

CHAPTER 15

ARCHAEOLOGIES OF THE SENSES

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1 WHAT IS THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE SENSES?

It will be easier to start by describing what the archaeology of the senses is not. It is not an attempt to produce a long-term developmental history of the sensory modalities of humanity, from early prehistory to the present. Such an effort would be akin to writing ‘the history of everything’ as a single narrative, or as one volume. It is not an effort to reconstruct past sensory and sensuous experience, in other words to understand, to feel, to sense, how past people sensed and felt in their interaction with the material world and with other humans. Sensory and sensuous experience is socially and historically specific, and our bodies and sensory modalities too are the products of our own historical moment, thus rendering attempts at sensory empathy with past people problematic. It is not a sub-discipline of archaeology either, in the same way that we have an archaeology of food, of death, of pottery, of ethnicity, or colonialism. Such a compartmentalization is not only unfeasible (for the senses do not occupy the same ontological ground as, say, pottery, or a historical phenomenon such as colonialism), but it would have also deprived this approach of its potential to cross-fertilize all aspects of the archaeological endeavour.

So, what is it? I hope that a more complete answer to this question will emerge at the end of this chapter, but for the sake of convenience, let me offer a working definition here: the archaeologies of the senses are attempts to come to terms with the fully embodied, experiential matter-reality of the past; to understand how people produce their subjectivities, their collectively and experientially founded identities, how they live their daily routines and construct their own histories, through the sensuous and sensory experience of matter, of other animate and inanimate beings, human, animal, plant, or other. In other words, they are attempts to come to terms with the skin and the flesh of the world. The archaeologies of the senses do not ask the questions: did this roast pig taste for the people in the Neolithic the same as it does to us today? Or did this Early Bronze Age Aegean pot with this plastic external decoration and its rough surface, produce the same tactile feelings of roughness to the Early Bronze Age people in the Aegean as it does to the pottery analyst today? Not only are these questions impossible to answer, but they are also wrongly

phrased—we only need to be reminded of the context-specific nature of sensory experiences even within our own era. But the archaeologies of the senses do pose the following questions: what is the *range* and *form* of taste or tactile experiences in any given context, and how and why do they change across space and time? Why is it that these specific pots with their distinctive surfaces with plastic decoration, appear and disappear suddenly, what is the context of their use, and how does their distinctive tactile experience relate to the tactile experience of other pots, spatially and chronologically? How do the tactile experiences they afford relate to the olfactory and taste experiences of their content, and, of course, the visual experience in the context of their use (a dark cave or a tomb, perhaps, where tactility then becomes crucial in recognizing the shape of the pot and its content)? And how does the olfactory and taste experience of roast pig, and of burning fat relate to the range of other culinary sensory experiences in that context? What kind of occasion does this experience produce, and what kind of temporality does it relate to? How do the sensory experiences of hunting an animal, of killing it, sometimes as part of a sacrificial ceremony, of listening to the screams of the animal as it senses its death, of seeing the bright red colour of blood and of meat, of partaking of the skinning, the chopping, and cooking of the carcass, of being infused with smoke and smells, and of course with the sensory and embodied presence of others, produce feelings and emotions, time, identities, and personal and collective histories? How does the relatively infrequent bodily consumption of meat in a context, say Mediterranean prehistory, where daily routines are structured around a diet based on cereals and legumes (mostly of pale colours, with tastes and odours less strong than that of meat and fat), produce time, history, memory, and identity? And what kind of prospective memories would these events and experiences have sedimented onto the bodies of the participants, and how were these memories materially reactivated during a subsequent occasion? Finally, how do these sensory experiences and associated memories operate within the field of political economy, how do they structure the bio-political reality of a given context?

