

THRACIA XVIII



IN MEMORY OF ALEXANDER FOL

PHRYGIAN ROCK-CUT THRONES,
'IDOLS' AND PHRYGIAN ROYAL SYMBOLISM

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Thirteen years ago I offered a paper on the rock-cut thrones in Phrygia and Thrace for Prof. Alexander Fol's 60th anniversary volume.¹ Since then a major work on the Phrygian rock-cut monuments appeared,² and a number of new ones were published.³ With my deep regret, I am dedicating some more thoughts on the same topic to the memory of my university professor, with all my gratitude and appreciation.

Phrygian rock-cut thrones and stepped monuments have recently been the subject of a vivid discussion.⁴ They were considered together with the idols and often called 'idols' or 'altars'. S. Berndt-Ersöz has justly argued against such a labelling of these monuments.⁵ Some of the thrones whose backrests have carvings in the shape of human head(s) resemble 'idols'. However, such a classification of the whole monument is hardly justified.

I have argued that the double thrones were designed for the Phrygian Mother Goddess, or *Matar*, and her *paredros* at some special moments of the ritual.⁶ The idea about the Mother-Son *paredria* has resourcefully been investigated by Prof. Alexander Fol.⁷ A supreme male deity, who is still elusive both in pre-Roman Thrace and Phrygia, might have taken the seat next to the goddess. We have more evidence about the role of the king in the cult of the Kubeleyan Mother and can suggest that on some occasions he might have taken the place of the god next to the Mother.

S. Berndt-Ersöz has rightfully suggested that curls or 'bolsters' carved or sculptured on both sides of the semicircular backrests or on some idols represent locks of hair, thus rendering stylized human head.⁸ She observed that these features are present only on the double thrones and on the slabs with carved double idols. Recent finds from Kerkenes showed that single freestanding idols of considerable size were also provided with locks of hair.⁹ The above-mentioned author considers the possibility of both male and female deities to be represented by them. About the double idols/thrones

¹ Vassileva 1995.

² Berndt-Ersöz 2006.

³ Tufekçi-Sivas 1999, Pl. 136-147, 152-156; Brixhe and Sivas 2002.

⁴ Recent summaries of the discussion in: Berndt-Ersöz 2006, 172-173; 2007; Фол, В. 2007, 301-309.

⁵ Berndt-Ersöz 2007, 33.

⁶ Vassileva 1995, 275-276.

⁷ Fol 1997.

⁸ Berndt-Ersöz 2006, 57-58, 159; 2007, 27-30.

⁹ Sumner et al. 2006, 11.

she suggested that one was meant for the Mother Goddess, the other – for the Phrygian Male Superior/Weather god who was called just Father.¹⁰ She reached her conclusions using the combined data from Phrygian and Hittite iconography.

I have discussed elsewhere some older Anatolian/Hittite elements that the Phrygian royal ideology might have inherited.¹¹ In the same context I would argue in this paper that these Phrygian stylised images on the rock-cut thrones and idols could have been meant for the king as well.

A recent article has investigated again the winged sun-disc, the Hittite royal symbol, in connection with image No. 34 in the rock-cut sanctuary of Yazılıkaya near Hattuša/Boğazköy (Fig. 1).¹² The author concludes that the image generally described as the Sun God of the Sky is actually that of a Hittite king while still alive.¹³ The winged sun-disc is usually considered as borrowed from Egypt where it was a symbol of Hor and also a royal symbol.¹⁴ It corresponds with the title „My Sun” or „My Sun-god” of the Hittite king.¹⁵ What is interesting about this case is that locks of hair are probably hanging from the central disc. A rosette is inscribed inside the disc. The same kind of winged sun-disc can be seen in the cartouche of Tudhaliyas IV in Chamber A at Yazılıkaya (No. 64), as well as in that in Chamber B, considered to be his burial chamber (Fig. 2).¹⁶ Here, however, a second disc with a rosette is carved above the central one. Similar rendering of the winged sun-disc can be found on some Hittite royal seals and sealings.¹⁷

