

# GREEK MYSTERIES

The Archaeology and Ritual of Ancient Greek  
Secret Cults

*Michael B. Cosmopoulos*

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## GREEK MYSTERIES

Mystery cults represent the spiritual attempts of the ancient Greeks to deal with their mortality. As these cults had to do with the individual's inner self, privacy was paramount and was secured by an initiation ceremony, a personal ritual that established a close bond between the individual and the gods. Once initiated, the individual was liberated from the fear of death by sharing the eternal truth, known only to the immortals.

Because of the oath of silence taken by the initiates, a thick veil of secrecy covers those cults and archaeology has become our main tool in deciphering their meaning. In a field where archaeological research constantly brings new data to light, this volume provides a close analysis of the most recent discoveries, as well as a critical re-evaluation of the older evidence. The book focuses not only on the major cults of Eleusis and Samothrace, but also on the lesser-known Mysteries in various parts of Greece, over a period of almost two thousand years, from the Late Bronze Age to the Roman Imperial period.

In our mechanized and technology-oriented world, a book on Greek spirituality is both timely and appropriate. The authors' inter-disciplinary approach extends beyond the archaeological evidence to cover the textual and iconographic sources and provides a better understanding of the history and rituals of those cults. Written by an international team of acknowledged experts, *Greek Mysteries* is an important contribution to our understanding of Greek religion and society.

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Contributors: Pierre Bonnechere, Kevin Clinton, Susan G. Cole, Michael B. Cosmopoulos, Fritz Graf, Madeleine Jost, Mark Lawall, Noel Robertson, Albert Schachter, Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood.



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TO THE MEMORY OF MARY E. CRITZAS



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## PREFACE

Since the beginning of our existence, humans have pondered the mysteries of life and death and have strived to find meaning in a constantly changing world. Above and beyond the world of the senses and the triviality of our existence there has always been a belief in another kind of reality, one of eternal powers, powers that affect and impact human lives. To comprehend that supreme reality and to be in harmony with it, humanity has relied on religion.

Religion in ancient Greece had a strong public character and was, in many respects, a way of integrating the individual into the community. Within this public religion, which often was sponsored and even imposed by the polis, there were special cults that addressed people on an individual basis and were voluntarily selected by each person. The ancient Greeks called them Mysteries (“Mysteria”) and they represented a special opportunity for dealing with the gods of the polis on an individual basis. As these cults had to do with the individual’s inner self, privacy was necessary and was secured by an initiation ceremony, a personal ritual that brought the individual to a new spiritual level, a higher degree of awareness in relation to the gods. Once initiated, the individual was entitled to share the eternal truth, to catch a glimpse of the eternal reality.

Mystery cults are the spiritual attempts of the ancient Greeks to deal with their mortality. The phenomenon is by no means restricted to Greece, but it is in Greece that it found its philosophical explanation and justification. Exactly because Mysteria deal with the spiritual aspects of our existence, they have fascinated both scholars and the public. Looking back in order to understand those cults is especially timely today. We live in an age of rapid technological progress, an age of virtual realities and an abundance of material goods that are redefining our society. And yet our age experiences a surge of private cults and religious sects, of drugs and abuse, of violence and materialism, forcefully proving how desperately we need to regain our spirituality. It is one of the greatest paradoxes of our time, that those of us who are fortunate to live in the developed countries seem to have all the material objects we could possibly desire, but our lives appear to be emptier

than ever. Unless we redefine our priorities to focus on our humanity, rather than our technology, we may never regain a deep connection with ourselves and with each other.

Within this framework, a book on ancient Greek mystery cults is both timely and appropriate. This volume will not solve the great mysteries of life and death or settle the unanswered questions about our spirituality. Its purpose is to take you, the reader, on a fascinating intellectual journey, a journey through the minds, lives, and souls of hundred of thousands of people who lived before us, people who loved, suffered, rejoiced, and aspired to happiness, much like we do. There are many lessons to be learned from their experience. As you turn each page of this book, please remember that the picture so painstakingly reconstructed by each author is part of a greater canvas – the painting of ancient Greek religious and spiritual life. Although the contributions found in this volume are the fruits of the rational and meticulous work of scholars, they offer valuable new pieces to the great puzzle of ancient Greek mystery cults.

