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CULT MATERIAL
FROM ARCHAEOLOGICAL DEPOSITS TO INTERPRETATION OF EARLY GREEK RELIGION

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Depositing Cult – Considerations on What Makes a Cult Deposit

Petra Pakkanen

Abstract

This article presents a discussion on the nature and definition of archaeological deposits related to cult activity. The issue is approached from a three-fold perspective by 1) considering archaeological understanding of ritual, cult and religion; 2) considering the definition of an archaeological 'deposit' in relation to material evidence of cult and ritual; and 3) reconsidering these two through examples of depositing ritual waste and refuse. For the last part, which is an attempt to provide a wider material basis for the preceding discussion, examples from ancient Greek material, especially from the sanctuary at Kalaureia on Poros are compared with the material evidence from the sites of ancient native Americans in the Andes, the Basin of Mexico and in Blue Creek, Belize. The material is discussed firstly within the framework of cultural understanding of refuse and waste, and secondly within the so-called 'refuse archaeology', or 'garbology'. It is proposed that the idea of intentionality of an act of depositing objects and artefacts ritually should be seen as a factor which can direct us to identifying cult deposits. Furthermore, we should generally take into consideration larger ideological factors and aspects of a belief system of a given society when we study cult deposits since the only way to finding out possible ritual acts on the basis of studying deposits is to look beyond the mere functional forms of the deposited artefacts to ritual patterns in the society and to observe possible changing functions of artefacts as well as to pay attention to the manner of their final discard.

Introduction: the Problem

When we consider the problem of what makes a cult deposit two main issues confront us: terminology and interpretation. The first one can be solved relatively easily by means of semantic and technical definitions aimed at functional descriptions relating to certain contexts under discussion. The second one, the interpretative problem is more difficult. It relates both to the archaeological discourse and to the larger field of mapping meanings and uses of the terms 'cult', 'ritual' and, in the end, 'religion' in anthropology and within the field of religious studies. Archaeological material evidence provokes similar questions: how to define ritual and cult, how can they be differentiated from secular activities, can ritual be profane, should it be regarded as different from ritualisation, is it inevitable that archaeologists implicitly define ritual and non-ritual practices as mutually exclusive? In this paper my intention is to take a relatively straightforward path through these 'big questions' via three approaches: 1) considering archaeological understanding of ritual, cult and religion; 2) considering the definition of an archaeological deposit in relation to material evidence of cult and ritual; and 3) reconsidering these two through examples of depositing ritual waste and refuse. I will argue that for better understanding deposits related to ritual practice the relationship between ritual, cult and religion should

be elaborated, and when interpreting these types of deposits larger ideological factors and aspects of past belief system should be taken into consideration. This is exemplified by having a look at culturally and religiously determined ways of conceptualising waste and refuse.

The imposition of the dichotomy between the religious (cultic and ritualistic) and the secular activities has resulted in particular interpretative difficulties for archaeologists. C. Renfrew listed the criteria for cult and as a result his work has become a kind of tool kit for defining cult or ritual particularly in Greek archaeology.[1] This approach starts from a postulate that as far as we have minima criteria of cult or ritual, we can also excavate and identify it archaeologically. Within archaeology there have been, however, differing, even contrasting, opinions which have pinpointed the futility of this approach. J. Brück (1999) and R. Bradley (2003), for example, proposed that instead of defining archaeological correlates for ritual, an archaeologist should explore how past conceptions of effective action may have completely differed from those enshrined in modern rationalist thought. This implies, naturally (an anthropological) questioning of our premises for rationality and directs archaeological focus from functionalist interests to a historiography of interpretations of the material culture. It seems, however, that both of these approaches and all in between are nevertheless fundamentally based on the same problem: what is our understanding of ritual? Archaeological conception of ritual has been criticised and its inappropriateness has been recognised,[2] but not solved so far. That is why it is worthwhile to elaborate a bit further, firstly, the distinction between ritual and cult, and, secondly, between cult and religion.

Ritual – Cult – Religion

Literature about ritual is vast; the most recent (2006–2007) two-volume presentation of the state of the study on the theory of ritual in anthropology and religious studies alone consists of 1,350 pages.[3] Different approaches in this respect can be differentiated, for example more theoretically oriented ones employed, amongst others, by the so-called *Ritualdynamik* studies[4] and the ones leaning traditionally towards cultural-historical understanding of ritual.[5] Bringing anthropological and archaeological discussion

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[1] Renfrew 1985, 18–20; Renfrew 1994, 51–52 and 2007, 114–119. Renfrew sustains that belief (in supernatural) is elementary and universal to religion (pp. 47–48). For him ritual consists of 'repeated actions of a symbolic nature which are directed towards non-terrestrial and therefore transcendental forces' (1994, 52). For difficulties in applying his criteria, particularly in the study of material related to other than Aegean (Bronze Age) archaeological record, see Biehl and Bertemes 2001, 13, and Darcque and van de Moortel 2009, 31–32 who criticise Renfrew's failure to make a distinction between ritual and cult; for more recent attempts to define contextual criteria for identifying cultic activity, see Barrowclough 2007 and Insoll 2007, 1–9.

[2] Esp. Bradley 2003, 5ff. who ascertains that the term ritual, along with some other problematic words frequently used in archaeology, has gained its ascendancy over the ideas it imparts; see also Insoll 2004a, 15–17; 2007, 3–4; Fogelin 2007, 58–59 and Kyriakidis 2007a, 290–294.

[3] Kreinath et al. 2006 and 2007.

[4] The *Ritualdynamik* programme is based in Heidelberg since 2002 and is entitled 'Socio-Cultural Processes from a Historical and Culturally Comparative Perspective'. It is a large interdisciplinary research association exclusively investigating rituals as well as their change and dynamics in terms of the cross-cultural construction of theories. See http://www.ritualdynamik.de and Harth and Schenk 2004; also Mylonopoulos and Roeder 2006, 12–13.

[5] See e.g. Belliger and Krieger 1998; Mylonopoulos and Roeder 2006.

concerning ritual closer to each other has recently been (re-)attempted;[6] for example, a 2007 volume *The Archaeology of Ritual*[7] and a 2009 volume *Archaeologies of Cult*[8] present papers equally from both disciplines, but the synthesis still remains rather non-explicit.[9] In the 2007 volume C. Bell, whose anthropological study *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practise* (1992) has been very influential among archaeologists, acknowledges the scarcity of attention the anthropologists have paid to archaeology's contribution to understanding ancient ritual, but she nevertheless states rather bluntly: 'We are never going to agree on a definition of ritual.'[10] What she means is that a single definition of ritual may rather be a restrictive factor in discussing it, whereas leaving the matter undefined may generate more fruitful insights to it: 'We do not want to (define a ritual), nor will doing so solve the problems we face.'[11] Have we, then, moved anywhere from the position which was summarised by E. Leach in his 'play of skittles', a paper commenting on the conference proceeding *Archaeology and Anthropology. Areas of Mutual interest* held in 1976: 'Even those who, in courtesy to their hosts, have paid lip service to the enterprise of "breaking down the parochial boundaries that often set up" between the two disciplines rather quickly get lost in the desert.'[12] Recently L. Fogelin (2007) elaborated the reasons for the dichotomy the archaeologists have created between religion and ritual, belief and action – the dichotomy which exemplifies the differences in the points of views that the anthropologists and the archaeologists have employed when studying ritual and religion. Anthropologists have theorised widely about ritual, regarding it variously as a form of communication of distinct meanings and symbols,[13] a performance,[14] a codified set of actions,[15] a force of establishing forms of heritage and social identity,[16] employing cognitive resources similar to what is employed in representations of ordinary actions,[17] or they have drawn a distinction between ritual and ritualisation.[18] Their basis differs, however, from that of archaeologists since they are observing rituals which have

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[6] An early condemning view on the possibility of finding a common ground for the two discourses was powerfully expressed by E. Leach (1977).
[7] Edited by E. Kyriakidis (2007a).
[8] Edited by A.L. d'Agata and A. van de Moortel. The volume brings together discussions on the nature, definition and different contexts for cult in the Bronze and Early Iron Age Crete.
[9] Cf. the volume *Archaeology and World Religion* (2007) edited by T. Insoll who rightly observes that archaeological approaches to religion have been piecemeal, and with few exceptions the components of religion have been only little considered in terms of archaeological approaches that might be employed to further the archaeological study of religion in general and its theoretical study in particular (pp. 3–4 with references to recent literature). It should be noted, however, that after the writing of this article, literature on the topic has been published on interpretative questions related to cult and ritual, and the definition of the central terms has naturally been one of the key issues. See especially d'Agata 2009, esp. 1.
[10] Bell 2007, 283.
[11] Bell 2007, 283.
[12] Leach 1977, 161.
[13] Esp. Leach 1976.
[14] E.g. Lewis 1980.
[15] See e.g. Humphrey and Laidlaw 1994.
[16] This line of theorising about ritual goes back to É. Durkheim's sociology of religion. For the phenomenon in modern and early modern contexts, see e.g. Clart 2007, 213–214; Strathern and Stewart 2007, 263.
[17] Cognitive approach to religious rituals is represented particularly by E.T. Lawson and McCauley (1990), P. Boyer (1994) and I. Pyysiäinen (2001).
[18] Particularly Bell 1992. Her theory has been very influential in archaeological interpretation of ritual (e.g. Bradley 2003).