It is often assumed that sensory experience is too ephemeral and immaterial to be of use to archaeology, yet the examples I have cited in the passage above, and a growing body of work in a number of disciplines (cf. Seremetakis 1994; Sutton 2001, 2010, for anthropology; Rodaway 1994 for geography) should convince us that, in fact, the opposite is the case: sensory experience is material, it requires materiality in order to be activated, and its past and present material traces are all around us, whether it is the burnt bones of a pig that was sacrificed and then consumed, or the traces left on a rock which was repeatedly hit deliberately to produce sound. Why is it then that sensory and sensuous archaeologies is a project that is still at its infancy? To answer this question will require a close and detailed examination which should explore, side by side, the social and philosophical western conceptions of the body and of the bodily senses since classical times, but also the development of official, professional archaeology, as a specific device of Western modernity. It is well known that archaeology, as an organized discipline and as we know and practise it today in the West, is the outcome and at the same time an essential device of Western capitalist modernity, with close affinities with the colonial and national projects and with the post-Enlightenment philosophical traditions (cf. Hamilakis and Duke 2007; Thomas 2004). What is less well known or even systematically overlooked is that, in the same way that modernity is not a monolithic concept, modernist archaeology is diverse and multifaceted: diverse modernities have often resulted in alternative archaeologies, often

incorporating features that we associate with pre-modern attitudes and practices (cf. Hamilakis 2007; Hamilakis and Momigliano 2006).

It is fair to say, however, that dominant and influential versions in Western modernist archaeology relied on a philosophical and social framework which consistently denigrated sensory experience, set out the framework of the five senses commonly known today, constructed a distinctive hierarchy within the Western sensorium (lower senses: touch, smell, taste; higher senses: vision, hearing), and elevated the autonomous vision to the highest position. Of course this framework is part and parcel of a Cartesian view of the world, with its well known binarisms of mind/body, mental/material, culture/nature, and male/female, to name but a few. Contemporary Western archaeology is still primarily visual, one only needs to reflect (another visual word) on its vocabulary, but it harbours at the same time a tension: a tension between this occularcentric tradition on the one hand, and the inherently multisensory nature of both material culture, and of the archaeological processes on the other. As Ingold has already noted (2000), the solution is not to demonize vision but to *re-materialize* it, to fully integrate it again within the multisensory human and archaeological experience. Besides, vision and sight as modalities have been hardly homogeneous throughout history; suffice only to mention the sense of vision as extramission, encountered amongst philosophers and authors in classical antiquity, in Byzantium, and in other contexts (cf. Bartsch 2000: 79, and below): the idea that the eyes emit as well as receive rays of light, a notion that makes vision akin to the sense of touch.

There have been several attempts in recent years to produce archaeologies of the senses, with varied degrees of success (cf. Insoll 2007). Some researchers have tried to isolate a single sensory modality (as defined by the Western sensorium), say, the auditory sense, and have attempted to reconstruct on that basis acoustic or other properties and effects of past material culture, the megalithic monuments of southern England for example (e.g. Devereux and Jahn 1996; Watson 2001; Watson and Keating 1999). Others have focused on concrete pictorial and other material representations of sensuous social actions, contexts rich in such evidence such as Mesoamerica (e.g. Hauston and Taube 2000); and others still have concentrated mostly on megalithic monuments, primarily in Northern Europe and within a theoretical context which they define as landscape phenomenology, they have explored primarily the visual (but more recently, other sensory) effects of these monuments (e.g. Tilley 1994, 2004, 2008).

A detailed critique of these approaches is beyond the scope of this chapter, but suffice to say here that, notwithstanding the immense value of these attempts as the first exploratory endeavours in a new field, the problems with them are considerable. Despite the analytical convenience, the focus on one single sense ignores two fundamental facts: that the dominant Western sensorium with its five autonomous senses may not be the most appropriate framework for understanding past sensory experience; ethnographic work (e.g. Geurts 2002) has shown that non-Western societies may valorize other modalities, balance for example, beyond our own definitions. More importantly, however, sensuous experience is always *synaesthetic*—it involves multiple sensory modalities working in unison (Porath 2008; cf. Hamilakis 2002; in preparation). Representational studies on the senses are important; yet, sensuous interactions are primarily experiential, and in many cases do not involve representations. Whenever these are available, they should be studied not only as depictions of sensuous experience, but also, and perhaps primarily, as material that elicits sensuous experience in itself, through vision, touch, or perhaps other senses.

Finally, work on landscape phenomenology is still heavily biased towards vision as a separate entity, despite recent efforts to include other senses, and often resorts to structuralist binarisms. Moreover, it often relies on a limited set of data, primarily landscape and architecture; very little use is made of detailed on-site, artefactual, or bioarchaeological data, even when these are available (cf. Brück 2005). More seriously, it mostly assumes a solitary observer, more often than not the archaeologist herself, who experiences a site or a monument as if *for the first time*. Yet, as Bergson has taught us (1991), there is no experience which is not full of memories (cf. Jones 2007). It is this neglect of the *mnemonic sensuous field*, of the fact the sensuous experience of past people would have been filtered through countless past multisensory memories, produced through *collective interaction* rather than through a solitary encounter, which renders many of these approaches problematic.