The chronological range of this book spans a period of almost two millennia, from the Late Bronze Age to the Roman epoch. In an area of study where archaeological fieldwork constantly brings new data to light, this volume provides a close analysis of the new information and a critical re-evaluation of the older evidence. Although archaeology is the backbone of the book, the authors' interdisciplinary approach extends beyond the archaeological evidence to cover also textual and iconographic sources. The ten chapters cover a wide variety of topics relating to Greek mystery cults. The first three study Eleusis: the beginning and early development of the sanctuary (Cosmopoulos), as well as issues of the Eleusinian ritual and how it relates to festivals (Sourvinou-Inwood) and to the cult of the Kabeiroi in Samothrace (Clinton). The archaeological evidence for *Mysteria* at Troy, Boiotia, and Arcadia is examined by Lawall, Schachter, and Jost. The next three chapters are devoted to the mysteric elements of the cults of Trophonius (Bonnechere), Dionysus (Cole) and Orpheus (Robertson). The final chapter (Graf) deals with the lesser-known but equally important cults of mainland Greece and Asia Minor.

This project would have been impossible without the collegial and interactive relationship of the authors. For the editor, a Bronze Age archaeologist, who for the last thirteen years has been studying pottery sherds in the basement of the museum at Eleusis, working with the contributors of this book has been a wonderful opportunity to place the Eleusinian cult within the greater context of Greek religion; more importantly, the warm atmosphere and scholarly interaction among the scholars involved with this project has been a great source of personal and intellectual pleasure. To each and every one of the contributors I am grateful for accepting to participate in this venture and for their professionalism and cooperation. Many thanks also go to the staff of Routledge, especially Richard Stoneman, Senior Editor for

## P R E F A C E

Classics and the staff of Wearset, especially Claire Dunstan, for their support and assistance with the production of this volume.

The book is affectionately dedicated to the memory of a remarkable person and a great enthusiast of Eleusis. Mary Critzas and her husband, Evangelos, were born in Smyrna and came to St. Louis in the early 1930s. Here, they became the life-long friends of George and Lella Mylonas, a friendship that lasted until their deaths. Although Evangelos Critzas passed away before I came to St. Louis, I was privileged to have known Mary Critzas during my graduate years at Washington University, when she became my family away from home. Her passing a few years ago at the age of 92 was a great loss to the Greek-American community in St. Louis and to Hellenic studies in our area. Throughout her long life not only did she keep her passion for Greece alive by teaching Greek and by promoting Hellenic studies, but for over half a century she remained an ardent supporter of archaeological work at Eleusis. The dedication of a book on Greek mystery cults to her memory is a small recognition of her silent but substantial contribution to Eleusinian studies, and to the nobility and humanity of her character.

Michael B. Cosmopoulos  
University of Missouri  
St. Louis, March 2002

## NOTE ON ABBREVIATIONS AND TRANSLITERATION

Abbreviations of periodicals and series are those listed in the *American Journal of Archaeology* (2000) ([http://www.ajaonline.org/shared/s\\_info\\_contrib\\_7.html](http://www.ajaonline.org/shared/s_info_contrib_7.html)). The transliteration and English spelling of Greek names follows the preference of individual authors, although in the index I avoid the latinized versions of Greek names (e.g. Amphiaraos instead of Amphiaraus, Trophonios instead of Trophonius).



# MYCENAEAN RELIGION AT ELEUSIS

## The architecture and stratigraphy of Megaron B\*

*Michael B. Cosmopoulos*

The function of Megaron B at Eleusis is one of the most controversial issues in the history of the site. The excavators of Eleusis, Kourouniotes and Mylonas, had suggested that the Mycenaean building known as Megaron B and its adjacent units B1, B2, B3 (Figure 1.1) were in fact a Mycenaean temple to Demeter and possibly an early Telesterion (Kourouniotes 1935; Mylonas 1961, 38–49).<sup>1</sup> Thus, they proposed that the cult of Demeter originated in the Late Bronze Age. In view of the lack of objects that could be characterized as ritual, Mylonas supported this theory with three arguments: (a) chronology (he dated the introduction of the cult of Demeter to the Mycenaean period on the basis of his interpretation of the events narrated in the Parian marble and the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*); (b) continuity of location (the later Telesteria were built right above Megaron B); and (c) architectural elements (use of a *peribolos* wall to isolate Megaron B from the rest of the settlement, and a raised platform which could have been used as an altar). A religious function for Megaron B was also proposed by Travlos (1970, 60; 1983, 329; cf. Mazarakis-Ainian 1997, 347–348) who, on the basis of an earlier suggestion by Nilsson (1950, 468–470), suggested that Megaron B served not only as an early temple of Demeter but also as the residence of a prominent family of Eleusis, perhaps the Eumolpids.