a more or less clear connection to a 'script', i.e. the explanatory structure of a myth with which ritual is seen to have a close interrelated connection; the 'script' alone, it is argued, can give us an insight into what sustains belief.[19] On the contrary, when we are trying to understand ritual activity solely on the basis of archaeological material, we move within a skeleton or frame of performed past actions. The frame – our material evidence remaining at our disposal – naturally does not exhibit *per se* the other pole of the 'mythico-ritual' complex, namely the 'script' of belief or ideology.[20] This fact considerably reduces the possibilities of our interpretative task if it was to be compared with the exercises anthropologists have engaged themselves with for decades: decoding a system of meanings embodied in the symbols which make up the 'religion proper'.[21] Yet we should not fall into using incongruous or non-contextual written documents as proof of cultic nature of later or 'text-free' activities observable in material remains.[22] There is hope, however: archaeologists can learn about themselves and their practices, about the tradition of asking specific questions and finding answers to them by employing certain methodologies by observing themselves through the other, different questions which are posed in studying the same phenomena, a human being in his/her society. This is the only way to mutually see a 'constructive difference' between the disciplines.

What is, then, the relation between ritual and cult? It has been noted that rituals may be 'externalised' actions and, therefore, irrelevant to the whole set of meanings and ideas that the system of a certain religion includes and tends to communicate.[23] Thus, cult and religion are systems of which rituals form a part, but, importantly, meanings and indeed the significance of meanings given to them may vary and change over time. Rituals themselves can be regarded as elements that create, construct and modify religious beliefs.[24] Taking this view, the meaning of a ritual may be secondary for celebrants: it is the action which counts.[25] It has been noted that what makes an action ritual is its repetitiveness, formality, fixity, implicit symbolism and public attention that distinguishes it from the profane forms of actions.[26]

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[19] See e.g. Lewis 1980, 16–17; Fogelin 2007, 56.

[20] Cf., however, Insoll 2007, 9–10 advocating an acknowledgement of the element of numinous as a starting point also in the archaeological study of religion.

[21] Particularly (and influentially) C. Geertz stressed the aspect of symbolism in religion and regarded ritual as essentially symbolic behaviour. He was one of the last scholars of religion who aimed at formulating a universal (i.e. anthropological) definition of religion in his acclaimed 'Religion as a cultural system', originally published in 1966, reprinted in Geertz 1973, 125 (for his definition of religion, see p. 90). For critical evaluation, see esp. Asad 1993, 29–53. It is also noteworthy that the task of the so-called phenomenologists of religion, as presented particularly by M. Eliade and P. Ricoeur, is similar; in the words of Eliade 1977, viii: 'The materials at the disposal of the religious historian present a series of 'messages' awaiting decoding and comprehension.' See also Allen 1978, 159–160.

[22] See e.g. Papadopoulos 1999, 383–386 who strongly criticises the still common practice of privileging written documents over material evidence in Aegean prehistory and Classical archaeology by using them as direct historic analogues with material evidence; also Kyriakidis 2007b, 3.

[23] Humphrey and Laidlaw 1994, 64–65; 2007, 256–257.

[24] Fogelin 2007, 58.

[25] Price 1999, 3 rightly notes this in connection with ancient Greek religion, too: 'Practice not belief is the key, and to start from questions about faith or personal piety is to impose alien values on ancient Greece.'

[26] Cf. Lewis 1980, 7, 17. *The Archaeology of Ritual* (2007) discusses the matter of definition of ritual particularly from the point of view of archaeology. Formulating definitions of religion within cultural studies has fallen out of fashion since C. Geertz's definition of religion (see above n. 21). New attempts have, however, been made recently; for example, T.A. Tweed (2006, 54) gives a definition of religion which draws on aquatic and spatial tropes and is of some interest with regard to interpreting material evidence related to cult and religious practices.

Naturally, any of these characteristics could be applied to profane actions, and this is one of the main problems in discussions of ritual and its role in religion. Cult is like a long necklace made out of separate beads, rituals and rites. Adopting more anthropological language M. Fortes described ritual as 'the executive arm of magico-religious systems.'[27] Rites or rituals may be separated from the whole they are part of and carried out in a different context as singular occurrences. In such cases, however, they are no longer part of a regulated cycle of cultic life. Over time additional rites and rituals may become added to the whole, others forgotten. In a certain way we are deconstructing cult into its components, rites and rituals, and when as much information as possible is obtained about separate rituals, which may seem to have occurred as singular events, an analogical feature or similarity may start appearing among them. This, in turn, forms a unifying principle which may lead us to regard these rituals with uniformity, not as anomalies, and a picture of 'a cult' emerges. Nevertheless, past cultic life was dynamic regardless of the certain conservative nature of all ritualised activities: they are generally prone to slower and 'lazier' change than secular activities.[28] The scholarly community, particularly within archaeology studying cult practice ('archaeology of cult'), has often been willing to pay more attention to entire 'necklaces' than to separate 'beads' because it is more tempting to try to fit even enigmatic or anomalous features into the larger picture of already known cultic activities. Thus, C. Geertz's 'religion proper' easily achieves dominance over its separate components (rituals), even though paying attention to these rituals may pave us a way to even seeing totally new types of 'cults'. We should first try to see the trees for the forest, not the whole forest at once. In this view a ritual is an element of a wider whole, and its archaeological recovery is a reflection of this whole, i.e. religion, and concentration on ritual alone should not be a means to an end in itself: no ritual stands by itself, it sits inside the 'thick' context of religion.[29] This is a question of the primary importance of context, and this point has been recently underlined also in theoretical approaches to religion (and to the sacred): within the history and archaeology of religion one should not approach the issue of sacrality from the top down, from a theological or metaphysical standpoint, but instead by first delineating socio-cultural and cognitive structures of religious conceptualisation that lay the foundation for sacred-making behaviour in specific social contexts.[30] It is worth remembering that as concepts 'cult' and 'religion' are more ideologically loaded than a mere 'ritual'; they are regarded to reflect larger conceptual frameworks, and thus are more firmly embedded in the totality of culture. They are more holistic concepts. Naturally ritual is more concerned with action in relation to material objects.[31] Therefore, archaeology's focus on ritual over religion

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[27] Fortes 1966, 411.

[28] See e.g. Fogelin 2007, 57–58 who points out the danger of seeing religion as one of the most long-lasting and stable phenomena and the implied reasoning for using often historically incongruous ethnographic and historical accounts to explain ancient ritual. He regards, however (pp. 63, 66), the ethno-archaeological approach as advantageous in the explorations of material implications of ritual and ritual symbolism.

[29] Insoll 2004a, 11–12; 2004b, 3.

[30] Anttonen 2005, 187–189; Anttonen 2013, 13–32.

[31] Insoll 2004a, 77–80 regrets the absence of religion in post-processual archaeology and regards that absence more as a reflection of the practitioners of post-processualism themselves rather than any limitations in the evidence they discuss (p.80). See also Kyriakidis 2007a, 298; cf. Renfrew 2007, 109–110 about the notion of the link between 'archaeology of religion' and 'cognitive archaeology' and Fogelin 2007 who elaborates on the dichotomy the archaeologists have created when considering ritual as separate from religion and considers the relationship between ritual, belief and action.

is understandable: we have to employ caution in construing a complete picture of, say, prehistoric religion with panoplies of organised systems of beliefs and structured social institutions to support and keep them up[32] (these would inevitable reflect analogies from either our contemporary contexts or from better known historical ones). In archaeological discussion we should nevertheless retain the special character of cultic and ritual, but approach the definition-problem in a more detached way from anthropologically based ideas of ritual because in archaeology we often are dealing within 'text-free zones', whereas in anthropology the 'script' is of primary interpretative importance. How can we, then, talk about 'cult deposits' as this concept includes both an ideological and a technical dimension in archaeological vocabulary?

Ritual Deposits in the Archaeology of Cult

An archaeologist working on the archaeology of cult or a sanctuary context should be aware of the tradition that postulates our (archaeological) understanding of cult and ritual. The expectation about the nature of religion at a certain site is influenced by this framework; it is an initial set of definitions, a kind of prototypal core of the conception of religion within the scholarly community. Therefore, it reflects the prototypes which scholars regard should be being included in 'religion', of what it necessarily must entail.[33] Moreover, the context in which he or she works, the sanctuary setting, may affect both the questions asked of the material and the answers we are predisposed to regard reasonable and relevant.[34] This includes our ideas about cult deposits. Therefore, it is reasonable to start an investigation of cult in the archaeological record by paying attention to small units, separate parts of potentially larger units within entire cult settings, and not to forge separate ritual deposits into an often preconceived idea of ancient past cult as a whole. Drawing a larger picture of the cultic practice at certain site should be left to the last interpretative phase of a study, particularly in the case of large and more complex sites.