Still, the archaeologies of the senses constitute a growing and dynamic field of enquiry, in tandem with the growth of the field in other disciplines, and perhaps the only approach which challenges both the cognitivist discourses of much recent theoretical work as well as the residual functionalism of much of scientific archaeology. In fact, the archaeologies of the senses have the ability to bridge these divides, and with their emphasis on the thingness of things, on the materials (Ingold 2007) as well as on materiality, to bring together in a fruitful collaboration hitherto disparate efforts, from zooarchaeology and soil micro-morphology to explorations on temporality and the philosophy of archaeology. Recent studies along these lines (e.g. Boivin 2004; Boivin et al. 2007; Cummings 2002; Goldhahn 2002; Hamilakis 1998, 1999, 2002; Morris and Peatfield 2002; Rainbird 2002; Skeates 2008, 2010) have already demonstrated the enormous potential that lies ahead (cf. Insoll 2007).

2 RELIGION AND RITUAL: REDUNDANT CONCEPTS?

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Several contributors to this book have problematized the notions of religion and of ritual more generally and in archaeology (see Introduction and Chapter 11). I tend to side with the scholars who insist that these two concepts should be kept apart, not only because of the difficulty of talking about religion for much of human history, but also because the term ritual or rather the more useful concept of ritualization as a process (cf. Bell 1992, 2007) has the potential to inform our understanding of situations and phenomena which are definitely not religious in any sense. The fundamental problem with both religion and ritual is that as categories they are the result of the modernist Western mentality I referred to, and the one which has been responsible for the dichotomous thinking which the archaeologies of the senses have attempted to overcome. It is this thinking that has produced the additional dichotomies between secular and religious, and ritual versus practical. It is often repeated that archaeologists in particular have used the concept of ritual whenever they have faced a difficulty in finding a practical or economic explanation for an observed pattern (Insoll 2004: 1–2), perpetuating thus the dichotomous Cartesian logic. There are, however, some interesting recent developments in this debate. Some anthropologists of religion, for example, emphasize the need to view religions not as systems of beliefs but as material and sensory practices. ‘Religions may not always demand beliefs, but they always involve material forms’, states Webb Keane (2008a: S124; cf. also 2008b), whereas the recent

launch of the journal *Material Religion* points to the same direction (see also the special issue of this journal on *Archaeology and Material Religion* 5(3), 2009). Archaeologists have critiqued the use of the concept of ritual in their own discipline, and have attempted to bridge the divide between special, ‘ritual’ occasions and contexts, and the routines and practices of domestic and daily life (e.g. Bradley 2005; Brück 1999).

The approach I am advocating here, however, proposes a more radical break. Its starting point is that religions and ritual—if seen as overarching, and in many ways abstract, concepts—are of limited value in understanding past human experiences. A sensory and sensuous archaeology instead begins with the human body, or rather the *trans-corporeal*, *somatic landscape* and its culturally defined but universally important sensory modalities; the multisensory interactions with the material world; the interweaving of the senses in experiential interactions (intersensoriality and cultural synaesthesia); and social and collective bodily memory, seen as a meta-sense linked both to remembering *and* forgetting which are activated and re-enacted through the senses. Some of these social sensory interactions may be formalized, performative and repetitive (i.e. ‘ritual’), some not; some taking place within the context of organized religions, some not; but all are important in social production and reproduction, in the construction of human histories and identities. In other words, an archaeology of the senses goes beyond the religious and the secular, the ritual and the ordinary/mundane, showing the futility of such dichotomous thinking. I will try to illustrate these thoughts with the case studies below.