A religious function for Megaron B was generally accepted by scholars<sup>2</sup> until the early 1980s, when it was seriously challenged by P. Darcque.<sup>3</sup> Darcque's arguments are: (a) the lack of continuity in material remains between the Mycenaean period and the second half of the eighth century, when for the first time evidence for cult activity appears; (b) the fact that the events mentioned in the Parian Marble and the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* are not likely to refer to events in the Mycenaean period; (c) the observation that Megaron B had primarily a residential function, as indicated by the

utilitarian character of its finds; and (d) doubts about the use of the platform as an altar and also about the existence of a peribolos wall, which in turn cast serious doubt on the architectural isolation of Megaron B and, therefore, its sacred character.

The uncertainty about the function of Megaron B stems largely from the summary way in which the finds were published. Mylonas' book on *Pre-historic Eleusis* (1932a) was written before Megaron B was excavated, so the only published descriptions of the building are interim reports in the *ArchDelt* and the *AJA* (Kourouniotes 1930–1931, 18–23; 1931–1932, 2–3; Mylonas and Kourouniotes 1933), as well as the description of the building in Mylonas' classic *Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries* (Mylonas 1961, 31ff.). As a proper interpretation of the function of Megaron B can only be based on a detailed analysis of its architectural elements and finds, in this chapter I use the unpublished excavation records and the evidence provided by the recent study of the finds, in order to reconstruct the architectural development and stratigraphic sequence of the building and to shed new light on the issue of its function. This chapter does not discuss the more general issue of continuity of cult from the Late Bronze Age to the Dark Age, but only the function of Megaron B in the Mycenaean period.

The bulk of the Mycenaean remains under the Roman Telesterion (Figures 1.1, 3.1: 7) were brought to light during two long excavation seasons in 1931 and 1932. Further exploration in the same area took place in 1933 and 1934, but produced little evidence that could be of use to the reconstruction of the stratigraphy of Megaron B. The director of the excavation was Konstantinos Kourouniotes, assisted by George Mylonas (except in 1933), Ioannis Threpsiades, and Ioannis Travlos, who was also the architect of the project. The excavation was difficult, as most Bronze Age strata were covered by later remains; the excavators were confined to digging in deep and narrow trenches and tunnels under the bases of the columns of the later Telesteria, and even had to remove temporarily two column bases of the Peisistrateian Telesterion (Kourouniotes 1930–1931, 18). An added difficulty was that in the 1880s Philios had already excavated parts of the Telesterion down to the bedrock (Philios 1884, 64–65) and then refilled his trenches, in many cases without marking the already excavated areas. Kourouniotes and Mylonas excavated in artificial layers 0.20 to 0.30 m thick, but also recorded in their notebooks changes in natural stratigraphy.

### The architectural elements of Megaron B and its adjacent structures

The building known as Megaron B<sup>4</sup> is a rectangular structure located under the Peisistrateian Telesterion. The earliest remains at that location were parts of walls dating to the late MH period (Figure 1.2; Kourouniotes 1930–1931, 18; Mylonas and Kourouniotes 1933, 279).<sup>5</sup> Although their

