

# NOTES ON KEOS AND TZIA

(PLATES 77–79)

THE TITLE implies—obviously, I trust—that these remarks are to include bits of the history of the island from the earliest times of which an archaeologist can know anything down to the present day, a span of some six millennia.<sup>1</sup>

The name of Keos (Κέως, f.) with its omega is almost certainly prehellenic. It persisted in that form through the Classical Greek period. Then a final alpha generally supplanted the less familiar -ως, and the penult was often lengthened (Κέα to Κήα, Κεία, Κία). The Latin had initial C (Ceos, Cea, Cia), which led ultimately to Italianized spellings and pronunciations Ζέα, Ζία, Τζία, and even Ντζιά. The outer wall of a fine little 11th-century church at Ligourio in Epidauria contains an inscribed block with record of a builder Θεοφύλακτος, ἡκοδόμος ἀπὸ νησηοῦ Κήας (Pl. 79:f, g).

Evidences of continuity, variations, changes, and occasional interruptions in many aspects of life in Keos are at hand. Some are well known through published works, others await further study. Below we list only a few, illustrated chiefly by discoveries around Ayia Irini, the site of excavations conducted by the University of Cincinnati since 1960.

At the start it should be noted that this island is singularly favored by nature. In the rocky hilly terrain there are broad patches and basins of fertile soil, and the supply of fresh water is abundant by average Cycladic standards. Myths tell of nymphs who tended the springs; the island itself bore the epithet Hydrousa. Once an evil power sent a monstrous lion who drove them away to Euboea—surely a poetical record of a rare and damaging drought, still symbolized by a huge figure of the beast on a hillside near Ioulis.

The slopes were, and are, terraced for vineyards (Pl. 77:g). Grapes, wine jars, the head of Dionysos are emblems on classical Greek coins. Useful minerals exist: gray, yellowish and near-white marble; miltos, the red ocher always needed by potters and prized especially by Athenians of classical times; metals—iron, lead, and possibly silver and copper, as at near-by Laurion—which were worked in the many crucibles that we have found in the Bronze Age contexts.

Most obvious of the island's assets are the sea and the geographical position. Fishing was good; tunnies are symbols on many coins. Waters are deep and clear (only

<sup>1</sup>No attempt could be made in the brief oral presentation (30 minutes) to include or even to touch upon all aspects of the large subject. In the present version a few of the spoken parts have been reduced, others expanded slightly, illustration and documentation minimized. Evidence of preliterate habitations, as seen chiefly up to now in the excavations at Ayia Irini, may be found in preliminary reports and studies in *Hesperia* (1962–1980) and other journals. For much further information about subsequent periods see J. N. Psyllas, *Ἱστορία τῆς Νήσου Κέας*, Athens 1920 and Büchner's compact but full account, with references, in Pauly-Wissowa, *RE*, s.v. Keos.

recently polluted by oil spills and other human degradations). Principal routes of maritime trade from the southern mainland to the Aegean pass along the north coast; those between the southern Cyclades and the Euripos hug the eastern and western shores. The island is conveniently close to Attica. A great natural harbor, well sheltered from storms, all but landlocked, opens to the northwest (Pl. 77:c-f). It can hold big vessels or a large fleet of small ones and has done so repeatedly. Minos came here with 50 ships; Nestor stopped with his squadron on the way home from Troy and founded a temple. Throughout antiquity and in the Middle Ages it was frequented. Today we see freighters, fishermen, scores of yachts, and wind-surfers.

#### CHRONOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE EARLY PERIODS

Let us briefly list the principal periods of occupation, with a few notes on their sequence.

##### I. *Neolithic*

The Cincinnati excavations have revealed parts of a Late Neolithic settlement and cemetery on the headland of Kephala (Pls. 77:a, b, 78:a).<sup>2</sup> Near it is another site on an imposing height called Paoura. This and several more, marked by scatterings of sherds but not yet investigated, have been recognized.