Interestingly, ritual itself seems to be in archaeology one of the accepted interpretations for features of the deposit itself.[35] It has been claimed that this is particularly the case with deposits that defy functionalist explanations, and as such they become an analogy for the cult-problem in general: all that is not understood or clearly non-functional (and hence non-symbolic) is ritual or cultic.[36] It has also been noted that particularly after the processual strand in archaeology became less attractive many archaeologists have fallen back on a fundamental dichotomy between utilitarian and non-utilitarian artefacts resulting in conceptualisations of ritual objects primarily as

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[32] Insoll 2004b, 3 and 2007, 2; also Insoll 2004a, 12 noting that ritual is often treated as the description for religion itself in archaeological parlance.

[33] I have called this starting point of conceptualisation a relative *a priori* approach which does not strive for a final definition of religion but examines some commonly shared pre-understanding of the confines of the concept 'past religion'; see Pakkanen 2000–2001, 76–78 with references; also Comstock 1984, 499–517 and Lakoff 1987, 17–21, 312, 327.

[34] Cf. e.g. Trigger 1989, 379.

[35] E.g. Brück 1999, 328–329; the session 'Beyond matalevel explanations of ritual' in the Theoretical Archaeology Group meeting in 2008 was convened by J. Morris and C. Randall.

[36] See e.g. Richards and Thomas 1984, 189; Hodder 1992, 222–223; Renfrew 1994, 52 ('residual nature of the archaeological category "ritual"'); Walker 1998, 249–250; Brück 1999, 313–314; Insoll 2004a, 11; 2004b, 1–2.

symbols, rather than as utensils used in behavioural patterns.[37] We read about deposits such as 'structured', 'special' or 'specialised', 'votive', 'deliberate', 'non-domestic' etc., and these attributes are in themselves quite vague and even paradoxical (for example, 'purposeful deposition': can any deposition, even of waste, be non-purposeful?).[38] The characteristic difference between deposits and mere accumulations of archaeological remains in this regard lies in intentionality of actions which created them. A strong material link between religion and the formation of archaeological deposits has been pointed out, and the co-existence of both non-utilitarian and utilitarian objects in these ritual deposits has been noticed.[39] In fact the development of the concept of 'structured deposition' has taken place in parallel with consideration of ritual and cult in archaeology.[40] This kind of deposition is explained to mean a 'meaningful deposition of articulated and disarticulated animal remains, human remains, and other deposits (e.g. pottery)'.[41] Another feature assigned to the 'structured deposit' is careful sampling and placing of certain types of artefacts to be deposited according to a number of conventions suggesting a certain degree of formality.[42] Formality itself provides grounds for associating such depositions with ritual, formality usually being regarded as one of the main components, perhaps the most important criteria for ritual in general.[43] For an archaeologist repetition of such formal or formalised acts is also important since repetition increases the likelihood that the material evidence linked with these actions can be discovered.[44] Archaeologists tend to emphasise similarities at the expense of differences. Analysing the ritual element in the context of a later Neolithic henge monument in Wessex, England, C. Richards and J. Thomas went as far as maintaining that since ritual activities involve highly formalised, repetitive behaviour, they may be detected archaeologically through the observation of highly *structured* mode of deposition.[45] This may go, however, also in the opposite direction and indeed form an interpretative pitfall: we recognise rituals which are highly patterned and this brings about a view of patterning in the archaeological record which excludes observations of possible exceptions and which could still be regarded as part of ritual activity. Thus, expecting a ritual to be an exclusively highly patterned and repetitive activity we easily fail to recognise an exceptional ritual activity which could even have been a singular occurrence in the past. It is noteworthy that behind the formality, which is often regarded as a characteristic of ritual activity, lies intentionality. Therefore, the result of mere accumulation cannot be regarded as a deposit.

The notion of a 'structured' or 'special' deposition and its almost automatic connection with 'cultic' is a result of focusing on special contexts in which, broadly

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[37] Walker 1998, 249.

[38] It could be noted here that the concept of a 'sealed deposit' is commonly used in archaeology for an undisturbed deposit completely separate from any possible intrusion. For example, a buried vessel containing coins, or a stratum completely sealed by an impervious upper level, such as a concrete floor, is defined as a sealed deposit. See e.g. Biers 1992, 20.

[39] Walker 1998, 259.

[40] Bradley 2003, 8.

[41] Insoll 2004a, 73.

[42] Bradley 2003, 8.

[43] In anthropological theory the formality of ritual and its central nature as a performance was influentially underlined especially by R. Rappaport who also viewed ritual as not necessarily a religious activity (e.g. 1999, esp. 24, 46–50).

[44] Marcus 2007, 46.

[45] Richards and Thomas 1984, 189, 215 (italics mine).

speaking, purely secular activities seem to be lacking. Naturally, this view of a ritual or cultic deposit is based on the strict demarcation between sacred and profane, and can as such be criticised.[46] Interestingly, even though far-fetched interpretations as sacred or ritual of anything which does not fall within the confines of 'ordinary' or 'domestic' have recently been rejected in archaeological debate. It has also been proposed that the strict demarcation between the sacred and profane should be abandoned because it reflects our western idea of religious and ritual being in opposition to every-day, profane, functional and as such beyond 'normal'.[47] The argumentation builds on the view that a ritual does not necessarily contain deeply-held or widely-shared beliefs but actions of a specialised kind rather than propositions about the world.[48] But at the same time this argumentation is circular and, in the end, turns against itself: everything cannot be accepted as ritual, but at the same time we should be ready to regard everything as ritual. Controversy is implicit whilst we continue to define the terms ritual and cult vaguely and interchangeably. Profane actions certainly can have ritualistic or ritualised characteristics (regularised formal acts, like communal feasting), but when we discuss cult, we become necessarily involved with components of ideology and belief (the 'script' in the large sense). I will illustrate this by presenting examples which introduce a dilemma of differentiation between the intentional (ritual) deposition and depositing waste or rubbish even if it was refuse from ritual actions. I begin from the ancient Greek context and after a detour of comparative examples return back 'home'.

Depositions of Ritual Waste: Cult Deposits or Not?

All my examples here ask a question about the difference between waste deposition and ritual deposition. As much as ritual, waste is a culture-specific concept, and cross-culturally attitudes to refuse and waste are extremely variable, but they still play an important role. M. Douglas (1966) famously paid attention to the significant role of pollution in framing social structures and boundaries due to their inner danger. In her assertion, pollution and filth are uncleanliness, dirt, and dirt is something, anything, which is out of place and a disturbance or a threat to the proper order of things. Therefore, behind dirt and pollution must lie a presumption of order: dirt is the reverse of the same coin and they are both related to questions of power – dirt is itself the by-product of systematic ordering and classification of matter.[49] Waste as residue even from ritual acts is inevitable; hence, for example, animal bones and ashes in primary sanctuary depositions are common. The impact of behaviour involving discard and abandonment has been emphasised as an important factor in the formation of archaeological deposits in general, and if cultural and social meanings of waste are considered in addition to archaeological classification of deposited objects, we may get closer to understanding certain types of ritual activities. Residues of ritual activities were pushed aside, recycled, thrown into wells and pits, purposefully destroyed or dutifully cleared away,[50] and in such cases the items naturally

[46] Cf. Brück 1999, 328–335; Insoll 2004a, 73–74.
[47] Especially Brück 1999; Bradley 2003; Insoll 2004a; 2004b; also Richards and Thomas 1984, 189–190.
[48] E.g. Bradley 2003, 12; Bell 1992; Humphrey and Laidlaw 1994; cf. Kyriakidis 2007b, 15–16.
[49] Douglas 1966 (1984), esp. 36–37.
[50] Kyriakidis 2007b, 20.

do not originate at the spot where they were discovered and where the rituals in which they were used took place. Why were they cleared away and 'secondarily deposited'? What distinguishes refuse from secondary depositions in archaeological terminology? What is the distinction between ritual and common, domestic trash? There could have been complex religious ideas and beliefs behind depositing residue or waste from ritual acts. We have examples of figurines having been discarded in pits intentionally dug for this purpose within the confines of a sanctuary after they had fulfilled their purpose.[51] Votive objects, particularly those which accumulated in excess at the sanctuaries, were often thrown into wells and springs as filling.[52] If archaeologically recovered objects were studied from the point of view of the 'life history of objects', final discarding of them, ritually or non-ritually, marks one point in their potentially multi-functional life span. This means that domestic, non-ritual objects may have gained ritual function, for example, only in the end of their object-life if they were ritually discarded and deposited away. Or, the objects with a high probability of having had ritual functions may have ended up having purely profane functions at the end of their use-life as recycled items: for example, two animal figurines from Mycenae were sharpened to be re-used as stoppers for vessels.[53] Acknowledging potentially multiple changes in functions of objects can be called a relational understanding of object function which indicates that functions of objects are ultimately relational properties defined by their interaction with other objects.[54]

