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### THE SANCTUARY OF THE HORNED GOD RECONSIDERED

The French Archaeological Mission and Cyprus Government Joint Expedition to Enkomi, directed by P. Dikaios, uncovered a large area of the ancient city.<sup>1</sup> One of the more interesting results of these excavations was the discovery of a small sanctuary, which is now widely known among the scholars familiar with Cypriot archaeology as a 'Sanctuary of the Horned God'. In this paper I would like to present my own interpretation and possibly a reconstruction of it.

First, it may be useful to report P. Dikaios' description of the sanctuary.<sup>2</sup> It came to light in Area I within the so called Ashlar Building. In the sanctuary it is possible to distinguish, according to the discoverer, two architectural phases. In the first one (Level IIIB, 1190-1150 B.C.), the sanctuary consisted of three rooms: the large rectangular hall 45 (West Megaron) with three stone bases on its longitudinal axis — on them probably rested wooden pillars carrying the roof; in the east wall of the hall was a doorway to the small Room 9 which was connected by the entrance in the south-eastern corner with the next Room 10. In the isometric view of this phase of the sanctuary we can also see that there is an additional passage between Rooms 10 and 13 (Fig. 1).

In the second phase (Level IIIC, 1150-1075 B.C.), the inhabitants introduced far-reaching changes into the general layout of the sanctuary; the functions of hall 45 were taken over by Room 13 situated north of Rooms 9 and 10. To provide a direct communication with the rest of the sanctuary a new entrance in Room 9 was built. We can also note that Rooms 10 and 13 in this phase were completely separated by a wall (Fig. 2).

The plan of the sanctuary (in both phases) that P. Dikaios presented has been accepted by the scholars and is mentioned in this form in various works as the actual plan of the sanctuary. In my opinion this plan (Fig. 1) seems to be incorrect. It must be remembered that P. Dikaios' isometric view is only a simple registration of the architectural remains which had been found during the excavations, not a final reconstruction of these. I very much doubt that during phase I (Level IIIB) there had existed a connection between Rooms 10 and 13 as we can suppose on the basis of the isometric view mentioned above; this area should be interpreted differently. From a closer examination of the architectural plans and sections included in the Enkomi publication,<sup>3</sup> I conclude that Room 10, in both phases, had to be accessible only from Room 9. P. Dikaios writes: 'At approximately the centre of the room was a pit 0.64m. across, but its eastern end, as well as its lower part had been destroyed by tomb searchers who dug a large trial pit in the eastern part of the room and tunnelled towards the pit (pl. 35/1)'.<sup>4</sup> Thus, it is highly probable that Rooms 10 and 13 originally were separated by the wall, only the eastern fragment of which had been found by the discoverers. The rest of it was destroyed by the tunnelling which, as we can see on the plans and sections,<sup>5</sup> was continued to the north alongside the eastern walls of Rooms 10 and 13.

1. P. Dikaios, *Enkomi. Excavations 1948-1958* (1969-1971).

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 194-199.

3. *Ibid.*, Pls 276, 280/1, 6.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 197.

5. *Ibid.*, Pls 276, 280/1, 6.