Blocks retrieved from the debris at Nişantepe in the Upper City of Hattuša gave the opportunity for two sphinxes to be reconstructed; they once stood at the gate of the building on the rock cliff. These have long locks of hair framing their faces and falling on the breasts, while their headdresses resemble high hats decorated with six rosettes.¹⁸ The sculptures at the city Sphinx Gate probably looked alike. The sphinxes at the city gate of Alacahöyük have the same curls on their breasts but no high headdress. They wear something like a band, a necklace of rosettes. The *polos* and the curls of hair falling on the breast are also typical of the representations of the Egyptian goddess Hathor,¹⁹ who was the mother and wife of Hor and, since the Old Kingdom, considered wife of the pharaoh. Thus, Enseret interprets the winged sun-disc as flying Hittite sphinxes.²⁰

If one were to remove the wings from the Hittite symbol, the outline of the central element would be very much like the stylised human heads with curls of hair on the

Phrygian rock-cut thrones and idols. However, their ‘heads’ have no facial features, neither do they have rosettes. Nevertheless, the rosette design has a history of its own in Phrygia. A rosette or rosette-like design occupies the centre of the wooden serving stands, ‘screens’, from Tumulus MM and P at Gordion (Fig. 3).²¹ It is an openwork rosette on the Tumulus P stand, whose six petals are simple circles. Conversely, the ones from Tumulus MM are of solid wood whose inlaid pattern is more delicate: curving line(s) forming multi-petal rosette with triangles between the petals. Below the rosettes all three stands have curved legs terminating in scroll feet. The top of each leg of the Tumulus MM stands is a smaller disc with an inlaid star-like rosette. If viewed from afar, these smaller rosettes can be imagined as ‘curls’ of the main disc. Such star-like rosettes and their variants are also to be found on the legs of the ‘Pagoda’ table from Tumulus MM.²²

In all three wooden pieces of furniture three arcs, or crescents, are arranged above the central rosette. On the Tumulus P stand they are enclosed in a rectangular border, much less pronounced on the MM ‘screens’. The design could be perceived as a stylised head with a cylindrical high hat, or *polos*. The legs, on the other hand, can be thought of as locks of hair falling down.

E. Simpson revealed the maze-like arrangement of the elements of the geometric patterns on the inlaid serving stands and suggested that this „play” had religious importance (Figs. 4a-b).²³ She has convincingly argued that the central composition on the furniture pieces from the tombs corresponds to the central niche and the design of the rock-cut façades.²⁴ The rosette most probably stands for the goddess herself as her image stood in the niche, while the two lions on both sides of her at Arslankaya were symbolised by the wooden lion’s legs of the ‘screens’ (Fig. 5). Assyrians and Babylonians considered the star-like rosette a symbol of Ishtar.²⁵ At Kargamiš Kubaba wears a high *polos* decorated with rosettes.²⁶ The same hat is worn by the goddess on the ivory frontlet from Terrace Building 2 at Gordion, topped by a winged sun-disc (North Syrian import),²⁷ as well as by the ivory figurine of a female figure from Gordion²⁸ and a stone head found in Ankara.²⁹ Compass-drawn rosettes were incised on some of the Phrygian bronze belts found mainly in tombs.³⁰ They are also to be found among the pictorial graffiti on the stones from Megaron 1 and 2, dated to the Early Phrygian period, together with lions and birds of prey – attributes of the Mother goddess.³¹ Rosettes

¹⁰ Berndt-Ersöz 2004; 2006, 170-172, 2007, 33-35.

¹¹ Василева 1990; Vassileva 2008.

¹² Enseret 2005.

¹³ Enseret 2005, 297.

¹⁴ Against this view: Beckman 2002.

¹⁵ Bryce 2002, 19-21.

¹⁶ Neve 1996, Abb. 237; Seeher 1999, 140-141, Fig. 133; 146-147, Fig. 138.

¹⁷ Neve 1996, Abb. 151, 159.

¹⁸ Neve 1996, 61, Abb. 178-184; Seeher 1999, 93-94, Fig. 98-99.

¹⁹ Seeher 1999, 57.

²⁰ Enseret 2005, 296.

