

**RECENT WORK ON THE CULTS OF BOEOTIA:
ARCHAEOLOGY, EPIGRAPHY, AND HISTORY**

Πρόσφατο έργο για τις λατρείες της Βοιωτίας: Αρχαιολογία, Επιγραφική, Ιστορία

Tuesday, 5 December

Panel 1: Dedicatory Practices

Dimitra Oikonomou (Εφορεία Αρχαιοτήτων Βοιωτίας, dimitra.oikonomou@yahoo.com), *Οι τρίποδες στα βοιωτικά ιερά* (9:40-10:00)

Δεν έχουν βρεθεί στη Βοιωτία τρίποδες των μνημειωδών τύπων που αφιερώνονταν στα πανελλήνια ιερά κατά τη Γεωμετρική περίοδο. Ωστόσο τα ελάχιστα θραύσματα τρίποδων, από τα βοιωτικά ιερά της αρχαϊκής, κλασικής και ελληνιστικής περιόδου με πανελλήνια εμβέλεια (στο Πτώο όρος, στο όρος Ελικώνα, στα ιερά του Απόλλωνα Ισμηνίου και του Ηρακλή στη Θήβα, στις Πλαταιές, τον Ορχομενό, την Κορώνεια) αποδεικνύουν ότι οι ιδιαίτερες κοινωνικές, πολιτικές και ιστορικές συνθήκες, ευνόησαν και εξυπηρέτησαν την αφιέρωσή τους, ως σύμβολα πλούτου, πολιτικής δύναμης και θρησκευτικής εξουσίας. Νέα στοιχεία από θηβαϊκό Ηράκλειο, που βρισκόταν λίγο έξω από την κύρια πύλη της πόλης, επιβεβαιώνουν την αφιέρωση των τρίποδων ως θρησκευτικών συμβόλων και πρακτικών.

Nikos Gkiokas (Duke University, nikos.gkiokas@duke.edu), *Kouros statues and human experience of the sanctuary of Apollo Ptoos* (10:00-10:20)

The sanctuary of Apollo Ptoos was a vital agent in the religious and political history of Archaic Boeotia. According to Ducat (1971) around 120 kouroi had accumulated in the area of the sanctuary during this period, the largest assemblage of such statues from a single sanctuary. I argue that these statues fundamentally impacted the experience of the human users of the space. Visitors could have a panoramic view of the over life size kouroi from afar and then wander amongst this army of statues, some of which were under life size, when they were in the sanctuary. Other aspects of the sanctuary – the rocky backdrop, the fountain, the architecture, the trees and vegetation – would have shaped and affected this experience. The large population of kouroi differentiates the experience of this sanctuary from experiences of other sacred spaces. Also, the statues' varied style, standard iconography, large assemblage, distribution and overwhelming physical presence in the sanctuary communicate and color their aristocratic message: god-like men have common identity and a mission to co-operate and rule. In my paper I zoom in on the mechanism of how this propaganda evolves in the sanctuary setting.

Maria Mili (University of Glasgow, maria.mili@glasgow.ac.uk), *Family and the individual in Boiotian dedications* (10:20-10:40)

The paper explores the role of family in Boiotian religion by looking at the evidence of Boiotian dedications. It will look in detail at Boiotian votive reliefs and inscribed dedications to explore the ways in which the images on the reliefs, the inscribed texts and the accompanying dedicated objects, shaped particular perceptions of the family as a unit, and of the role of various family members in it. The Boiotian evidence is compared with similar material from Thessaly, a neighboring area with which Boiotia shared similarities in political forms, religious tradition and with which it claimed links of

kinship. The purpose of the comparison is to highlight what is distinctively Boiotian. Finally, the paper will discuss the evidence in the light of what we know about gender roles in Boiotia, as well about the role of the family in Boiotian political and religious ideology.

Panel 2: Local Cults through Time

Alice Solazzo (University of Palermo, alice.solazzo@unipa.it), *Re-evaluating the role of Poseidon in Boeotia: "pan-Boiotian" god?* (11:40-12:00)

In *Cults of Boiotia*, Albert Schachter argued that Poseidon never has the function of "pan-Boiotian" God, as this characteristic belongs only to Athena and Zeus Karaios. More recent studies on Poseidon's prerogatives, in the region and beyond, together with excavations carried out up to 2020 by Ioannis Mylonopoulos, prompt a reconsideration of this deity's field of influence in Boeotia. In the 4th century BC the shrine consecrated to him at Onchestos was selected as the meeting place of the koinon reconstituted by Philip II in the aftermath of the Battle of Chaeronea. This choice can only be explained by recourse to the role that the god played in the identity affirmation of the Boeotians and in the formation of a religious amphictyony in the region from very early times.