3 THE SENSORY WORLD OF A BYZANTINE CHURCH

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Reading Byzantine theological texts one gets the impression that Eastern Orthodox Christianity is an austere, spiritual world, where the bodily senses are seen as the portals to sin and to depravity, and they are thus banished. Yet, partaking of a religious ceremony inside a Byzantine church would testify otherwise. The experience here is clearly multisensory, almost carnal, as all sensory modalities are activated in unison and play a fundamental role in the ceremonies (Caseau 1999: 103). Churches are not simply the places where the believer communicates with God, but rather the materialization of heaven on earth (Ware 1963: 269–80). The different material entities, from architecture and the organization of space, to the iconography on the walls and the ceilings as well as on portable panels, the candles and the oil lamps, the incense, the singing and the Eucharist, the decorative flowers, and of course, the multisensory bodies of the priests and of the congregation, are all participants in a theatrical drama where sensorial stimuli and interactions are the key ingredients. In many cases, it is the interaction across the various material media that produces mnemonic and highly evocative effects in this performance.

Conventional art historical traditions have treated much of the material culture of Byzantine churches as works of art, to be appreciated and perceived through the sense of autonomous vision, and in galleries lit with steady, harsh and cold light (cf. James 2004; Pentcheva 2006). Yet, in Byzantine churches, the figures of saints on the walls and on portable media were lit by oil lamps and candles, and the flickering of their light produces the effect of movement, of human forms becoming animated, and fully participating in the ceremony. In some cases, the selection of certain materials seems to have been governed by

the desire to create the sense of movement and animation, to facilitate this theatre of reflections and shadows. The use of mosaics is a case in point. As Liz James has noted:

[mosaics] made of thousands of glass tesserae, all acting as little mirrors, formed one vast reflective surface which glinted and sparkled as light played across it. Offsetting the tesserae of a mosaic changed the spatial relations around the mosaic and encouraged a sense of movement. It would also change the appearance of an image. In the apse of Hagia Sophia [in Istanbul], the Virgin's robe alters in colour as the light moves around it. [2004: 527–8]

The same goes for the use of enamel to decorate silver icons (Pentcheva 2006: 640–1). These techniques render these artefacts dynamic and constantly changing, resistant to attempts by scholars who may wish to photograph them, that is to render them two-dimensional and static: the multiple reflections of lights would result in constant changes of the expression of the image (2006: 644). Byzantine icons are often equated with the later, better-known, flat wood panels, yet an earlier (ninth–eleventh centuries AD) middle Byzantine tradition of silver-relief icons, often decorated with enamel, invites a tactile experience, and enacts the dominant, in Byzantine theological mentality, view of vision as extramission: in Byzantine churches, vision was a tactile sense, as rays of light were thought to reach out of the eye to touch and feel surfaces (James 2004: 528; Nelson 2000: 150; Pentcheva 2006: 631). But these objects were meant to be experienced with the whole body, not just through tactile vision: images and icons were touched and kissed; they came alive in ceremonies where sermons and singing were prominent, not as theological rhetoric and content (which most people could not understand) but primarily as spoken words and songs, in other words as sound and hearing (James 2004: 527); and they were decorated with aromatic flowers and were infused with incense.

The use of incense and of fragrant smell within the Byzantine churches deserves special mention. Smell is a peculiar sense; it invades human bodies at will, being the most difficult to shut out and control, and occupying at the same time that liminal space between the material and immaterial. As Alfred Gell has noted, '[t]o manifest itself as a smell is the nearest an objective reality can go towards becoming a concept without leaving the realm of the sensible altogether' (1977: 29). It is perhaps these properties that have led to the association of fragrant smells and perfumes not only with magic and dreaming, but also with transcendence and with rituals aimed at communicating with the divine. Incense in particular, with its smoke as well as smell, provides a visual and olfactory bridge between the human and the divine worlds (Pentcheva 2006: 650). Within the church, incense produces a spatial realm that is no longer of this world, but rather paradise itself. The fragrant smell envelops the bodies of the participants, as well as the bodies of saints on the wall, and it neutralizes individual bodily odour, creating thus the collectivity of the worshippers (Kenna 2005: 58). It also marks specific locales within the church, as the priest would often stop and infuse with incense special spots, the icon of the patron saint for example. But it also marks distinctive moments within the service, focusing the congregation's attention to transitions within the liturgy (Kenna 2005: 65), marking thus time, and inviting the congregation to cross themselves or to engage in other ritualized actions. Incense, of course, is also used in religious rituals outside the church, often with similar effects, in producing a locale as sacred (the corner with the Christian icons within the house, for example), or marking time within the day (e.g. the time of the evening Mass) and within the annual religious calendar.