²¹ Young 1981, TumP 151, Fig. 33, Pl. 29A-E; MM 378, 379, Fig. 104, 107, Pl. 44A-C; Simpson 1988; 1998; Simpson and Spirydowicz 1999, Figs. 15-17, 29, 31, 61, 63.

²² Young 1981, MM 388, Figs. 109 and 111L; Simpson and Spirydowicz 1999, Figs. 7, 13.

²³ Simpson 1988.

²⁴ Simpson 1988; 1998.

²⁵ Simpson 1988, 34-35; 1998, 637 with more Mesopotamian and Babylonian examples.

²⁶ Woolley and Barnett 1952, Pl. B39a.

²⁷ Young 1962, 166-167; Sams 1993, 552, Pl. 95.1.

²⁸ Young 1966, Fig. 5, Pl. 74.

²⁹ Naumann 1983, No. 24, Taf. 7.2, Roller 1999a, 48.

³⁰ Young 1981, 19-20, TumP 35, 36, Figs. 10, 11.

³¹ Simpson 1988, 28; 1998, 638-639, Figs. 16-19; Roller 1999b, 148, Fig. 6.

are hewn on the pediment or as acroteria of some of the Phrygian rock-cut façades – on the Unfinished monument at Midas City and on the Areyastis Monument.³²

Now back to the Phrygian rock-cut thrones and idols, a number of the so-called step monuments have a semicircular disc above the steps forming a backrest, some have 'armrests' as well, and could be considered thrones.³³ Five of them have carved or relief features of a 'double idol', the best example being the throne on the top of Midas City bearing an inscription (Fig. 6).³⁴ The latter has two 'heads' sharing a common double incised line, which represents hair and two curls, each on one side of each 'head'. Another throne at Midas City has a double idol carved on its backrest and bears an inscription (Fig. 7).³⁵ The outline of the two heads is also rendered by a double line. The 'curls' are badly worn out. At the same site, there are two more examples of depicted hair (and locks) on carved double idols in the rock wall (Fig. 8).³⁶ A platform and something like a step accompany the idol on one of them. Both monuments are not thrones.

Five of the rock-cut thrones bear inscriptions: either on the rise of the steps or on the backrest of the throne/'bench'.³⁷ Three of them come from Midas City. The inscription M-03 is on the rock wall above the platform in which a seat is cut out (a throne?). An official title, *modrovanak*, is mentioned in the text at the most imposing throne on top of the east side of Midas kale (M-04). 'Iman' is carved on two of the other stepped monuments: M-03 and M-06. It has already been suggested that this word could be interpreted as a 'cult object', or an 'image'.³⁸ Could 'iman' be associated with the 'idols' carved on the monument with the inscription M-06?³⁹ The inscription on the steps of Kalehisar (P-06), where two lions once stood on top of the armrests, is badly damaged but 'ios' is still recognisable, which would give a lead to a probable curse formula against a violator of the monument.

Nine other monuments have smaller rock-cut discs, or 'bolsters', on both sides of the backrest, often attached to it. In some cases they are situated further down from the 'head' and give the impression of 'shoulders'. I would agree with S. Berndt-Ersöz that most often these represent locks of hair rather than shoulders.⁴⁰ Several monuments where rectangular idol bodies are also represented have ledges in front of them, more like podia and not steps. These can hardly be thrones.

Similarly, the joint hair of two heads with two curls is incised on the stele from Sincan, Ankara (Fig. 9).⁴¹ A pediment with a king post and a semicircular acroterion is depicted above the double idol, thus suggesting it was arranged in a rock-cut façade (or in a real building façade?). The two 'bodies' are joint with a semicircular object interpreted as a fibula. Probably the two heads on another stele from Faharet Çeşme, outside Ankara, were also covered with 'hair' but the stele is too worn out.⁴²

Recent finds from Kerkenes Dağ revealed single stone idols of considerable size with well marked locks of hair.⁴³ One stood on a stepped monument in the Monumental Entrance to the Palace Complex.⁴⁴ The sculptured base for the monument bears an Old-Phrygian inscription that surrounds a relief of two winged griffin genies topped by a sun-disc with a rosette.⁴⁵ Numerous fragments were assembled to restore a free-standing human figure from the same location. A representation of a male ruler has been suggested.⁴⁶ More fragments of freestanding idols in the shape of omega with locks of hair appeared, which were associated with the top of large tower-like terraces at both sides of the paved court (Fig. 10). New-Hittite influence has been suggested.⁴⁷ The orthostates with the relief representations of Kubaba at Kargamış were also placed near the city gate.