The aim of this report is to show that not only Poseidon in Boeotia was perceived as a true regional god, but that he can even be counted as a federal god, since the Onchesteion fits into a larger network linking the Boeotian amphictyony to the other federal contexts of Greece presided over by Poseidon, especially when looking at the Peloponnese and the Ionian dodecapolis.

Eleni Goula (Εφορεία Αρχαιοτήτων Βοιωτίας, egoula05@gmail.com), *Αλαλκομενεία-Τριτογένεια Αθηνά: ο προϊστορικός προκάτοχος της Ιτωνίας* (12:00-12:20)

Σύμφωνα με την κυρίαρχη άποψη που παραδίδεται από τις φιλολογικές πηγές, η λατρεία της Ιτωνίας Αθηνάς μεταλαμπαδεύτηκε στην Βοιωτία από την Θεσσαλία κατά την κάθοδο των Βοιωτών. Πολλοί μάλιστα υποστηρίζουν πως πρόκειται για μια Θεσσαλική λατρεία. Όμως, ανάμεσα στις ομώνυμες λατρείες των δύο περιοχών (Θεσσαλία και Βοιωτία) διαπιστώνονται αρκετές διαφορές που αφορούν τους ιδρυτικούς μύθους, την λατρευτική δομή και το περιεχόμενο, υποδεικνύοντας πως στηρίζονται σε διαφορετικές παραδόσεις. Στην παρούσα ανακοίνωση θα επιχειρηθεί να εξηγηθεί το παράδοξο αυτό φαινόμενο. Υποστηρίζεται πως πρόδρομος της Ιτωνίας λατρείας είναι η πανάρχαια λατρεία της Αλαλκομενείας ή Τριτογένειας Αθηνάς στην κωπαιδική λεκάνη, η οποία, όπως θα επιχειρηθεί να καταδειχτεί ανάγεται στην νεολιθική εποχή και συνδέεται με την διάδοση της γεωργίας και την αναζήτηση μεταλλευτικών πηγών στον χώρο του Αιγαίου.

Efi Kourouni (Εφορεία Αρχαιοτήτων Βοιωτίας, efikourouni@yahoo.com), *Διόνυσος. Από τους Σατύρους και τις Μαινάδες στους Βλάχους* (12:20-12:40)

Ο Διόνυσος, θεός του κρασιού, της βλάστησης, του θεάτρου αλλά και των μυστηρίων, λατρεύτηκε στον αρχαίο ελληνικό κόσμο μέσα από γιορτές με τραγούδι, χορό, και πομπές όσο κανείς άλλος θεός. Στη Θεογονία αναφέρεται ρητά πως αφού η θνητή Σεμέλη έσμιξε με τον Δία, γέννησε θεό. Η γέννηση του θεού απ' την κεραυνοβολημένη κόρη του Κάδμου, είναι κι ο επικρατέστερος μύθος κυρίως όταν ο Διόνυσος και η λατρεία του είχε καθιερωθεί ήδη στην Ελλάδα και είχε εξαπλωθεί στη Βοιωτία. Ο Διόνυσος λατρευόταν στη Θήβα ως Διόνυσος Λυσιος, "ελευθερωτής". Είναι ταυτόχρονα «τοπική» θεότητα, στενά συνδεδεμένη με έναν μύθο και ένα πλαίσιο θείας γέννησης θρύλος της πόλης, με την