4 AT A ‘MYCENAEAN’ SANCTUARY

Very little is known about ‘Mycenaean’ (meant here as chronological rather than ethnic signifier) ‘religious’ practice. The societies of the Aegean in the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries BC, with which this problematic label is normally associated, after the site-type of Mycenae in the Peloponnese, have been constructed in the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries AD as the beginnings of Greek civilization, as the mythical heritage of the Homeric epics, and very often as a warlike society, in opposition to the ‘peaceful’ and serene ‘Minoans’ of Crete (cf. Darcque et al. 2006; Hamilakis and Momigliano 2006). As in my previous example, the documentary evidence for this period—if used on its own—offers, if not a misleading picture, certainly a partial and fragmentary one: the documents of Linear B are of administrative nature, concerned with the interests of ‘palatial’ institutions. They do however, mention deities, and more importantly, provisions of food commodities and offerings for sanctuaries and religious festivals (cf. Bendall 2007; Palaima 2004). Archaeological work has offered some concrete examples of such sanctuaries, with Phylakopi on the Aegean island of Melos being the most prominent, thanks to its detailed study and publication (Renfrew 1985). Yet, much of the discussion has focused on the criteria for identifying sacred, cultic localities; the nature of the divinities; and on potential links with the later, Classical Greek religion, often leading to unfounded extrapolations and desperate searches for continuities. It is only very recently that social practice and ritualized embodied interactions have attracted attention. A key factor in this recent shift is the realization that eating and drinking ceremonies formed a central part in the religious rituals (Hamilakis 2008).

The sanctuary of Agios Konstantinos, located on the east coast of the Methana peninsula (in the north-east Peloponnese) was excavated in the 1990s by Eleni Konsolaki. It forms part of a large architectural complex, with many rooms, including a megaron (the formal, elite reception building of Mycenaean centres) (Konsolaki 2004). The room that seems to have been the focus of cultic activity, room A (Figures 15.1 and 15.2) is only 4.30 m x 2.60 m, and yet is full of material traces of intense ritualized ceremonies: more than 150 clay figurines, mostly of bovines, but also humans (riders, charioteers, bull-leapers, one single female), and clay models of thrones, tripod tables, a bird, and a fragmentary boat, scattered over a stone bench and its three, low stone steps. Other features in the room included a low stone platform along one of its walls, a partly paved floor, a hearth full of ash and burnt animal bones, drinking vessels, cooking pots, a triton shell with its apex deliberately broken, and ceramic vessels associated with libations, including an animal-head rhyton (libation vessel) resembling the head of a fantastic beast, something between a pig and fox. The finds seem to constitute a single, destruction layer (cf. Hamilakis and Konsolaki 2004; Konsolaki 2002).

It is tempting to impose a literary/documentary and mythological/genealogical grid upon this site, and attempt to relate it to a deity mentioned in the Linear B or even in later, classical sources, and even attach a set of beliefs to this material, positioning it thus along the long line of perceived continuity of Greek religion. Alternatively, and the approach advocated here, is to engage with the embodied, sensory, material practices, and connect them to their historical social context at large. My starting point is the bare bones found in and around the hearth. These humble, fragmentary, mostly burnt, bones—some brown-black, more greyish white—come mostly from juvenile and neonatal pigs