We know of Greek rituals whose meaning was to purify polluted space in one way or another, to restore its sanctity by ritual repair. The blood of piglets in particular was used for this purpose, not only in sacred enclosures but also in public spaces such as in meetings of *bouleitai* in the *Bouleteria*, before dramatic performances, in households etc.[55] After the ritual the used carcasses (*katharmata/katharsia*[56]) were regarded as irredeemably polluted; they therefore had to be thrown outside the boundaries of the city into no-man's land between the boundaries of the *polis*, or into triangular spaces at *triodoi*, crossroads, to cisterns or to the sea. *Katharsia* seem to have included *oksythymia*, polluted remains of household purification rituals, which, therefore, were similar in essence and had also to be deposited in liminal places.[57] The Hippocratic writer, in the passage *On the Sacred Disease* from the early fourth century wrote about *katharmata* (used in healing

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[51] For example, at the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore in Corinth; see Bookidis and Stroud 1997, 159, 211, 380.
[52] See e.g. Kyrieleis 1993, 145–149 and Pedley 2005, 164–165 for Heraion at Samos; Sinn 1993, 96 for Olympia.
[53] Tzonou-Herbst 2009, 169.
[54] Walker 1998, 252, 254–255. Brysbaert 2011 develops and adds to the concept of the *chaîne opératoire* first deveped by the French anthropologist Leroi-Gourhan (1943) for understanding and interpreting acts of discard, abandonment, reclamation and refuse of material objects. She pays special attention to the cyclic nature of the life-cycle of materiality and studies the meaning, reuse, recycling, waste and discard of materiality in order to go beyond the linear understanding of *chaînes opératoires*. Brysbaert takes a holistic view which encompasses interpreting past actions, belief systems, politico-social organisation, settlement functions and also ritual behaviour of peoples and places through studying people's rubbish, reuse, recycling and refuse patterns. See also Tzonou-Herbst 2009, 170.
[55] The most common act of purification required cutting of the throat of a new-born piglet and walking around the designated area while letting the blood drip from the carcass. See Apollonius 4.700–709; Cole 2004, 47–48.
[56] Plutarch, *Quaest. Rom.* 280c and 290d mentions purification materials called *katharsia* that were taken to crossroads specifying that dogs are carried out to Hecate with the other *katharsia* (purification refuse) and that puppies were used in cleansing rituals (*periskylakismos*). See also Johnston 1991, 221; Zografou 2005, 197–201, 205 and Pakkanen 2011, 127–128.
[57] Johnston 1991, 220–221.

purifications): 'They bury some of them in the ground, they throw some into the sea, and others they carry off to the mountains where nobody can touch or tread on them.'[58]

The problem here is whether an archaeologist excavating a deposit of possible refuse from, for example, sacrificial meals is dealing with a cult deposit and whether it is possible to identify such a deposition as belonging to a sacred sphere. Generally waste of refuse deposits defy the central idea behind the concept of a ritual deposit: it consists of intentionally laid out components resulting in a deposition which is characterised by formality and special care in spatial patterning, such as the layout, distribution and choice of deposited items or artefacts. In certain cases refuse disposal is clearly not a random act (as we shall see below), but instead depositing for example *katharmata* or *oksythymia*, waste and residue from purification rituals or meals, is intentional. It is also firmly rooted in the cultic framework and also the religious belief system of the Greeks because deposition of *oksythymia* is necessary: it has to be performed in order to maintain the structural equilibrium and continuation of the efficacy of cultic and domestic life as well as to ensure exclusion of presence and effects of *miasma*. Getting rid of such waste ensures the efficacy of any future rituals which in turn enforce the effectiveness of religion and cultic system as a whole. Residues of sacrifices and sacrificial meals such as animal bones, charcoal, cooking pots, often together with broken votives were almost customarily deposited inside the sanctuaries in pits and in cisterns and wells which had gone out of use as sources of drinking water.[59] Potentially, these kinds of deposits could tell us as much about the belief system and ideologies of conceptualising purity through understanding of *miasma* as they tell about separate ritual acts which produced this refuse and waste.[60] Is the deposit, therefore, a cult deposit, a ritual deposit or a waste deposit? It is all of these simultaneously. Revealing archaeologically these kinds of deposits could inform a number of issues such as maintenance of religious and social identities through, for example, recognition of laws concerning pollution, dietary regulations and food taboos and prohibitions, use of animals in sacrificial rituals or feasts, meals and festivals, animal exploitation patterns, the demarcation of space between sacral and profane areas, etc.

It is easy to see that Douglas' signification of pollution as an important factor in framing social structures and boundaries is pointing to the right direction. The archaeological problem here is that identifying a deposition as containing *katharma* and *oksythymia* or other 'sacred waste' is necessarily at least partly guess-work. It does not, however, differ much from other identifications of religious structures, naming functions for cultic or ritual objects in the contexts which lack written evidence to support such interpretations. What is different is that we should be prepared to see also the 'unclean' side of ritual and cultic life: powerful importance of residue and waste also in the forming of religious world-view. The so-called 'refuse archaeology' or 'garbology' itself is a relatively new field in archaeology and it concentrates mainly on studying modern or early modern contexts created by systematic mass disposal of urban waste. The first systematic archaeological-anthropological study of household refuse was set

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[58] *Mobr. Sacr*. 1.99–102; Parker 1983, 229 with references to laws restricting where *katharmata* might be thrown out (*LSCG* 108; *IG* I^3 257 = *LSS* 4); Cole 2004, 48.
[59] E.g. Pedley 2005, 164–166.
[60] For this issue from the point of view of demarcating between sacred and profane activities and between sacralised and profane space, see Pakkanen 2006–2007, 345–346, 350–351, 353–354.

up to determine patterns of urban consumption in the early 1970s.[61] Depositions of waste and refuse from supposed ritual activities have, however, puzzled archaeologists working also with more ancient contexts. For example, at the ancient site of Tiwanaku in the Andes, Akapana East is an extensive residential sector just outside of Tiwanaku's central monumental complex.[62] Excavations there revealed extensive refuse pits and refuse heaps (middens) associated with earlier compounds and structures, and dated to the phase AD 600–800. Numerous deep, amorphous pits perforated the area; they were filled with immense quantities of ash, camelid dung, gigantic numbers of splintered and butchered bones of camelids, guinea pigs, birds, and fish, broken stone tools, macro-botanical food remains including seeds, abundant ash, and thousands of broken ceremonial vessels. In many cases deposition of this refuse seems to have been carried out quickly, as 'major dumping events' which supposedly were parts of 'ritual meals' or major feasts. Refuse was also found as fillings of wells.[63] The vast quantity of this refuse and the nature of its deposition suggested to the excavator that it was non-domestic in nature, a part of ritual activity. Interestingly, in this view the deposition act itself seems to turn into a ritual. Ideologically, at Akapana East, cleanliness was critical to the maintenance of ritual purity. This was reflected also in the household structures, the floors of which were found impeccably clean, free of ash, stains, artefacts, or any other domestic residue. 'In effect, they were sterile,' writes the excavator.[64] Then, the deposits are, in fact, not only dumps of ritual waste, but also material evidence for the ritual activity itself. Cleaning is a part of the ritual whole, particularly when cleanliness has a capacity to be used as an instrument of power and coercion.[65] It becomes a 'cult of depositing', or a 'depositing cult', and *a ritual act itself*.

Another example of the peculiar nature of possible cult deposits is from the Late Aztec culture (after AD 1350) in the Basin of Mexico on the edges of Lake Texcoco and Morelos. In connection with the so-called New Fire Ceremony, a celebration of the cyclical renewal of the world every 52 years, the Aztecs are told to have broken 'all of the jars and pitchers, all of the cooking griddles and vessels they had used'[66] along with ritual items, such as figurines.[67] In trying to archaeologically identify the remains of the Fire Ceremony C.M. Elson and M.E. Smith defined the criteria for these 'cyclical ritual dumps' by comparing them with household middens: relatively unfragmented nature of

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[61] The United States was the first nation to introduce communal landfill sites in the 1880s, and in England this took place firstly in 1912. The first systematic study was called the Tucson Garbage Project under the direction of W. Rathje; for the results, see Rathje and Murphy 2001. Cf. Schmidt 2001, 210–213 who sees 'refuse archaeology' in the works of such persons as, for example H. Schliemann and an analogy of it in the psychoanalysis of S. Freud and Lacan; Schmidt regards R. Virchow's excavation in central Berlin in 1871–72 as the first actual case of refuse archaeology (pp. 213–218). The so-called 'rubbish-theory', on the other hand, has existed as an academic field of study (particularly with anthropological underpinnings) longer than archaeological 'garbology'; see e.g. Thompson 1979. More recently A. Brysbaert 2011 has paid attention to the issue of cyclic nature of the life-cycle of materiality within a wider theoretical perspcective and also within the Aegean Bronze Age contex.