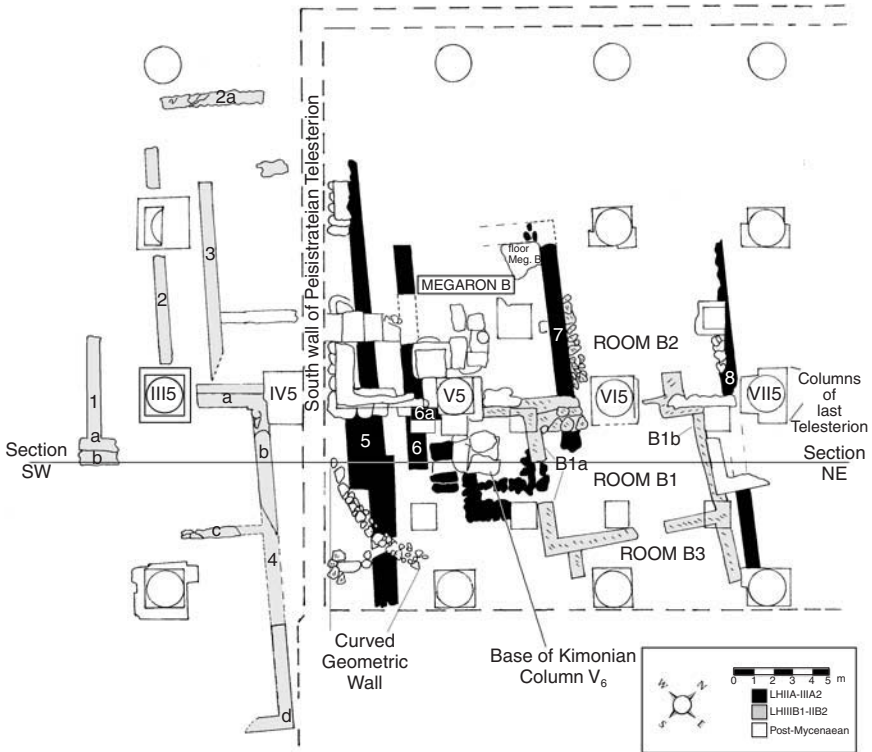


Figure 1.1 Plan of the area of the Peisistrateian Telesterion with the Mycenaean walls (based on an unpublished plan by I. Travlos)

state of preservation was very fragmentary, parts of at least one rectangular building was discerned, oriented roughly from east to west: a cross wall running from north to south divided the building into a smaller back room and a larger room that stretched towards the top of the hill. Notable was the fragment of a wall running north–south, underneath the LH wall 6a (Figures 1.1, 1.2; Notebook 1932, 21). Several MH burials were also found associated with these walls. The pottery associated with these walls consists of Grey Minyan, Yellow Minyan, polychrome, and matt-painted sherds, dating to the late MH period.<sup>6</sup>

Megaron B (Figures 1.1, 1.3) overlies the MH walls. It is defined by two long walls, running roughly in a west–east direction. Wall 6 (Notebook 1931, 45–51; 1932, 10–11, 24) is 0.63–0.68 m thick and is preserved to a length of 10.40 and a height of 1.16 m. Its foundation is made of three rows of large stones and forms an indentation at the level of the floor (Figure 1.3).<sup>7</sup> The wall is constructed of stones held together by clay mortar and its east end forms an *anta* 0.95 m thick (approximately 0.30 m thicker than the

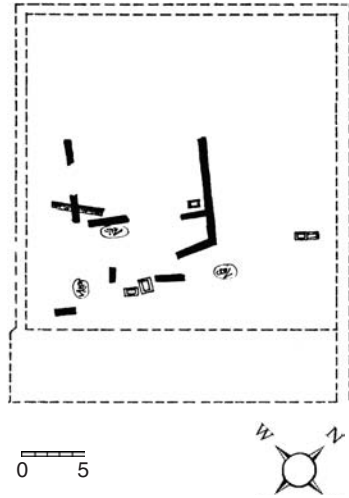


Figure 1.2 Plan of the Middle Helladic walls under the Peisistrateian Telesterion (based on an unpublished drawing by I. Travlos)

wall) and built of stones placed in clay mortar (Figure 1.5, B); LH IIIA1 sherds are wedged in between the stones. The south/external face of the anta is rather crudely made, with stones protruding from the line of the wall, and was presumably covered by a thick layer of plaster. The north/internal face of the anta is smoother, made of smaller and more regular stones placed in horizontal rows; presumably it would have been covered also with a thick layer of plaster. In fact, next to the wall was found a small fragment of a fresco with a representation of an eye looking towards the right, bordered by a vertical band. The east end of the anta is carefully made of large flat stones placed in horizontal rows and sitting on a large block of black Eleusinian stone (h. 1 m, w. 0.83 m, th. 0.55 m), whose face had been artificially smoothed; the block is conical with an almost rectangular section and one of its corners has been chiseled away, giving it an irregular polygonal shape. It rests on a layer of flat stones. In the narrow (0.20–0.25 m) space between the anta and the base of the adjacent Kimonian column V<sub>6</sub>, there is a flight of three steps (Figure 1.5, A). The two lower steps, measuring  $0.72 \times 0.20$  and  $0.72 \times 0.25$  m, are constructed of large blocks of Eleusinian stone, whereas the third is aligned with the floor of the vestibule (see p. 6), made of a layer of small stones; a flat upright stone and a large fragment of a slab ( $0.80 \times 0.75$  m) were found next to wall 6 and, according to Mylonas, could have been part of a stone seat. The floor of the main room was made of a layer of packed earth, pebbles and lime, and sloped gently from west to east; its thickness ranged from 0.04 m in the central part to 0.08 m near the entrance. One part of the floor, measuring  $0.60 \times 0.85$  m, was found near