Detailed observations associate the rock-cut thrones with double-headed representations with the cult of the Phrygian Mother. It only seems logical to me that the second figure be that of her *paredros*, of the male supreme god for whom the second seat should have been reserved. It was suggested that this was a figure of the Hittite Weather/Storm God type possibly later attested as Zeus in the inscription from Phrygia in Roman times.⁴⁸ However, clues to other divinities might be worth considering. Even if the interpretation of *Apelan* as Apollo is not secured,⁴⁹ the other two words on M-05 *mekas* and *tevano* [speak in favour of a religious context].⁵⁰ Apollo was also one of the most worshipped gods in the Phrygian highlands in Roman times.⁵¹

The wooden serving stands discussed above come from tumuli whose occupants were of a very high social standing, if not all of them kings. The rock-cut façade at Midas City, the so-called 'Midas Monument', bears a dedication to Midas, *'Iavagetas, wanaks'*.⁵² Thus the discussed symbols were related not only to the Mother Goddess but to the Phrygian king/aristocrat as well. Hence, the involvement of the Phrygian ruler in the cult of the Mother could possibly be reflected in the visual vocabulary

³² Haspels 1971, 77-80, 104-107, Figs. 14-15, 83-84; Berndt 2002, 18-19, Abb.24; Berndt-Ersöz 2006, Nos. 34, 37, Figs. 49, 56.

³³ For a detailed description: Berndt-Ersöz 2006: 40-49, 56-59.

³⁴ Haspels 1971, 93, Fig. 28; Berndt 2002, 39-42, Abb. 62; Berndt-Ersöz 2006, No. 70, Fig. 80; Brixhe and Lejeune 1984, M-04.

³⁵ Haspels 1971, 93, Fig. 31; Berndt 2002, Abb. 52; Berndt-Ersöz 2006, No. 95, Fig. 90; Brixhe and Lejeune 1984, M-06.

³⁶ Haspels 1971, 94, Fig. 36; Berndt 2002, 27, Abb. 39; Berndt-Ersöz 2006, Nos. 72 and 80, Figs. 81, 82. For recently published numerous miniature 'idols' carved in the rocks at Midas City see Berndt 2008.

³⁷ Brixhe and Lejeune 1984, M-03, -04, -06 and P-06; Brixhe and Sivas 2002, 104-116; Brixhe and Sivas 2003, 67-69; Berndt-Ersöz 2006, 68, Nos. 69, 70, 95, 108 and 112.

³⁸ According to the Luwian and Hittite parallels offered: Bayun 1992; Brixhe 2004, 51 interpreted it as part of the monument, 'monument'?' 'stèle'?

³⁹ As briefly suggested: Vassileva 1999, 177.

⁴⁰ Berndt-Ersöz 2007, 27-29.

⁴¹ Metin and Akalın 2001, Fig. 1.

⁴² Prayon 1987, Pl. 15c; Naumann 1983, 94, Pl. 9f.

⁴³ Summers et al. 2006, 11, Fig. 9 and 13.

⁴⁴ According to architectural symmetry, the existence of another one is assumed: Brixhe and Summers 2006, 104.

⁴⁵ Brixhe and Summers 2006, Fig. 9.

⁴⁶ Opinion of C. Draycott, cited by Summers et al. 2006, 11.

⁴⁷ Summers et al. 2006, 11.

⁴⁸ Vassileva 1999, 178-179; Berndt-Ersöz 2006, 172; 2007, 33-35.

⁴⁹ Ortel 1997, 27-28.

⁵⁰ Vassileva 1999, 178-179.

