cover the islands Lemnos, Samothrace, West Anatolia with Troy, as leave the space from north opened toward Thrace.

[6] Matsas 1991; 1995; Fol – Schmidt 2000; Lichardusetalii 2000: 159 – 162; look in details Fol 2002: 80 – 83 with literature and for the other points outside island Krite, in which are found products with Linear A.

[7] Fol V. 2007

[8] Look in more details with literature – Fol V. 2007: 36 – 40.

**[9]** Look about the Samothrace ceremonial and the Great Samothrace Gods Fol 2002:272 – 286 and literature with the different opinions. Toward her I will add Burkert 1993 and Lawall 2003. Actually, this ceremonial is renewable very hard, despite of the archaeological excavations, which are conducted consistently from French, Austrian (1873 – 1875), which results are published and from 1938 – from the New York university with interruption during the Second World War. Review of the excavations and the interpretations look Ilieva 2005 with last literature.

**[10]** For the rock antique of Samothrace and the early construction of the sanctuaries look Fol V. 2007: 36-41 with literature.

**[11]** Lehmann 1966: 12 Burkert 1993: 179 emphasized in note toward his text that he does not comment his materials until VII century B.C.

**[12]** Lehmann 1966: 22.

**[13]** For the different identification of the Samothrace Great Goddess – Mother, including the connections with the Semitic Great Goddess look Samothrace 5.1:276 – 286 and literature. For cult toward the Samothrace Gods in Troy look Lawall 2003.

**[14]** Fol V. 2004.

**[15]** Lehmann 1966:24; for the rock altar from the Archaic period of the altar yard look Samothrace 4;109 -111, pl. II; for altar in hieron, look Samothrace 3.1: 131 – 135, 3.2: 44; for constructed altars for east of terrace look Samothrace 5.1: 295. Look for the hall critical report of Balaris 2008.

**[16]** Samothrace 5.1: 295.

**[17]** Samothrace 5.1: 296 and notes 104.

**[18]** Lehmann 1966: 56 -57.

**[19]** Samothrace 5.1: 295 – 296 with literature.

**[20]** Burkert 1993: 180.

**[21]** W. Burkert does not suppose that wood platforms can be elevated, shelters, accommodations. Look for this type of wood constructions in the Early Sanctuaries Marinatos 1993.

**[22]** Hdt 2: 51 -52 Legrand/ Feix.

**[23]** Hdt 5.7.1: Legrand/ Feix; Fol analyse 2002: 229, 282-287, 291-293, with literature and other translate Burkett 1993: 181 – 182. The big problem which always come in front of people who care about the Thrace religion is that the difference between believing of kings and of the populations according to Herodotus, that the European Thrace honor Artemis, Dionysus and Ares and the kings separate from them – Hermes and they swear in them. For the operation of swearing look Fol 2002:

269 – 293; for “the swearing in the name of God” as magic practical look Fol 2004: 19-26.

**[24]** For the interpretation of the Thracian and Samothrace tetrad as well as the Cabeiri look Fol 2002: 269 – 293 and Fol 2004: 123 – 124; 152 – 153 with analyze and comment of the previous literature.

**[25]** Look Dimitrova 2002: Number 28 with comment of p. 160 – 161 and 170 – 178 for the epitaph of Isidor from Athens, who was dedicated in the Samothrace and the Elevsinskite mysterious and he saw “the split in two sacred lights of Kabiros in Samothrace and the pure rites of Eleusinian Demeter”. According to me from my view point of the interpretation of the Samothrace mysterious – the cite can be interpret not as mentioning of two Ceibiri, but as the Great God – mother with his son. Another interprets of the Cabeiri ceremonial in Thrace look Marazov 2011.

**[26]** Matsas 2006.

**[27]** Fol. V. 2007.

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