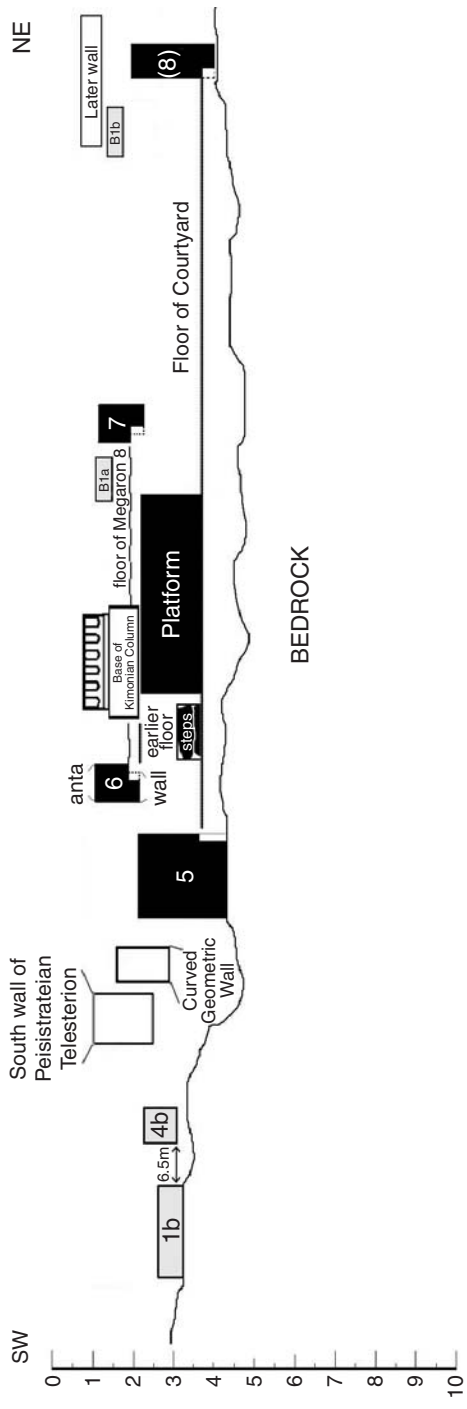


Figure 1.3 Schematic section (SW-NE) at the Telesterion (cf. Figure 1.1)

the base of wall 6, at an elevation of  $-1.50$  m from the surface, overlaying an earlier pebble floor (Notebook 1931, 51). Another part of it, of unrecorded dimensions, was discovered near the western end of wall 6 at an elevation of  $-1.46$  m. The bulk of the pottery found on the later floor dates to LH IIIA1–IIIA2, although LH IIA and IIB sherds were also found on and under the level of this floor. At a distance of 2.20 m from the east wall of the room (wall 6a) a base of a column, which would have supported the roof, was found (Kourouniotes 1933, 2). A second column base was restored approximately 2 m to the northwest of the first one (Mylonas 1961, 35).

Wall 7 (Notebook 1932, 23–25) is preserved to a length of 9.70 m and is 0.65 m thick. In some places it is made of large stones placed in a double row and the space in-between is filled with small stones and clay. In other places, relatively large flat stones are placed horizontally in the wall, spanning its entire width (Figure 1.4). Smaller stones, sherds, and carbonized remains of wood are wedged in the spaces between and under the stones of each row. This wall also ends in an anta, constructed in a similar manner as the anta of wall 6, although the ending block of the face (h. 0.70 m, max. w. 0.94 m, th. 0.50 m) has a round irregular shape. This block rests on an artificial fill, 0.43 m thick. The sherds wedged between the stones of the wall are LH IIIA1. A staircase was originally placed immediately to the south of the anta of wall 7, in symmetry with the flight of steps of wall 6, but it was dismantled when room B1 (see p. 11) was built; the slabs used for the steps of this staircase were incorporated into the west part of wall B1a (Figure 1.1).

Walls 6 and 7 are connected by a partly preserved cross wall (*wall 6a*), which divided the building into two rooms, a short vestibule and a main room (Notebook 1932, 12–13, 19–22). This cross wall sat on an earlier MH wall, slightly diagonally oriented, and its upper course connected it also with the later extension to Megaron B (B1/B2/B3). The vestibule was 2 m deep from the cross wall to the east end of the platform and accessed through the two flights of steps. Its floor was 1.25 m higher than the level of the court in front of the anta. The floor was partly made of a large (l. 1 m, w. 0.96 m, th. 0.20 m) rectangular slab of amygdalite stone, whose western end was irregular and covered by a layer of packed earth and small pebbles. The south end of the slab sat on a narrow wall built parallel to the wall of the anta; it formed one side of a drain that ran towards the south and connected with the drain that exited under wall 5 (see p. 8). The opening of the entrance from the vestibule to the main room was 1.30 m wide and would



Figure 1.4 Plan of wall 7 (based on G. Mylonas, Notebook 1932, 24)



Figure 1.5 View of the steps (A), the anta of wall 6 (B) and the platform (C) from the SE (photo in the General Archive of the Athens Archaeological Society)

have been made of at least one step, as the floor of the main room was 0.30 m higher than that of the vestibule.