[62] Janusek 2004, 183–184.

[63] Janusek 2004, 194.

[64] Janusek 2004, 191–192.

[65] Cf. Parker Pearson and Richards 1994, 25–26; also Douglas' (1966, 162) notion of the dangers of obsessive purity of not only the physical space but, for example, of racist 'cleanliness'.

[66] Elson and Smith 2001, 158–159 referring to *Codex Tudela.*

[67] Elson and Smith 2001, 159–163.

sherds, dense and unstratified contexts resulting from one-time event (ritual) activities, location of the dumps within the so-called patio-groups, and the type and proportion of items such as basic domestic wares when compared with middens.[68] Their analysis follows the assumption of ritual as a singular occurrence, though repeatable in cyclical (cosmological) intervals, and implies the idea that archaeologically identifiable 'ritual dumps' can only result from one-time ritual events as they are in effect sealed deposits. This echoes the idea of ritual as a formalised act, and if regarded in relation to religion or cult it can also be deduced that archaeologically only ritual can be excavated whereas its relation to cult and religion can only be speculated upon and interpreted with the aid of other material, such as historical and ethnohistorical data. If we were to follow this view *strictu sensu* we could only talk about ritual deposits, and not about cult deposits. I would suggest, however, that if only ritual can be studied based on excavated deposits whereas cult or religion cannot, our interpretative view remains rather restricted. Studying past ritual should nevertheless include wider parameters of the religious world view which push beyond understanding mere ritual acts. Even if ritual and cult cannot be equated, religious beliefs and cultic customs still strongly affect people's ritual behaviour.

My last example to illustrate the problem comes from the same cultural sphere as the previous examples and this time it relates to the so-called Terminal Classic period (AD 830/850–1000) of the Maya Centre of Blue Creek in Belize. S. Clayton and colleagues considered (and reconsidered) the so-called 'problematical deposits' which are related to ritual activity. They define a problematical deposit as an archaeological entity which resembles middens in composition but appears in a ritual context, and is often located at the centre or in the near vicinity of monumental, ceremonial architecture. These deposits are, furthermore, often connected with the ritual behaviour of 'termination rites' which marked the destruction or abandonment of the structures, buildings or whole sites.[69] Destruction rites themselves implied intentional smashing, layering and scattering of vast quantities of especially ceramics, particularly vessels, and as such would have been one-time singular occurrences. The archaeologists studied a deposit which comprised a dense concentration of sherds encountered on a stairway of a pyramid structure at a ceremonial centre. The assemblage contained a vast number of sherds from over 2 000 separate vessels, but no animal bones, and only 17 non-ceramic artefacts.[70] The ceramics vessels had, however, wide-ranging chronological distribution and the vessel fragments were scattered and partial in nature, sherds not generally stemming from reconstructable vessels. Thus, the archaeologists interpreted that this deposit represented ritual behaviour, but it was not created in situ as a single ritual event. Instead, on the basis of the ratio of the sherds from vessels for preparing, serving and consuming food against those for storing it, they suggest that the deposit accumulated from feasting rituals held at the spot (plaza) or in near vicinity.[71] The deposit seemed to be, therefore, a secondary deposit, and 'it appears that *only* this final act of secondary deposition could be assumed to have occurred as a single event.'[72] We can pinpoint some interesting details here: first, the interpretation

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[68] Elson and Smith 2001, 159, 168–169.
[69] Clayton et al. 2005, 120, 123–126. For the first elaboration of the termination rituals, see Coe 1959, 94–96, 462.
[70] Clayton et al.2005, 123–124, 127 (Table 2).
[71] Clayton et al. 2005, 124, 126, 128.
[72] Clayton et al. 2005, 128.

of a 'problematical deposit' relates to ritual behaviour, but archaeologically traceable ritual act here could only be a rite which was a singular one-time event. This reveals that ritual is understood here as an act, an event which could, if we were lucky, be connected with 'complex termination activities' or 'ritual components of dedication rites',[73] but hardly with the large ideological scheme of 'religion': 'Interpretation of ritual behavior should not be confused with the reconstruction of aspects of Maya belief system', the archaeologists write.[74] This exemplifies how far archaeological understanding of ritual still is from that of anthropological, and how underlining formality and repetitiveness as an important feature of ritual can be turned into a counter-argument when studying ritual deposits archaeologically. I maintain, again, that studying deposits, ritual deposits or cult deposits, could and should take into consideration larger ideological factors and aspects of the belief system simply because of the close conceptual relationship between ritual and cult; studying ritual would be a rather empty enterprise if its connectedness with cult and religion was totally denied.

It is possible to draw some general remarks about the nature of archaeological deposits related to cultic and ritual activity in light of the above observations. First, when we discuss deposits, we imply intentionality in the act of depositing something; items or objects or remains of acts (like feasting) are removed, relocated, transported and sealed away. They are re-posited. When this act is connected with ritual and cult, it is shaped by an ideology: religious beliefs or ritual customs dictate these depositions as necessary, sometimes compulsory, and make the act of depositing a ritual one. In this sense random, non-ideological acts of cleaning or clearing of space cannot be regarded as depositing something even though these acts may well produce deposit-like structures, like refuse heaps. Slow accumulation of objects is naturally not depositing objects. This has, then, some bearing for archaeological understanding of ritual through deposits: archaeologically recoverable depositions related to ritual are often seen as singular, one-time occurrences. Controversially, archaeologists often acknowledge the anthropological understanding of ritual as something fundamentally involving regularity, formality and patterned repeated behaviour; this is implicit even in definitions of 'structured' deposits. Therefore, archaeological studies of ritual deposits should not refrain from taking into account larger ideological factors and religious world-views which largely dictate the ritual behaviour of people. On the surface this seems quite simple and self-evident. Thus, can only 'structured', 'deliberate', 'purposeful' etc. deposits be regarded as ritual deposits? Did we not note that all acts of depositing waste implies culturally specific beliefs of what is regarded as waste and refuse and what is not? Here we encounter the archaeological dilemma which crystallises when archaeological deposits have to be differentiated from ritual or cult deposits. It seems clear that artefacts themselves in assemblages, and particularly their categorisation indicating possible use-functions (food preparation or consumption, for example), cannot themselves reveal us possible rituals they may have been part of. The reason is that ritual acts are part of social and cultural behaviours and objects are agents in behavioural acts, both ritual and non-ritual. Therefore, the only way to find out possible ritual acts on the basis of studying deposits is to study ritual behaviour of a given society and to infer possible roles of deposited artefacts by looking beyond their mere (functional) form to ritual patterns in the society, to observe possible

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[73] Clayton et al. 2005, 128.
[74] Clayton et al. 2005, 129.

changing functions of artefacts, and to pay attention to the manner of their final discard.[75] Archaeologically recoverable ritual should not necessarily be understood only as a one-time occurrence since at least certain decree of formulaicness is characteristic to ritual. The material record that rituals leave behind is, of course, a result of individual acts which took place once in the past. However, if we are interested in learning about past ritual behaviour through material remains, we have to pay attention to patterns which can only emerge through comparisons and multiplicity.

This multiplicity is present also when an object is or objects are rendered sacred by consecrating them. This can take place in an act of giving or dedicating them at a sacred place to a sacred realm. Dedicated items turn in this process into religious objects; they become consecrated, or, to use another term 'sacralised'. Greek verbs such as ἱερόω, αφιερόω, καθιερόω and ἀνιερόω, 'I render something sacred', can be regarded to mean 'consecrating'.[76] Greek terminology sheds some light to the nuances related to dedicating and sacralising: forms of the words ἀνατίθημι or ἀνάθημα denote dedications, meaning variably 'to set up' or something that has been set up, whereas for sacralising the act of consecrating is rendered by καθιερόω, 'I consecrate', a verb only rarely used in a non-cultic context[77] or by κατατίθημι, 'I deposit', which is also used with no obvious religious associations.[78] Thus, dedications are set *up* for everyone to see on display and they had a communicative, public role, whereas some other items, probably of minor or more personal value, were simply deposited in a sacred place and left there as gifts to the gods. Setting up is here replaced by putting *down*. This difference is, however, very fluid and therefore dedications and votive offerings can be regarded to fall into a same category of sacralised items. The difference is nevertheless interesting from the point of view of archaeology: objects that are recovered archaeologically in sanctuary contexts tend to be more easily those which were deposited, put *down* rather that set up since the latter naturally were prone to get lost in various ways in the course of time and history. This means that our conception of the items categorised as votives, donations etc. from cult deposits and produced in archaeological excavations is rendered firstly by their initial nature as objects laid down (rather than set up) and secondly by the nature of their archaeological recovery.

In the following I will make a trial based on these ideas. It will inevitably be at least partly speculative just because studying archaeological deposits as ritual deposits is an interpretative enterprise due to the reasons outlined above.

So, let's return to ancient Greece and look at *oksythymia* again in order to show the difficulty that an archaeologist encounters when working on cult deposits: the dilemma of imposing information about ritual in ancient Greek literary evidence to interpretations

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[75] See also Brysbaert 2011 particularly with reference to Aegean Bronze Age context.