εισαγωγή νέων τελετουργιών. Οι εορτές που λάμβαναν χώρα προς τιμήν του ήταν τα Αγριώνια, και τα Ηράκλεια Διονύσια. Οι διονυσιακές γιορτές που ήταν αφιερωμένες σ' αυτόν και οι απεικονίσεις στην αγγειοπλαστική, καταδεικνύουν το πόσο αγαπητός θεός ήταν για τους ανθρώπους. Η μεταμφίεση κατά τη διάρκεια των εορτών του, ήταν αναπόσπαστο κομμάτι της τελετουργίας και υιοθετήθηκε σχεδόν σε κάθε λατρευτική εκδήλωση προς τιμήν του θεού. Τα σύμβολα που χρησιμοποιήθηκαν στη Διονυσιακή λατρεία, ήταν πολλά και καθένα απ' αυτά φανέρωνε τις διαφορετικές όψεις του θεού, τόσο έντονα και γλαφυρά, ώστε στο πέρασμα των αιώνων τα ταυτίζουν με εκείνον και παρόλο που αφομοιώθηκαν από την Χριστιανική θρησκεία, να συνεχίζουν να απαντώνται σε παραδοσιακά έθιμα που τελούνται σε ολόκληρη την Ελλάδα. Ειδικά στην περίοδο της αποκριάς, η μάσκα που τόσο συνδέθηκε με τον Διόνυσο, είναι το απαραίτητο στοιχείο κάθε λαϊκού δρώμενου με τους συμμετέχοντες να την χρησιμοποιούν προκειμένου να αποκρύψουν την ταυτότητα τους και να ντυθούν μια διαφορετική προσωπικότητα. Ο βλάχικος γάμος ένα από τα αποκριάτικα έθιμα που αναβιώνει κάθε χρόνο στη Θήβα, φαίνεται να έχει στοιχεία που διακρίνονται για τον διονυσιακό τους χαρακτήρα. Σε αυτή τη γιορτή, το λαϊκό έθιμο που έχει καταβολές και ρίζες σε διονυσιακά δρώμενα, κυριαρχούν οι μεταμφιέσεις, τα κουδούνια, τα τραγούδια, οι χοροί και οι αναπαραστάσεις. Μέσα από την παρούσα ανακοίνωση θα προαπαθήσουμε να αναδείξουμε την αέναη συνέχιση του ελληνικού πολιτισμού μέσα από τη διονυσιακή λατρεία από την αρχαιότητα έως σήμερα. Η παρακαταθήκη που άφησε η Διονυσιακή λατρεία στους αιώνες είναι έντονη και εφελτήριο για την εξέλιξη του τραγουδιού, του χορού, της ποίησης και κυρίως της γέννησης του θεάτρου.

Panel 3: Constructing Sacred Landscapes

Vassileios Aravantinos (Εφορεία Αρχαιοτήτων Βοιωτίας, vass.aravantinos@gmail.com) and Kyriaki Kalliga (Εφορεία Αρχαιοτήτων Βοιωτίας, kikalliga@yahoo.gr), *Το ιερό του Ηρακλή στη Θήβα και η συμβολή του στη δημιουργία πολιτικής ταυτότητας στη Θήβα των όψιμων γεωμετρικών – πρώιμων αρχαϊκών χρόνων* (2:30-2:50)

Από τις τελευταίες δεκαετίες του 8^{ου} αι. π.Χ. -μετά από αιώνες παρακμής και εγκατάλειψης- η Θήβα αρχίζει να διεκδικεί κυρίαρχο ρόλο στη Βοιωτία. Ωστόσο, ανάλογες αξιώσεις εγείρει και η γειτονική της Αθήνα. Ο ανταγωνισμός των δύο πόλεων αποτυπώνεται στη χωροθέτηση των ιερών των βασικών θεοτήτων της Θήβας, δηλ. του Ισμηνίου Απόλλωνα και του Ηρακλή, έξω από τα νότια τείχη της πόλης.

Το ιερό του Ηρακλή, γνωστό από τις αρχαίες πηγές, αποκαλύφθηκε σε σωστική ανασκαφή το 2005. Ο πυρήνας της πρώιμης λατρείας εντοπίζεται σε μια τελετουργική πυρά μεγάλων διαστάσεων, στην οποία αφιερώνονταν τα πήλινα σκεύη που χρησιμοποιούνταν στα τελετουργικά γεύματα.

Η ανάλυση των κεραμικών ευρημάτων της πυράς μπορεί να δώσει πληροφορίες για τους συμμετέχοντες, το είδος αλλά και τον σκοπό των τελετών σε μια εποχή όπου η Θήβα αρχίζει να εδραιώνει τη θέση της ως κυρίαρχη πόλη της Βοιωτίας.