⁵¹ Drew-Bear and Naour 1990, 1933-1939; Berndt-Ersöz 2006, 78.

⁵² Brixhe and Lejeune 1984, M-01a.

employed in different media: rock, wood, bronze.

Going back to the Hittite parallel: the resemblance between the carved heads with curling hair on the Phrygian rock-cut thrones and the outline of the central part of the Hittite winged sun-disc could possibly support royal connotations in Phrygian symbolism. Hittite gods were usually depicted with conical horned hats, while the kings wore close-fitting round caps. However, figure No. 34 at Yazılıkaya, usually identified as the Sun God of the Sky,⁵³ is dressed in the same 'priestly' attire, the round cap included, as that worn by Tudhaliyas IV in Chamber A of the rock-cut sanctuary. The winged sun-disc above figure No. 34 is one of the arguments in favour of its interpretation as king.⁵⁴ On the other hand, Suppiluliuma II, the last Hittite king, wears the divine horned hat in a relief on the side wall near the entrance of Chamber 2 in the Upper City of Hattuša. Scholars agree that, despite this detail, the representation is of the Hittite king while still alive.⁵⁵ The Sun-god on the wall opposite to the entrance of Chamber 2 resembles closely Yazılıkaya No. 34 image, as he wears a round cap and holds the *kalmuš* (*lituus*) in one hand, the Egyptian symbol of life, *ankh* – in the other; a winged sun-disc with a double rosette is depicted above his head. So, this might also be a representation of the king in the attire of the Sun-god, as is the case with figure No. 34 at Yazılıkaya. These two examples from the Hittite capital show that the king could have been dressed in or supplied with attributes reserved for the gods. And especially of the Sun god whose name was part of the official title of the Hittite king. Hence, on special occasions – beside his death, in his lifetime – the Hittite king could have been represented in the iconography of the Sun-god (and of the Storm-god, see above note 54). There is no convincing evidence of Hittite kings having been deified and no traces of ruler's cult. Still, the king was identified with the solar deity at certain events.

North Syrian and Neo-Hittite affinities with Phrygian visual representations have been discussed.⁵⁶ Winged sun-disc, with rosettes including, is present on a number of Neo-Hittite monuments. However, borrowings of Hittite elements proper have hardly been discussed, although parallels in religious sphere have been done.⁵⁷ The 'scanned' Anatolian and Hittite cultural heritage in Phrygia is still to be investigated.

My hypothesis of a possible connection between the central element of the Hittite winged sun-disc and Phrygian rock- and stone-carved 'heads' with 'curls' make good use of a recent article by M. Miller,⁵⁸ although it refers to a later period, the Achaemenid rule in Anatolia. The author convincingly shows how different iconographic elements borrowed from Achaemenid monumental architecture of the capital, were changed,

adapted and rearranged on the silver bowls of the so-called 'Lydian Treasure', i.e. in the western satrapies. She refers to this as 'poetics of emulation'. Her study deals with synchronous monuments, while the Phrygian rock-cut thrones and idols are centuries later than the discussed Hittite images. Probably we will never find the 'missing link', as is the case with the Mycenaean titles of King Midas on the rock-cut façade at 'Midas City' – *lavagetas* and *wanax*. The New-Hittite kingdoms could have been the intermediary between older ideas and images, and Phrygian symbolism.

Only as a hypothesis I would suggest that the central element of the Hittite winged sun-disc resembling a 'head' with hair locks might have influenced the Phrygian monuments. The similar context – the symbol associated with king's and god's images – facilitates the possible borrowing and further adaptation.⁵⁹ The preference for non-figural, mainly geometric designs in Phrygia⁶⁰ could also have played a role in such an adaptation. Here I would again refer to the 'detachable formula' and 'detachable themes', as discussed by C. Watkins in relation to mythological texts.⁶¹ Those 'may be deleted from one context and inserted in another', a process he calls 'genetic intertextuality'. A similar process occurred with visual formulae, where, like in the written texts, the main string, i.e. the royal symbolism, was preserved. The rosette in Phrygia is present on a number of other monuments and objects of the same royal/aristocratic and religious context. Should we bring further the comparison between the two rosettes, one above the other, in Tudhaliyas' IV cartouche in Yazılıkaya (No. 64) and the Sun-god in Chamber 2 in Hattuša with the half circles/rosettes inlaid on top of the whole rosettes on the serving stands from Tumulus P and MM? Should they be considered as shorthand for two rosettes?