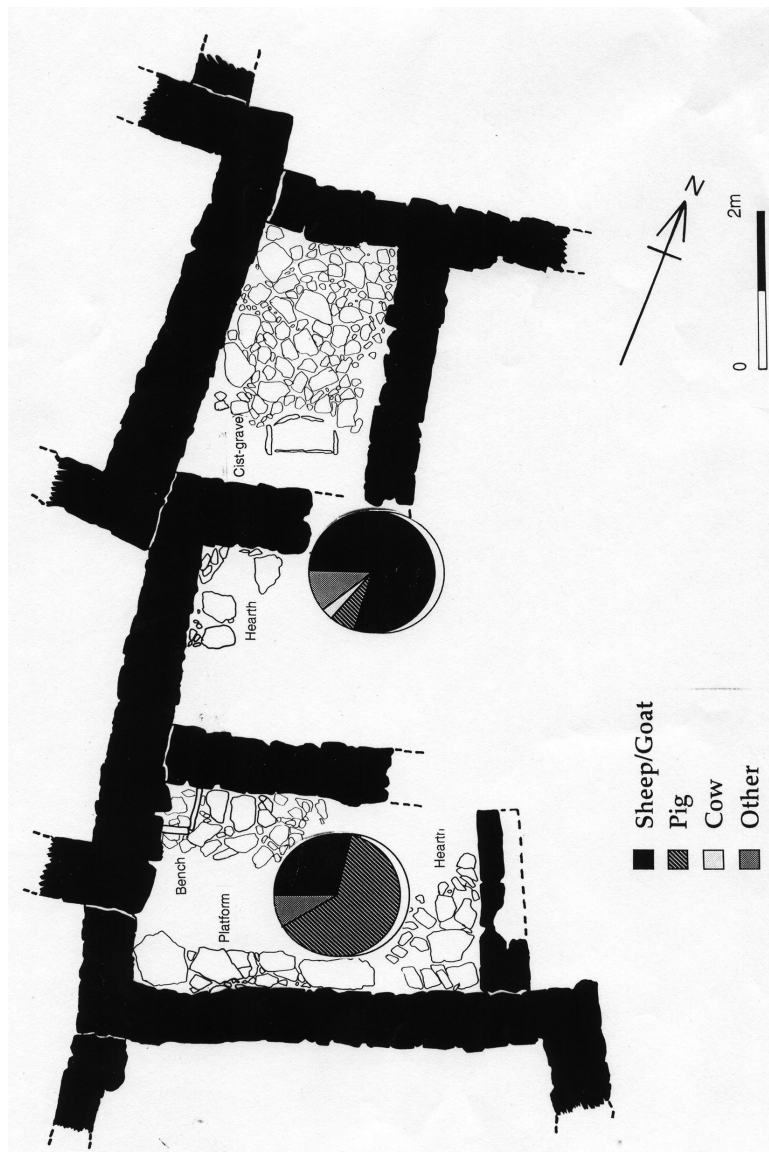


FIGURE 15.1 Plan of the main Room A and of the adjacent rooms at the 'Mycenaean' sanctuary of Agios Konstantinos, Methana, Greece.



FIGURE 15.2 Room A at the sanctuary of Agios Konstantinos, Methana, Greece.

(Figure 15.3). Whole carcasses seemed to have been brought into the room, and they must have been either boiled in cooking pots or roasted in the hearth, possibly on spits (a stone spit stand was also found next to the hearth); some of them were eaten (witness the filleting cut marks), and then the bones were thrown into the hearth and burned; some, perhaps the youngest animals, could have been thrown in the hearth with the meat attached: food for people but also burnt offerings for deities, the earth, the elements, or non-human entities. Inside the room other bones of sheep and goat were found but, unlike pigs which were whole, they were represented mostly by their meat bearing elements; while some of them were burnt, most of them were not; their bones did not seem to have constituted burnt offerings to non-human beings. Many limpet shells were also found in the room, as were eight drinking vessels (*kylikes*). What we have here, therefore, is strong zooarchaeological evidence for the practice of animal burnt sacrifices in the Late Bronze Age, a practice hitherto undocumented, and one which is also encountered in later classical periods (and in Homeric epic) but in different form.

We are dealing here with a small space, possibly with restricted access, but one which was the focus not only of exhibition and depositional practices (of figurines, of bones, of artefacts), but also of intense embodied ceremonies with strong sensory effects: the smells of cooking meat, of fat burning, the smoke produced by the hearth, the tasting of food and drink, the sensorial experiencing of marine as well as terrestrial foods, the intoxicating



FIGURE 15.3 Animal bones from Room A at the sanctuary of Agios Konstantinos, Methana, Greece. The assemblage is dominated by the burnt bones found in and around the hearth, the remnants of burnt sacrifices.

effects of alcohol, and possibly the sound and music generated by the modified triton shell which would have produced a fully embodied tactile experience, not just an aural one. The physical proximity and restriction would have amplified these effects, and the smoke and smells would have infused and enveloped the bodies of the participants, producing a transcendental locale, as well as unified sensory and corporeal landscape. And all this in front of the large accumulation of figurines, and perhaps a large wooden statue, standing on the partly paved floor (Konsolaki 2002: 32). The ingredients for these sensory events were not unusual: the animals are the ones we encounter in all contexts of the same period, the materials used in the production of artefacts are neither exotic nor rare. Yet, these sensory events would have disrupted the temporality of the everyday, by virtue of their special features such as the burnt offerings, the consumption of alcohol, the consumption of meat in a society with cereals as the staple diet, but mostly by virtue of the special locale within which they were taking place. They would have produced strong mnemonic effects on the bodies of the few participants, which could have been then narrated and recalled in future occasions and other locales. These sensory memories would have also bonded these people together, conferring upon them a sense of entitlement and special status as the few participants in sensorially strong, and emotionally special, transcendental events.