Michael Dyer (University of St. Andrews, mad27@st-andrews.ac.uk), *'Don't pick the laurels.' The Sanctuary of Apollo Ptoion, local agriculture and 5th century BC Boiotia* (2:50-3:10)

Alongside its Archaic prestige and Hellenistic rejuvenation, the paucity of Classical material from the Sanctuary of Apollo Ptoion demonstrably indicates a period of decline. While scholarship has moved past a model that sees this as part of a conflict between Akraiphia and Thebes, questions still remain over why this occurred in the mid to late 5th century. This gap is illustrated by Schachter's comments, where Akraiphia could have 'easily afforded' both the Sanctuary of Apollo Ptoion and the

nearby sanctuary of the Ptoion hero in the late Archaic/Early Classical period, but that 'later on all this would change'.

Through an interdisciplinary study, this paper suggests that activity at the sanctuary is intimately linked with the local environment, agricultural network and Boiotian politics in the mid to late 5th century BC. Through archaeobotanical datasets from comparable Archaic sanctuaries of Apollo, Archaic and Hellenistic epigraphic evidence from the Sanctuary of Apollo Ptoion, and the local environment of the Akraiphian *chora*, it is argued that the sanctuary of Apollo Ptoion formed a prominent node in an agricultural network around Mt Ptoion that was locally significant for Akraiphia. This is in contrast to its position in the Theban *chora*, where it occupied a regionally marginal space. It is theorised that the continuing dedications at both Ptoion sanctuaries through to the mid-late 5th century is related to continued agricultural activity, but where Theban landholders' primary interest was socio-political rather than economic. The subsequent decline of the sanctuary in the late 5th century coincides with Theban expansion throughout southern Boiotia, where the newly available, fluvial land diminished the socio-political advantage of agricultural activity on Mt Ptoion. As agriculture activity around the sanctuary subsided, so too did the wealth of dedications and development of the site. The Sanctuary of Apollo Ptoion's Classical history exemplifies not the relationship between landscape and religious worship, but between agricultural networks and displays of wealth.

Yannis Kalliontzis (Ionian University, ykalliontzis@ionio.gr), Guillaume Biard (Aix Marseille Université, guillaume.biard@univ-amu.fr), Alexandra Charami (Εφορεία Αρχαιοτήτων Βοιωτίας, alexharami@gmail.com), *The sanctuary of the Muses at the Valley of the Muses: New research* (3:10-3:40)

The French School at Athens and the Ephorate of Antiquities of Boiotia are conducting a new research project on the sanctuary of the Muses at the Valley of the Muses. The aim of this project is to study the topography of the sanctuary and also the buildings and the material unearthed during the excavations of P. Jamot at the end of the 19th century. These monuments were never thoroughly published and a lot of questions about the sanctuary remain unanswered. From 2015 to this year, we have studied the architecture of the altar of the Muses and we have produced a new reconstruction of this central monument. We have equally studied other monuments, like the base bearing the statues of the Muses and other statue bases. All this work on the sanctuary will be the object of our current talk.

Wednesday, December 6, 2023

Panel 4: Text and Cult

Bartłomiej Bednarek (Ludwig-Maximilians University, bp.bednarek@uw.edu.pl), *Dionysus Eleuthereus in Eleutherae and in the Bacchae* (9:00-9:20)

It is a commonplace statement that many Athenian tragedies contain an aetiology of cults. Euripides' *Bacchae* probably was no exception, even though a large part of its epilogue in which Dionysus *ex machina* described the establishment of his cult has been lost. On the metatheatrical level, the play features a chorus of youths dressed as Bacchae and tells a story of a crossdressing tragic king, who served as their prototype. It is, therefore, natural to suspect that the lost part of the epilogue contained a reference to a cult of the divinity that was worshipped during the City Dionysia: Dionysus Eleuthereus. According to tradition, the statue of this god was brought to Athens by the end of the sixth century BCE from Eleutherae, a village at the foot of Cithaeron and situated very close to the

border between Attica and Boeotia. As we learn from the fragments of Euripides' *Antiope*, Eleutherae was also the place traditionally associated with the Bacchic revelry of Theban women. These and similar references scattered in the ancient literature confronted with the topography of the area strongly suggest that Euripides' *Bacchae* contained the aetiology of the cult of Dionysus that would originally take place somewhere in Cithaeron, near the Hyrai, Erythrai and Eleutherai villages. Even after the incorporation of the latter settlement into Attica, Theban people offered sacrifices there once a year.