The suggested interpretation of the Old-Phrygian word '*iman*' as cult object,⁶² which is present on two of the rock-cut thrones, could have possibly implied the carved idols on the stepped monuments. According to this hypothesis, *iman* is „an object endowed with divine power“, „deity substitute“. Some of the objects on which this word was inscribed, e.g., the alabaster hawk with a bronze torque on its neck from Gordion (G-136), match very well the magic overtone of this interpretation.⁶³ Freestanding, portable idols of different size are known from Gordion⁶⁴ and from Hattuša.⁶⁵ The discussed comparison with the Hitt. *himma* – „imitation, replica, substitute“ can be added just to point once again to the same direction of possible borrowings, i.e., to the Hittite-Luwian world. Interactions with the Neo-Hittite kingdoms like Tabal, Tyana (Atuna), etc., historically attested, might account for these features. However, Anatolian affini-

⁵³ Neve 1996, 71; Secher 1999, 137.

⁵⁴ Güterbock 1993; Ensart 2005, 294.

⁵⁵ Secher 1999, 89. Archaeologists claimed that the other relief of Tudhaliyas IV found in House A in the Upper City, where he is also wearing the horned hat, was made *post mortem*, thus interpreting the building as a chapel for worshipping the deceased king: Neve 1996, 35-36, Abb. 101-103. In both cases Tudhaliyas IV is represented as the Storm-God, see the stele from Gaziantep with the relief image of the god: *Die Hethiter* 2002, 249, No. 127.

⁵⁶ Sams 1993; Roller 1999b; 2007, 206-212.

⁵⁷ Berndt-Ersöz 2004; 2006, 164-166.

⁵⁸ Miller 2007.

⁵⁹ The discussion on the inscription on the rock-cut façade at 'Midas City', a dedication to Midas – whether it is a monument in honour of a living king or a shrine of his posthumous worship – parallels the discussion on the above-mentioned images in Hattuša.

⁶⁰ Simpson 1988, 35, 38; Roller 2007.

⁶¹ Watkins 2004, 77-78.

⁶² Bayon 1992.

⁶³ The same might be valid for the small anthropomorphic idol from Gordion, bearing the inscription: *eymi Vaki* (G-178), as suggested by Al. Fol: *ΦOI* 1994, 64, 69, 259.

⁶⁴ Young 1951, Pl. 7, Fig. 2; Kohler 1995, 23-24, *TumB* 33, Pl. 12, H. 1.

⁶⁵ Prayon 1987, No. 58, 183, Fig. 26, Pl. 35; Neve 1993, Fig. 19; Roller 1999a, 77-78.

ties of second millennium BC should not completely be ruled out for Phrygia.⁶⁶

The puzzle-like interpretation of the two 'screens' from Tumulus MM, as well as the play of dark and light and the play with different type of symmetry on the other pieces of inlaid furniture, has demonstrated the multi-level reading of Phrygian 'decorative' patterns, and, respectively, symbolism.⁶⁷ Playful or not, rearrangement of the same elements was meant to convey different layers of meanings. Similarly, more than one meaning, beside the obvious, could have been read on the rock-cut thrones and carved images. Thus, I agree that the carved backrests of Phrygian rock-cut thrones were meant as human heads. The curls of hair, however, might have hidden yet another meaning. They could have implied royal connotation of the monuments, as well. These double thrones were meant for the Mother goddess and her *paredros*. The Hittite parallels would support the idea that, besides the supreme male god (of solar nature), the king could have been the goddess' *paredros* at some important ritual events. Carved schematic figures might have been *iman* – deity substitute, divine image, and the Phrygian king might have been *iman* – substitute of the god in the ritual. Similar complex messages could have been read on the patterns of the rock-cut façades, on the inlaid wooden furniture, or the bronze belts.