Ayia Irini, the site of our principal excavations, is on a promontory within the great harbor. Pottery like that of Kephala has been found there in cavities in the native rock, below the massed accumulations of later periods. A few single pieces from deep levels are of types apparently assignable to Early and Middle Neolithic. No trace of buildings has been found in association with these remnants of the Stone Age. We have not explored widely at these depths since some places are submerged below the modern water level and most, if not all, are covered by remains of the Bronze Age which must be preserved. Clearly, people of Neolithic ages were here. Patient digging elsewhere on the site hereafter may reveal whether they settled or merely camped from time to time, stopping perhaps briefly on their voyages.

It is all but certain that Ayia Irini was then abandoned over a considerable interval. No remains that are securely datable to the first phase of the Early Bronze Age have yet been recognized.

##### II-III. *Middle and late phases of the Early Bronze Age*

Unlike the Neolithic remnants, the evidence of Early Bronze Age occupation is abundant. Lower courses of walls in fine masonry, generally well preserved, have been found in several areas. These mark the clustered rooms of permanent buildings, in which were successive floor deposits with pottery of Aegean EB II (notably sauceboats; but see also Pl. 78:b) and, above this, strata of a following phase that corresponds generally with EB III. Some of the walls were rebuilt in the same style as before; some rooms were altered or added in the later phase; but there was no indication of violent

<sup>2</sup>J. E. Coleman, *Keos, I, Kephala*, Princeton 1977.

destruction. Much pottery of EB III is indistinguishable, or shows only gradual development, from that of EB II. A few pieces, however, are clearly different: plates, bowls, cups, tankards (e.g. Pl. 78:c), depa amphikypella, in burnished black and red-brown wares. These suggest an origin in, or at least a direct relationship with, Anatolian models (e.g. in Troy III–IV). Few seem close to the normal repertory of EH III on the southern Greek mainland (e.g. in Lerna IV).

Not all the evidence has yet been analysed in detail, but it seems clear that new people settled at Ayia Irini in the era of the sauceboat. They prospered on the good land and sea. In the late phase another group joined them, bringing some other elements of material culture but coming not as conquerors or destroyers. Then, after further generations of healthy life, the period ended, once more without violence. The site was abandoned, just when and why we know not.

#### IV–V. *The Middle Bronze Age*

After an undetermined lapse of time, which included perhaps the first phase of the MBA as known at some other sites in the Aegean area, the place was settled again, presumably for the same reasons but with changes. A wall of defense with gateway and U-shaped tower was built across the peninsula. Houses were aligned differently from those of the EBA and built in a less regular style of masonry. Objects were imported from various regions, notably ring-stemmed goblets in good gray Minyan ware of the Middle Helladic mainland. Now too a temple was built (see below), and grave plots were established along the eastern and western flanks of the town (cf. Pl. 78:d). These features imply a people with distinct ways, beliefs and tastes, living in economic and political conditions that called for measures of defense against enemies or marauders. Thucydides (1.5) speaks of the pirates who attacked unwallled cities.

Toward the end of the MBA, in the time of the MM III ceramic style, the town had grown in size and prosperity. The first circuit of fortifications no longer sufficed and seems to have fallen into disuse. Now (in our Period V) it was replaced by a greater structure that surrounded more ground, where more buildings arose. A new phase of vigorous activity was under way.

#### VI–VII. *The Late Bronze Age, first and second phases*

Without interruption this activity continued into the opening of the LBA. New evidences are conspicuous at Ayia Irini in the architecture and implements: the great mansion or palace called House A<sup>3</sup> and other impressive places of residence and business (Pl. 77:h), additions to the walls of the citadel, alterations in the temple and, quite certainly by this time, the first of the many big terracotta statues of women that were soon to stand in it. Fine pottery of LM IA style was imported from Crete, as also vases from neighboring islands (e.g. Pl. 78:e) and the early Mycenaean mainland; bits, scant but significant, of Linear A script. Minoan influence was strong. This was the time of the Thalassocracy. But local ways and materials were still dominant, and if Cretan

<sup>3</sup>Presented fully by W. W. Cummer and E. Schofield in *Keos* III, forthcoming.