Nazim Can Serbest (Yale University, nazimcan.serbest@yale.edu), *Thucydides and the Daidala: An ecocritical re-examination* (9:20-9:40)

The significance of the physical environment in Thucydides' narrative of the Theban and Spartan assaults against Plataea suggests a religious background (Foster 2009; Bruzzone 2019; Kingsley 2020) that his ancient readers must have understood more easily than us (Liotsakis 2015). Iversen (2007) has identified the context of the Theban attack of 431 as the celebration of the Little Daidala, and interpreted the cult of Hera through the Thebans' political claims over Plataea, building on Schachter's allusion to temple-building as a political act (1981: 245). This paper offers an ecocritical rereading of Thucydides' Plataean episodes in connection to later evidence on the Daidala in Plutarch and Pausanias. It argues that the Plataean cult of Hera was instrumental for the clashes between Boeotian polities, and was important for the Boeotians' experience of such conflicts. Thucydides' narrative suggests that the Plataean physical landscape helped them forge connections between politics and cults.

Tullia Spinedi (University of Urbino, tullia.spinedi@doc.orsoline.it), *Mythology, rituals, sexual boundaries: intersections between local poetry, local historiography, material culture in eastern Boiotia* (9:40-10)

The poetry of Corinna, whose chronology is debated, is characterized by a distinctive narrative content, and reveals a local, inner point of view, devoted to a regional, 'ethnic' mythology. This means that a 'female' voice appears to be appointed to celebrate local heroes and episodes: Corinna's compositions are not confined to female audiences and themes. Her poetry also shares some interests with local historiographers, engaged in discussion about foundations, etiologies, identity of places: they focus significant places, as the Ogygian gates or the Teumesos promontory in the Theban area. Corinna's mythography pays attention to the eastern side of the region too: her poems preserve references to eastern towns, such as Aulis, Hyria, Tanagra; to eastern heroes, such as Euonymos and Orion; to eastern genealogies and religious activities, (marriages, sacrifices, consultation of oracles...).

The aim of the presentation is to compare Corinna's fragments concerning eastern Boiotia (including *Boeotica incerti auctoris*, with a few new readings and interpretations that may reveal an interest in traditions concerning Aulis) to local historiographers' sources and material finds, to investigate eastern mythology and ritual practices; this might even enlighten women's involvement in shaping local identity.

Panel 5: Ceramics in Context

Trevor Van Damme (University of Victoria, trevvd@uvic.ca), *Two Euboean cult vessels from Eleon and their Late Archaic context* (11:00-11:20)

The Eastern Boeotia Archaeological Project, a synergasia between the Ephorate of Boeotian Antiquities and the Canadian Institute in Greece, has excavated on the acropolis of ancient Eleon since 2011. These excavations have revealed considerable investment in the monumentalization of the acropolis in the 6th century BCE but so far, the remains of a temple or altar on the acropolis remain elusive. From 2012–2018, the excavation of a gateway and ramped approach to the acropolis from the east revealed significant quantities of discarded votive pottery and terracotta figurines, as well as other ritual objects such as bronze phialai. These appear to be in secondary deposition, having been used to successively raise and grade the ramped approach to the acropolis. It is unclear therefore whether the material can be assigned to a single cult or perhaps multiple cults located in as-of-yet unexcavated parts of the site.

This paper presents what is known about the cults of ancient Eleon based on a review of the ancient sources and archaeological finds from the acropolis itself. I will then focus my attention on two clear Euboean imports found among the votive materials in the ramped entrance to the acropolis: a diminutive hydria and a high-necked jug. Both vessels can be placed in the later part of the 6th century BCE based on parallels from Euboea and their find contexts at Eleon. On Euboea both finds are closely connected with cults of Artemis. After a brief consideration of their significance for identifying the cult or cults worshipped on the Eleon acropolis, I briefly conclude by remarking on the significance of increased interaction between Boeotia and Euboea in the Late Archaic period, namely the co-ordinated invasion of Attica documented by Herodotus in 506 BCE (Hdt. 5.74).