[76] There are other related verbs as well, for example καθοσιόω. Lambrinoudakis et al. 2005, 303 define consecrating as 'the procedure through which nature, objects, living creatures and the circumstances of human life were integrated into the divine domain by the will of the gods themselves, or by human will and the action approved by god. […] Human will and action accomplished consecration through dedication, by offering and entrusting the item to god.' The writers emphasise the identical nature of dedications and consecrated items: 'There was no substantial difference between consecration and dedication.' For further observations on the terminology and its relation to materiality of the sacred, see Pakkanen forthcoming.

[77] See e.g. Paz de Hoz 1998, 163.

[78] For example in Thucydides 1, 33.1 ('...you shall so place your benefit as to have a testimony of it'), or in Herodotus 6.41.3 where Miltiades' son is brought up to the king. See also Parker 2004, 270.

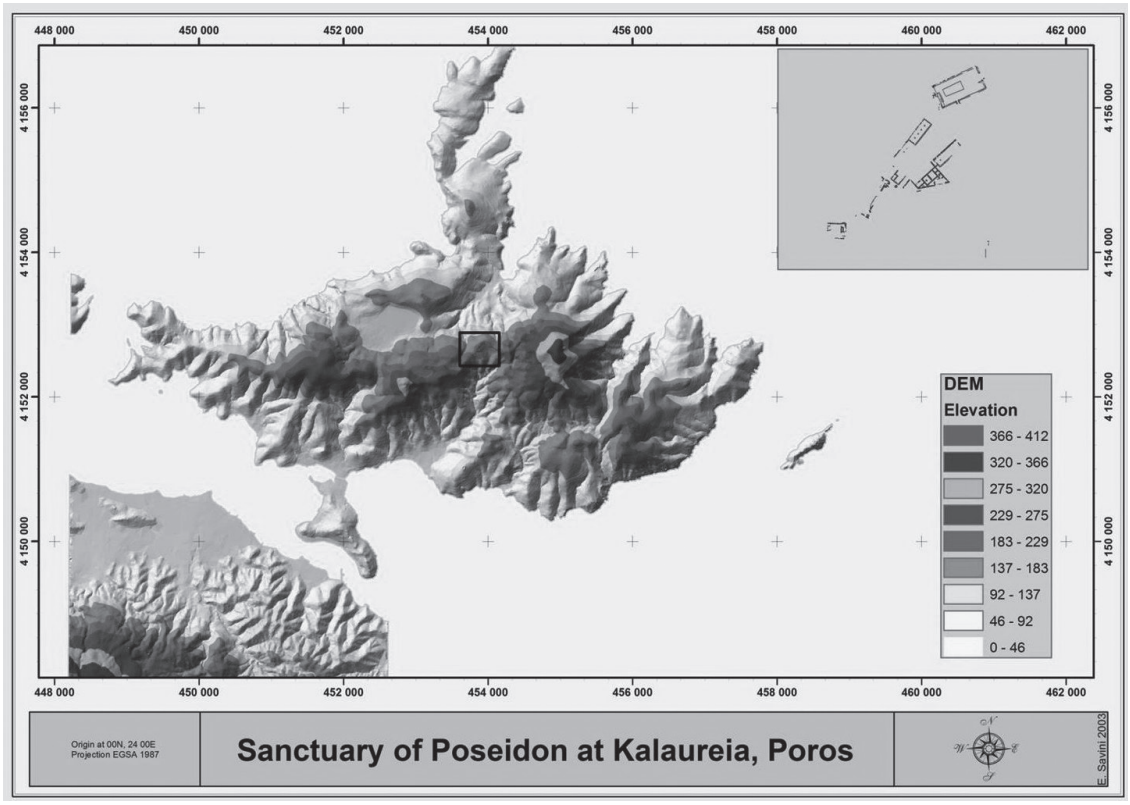

Fig. 3.1: Sanctuary of Poseidon at Kalaureia, Poros (Emmanuel Savini). For the figure in colour, see Plate 3.1.

of archaeological units, such like deposits, even within a clear sanctuary setting. The example is from the sanctuary of Poseidon at Kalaureia on the island of Poros.

The sanctuary of Poseidon is located on a saddle between the hilltops of Vigla and Profitis Elias, c. 185 m above the sea in the centre of the island of Kalaureia, the larger of the two islands that make up today's Poros (Figure 3.1 and Plate 3.1). The current, ongoing investigation at the sanctuary[79] has yielded material which shows that dining was an important activity here, especially in the Hellenistic period. Between the years 2004–2009 finds which have been defined as depositions, or deposits of the remnants of meals or eating in general have been found.[80] Deposits derive mainly from two locations: first, from the triangular area west of the so-called Building D[81] which is situated on the southern edge of the sanctuary close to its entrance (Figure 3.2), and from cistern(s) situated immediately to the north of the north-west corner of Building D.[82] Archaeologically the deposits are separate features, and the organic material they produced fall into different phases of the Hellenistic period, namely early Hellenistic in

[79] An international team of scholars is currently working at the site and on the island carrying out a long-term investigation funded by the Stiftelsen Riksbankens Jubileumsfond under the auspices of the Swedish Institute at Athens. (The project draw to its end in 2012 i.e. after this article was written.)

[80] For the Hellenistic finds, see Wells et al. 2005, 165–166. Dining as a predominant activity within Building D, however, has also been attested for the Archaic period: Wells et al. 2008, 78.

[81] For a potential cult building this structure is unconventional in form, consisting of a main building on the north side and an open irregular courtyard on the southern side (Wells et al. 2003 and 2005). New extensive excavations of the area have been carried out in 1997–2003. The architecture of the building is currently being studied by Jari Pakkanen. I am grateful for his comments.

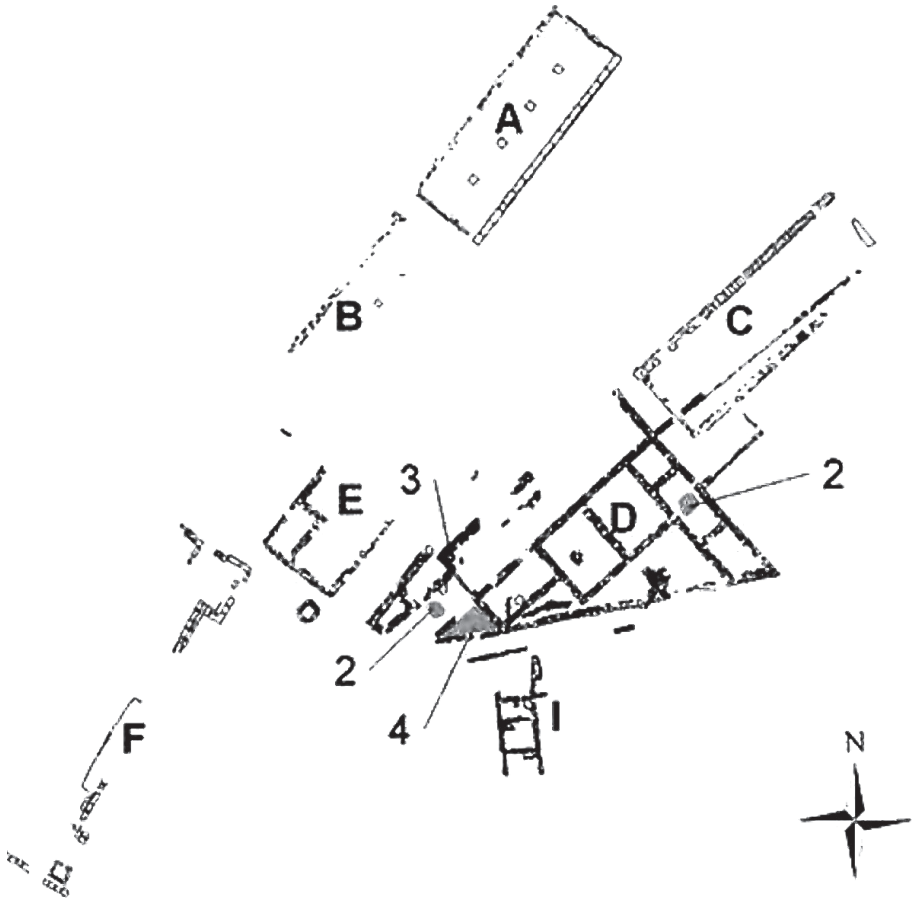

Fig. 3.2.: Plan of the excavated remains at the sanctuary of Poseidon at Kalaureia (2007).
1: Temple 2: Altar 3: Cistern 4: Dining deposit (Emmanuel Savini).

the case of the 'dining deposit' in the triangular of the Building D, and late Hellenistic in the case of the cistern.[83] I have discussed the finds elsewhere,[84] and therefore will not give here detailed archaeological description of the structures. Instead, I will look at their nature as depositions or deposits and briefly discuss the question of depositing waste in a cultic context. The aforementioned corner of the area produced a deposit containing a very large number of potsherds, bones of a large number of animals including fish, shells of molluscs, and organic materials, such as carbonised seeds and charcoal.[85] Pottery

[82] Wells et al. 2005, 180; Wells et al. 2008, 36–38, 48, 64, 89–89. The finds from the cistern have not yet been published, though see Wells et al. 2008. 90. I am here, as in the case of the 'dining deposit', relying on the information provided to me by Dimitra Mylona concerning the animal finds, and on personal communication with Arto Penttinen and Berit Wells concerning other archaeological features.