5 THE SENSORY ARCHAEOLOGY OF A CONTEMPORARY SHAMAN

The hero at the centre of the third case study is not a shaman in the sense of the neo-pagan traditions and practices, explored by other entries in this volume (e.g. see Chapters 61, 63, and 64). This is in fact the story of a celebrated archaeologist, Manolis Andronikos (1919–92), the excavator of the site of Vergina in northern Greece, where in 1977 he unearthed the so-called tomb of Philip II of Macedonia, and subsequently other tombs (Figure 15.4). I have explored Andronikos's archaeological life and his national biography in some detail elsewhere (Hamilakis 2007), but here I want to summarize and comment on some specific features of this story, more pertinent to the theme of this chapter.

Why have I used the metaphor of shamanism to describe Andronikos? To answer the question, I will need to say a word or two on the national and social context. As part of a broader study, I have claimed that within the modern Hellenic national imagination, archaeological monuments and sites (especially the Classical ones) have become sacralized. This sacralization was the outcome of a series of processes and factors: the affinities of national ideologies with religious systems of thinking (e.g. Anderson 1991: 10–12; Llobera 1994; cf. Hamilakis 2007: 85 for further references); the veneration of Greek Classical antiquities by the Western elites since the Renaissance, especially in more recent centuries; the fact that several iconic national monuments are places of ancient worship; and last but not least, the fundamental role of Greek Orthodox Christianity in modern Hellenic national imagination, which has led to a fusion I have termed *Indigenous Hellenism*. Within this framework of sacralization, Andronikos became a key figure, in fact the most venerated figure in Greek archaeology. He was a public intellectual of considerable standing well before his moment of destiny, the discovery of the undisturbed tomb at Vergina in 1977. But it was that discovery which elevated him to the supreme position, especially since the find was seen by him, by the Greek authorities, and by the majority of Greek citizens, as proving beyond any dispute the Hellenicity of Macedonia, an issue that has been the apple of discord between Greece and its northern neighbours, most recently with the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Andronikos had the conventional training of the classical archaeologist in Greece including a spell in Oxford, was participating in the international fora of his discipline, was a brilliant and inspiring teacher, and enjoyed the respect of his peers. But his main audience was always the general Greek public, and it was with them that he was in constant communication, through his popular books, his newspaper column, and his public speeches. In addition, although he had no apparent intellectual contact with recent phenomenological writings, he often claimed both in his scholarly and his popular writings that the archaeologist engages in an experiential, sensuous and bodily contact with the material past: 'the archaeologist sees and touches the content of history; this means that he perceives in a sensory manner the metaphysical truth of historical time' (Andronikos 1972). His writings and his speeches evoked the sensory reception of materiality, leading a commentator to write, after Andronikos's death, a piece dedicated to his hands, with the synaesthetic title: 'The touch that could see' (Georgousopoulos 1995).



FIGURE 15.4 A postal stamp issued by the Greek Postal Service in 1992, depicting Manolis Andronikos amongst some of his finds from Vergina, Greek Macedonia.

The most important materialization of his sensory, existential philosophy was his discovery of the fourth-century BC underground tomb (tumulus) at Vergina. He choreographed and performed that moment in a ceremonial manner. He planned the opening of the tomb for 8 November, a day that in the Orthodox calendar is dedicated to the archangels Michael and Gabriel, the guards of the underworld, and he makes much in his writings of that ‘coincidence’ (Hamilakis 2007: 142 with references). The theatrical moment of the opening of the tomb was his descent to the underworld, where he uncovered, amongst many other things, a golden chest with cremated bones. At that moment, he was overcome with emotion and religious piety, as he was standing ‘like a Christian, in front of the holy relics of a saint’ (Andronikos 1997: 142). Andronikos, unlike many other shamans, did not have to reach altered states of consciousness through various bodily techniques (cf. Price 2001), but he did share with them the fundamental ability of all shamans, the mediation between different worlds (cf. Eliade 1972: 51). He communicated with the ancestors through this touch, and upon his return from the

underworld he told a story of familial connections and national continuity: the celebrated dead, despite the on-going academic debates on his identity, was named as Philip II, was reunited with his national family; and a new grave, the new museum-crypt of Vergina, was created for his secondary burial, now a locale for perpetual, national veneration of both the ancient dead and the shaman-archaeologist.