Amy Smith (Reading University, a.c.smith@reading.ac.uk) and Katerina Volioti (University of Roehampton, Katerina.Volioti@roehampton.ac.uk), *Boeotian cups in their rural context* (11:20-11:40)

Boeotian black-figure ceramics are known for hastiness in decoration, Athenian influence, and evocations of festival culture. Whereas the kantharos is the characteristic ritual drinking shape of Boeotia, e.g., at the Kabirion, in this presentation we focus on black-figure kylikes or shallow cups, dating to the second half of the fifth century, which recall the crudeness of the Haimon Group that thrived in Athens in the earlier fifth century and likewise catered to festival contexts. Indeed, Haimonian cups, which are otherwise rare, are frequently found at Boeotian sites. In our consideration of the interchange between black-figure kylikes/cups from these neighbouring ceramic centres we consider iconographies as well as shape and decorative details, in seeking to understand their relevance to Boeotia's festival culture. Boeotian kylikes are characterised by more vegetation, especially elongated palmettes perhaps under the influence of Euboean and local floral ware, but also birds and other animals. We suggest that such an emphasis on nature emerges from Boeotia's rural context, wherein agricultural activity remained at the heart of local festivals to a greater degree than in the urbanised Athens. with its formalised festivals such as the Panathenaia.

Alexandra Zampiti (Διεύθυνση Προϊστορικών και Κλασικών Αρχαιοτήτων, azampiti@culture.gr), *Graffiti on ceramic offerings to the Leibethrian Nymphs of Helicon* (11:40-12)

The cave of the Leibethrian Nymphs on Mount Helicon is one of the few cult places that has been researched in Boeotia. Although it is located at a height of 820 m. above sea level, the worshipped deities seemed to be very popular and beloved by the local communities as attested by the hundreds of various votive offerings that have been unearthed in the cave. Among them numerous artifacts bear inscriptions, mostly of votive character. This paper focuses on the vases' graffiti which constitute the predominant category of those votive inscriptions and on the vases themselves. Apart from being the indisputable epigraphic evidence of the deities worshipped in the cave and despite their short,

formulaic, and schematic nature, they help us to further our knowledge about the identity of the dedicants that reached the cave with their offerings. Moreover, the use of the Boeotian dialect and of the Boeotian writing style on vases that can be safely dated mostly from the end of the 6th century B.C. to the first half of the 5th century B.C. offers one more opportunity to broaden our experience in the language that was spoken by common people at that time in Boeotia.

Panel 6: New Evidence for Cult Practice

Alexandra Charami (Εφορεία Αρχαιοτήτων Βοιωτίας, alexharami@gmail.com) and Eleni Goula (Εφορεία Αρχαιοτήτων Βοιωτίας, egoula05@gmail.com), *Ιχνηλάτηση της καβιριακής λατρείας μέσα από ταφικά κτερίσματα της Βοιωτίας* (2:00-2:20)

Σε κάποιους τάφους από Τανάγρα, Θήβα και Λειβαδιά έχουμε στοιχεία από υστεροκλασικά και ελληνιστικά κυρίως κτερίσματα που μαρτυρούν ότι ο νεκρός ήταν μνημένος στα Καβίρια Μυστήρια. Οδηγός ιχνηλάτησης αυτών των ενδείξεων είναι η παρουσία συγκεκριμένων μοτίβων στις παραστάσεις αγγειογραφίας, τα οποία αφορούν μυθικές αφηγήσεις που έχουν δομικό ρόλο στην καβιριακή λατρεία. Στόχος της παρουσίασης ανακοίνωσης είναι να ανιχνευτεί η σημασία της καβιριακής λατρείας σε διάφορες βοιωτικές πόλεις και να αποκωδικοποιηθούν ορισμένα από τα σύμβολά της που συναντώνται σε ταφικά σύνολα.

Anne-Charlotte Panissie-Oddon (Université Paris Nanterre, annecharlotte.panissieoddon@parisnanterre.fr), *Between localism and federalism: Reconsideration of the role of Boeotian manteis in the Hellenistic period* (2:20-2:40)

Despite recent epigraphic and archaeological discoveries and of the change in perspective that has taken place in the study of Religion in Ancient Greece in the last few decades, the general study of Boeotian religious institutions has yet been largely neglected, with no particular attention paid to the agents of Boeotian cults.

However, the uniqueness of Boeotian cult personnel undoubtedly lies in the creation of federal agents in addition to civic ones, when the Boeotian *koinon* was refounded in 287 B.C. and some shrines were upgraded to federal sanctuaries, such as the oracular sanctuary of Apollon Ptoos in Akraiphia. A re-examination of federal dedications shows that federal responsibilities – in the case of the Ptoon, the *manteis* – were not designed to mimic civic charges, enabling functions to be truly complementary rather than duplicating each other. The federal level was thus superimposed on the civic level without minimizing its scope.