The iconography of the Sun-god and that of the Storm God by which the Hittite king could be represented suggest the different roles that Phrygian ruler could have assumed in the ritual. The ranking of these gods in Hittite religion is not absolute and depends on the occasion. The Sun-god was the first deity to be mentioned as a witness in the concluding parts of treaties. The Hittite king considered himself the son of the Storm god.⁶⁸ Thus, while a deity of the Weather God-type seems the best candidate for a *paredros* of the Mountainous Mother in Phrygia, a solar deity could also have had important functions in a cult worshipped on mountain peaks and rocks. Or, these parallels with Hittite religious and royal symbolism would point to 'stormy' and solar functions of an anonymous male divinity. This deity might possibly be discovered in some Old-Phrygian inscriptions where identical or similar in meaning epithets in both feminine and masculine forms appear,⁶⁹ and later, in Roman times, would be worshipped as Zeus.⁷⁰ Thus, depending on the occasion, the Phrygian ruler could have embodied both the solar and the 'stormy' characteristics of the supreme god.⁷¹

Rock-cut 'idols', freestanding stylised human figures and those carved on stone

slabs, might have been '*iman*', the image of the god, placed on the site of her/his epiphany: the bench, the seat on a mountain peak, on top of a rock outcrop, etc. Where 'idols' are carved on a vertical rock wall, sometimes accompanied with platforms and podia, the images were probably meant to receive offerings and sacrifices. In this respect these monuments might be considered altars.

In Thrace there are no rock-cut thrones with carved images, or single carved idols in the vertical rock (Fig. 11).⁷² The stylised human figures on stone slabs of the Iron Age are much different from the Phrygian idols and usually represent a warrior (thus, possibly a king).⁷³ The typological parallels between the Phrygian and Thracian rock-cut sanctuaries (complexes) do not necessarily mean ideological and doctrinal identity.⁷⁴ However, the Eastern Mediterranean context of the rock-cut monuments suggests similar ideas, symbolism and ritual practice. Gradually, more and more old Anatolian/Hittite elements are being revealed interwoven in Phrygian culture. Hittite royal symbolism could help in suggesting more details in the meaning of Phrygian religious monuments. I believe that the comparison with the Thracian rock-cut thrones is a legitimate one. The Phrygian examples would add further support to the already suggested interpretation of the Thracian rock-cut thrones as places of the epiphany of the Goddess and Her *paredros*. The nature of the *paredros*, who is not visually attested either in Phrygia or in Thrace, could possibly be further specified due to the Balkan-Anatolian parallels. Adding a few more details to the already discussed *paredria* by Prof. Alexander Fol, I would suggest that the Mother-Goddess shared her throne with her son: a superior male deity of the Storm-god type or the Sun-god. These were possibly perceived as entity, as revealed by the solar-chthonian unity in Thracian Orphism.⁷⁵ On the other hand, depending on the kind of rituals performed, a Thracian ruler could have assumed the place of the Storm- or Solar deity next to the Mother Goddess.

⁶⁶ Archaeological soundings at Gordion yielded evidence that the site was 'well within direct control of the capital' in the period of the Hittite Empire; Gunter 1991, 105. Similar data are furnished by the Hittite cemetery: Mellink 1956, and the seals found at Gordion: Dusinger 2005, 20-21.

⁶⁷ Simpson 1988.

⁶⁸ Gurney 1990, 115; Bryce 2002, 141-146.

⁶⁹ Vassileva 1998, 301: B-03: *evtevey* and *evtevey* (Dat.) and W-01a: *areyastin* (Acc.) and *evdemnoy* (Dat.).

⁷⁰ I would agree with Berndt-Ersöz 2006, 164-165, that a Phrygian male god might have been called just Father, as already suggested by Lubotsky for the New-Phrygian *orouenos* in N 48 (Lubotsky 1997, 127-128), but so far there are no such Old-Phrygian epigraphic attestations. Zeus was also the god of daylight, thus resembling the Hittite Sun-God of the Sky.