The back (west) wall of the room has not been preserved, but its precise location can be surmised on the basis of the following (Notebook 1932, 26):

- The west end of wall 7, made up of small stones, seems to turn towards the south (the change in direction is visible under the foundation of the Roman Telesterion).
- Part of the floor of the main room is preserved in the west end of wall 7 (Figure 1.1). The floor has an elliptical outline, which can be explained only if we accept that wall 7 turned towards the south.
- Crossing wall 7, in the place where the west wall of the main room would have been, there are three oblong stones in a row, aligned in a west–east direction (Figure 1.1). These stones appear to have belonged to a wall running in a north–south direction, following a practice that is common in Megaron B: large oblong stones are placed perpendicular to the direction of the wall and span its entire width, whereas smaller stones are parallel to the direction of the wall (cf. the similar construction of wall 7 itself, in Figure 1.4).
- Further back to the west, the bedrock rises sharply and does not leave enough space for an additional room, unless there were several steps leading up. This is not likely, though, as the entire area was not leveled until Kimon.

In front of the vestibule, between the two flights of steps, there is a raised *platform* (Figures 1.3, 1.5C, 1.6) 1.10 m above the surface of the first step: the thickness of the steps is not recorded, but assuming that each step would have been 0.20–0.30 m thick, the floor of the platform would have been approximately 1.30 to 1.40 m from the courtyard. The platform is

a  $\Pi$ -shaped construction made up of three walls: the south wall is 0.65 m thick and 2.50 m long, the north wall is 0.60 m thick and 2.46 m long, and the east wall, vertical to the slope of the hill, is 1.60 m thick and 2.80 m long. These walls are made of medium-size stones, placed rather irregularly in horizontal rows; the area enclosed by these three walls was filled with soil and stones and formed a raised platform, extending to a length of 2 m from the external surface of the south anta and 1.30 m beyond the lowest step. The sherds wedged in the walls of the platform are LH IIIA1.

In the past, the purpose of this platform has been debated. Mylonas suggested that it could have been used both as a retaining wall for Megaron B and as an altar, but Darcque (1981) maintains that it only served to support Megaron B. A careful analysis of the architectural elements of the platform suggests that it was much more than a simple retaining wall. If retaining Megaron B were the only function that the builders had in mind, there would have been no need for a complex  $\Pi$ -shaped construction; the simplest and most effective way to support Megaron B would have been to build one sturdy retaining wall, spanning the *entire* width of Megaron B, either on or close to wall 6a. More importantly, the platform is 2.80 m wide,<sup>8</sup> whereas Megaron B is 5.90 m wide: in reality, the platform spans only *half* of the width of Megaron B (Figures 1.3, 1.6). Therefore, as much as the platform may have partially supported the building, it is evident that it also served a non-structural purpose. The elevation of the platform (1.30–1.40 m from the level of the courtyard in front of it) could indicate that it was used for an activity that was meant to be seen from the court below, which would not preclude its use as an altar. This possibility will be further discussed in the Conclusion.

Megaron B was enclosed by a wall, of which only two sections survive. The first section, called *wall 5* (Notebook 1932, 6–7), lies at a distance of

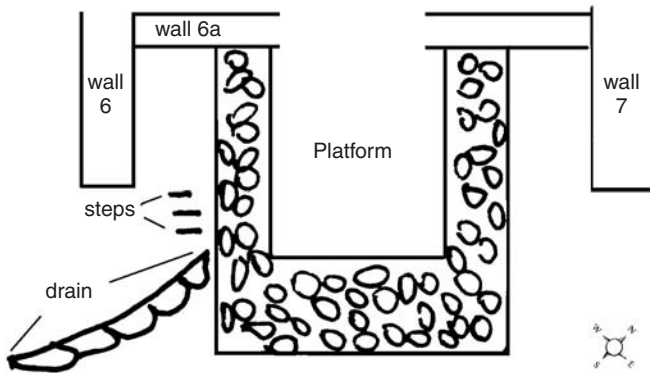


Figure 1.6 Plan of the platform and the east end of Megaron B (based on Mylonas, Notebook 1932, 20)

1.15 m to the south of wall 6. It is a long wall running roughly west–east, 0.84 m thick at its east end and 0.60 m thick at its west end, preserved to a length of 19 m and a height of 1.50–1.70 m. Its east part is founded on the bedrock, but its west part sits on an artificial fill because of the slope of the ground. Its lower course is constructed with large flat stones, averaging 0.50 m in length and 0.23 m in width. The wall is formed by two rows of relatively large stones placed in clay, forming an even façade, with the space in between filled with small stones and clay. The three lower rows (which constitute the foundation of the wall) are 0.17–0.20 m narrower than the socle, forming an indentation at the height of the floor of the courtyard (Figure 1.3). At this point the north side of the wall sits on the rock.