[83] Wells et al. 2003, 79–80 (dating of the 'dining deposit') and Wells et al. 2008, 37–38, 41 (Fig. 14) (dating of the 'cistern deposit').

[84] Pakkanen 2006–2007, esp. 347–349, 354–355.

[85] Animal remains discovered and (preliminarily) studied from this assemblage consist of several thousand bones, most of them from medium and large size mammals; there are also more than one and half thousand from fish, a few from birds and about a dozen from small mammals. The deposit also produced several sea-shells. The fish bone assemblage from the 'dining deposit' is particularly rich in variation and species: at least 18 different species of fish, probably more, seem to have been consumed there. See Wells et al. 2008, 45, 88. All the details about animal bone analysis have been kindly provided by Dimitra Mylona who is responsible for their study, analysis and interpretation. I wish express my gratitude to her.

analysis narrowed down the deposition date to c. 165–160 BC,[86] and generally the finds were almost homogeneously of Hellenistic date.[87] Animal remains, including fish bones, and pottery which generally is domestic in character and vessels for drinking, preparing and serving of food outnumber all the other categories, seem to have been buried short time after the consumption of food as a single occurrence. The arguments for this are the homogeneous character and date of the pottery and the exceptionally good state of preservation of the animal bones which do not seem to have remained exposed, either to weathering or to scavengers as one would expect in the case of slow accumulation.[88] On these grounds the archaeologists argue 'that the deposition was thus contained within the triangle formed by the two walls [..and] as the deposition was found to have been made on bedrock, the area had evidently been cleared in preparation for it.'[89] This gives way to interpreting the action which could have produced the deposited dining refuse:

> All remains recovered in the deposit derive from a feast of gargantuan proportions. [...] During this event a number of animals would have been consumed most likely after a sacrifice to the divinities present in the sanctuary. Other foodstuffs, such as fish, would also have been consumed in large quantities. After the feast, all remains of it would have been buried in a spot.[90]

We can observe that a 'deposit' here is an archaeological feature which is regarded as a result of an intentional action and a singular occurrence in contrast to accumulation of objects or refuse. If it contains refuse it is not regarded as a 'structured' deposition. It is connected with sacrifice which presupposes veneration of deities. What remains unanswered is *why* did people feel need to bury or seal away the refuse of their dining or feasting. We may try to answer this after a brief look at the 'cistern deposit'.

The old cistern,[91] which is Archaic in construction, appears to have been filled with material the largest accumulation of which is datable to the late Hellenistic period, to c. 50BC.[92] The remains of dogs and snakes are a special characteristic of the late Hellenistic accumulation of the fill in the cistern. Majority of the identifiable bones are either of adult dogs or puppies, but also a significant number of snake remains, some of very large species were discovered.[93] The assumption here is that various adult dogs and snakes were

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[86] Wells et al. 2005, 169, 179, 182; Wells et al. 2008, 45.
[87] Wells et al. 2005, 169–78, Fig. 47, Appendix 2 and catalogue of finds from the area D03 (the south-western corner of the building).
[88] Wells et al. 2003, 166–168; Mylona (forthcoming) in Wells et al. forthcoming.
[89] Wells et al. 2005, 34. The term 'deposition' used here could be understood as 'deposit' due to an implicitly assumed intentional action of depositing (Arto Penttinen, personal communication).
[90] Wells et al. 2003, 168.
[91] Wells et al. 2005, 180; Wells et al. 2008, 36–38, 48, 64, 89. The finds from the cistern have not yet been published, though see Wells et al. 2008. 90. I am here, as in the case of the 'dining deposit', relying on the information provided to me by Dimitra Mylona concerning the animal finds, and on personal communication with Arto Penttinen and Berit Wells concerning other archaeological features.
[92] Wells et al. 2008, 37–38, 41 (Fig. 14).
[93] Remains of at least eight adult dogs and at least 26 puppies are present, adults with all anatomical parts present though not in the form of complete skeletons, and remains of whole carcasses of puppies are preserved although in disarticulated form. Some of them bear disarticulation and skinning cut marks. Here, as in the case of the 'dining deposit', I am relying on information provided to me by Dimitra Mylona concerning the animal finds which will be published in Wells et al. forthcoming.

eaten in the vicinity of the cistern, and unlike the adults, the puppies do not seem to have been char-grilled, but instead, were either cooked in another manner (boiled, stewed), or left uncooked. D. Mylona who studied the bones proposes a scenario in which an old cistern was filled up with soil and stones, and when the filling was almost complete a mass of animal remains were thrown in. In addition to dogs, puppies and snakes there were bits and parts of two horses, a pig and a piglet, a cow, four sheep and goats alongside birds, eggs, fish, frogs and a pile of sea-shells. On top of all this a number of complete or broken glass vessels were thrown in the cistern. From the point of view of the question of deposits, the cistern exhibits two special characteristics: first, as different types of finds were found at different levels in the cistern, they indicate some type of organization in the filling in of the structure: '[it] does not seem to be a random act of refuse disposal, as different types of finds were found on different levels'[94]; and secondly, as sherds from a vessel datable to around 50 BC were found all the way down to a depth of roughly three meters from the surface, it is argued that this, too, is a single deposition.[95]

The two examples of deposits from the Kalaureian site reflect the current understanding of deposits related to cult practice in general, and fulfil the characteristics expected from such deposits: a singular action of depositing can be argued for, certain organisation of the filling is observed (in the case of the cistern deposit) excluding the possibility of refuse deposition, and ritual or cultic behaviour is presumed to have prompted the action. Eating becomes ritual feasting, depositing refuse from it turns into a ritual act. I wish, however, to draw attention back to the question of refuse and rubbish. If we suppose that the remains of the meal found in the triangular area just outside Building D or those deposited in the cistern are the remains of a sacrificial meal, why were they thrown into the marginal space on the border between the sacred and profane or thrown into a cistern? Perhaps we can construct a speculative scenario, whereby our meals could have taken place within the confines of sacred space, *temenos* or *hieron*, but since they were not regulated sacred meals (*hieron deipnon*), the remnants had to be disposed away from the sacred place: the purity of the place was to be restored, pollution (*miasma*) had to be driven away.[96] Or, they were remains of (ritual) dining in the sanctuary which included consumption of 'impure' meat not regarded suitable as a 'proper' sacrifice. The eating of dogs as sacrificial animals was not an unheard-of practice in ancient Greece.[97] In Aristophanes' *Knights* (1399), Paphlagonian is advised to sell sausages of asses' and dogs' meat near the gates of the city, and Hippocratic writer (*Mobr. Sacr.*) mentions that dog's meat, along with the flesh of goat, stag and sow, is believed to be aptest to disorder of the bowels. The former is naturally poking fun and the sausages of dogs' and asses' meat have a special significance as not the greatest-selling item for Paphlagonian, and the latter is criticising the popular beliefs in purifications and the reliance of people on 'purifiers'. Nevertheless it is clear that dog meat as a part of Greek diet was nothing unusual, and ancient authors refer to it as a nutritional item with no specific acclamation. Proof of dog-eating has also been increasingly attested in Classical archaeology, and many examples come from sanctuary settings.[98] However, sacrificing dogs was not

[94] Wells et al. 2008, 90.
[95] Wells et al. 2008, 48.
[96] For more detailed discussion of the same, see Pakkanen 2006–2007, 351–352, 354–355.
[97] For more details on the eating of dogs and their role as sacrificial animals, see Ekroth 2007, 259–262.
[98] See discussion in Ekroth 2007, 257–259.

customarily included in the regulated, officially sanctified gallery of religious customs; rather, dogs (and snakes) in religious world-view were connected to the chthonic and 'dark' sphere, particularly through Hecate, and their carcasses are known to have been regarded as *katharsia*: 'meals' (*deipna*) set out for the goddess in the crossroads were called *hekataia*, and probably consisted of magides (bread used to clean hands after a meal), puppies, and perhaps certain fish.[99] In this particular sense meat associated with 'lower domains of life' could have been regarded as particularly unsuitable for 'proper' religious ritual. These meals could have produced ritual waste by turning the remains into *oksythymia*, polluted household refuse which was to be left at a liminal space of transition between defined, bounded areas. These are, of course, speculative possibilities, but they nevertheless take into account the religious conceptualisation of space and place as well as religious beliefs implicit in the definition of pure and impure matter, ritually correct and incorrect behaviour, components defining socially and culturally coded religious behaviour when trying to interpret ritual deposits. If we wish to speculate about the depositional history of archaeological remains in these deposits we have to look for interpretative possibilities within the realm of ritual and cultic behaviour which includes also the 'unclean' side of religious worldview of the Greeks. Understanding waste as an agent in both ritual behaviour and in the formation of archaeological ritual deposits is essential. Also, elaborating further the definition of deposition as a past *act* with possible meanings in cultic life may allow us to look at archaeological deposits not as mere units of objects and artefacts, but as remnants of possible ritual acts and, furthermore, deposits of a cult.