*oikistai* were now in Keos they were, I think, peaceful immigrant settlers rather than masters.

Development continued, again without a break, in the time of LM IB/LH II pottery (e.g. Pl. 78:f, g). Further bold additions were made in the buildings of the town. Beside the outer face of the circuit wall, near the main gateway, were a heroic tomb and tumulus and an elegant little structure with flagstone floor and frescoed walls. Fear of attack must have passed, for these monuments would have given aid and shelter to an enemy who tried to scale the ramparts. Shall we not conclude that Minos had by now succeeded in pacificating the Aegean and ridding it of pirates?

The temple at this stage reached its greatest splendor, now holding more than fifty tall figures of women (e.g. Pl. 78:h)<sup>4</sup> in postures of the dance, honoring and appealing to the tutelary deity, and many other offerings (e.g. Pl. 78:i, j).

Then came a mighty disaster. Near the middle of the 15th century B.C. most of the buildings of the town were destroyed, not by fire or flood but almost surely by one great earthquake. Human skeletons are not found in the debris; perhaps minor shocks had given warning. The people escaped; few returned at once to rebuild amongst the ruins.

### VIII. *The Mycenaean period*

Some of the hardier refugees may have come back fairly soon—say, in a year or two—and other people joined them before long. The settlement was re-established. Dwellings were rebuilt but not on a grand scale. The full extent of the town cannot be determined, since the remains are scarcely below today's ground level and most have been lost through erosion.

Very little Minoan pottery has been found at this height. Cretans, no longer potent even at home, may have given up contact with Keos. Mycenaean vessels, however, of LH IIIA1 and A2 styles are present in considerable numbers (e.g. Pl. 79:a).<sup>5</sup> Then there may have been another earthquake: direct supply of spring water was cut off; most of the houses, if not all, were abandoned. Pottery of LH IIIB is scarce and that of IIIC is lacking altogether in areas of habitation that have been examined.

Stratified evidence of the post-earthquake periods has been found only in the temple. The building was reconstructed in LH IIIA1; rough stone bases for vertical wooden supports were added, and new floors were leveled; one terracotta statue, somewhat different in structure from the earlier groups, was made, probably in the time of IIIA2. Relatively little pottery of IIIB has been recognized.

Worship was renewed more intensively in IIIC. At least three phases were represented by successive levels that indicate interruptions by damage, probably caused by further earthquakes, but the holy place was restored each time. One may wonder whether the legendary dedication by Nestor of a temple to Apollo Smintheus might

<sup>4</sup>Presented fully by M. E. Caskey in *Keos II*, forthcoming.

<sup>5</sup>The image of a warrior incised on a marble stele (Pl. 79:b), found out of context, is presumably Mycenaean of this date.

probably refer to one stage of this very building (though the many vessels found by us suggest the serving of wine rather than the worship of the God of Mice!). In any case, it is probable that this temple at that time stood alone on the promontory, like the church of Ayia Irini today.

### *Summary*

Thus we see at Ayia Irini a sharp break in continuity and long interval after the Neolithic period, probable abandonment for a time after the Early Bronze Age, violent interruption by the great earthquake in phase II of the Late Bronze Age, and, except in the temple, diminishing activity on the site after Late Helladic IIIA. The temple continued as a single architectural unit until a late or final phase of LH IIIC.

Topographical surveys conducted in recent years have yielded evidence, chiefly through pottery seen on the surface, of occupation in some of the early periods at other places on the island. When the results have been analysed and made known, further excavation will surely be profitable and illuminating.

### LATER HISTORY

Much is known, and much remains to be learned, about habitation in Keos and the role of the Keians in periods after the Bronze Age. The topic is too large for treatment here but it may be illustrated by a selection of notes.