6 CONCLUSIONS

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The archaeologies of the senses do not simply offer some colourful detail of past life; they do not fill the gaps in a picture already drawn by other archaeological approaches, a picture of social organization, states, organized religions, technology, trade, subsistence, and ritual symbolism. The archaeologies of the senses in fact can succeed where abstract, top-down, functionalist, symbolist, textualist, and cognitivist approaches have failed. For example, we cannot fully understand the great iconoclastic dispute in eighth- to ninth-century AD Byzantium, if we fail to see it as a sensory debate, over whether sight or hearing hold primacy in communicating with the divine (James 2004: 529), a debate which concluded with the reinstatement of icons, as multisensory performative objects, rather than mere visual representations. We cannot comprehend what made a small and humble room in a remote location the special focus of a 'Mycenaean' cult if we fail to see it as a portal to other, transcendental worlds (cf. Hume 2007), reached through strong and special sensory experiences. We cannot easily explain why archaeologists like Andronikos become iconic, shamanistic figures (complicating thus our idea of modernist archaeology) and why the antiquities they 'touch', reanimate, and 'resurrect', acquire such immense force in national imagination, as has happened in contemporary Greece, if we fail to comprehend the potency of their sensory archaeology. The archaeologies of the senses do not constitute an added, optional ingredient to our mix of theories and methodologies; rather, they demand nothing less than a paradigmatic shift.

SUGGESTED READING

A pioneering collection on the senses is Howes (1991); the same author and the Concordia University inter-disciplinary group on the senses of which he has been a leading figure, continue to produce some important works (e.g. Classen et al. 1994; Howes 2003). A recent series of readers, focusing, however, rather unfortunately on single (Western) senses is the one produced by Berg Publishers (Bull 2003; Classen 2005; Drobnick 2006; Korsmeyer 2005; for a more integrated attempt see Howes 2005). Jütte (2005) provides a long-term analysis of attitudes towards the senses in the West, from antiquity to the present. The journals *Body and Society* and especially the recently launched *The Senses and Society* publish interesting interdisciplinary material. In anthropology, the pioneering works are by Stoller (e.g. 1989; 1997), Feld (1982), and Seremetakis (1994), a volume particularly relevant to archaeology due to its linking the senses with material culture and memory. Sutton's ethnography (2001) tackles the neglected dimension of the sensory importance of eating (on which see also, from a philosophical point of view, Curtin and Heldke 1992). For other interesting anthropological

work see Desjarlais (2003), and Hirschkind (2007). Amongst recent historical works, see Hoffer (2003), whilst the monograph by Woolgar (2006) has particular resonance to archaeology. Film studies (e.g. MacDougall 2006), architecture (e.g. Barbara and Perliss 2006) and contemporary art (e.g. Drobnick 2004; Jones 2006) have long been fertile grounds for the exploration of sensuous and sensory experience, while interesting insights can be found in the interdisciplinary collection on sound and listening edited by Erlmann (2004).

In archaeology there is still little writing on the topic. Most attempts have been already mentioned in the main body of the chapter. Hamilakis et al. (2002) provides a critique of archaeology's attitudes towards the body, and includes several studies on sensory experience. Edwards et al. (2006) includes studies by archaeologists and anthropologists with a special focus on museums and colonialism. Other attempts that do not directly address the topic but are linked in some way to the archaeology of the senses are works on embodiment (e.g. Meskell and Joyce 2003), the collection by Jones and MacGregor (2002), and the literature on visual culture and archaeology (e.g. Skeates 2005; Smiles and Moser 2005), although this body of work does not always situate visuality within a critical sensory history and theory of archaeology. The recent discussion between contemporary artists and archaeologists (e.g. Renfrew 2003; Renfrew et al. 2004) sometimes touches upon issues of sensory experience, although not as frequently and as thoroughly as it should.

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