Without overstating the importance of the federal level over the civic one, as recent historiography has tended to do, we need to rethink this articulation between levels and restore the importance of localism through the example of agents at work in oracular shrines.

Nikolaos Papazarkadas (University of California, Berkeley; Εθνικό Ίδρυμα Ερευνών, papazarkadas@berkeley.edu), *The cult of Leto in Boeotia: New evidence* (2:40-3:00)

In my paper I will first investigate the rather rare, albeit not entirely unknown, cult of Leto in ancient Boeotia. This initial section of my paper will serve as the background against which I will introduce and analyze an unpublished Boeotian inscription that records a previously unattested epithet of Leto.

Panel 7: Crossing Boundaries

Evi Tsota (Εφορεία Αρχαιοτήτων Βοιωτίας, e_tsota@yahoo.com) and Sofia Perlepe (Εφορεία Αρχαιοτήτων Βοιωτίας, perlepesofia@gmail.com), *Liminal deities of Boeotia: crossers of boundaries and gate guardians* (4:00-4:20)

A liminal deity is a god or goddess in mythology presiding over thresholds, gates, or doorways, “a crosser of boundaries”. They are the gods presiding over passages and gates and have a very interesting role: to perform in moments of transition, helping humans navigate their way in unknown territories. Some of these gods include entities of agriculture, seasons, fertility, and crossroads. An entire group of liminal gods is also known as “psychopomps”, leading the dead through the journey from life to death, guiding them into the underworld. The present study aims to explore the presence of gate shrines, mainly in fortified Boeotian ancient cities, some dedicated to deities and some to heroes as gate guardians.

Elli Tzavella (Εφορεία Αρχαιοτήτων Βοιωτίας, ellitzavella@gmail.com), *Continuity of cult: from pagan sanctuaries to Christian churches in Boeotia* (4:20-4:40)

Boeotia has produced monuments and finds which attest to religious cult during Late Antiquity (4th-7th centuries), but these finds have been researched and published to a highly varied level. A few of these Early Christian sites has been excavated systematically (basilica of Antikyra, basilica of Distomo), while some of them (e.g., at Tanagra) were identified early in the history of archaeology. Other sites, such as Pontza (Koroneia), Agia Paraskevi (Chaironeia) and Agia Paraskevi at Platanakia have been identified in situ thanks to partial preservation of architectural remains. In a few cases (Skripou at Orchomenos, Agios Georgios at Akraiphnio, Spyropoulou street at Livadeia) an Early Christian phase of a church has been identified based on remains of mosaics.

The present paper gives particular emphasis on cases of churches which attest to conversion from earlier, pagan religious sites. These sites are: Pontza (Koroneia), Agia Paraskevi (Chaironeia), Agios Georgios at Akraiphnio, and Anthedon. Further cases of cult survival are attestable, but their Christian successors date to a later period (e.g., Middle Byzantine, Frankish of later). These monuments are discussed in their Late Antique context and are corroborated by epigraphic evidence, which testifies to burial practice during Late Antiquity.

Stephanie Larson (Bucknell University, slarson@bucknell.edu), *Continuity in Southeast Thebes: The case of the Ismenion hill* (4:40-5:10)

In this paper, I present data from the Ismenion hill that attest to reuse of the site and its return as a locus for burial in the 6th-7th centuries CE. In the Bronze Age, the Ismenion housed chamber tombs, like many of the other hills surrounding Thebes. The archaic and classical Thebans located the temple to their main civic deity, Apollo Ismenios, directly atop a line of these Bronze Age tombs. By the early Byzantine period, the ancient temple was abandoned and spoliated. Early Byzantine Thebans then transformed the site back into a burial ground by installing an extensive yet relatively homogenous cemetery. I focus on this later cemetery because of its fascinating multiple burials, all of which reveal some form of leprosy often in advanced stages, in addition to other pathologies attested in new genomic data. I discuss the relationship of this cemetery to the nearby church of Saint Luke the

Evangelist, a foundation of the fifth-century CE, constructed of spoliated material derived in part from the classical temple, and I speculate on potential cultic continuities at the site.