At Ayia Irini almost all the evidence comes from the area of the temple. That building was never again wholly rebuilt but spaces within it were enclosed as small shrines. Room 1 at the western corner, where parts of the statues were uncovered in LH IIIA when debris was being removed soon after the great destruction, may well have been respected at that time, and continuously thenceforth, as the most sacred area.

The excavation of Room 1 revealed many successive strata above the late Mycenaean, from Protogeometric through Geometric, Archaic, Classical (Pl. 79:c-e, h, j), and, at the top, a Hellenistic structure. Repeated renewals had of course disturbed the strata, removing much of the total accumulation and thus denying us precise knowledge of the periods, intervals and sequence. Most striking of the discoveries was a floor of *ca.* 700 B.C. where the head of statue 1-1 (K3.611) was found carefully set on a stand in a ring of stones, obviously regarded as an object of veneration. In a later context was the base of an Attic skyphos of *ca.* 500 B.C. with a graffito marking it as a dedication to Dionysos.<sup>6</sup>

In upper levels of the original rooms, or just above the tops of walls as now preserved, parts of similar sequences were seen. Room 2 was never cleared out so deeply as Room 1 but was covered by Classical and Hellenistic strata. A late shrine was found in the western part of Room 3. At the north corner of Room 6 were remains of another small enclosure that had been built in the last phase of LH IIIC but contained intrusions from Geometric times. In short, a scattering of objects of the Iron Age and subse-

<sup>6</sup> *Hesperia* 33, 1964, pp. 333-334 and pl. 64:a, b.

quent Classical periods was evident in and above almost all areas of the old building and just outside it.

Keos had four cities in historical Greek times. Foremost was Ioulis, inland, high on the northern hills, famous as the home of Simonides, Bacchylides, and Prodicus. It is the chief modern town, crowded with buildings and therefore not readily accessible for archaeological excavation. Its port was Koresos (modern Koressia) at the southwestern end of the great harbor. Parts of ancient walls are visible, a fine kouros of the 6th century was found, and the place of a temple on the hill above; but here too the active harbor town blocks detailed investigation. On the west coast was Poieessa (Poieessa, Poiassa); on the southeast Karthaia, an important city of the tetrapolis, where excavations have revealed fortifications, temples, sculpture, a theater, and other buildings. Ancient authors and inscriptions name many smaller villages and shrines in regions around the four main centers, and evidence of still others has been noted.

Four Keian ships joined the allied fleet in the Persian War, at Artemision and Salamis, and possibly also at Mykale. Being islanders and Ionians, their sympathies were with Athens, to whose league and empire they adhered, as again later to the Second Confederacy. From time to time they were associated, by choice or compulsion, with Spartans, Thebans, Macedonians, and the Aetolian League.

In the Cremonidean War Ptolemy Philadelphos sent his fleet under the command of the admiral Patroklos to support Athens against Antigonos Gonatas. It made its base in Keos—indubitably, I think, in the great harbor—and established a fort at Koroni on the Attic coast near by. A town on the harbor, possibly Koresos, was renamed for a time Arsinoe; and some of the Egyptians may have visited the temple at Ayia Irini.<sup>7</sup>

Houses, other buildings, and graves in Keos give evidence of continuous habitation through much of the Roman period. Cicero visited the island in 51 B.C.; statues of Julius Caesar as benefactor and savior were set up at Karthaia. At Ayia Irini a big pit full of late Roman pottery was found over the ruins of House A.

The Byzantine era is represented by remains of small churches and other indications. Venetians were present from the 13th century. In the 16th century the island was made a part of the Ottoman empire.

Lambros Katsonis, an astoundingly gifted and enterprising character, left Greece as a young man and made his way to Russia. There he soon won recognition, was commissioned as an officer, and succeeded in brilliant exploits. The empress Catherine the Great, her country engaged in the Second Russo-Turkish War, readily chose Katsonis for an independent mission. At Trieste in 1788 he bought an American-built ship of 28 guns, named it "Athena of the North", and on his voyage to Greek waters recruited 17 other ships for his armada.