Conclusion: What Next?

To draw the above observations together we may note that in interpreting archaeological deposits related to ritual practice, acknowledgement of the following issues would be helpful: 1) clarification of what is terminologically and conceptually meant by a ritual/cult deposit in each specific context with particular attention to intentionality/non-intentionality of actions behind their formation, 2) elaboration of the relationship between ritual, cult and religion, 3) expanding the interpretive perspective of ritual deposits to encompass the ideological and religious factors of the studied past culture and society instead of merely paying attention to singular ritual actions, and 4) considering the relationship between refuse and remains of the past peoples' ritual practice.

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[99] Parker 1983, 30; Johnston 1991, 219–220.

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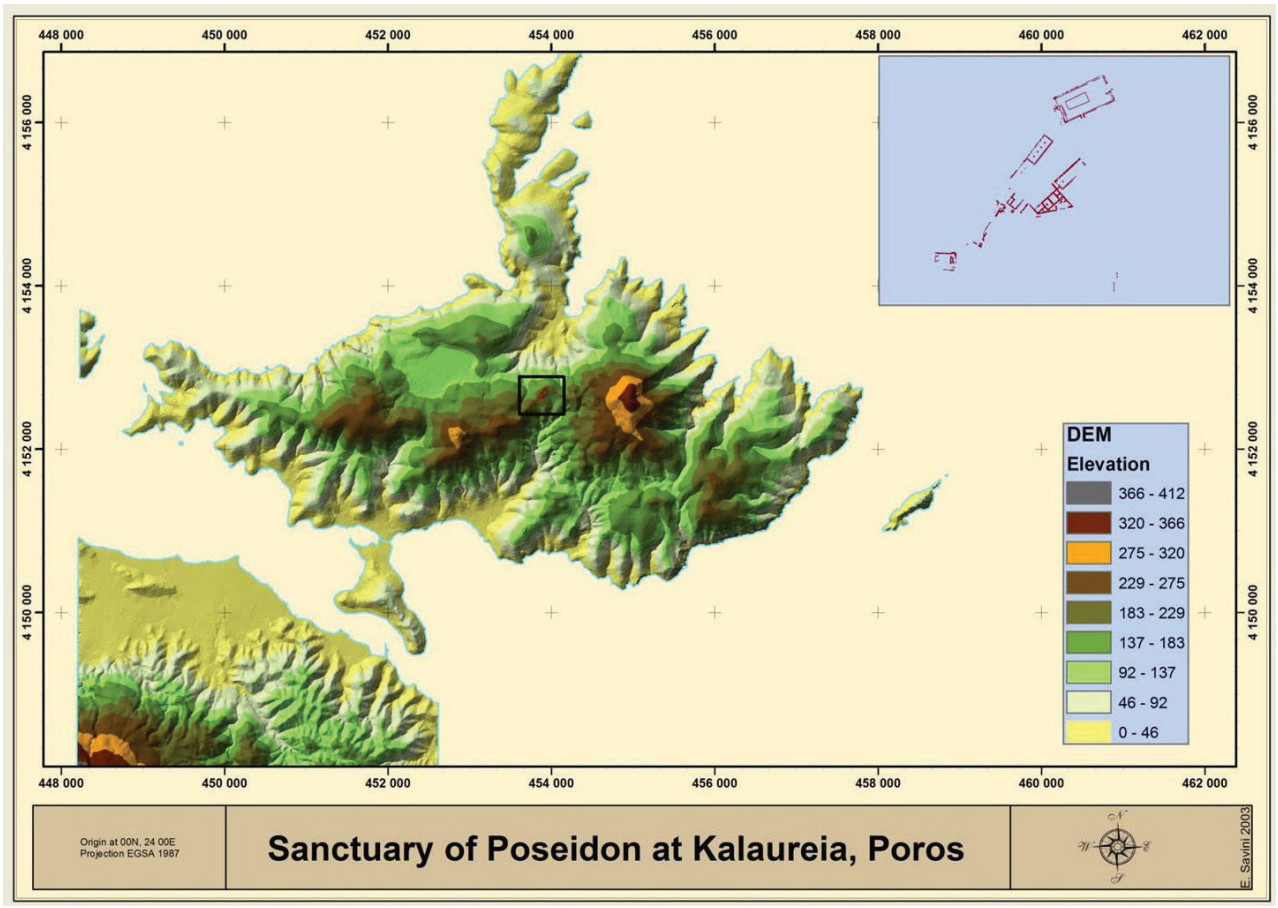

Plate 3.1. Sanctuary of Poseidon at Kalaureia, Poros (Emmanuel Savini).

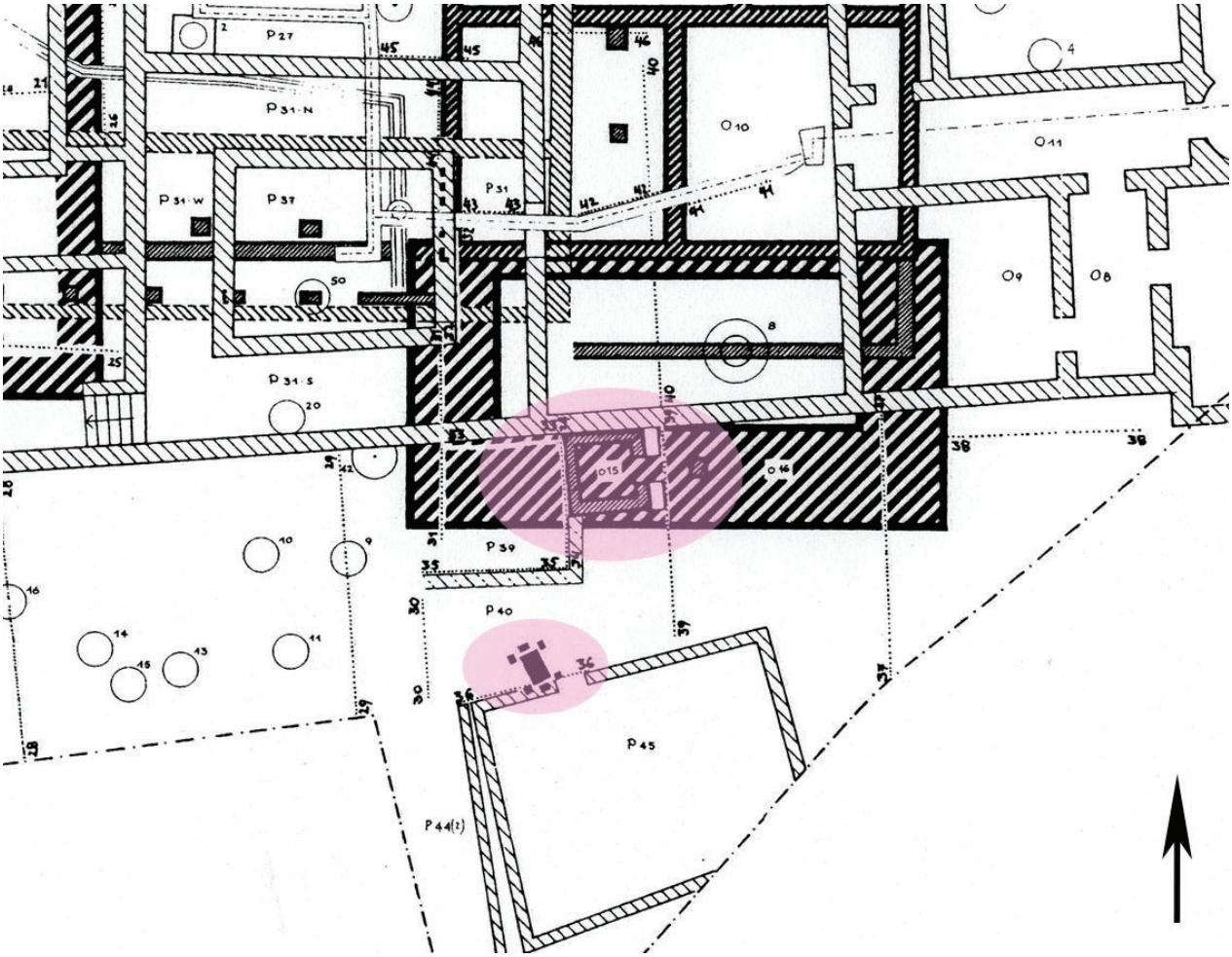

Plate 4.4. Plan with the two Altars of Artemis at Olympia (DAI Athens).