At a distance of 5.35 m from its east end, and for a length of 4.30 m, wall 5 almost triples in width to 1.80 m (Figure 1.7). The thickened part would originally have been rectangular, as one of its original blocks, 0.40 m wide (marked as “v” in Mylonas’ notebooks) seems to have been pushed inwards. The external side of the thickened part lies on a thin (0.07 m) deposit, which in turn sits on the bedrock. Its foundation is made of five large Eleusinian stones, the largest of which measures  $0.75 \times 0.70$  m. These stones, the wider side of which faces towards the external face of the wall, were meant to provide additional support to the wall. Although the thickened part of wall 5 is taken by Mylonas to be a small “tower,” it may also have a practical explanation. At that spot, the bedrock falls sharply: at the west end of this “tower” the bedrock is found at an elevation of  $-3.10$  m and at the east end at  $-4.05$  m, a difference of 1 m over a length of 4 m; this drop would have

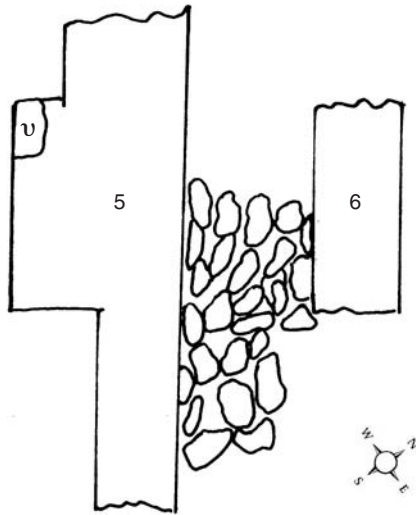


Figure 1.7 Plan of the “tower” of wall 7 and the paved courtyard (based on Mylonas, Notebook 1932, 6)

required extra support for the wall. The wall continues beyond the base of the Archaic Telesterion, but towards the west its width diminishes from 0.80–0.85 m to 0.65–0.70 m. The sherds found wedged in the east side of the wall, to the south of the thickened part, are LH IIIA1–IIIA2 (Notebook 1931, 13). The extension of this wall towards the east, as well as the point where it would have turned towards the north, is unknown. It is possible that the wall turned under the foundation of the Peisistrateian stoa to extend towards the north and then turned towards the west to meet wall 8, thus enclosing the courtyard.

The other preserved section of the enclosure wall is *wall 8*. This wall runs parallel to wall 5 and lies at a distance of 16 m to the east. It is 0.80–0.90 m thick, preserved to a length of 14 m, and founded on the bedrock. By the north foundation of wall 5 and the south foundation of wall 8 were found slabs and flat stones forming a paved area which formed the floor of the courtyard; the rest of the courtyard was covered with a layer of packed earth (Notebook 1932, 4, 17, 38). Wall 8 belongs to the same structure as wall 5, because:

- the two walls have the same direction and their foundations are at the same depth;
- walls 5 and 8 are, respectively, the south and north end of the paved courtyard as indicated by the end of the paved area;
- their construction technique is identical (Notebook 1932, 51), including the *indentation* at the height of the floor of the courtyard (Figure 1.3).

Accordingly, wall 8 seems to have been the north section of a peribolos enclosing the courtyard and Megaron B. An opening roughly in the middle of wall 8, to which a paved road leads from the northeast, permits the suggestion that a gateway would have led into the courtyard.