They chose Keos (now generally called Tzia) as their base of operations and raised the torch of rebellion against the Turks. The Sultan tried to buy them off, an offer

<sup>7</sup>J. L. Caskey, "Koroni and Keos," *Hesperia*, Suppl. XIX, *Studies in Attic Epigraphy, History, and Topography*, Princeton 1981, pp. 14–16.

which they rejected with scorn. In 1790 they met and fought savagely against a much larger enemy fleet. As darkness fell they withdrew to the great harbor, and a Turkish squadron blockaded the narrow entrance. Recognizing the odds, Katsonis resorted to a now-famous stratagem. In the moonless night he sank all his ships except the smallest one, which the combined crews rolled and carried across a low narrow neck of the enclosing headland and launched in the open sea (Pl. 79:i). Thus Lambros himself and chosen companions made their escape.

This episode, comprising elements of typically Greek imagination, quickness and daring, was one of many in the next generation. The struggle for freedom throughout the land, aided by allied powers against the Turks, brought liberation. Tzia was joined to the new kingdom in 1832.

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a. Headland of Kephala from southwest



b. Remains of a Neolithic house at Kephala



c. View southeastward toward Ioulis



d. View south-southwestward toward Korissia



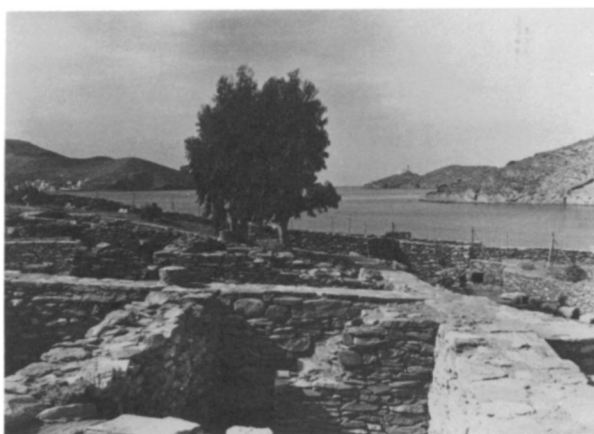
e. Ayia Irini, the bay and Vourkari from north



f. View southwestward to the harbor mouth



g. Ayia Irini and terraced hill behind, from south



h. House walls and fortifications from east-northeast





a. Late Neolithic jar used as burial urn, from Kephala



b. Fragment of zoomorphic pot, the "Teddy Bear with begging bowl." Early Bronze Age II



c. Tankard. Early Bronze Age III



d. Middle Cycladic jar used as burial urn



e. Shoulder fragment of large jar with griffins. Late Bronze Age I. Photo by Deutsches Archäologisches Institut



f. Cup with reed pattern. Late Minoan IB



h. Head of terracotta statue from the temple. Late Bronze Age (I-II)



g. Bowl with crocus pattern. Late Minoan IB. Watercolor by Piet de Jong



i, j. Minoan bronze statuette from the temple. Late Bronze Age IA-B



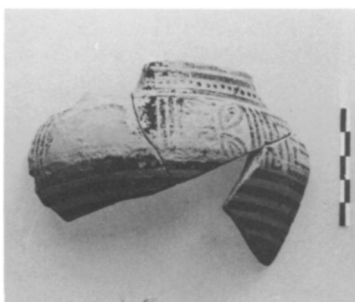
a. Kylix. Late Helladic IIIA1



b. Marble slab with Mycenaean warrior



c. Protogeometric skyphos



d. Kantharos fragment. Late Geometric I



e. Miniature skyphos of Corinthian type



f. Inscription at Ligourio



g. Eleventh-century church at Ligourio in Epidauria



h. Attic black-glazed cup of Type C. Late 6th century



i. Katsonis Gap. Keos



j. Black-glazed kantharos of Boiotian type