⁷¹ I would not agree with the criticism by S. Berndt-Ersöz 2006, 162 that, if meant for the king, the second seat, or image should have been smaller than that for the goddess. That is the point: the king equals the Sun-God in the ritual. And just in this capacity he could have even been the Goddess' lover, husband and son.

⁷² V. Fol suggested that some of the carved discs in Palaeocastro, near Elchovo and at Tatoul might turn to be the 'heads' of anthropomorphic carvings: Fol, B. 2007, 304.

⁷³ Fol, B. 1993, 66-76.

⁷⁴ As rightfully reminded by V. Fol: Fol, B. 2007, 308.

⁷⁵ Fol 1986, *passim*.

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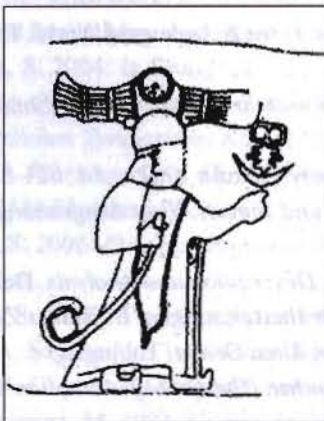


Fig. 1. Drawing of the Sun-god in Chamber A at Yazilikaya (No. 34) (after Die Hethiter 2002)



Fig. 3. Serving stand A from Tumulus MM. (after Simpson and Spirydowicz. 1999)



Fig. 2. Tudhaliyas IV with his patron deity Šaruma in Chamber B at Yazilikaya (after Die Hethiter 2002)

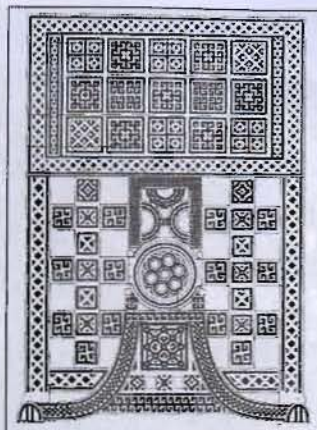
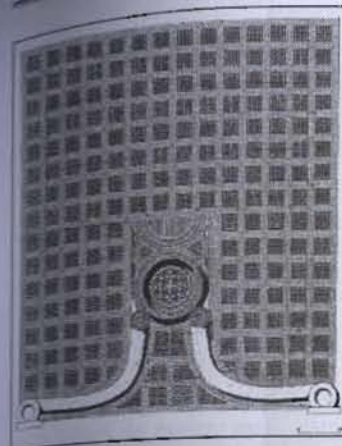


Fig. 4a Drawing of the Serving stand A from Tumulus MM;
4b Drawing of the serving stand from Tumulus P. (after Simpson and Spirydowicz. 1999).



Fig. 5. Arslankaya (after Simpson and Spirydowicz. 1999).



Fig. 6. Rock-cut throne on top of Midas City bearing the inscription M-04. (after Berndt, 2002, Abb. 62)



Fig. 7. Rock-cut throne at Midas City bearing the inscription M-06. (after Berndt 2002, Abb. 52)



Fig. 8. Rock-cut idols at Midas City (after Berndt 2002, Abb.

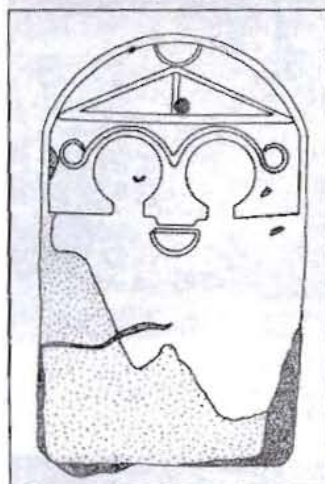


Fig. 9. Drawing of the slab with a double idol from Sincan, Ankara (after Metin and Akalin 2001)



Fig. 10. Reconstruction drawing of an anthropomorphic 'idol' from Kerkenes Dağ. (after Summers et. al. 2006)



Fig. 11. Rock-cut thrones at Tatoul, southeastern Bulgaria. Photograph by the author.

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