Two connecting drains were found to the west and south of Megaron B. The first starts at the corner formed by the north edge of the lowest step next to the south anta of wall 6 and the foundation of the south side of the platform (Figure 1.6), and runs towards the south; this drain is uncovered and has one side lined up with small stones. It connects with the second drain, which also runs towards the south and exits under wall 5 at a distance of 1.90 m from its east end (Notebook 1931, 15–16; 1932, 2–4, 17–19). The walls of the second drain are carefully made of three layers of stones, reaching a height of 0.43 m at the east and 0.52 m at the west end (Figure 1.8a). The width of the drain on the external side is 0.46 m in the base and 0.38 m at the top (i.e. the drain is a little narrower towards the top). The opening of the drain is covered with two large slabs (w. 0.30–0.40 m, h. 0.15–0.20 m, l. 0.75–0.80 m) at a distance of 0.15 m from each other, and irregular stones



Figure 1.8 Section (a) and top view (b) of the drain (based on Mylonas, Notebook 1932, 2–3)

between the two slabs (Figure 1.8b). The floor of the drain is formed mainly by the bedrock, and also by a layer of small stones placed on a thin fill. The exit of the drain under wall 5 is well preserved, made up of two parallel rows of small stones that form a smooth façade.

An important find was brought to light on July 18, 1931, inside the second drain and at a distance of 2.40 m from the south wall of the Peisistrateian Telesterion (immediately to the north of wall 5 and inside the courtyard):

In the upper layer [of the drain], immediately beneath the large slab that covers the opening, we found small fragments of mudbricks. Under this layer, inside the fill, we found carbonized remains mixed with Late Helladic sherds. In the south part, at a depth of 1.15 m there was a layer of pebbles and large stones, under which we found a concentration of ashes mixed with animal bones and fragments from Late Helladic flat round vases [“ἄρτόσχημα”].

(Notebook 1931, 15–16)

The find group has been identified in the Eleusis museum and consists of eighteen burned bones of sheep, goats or pigs, fragments of flat round alabastra, goblet stems and rims, and coarse jar fragments dating to LH III A1 (Cosmopoulos, in preparation). Because of the summary way in which the excavation was published, this find did not make its way into the published reports; yet, as we shall see below (p. 17), it has significant impact on the issue of the function of Megaron B.

### *Units B1/B2/B3*

Immediately to the northeast of Megaron B a complex of three rooms was found, oriented roughly from north to south (Figure 1.1). These rooms (B1, B2, B3) seem to have been an extension of Megaron B (Notebook 1932, 29–38; Mylonas and Kourouniotes 1933, 276–277; Mylonas 1961, 37–38).

Room B1 measures  $7 \times 4.40$  m and is preserved in its entirety. Its *south* wall (B1a in Figure 1.1) is built directly on the north side of the platform



Figure 1.9 Section of the anta of the east part of B1a (not to scale, based on Mylonas, Notebook 1932, 30)

(Figure 1.3) and is divided into two halves (east and west) by a doorway leading onto the platform. The east half is preserved in its entire length (1.45 m). Its foundation is built of large stones, placed perpendicularly to the direction of the wall, and is 0.78 m thick, but the upper rows are narrower (0.65 m). Its face is made of large flat stones, held in place by small stones used as wedges. It ends in an anta made of large regular stones forming a criss-cross pattern (Figure 1.9). The west half is not as well preserved as the east one. It is preserved to a length of 1.46 m, a height of 1.30 m, and is 0.60–0.65 m thick. It continues the line of the internal cross wall of Megaron B (6a in Figure 1.1), and it seems that when this connection was made the shared wall was continued beyond the anta and in this way partially blocked the opening of the door of Megaron B. The *west* wall of B1 is preserved to a height of 0.60 m. It is founded on an artificial fill, 1.10 m thick. In its north end there seems to be an opening to the west, possibly accessing another room, but the wall at that point is destroyed by the Peisistrateian column and the case remains uncertain. The *east* wall is preserved to a height of 1.40 m and is 0.60 m wide. It is founded on a MH deposit, 0.50 m thick (remains of MH walls were discerned under its south corner, see Figure 1.2). It was carefully made of stones placed in irregular horizontal rows, wedged in place by small stones. The lower course protruded from the line of the wall and formed an indentation at the level of the floor. The *north* wall is preserved to a height of 1.25 m and is 0.60–0.65 m thick. It was built on an artificial fill, 0.50 m thick, and constructed with large stones placed in irregular horizontal rows. The west end of this wall was not well preserved, but the base of a staircase leading up from room B1 into room B2 survived: the staircase was 1.45 m wide and rested on a layer of large stones, some of which were smooth and regular. It was aligned with the entrance of wall 8 (north section of the enclosure wall), which lies at a distance of 1.25 m to the north. The space between the staircase of room B1 and wall 8 was paved with pebbles.

In the interior of room B1, and near its east wall, part of the floor was found. It was made of a layer of packed earth 0.05 m thick and another layer of loosely placed pebbles 0.08 m thick. A threshold in front of its entrance would have facilitated access to the platform. Access to the interior of room