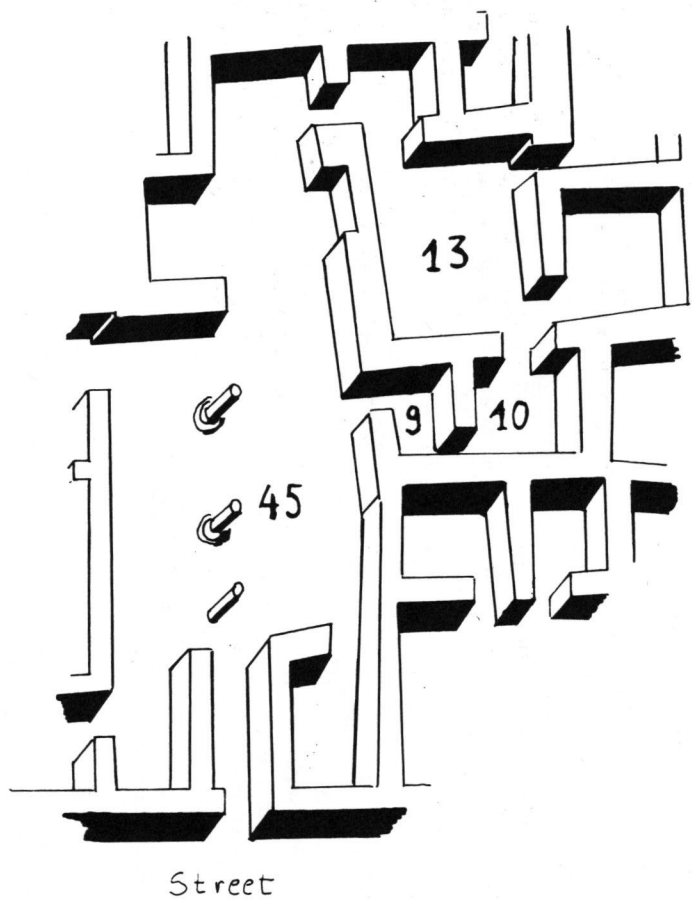


Fig. 1. Isometric view of Level IIIB, Area I. Fragment of the Ashlar Building. Drawing of the author on the basis P. Dikaios, *Enkomi Excavations 1948-1958, IIIb* (1969), Pl. 277.

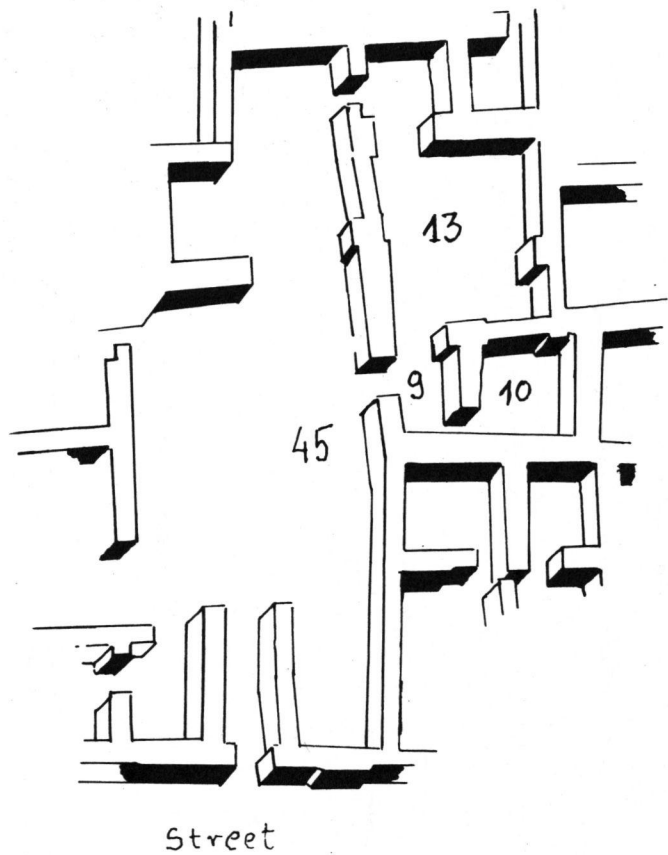


Fig. 2. Isometric view of Level IIIC, Area I. Fragment of the Ashlar Building. Drawing of the author on the basis P. Dikaios, *op. cit.*, Pl. 279.

There is an even more significant reason makes the existence of such a communication between Rooms 10 and 13 undesirable. If, according to P. Dikaios, we interpret Rooms 45 - 9 - 10 as a sanctuary, the last mentioned Room should then be understood as a kind of holy-of-holies or repositorium since the statue of the Horned God was found there. As is attested by the various temple types known up to now from the ancient Levant, this part of the temple was always very difficult in access. The inaccessibility resulted from the ancient peoples beliefs about the exceptional character of such a space in which the images of the god(s) worshipped in the temple were placed. Therefore, the holy-of-holies — in other words the proper house of the god — had to be guarded against the profaners in various ways: for example, the strongest walls, a not easily accessible entrance, a bent-axis approach etc..

However, the existence of two entrances: from the north and west, gives Room 10 a character not at all exceptional. Rather, it is a transitory room makes inner communication between Rooms 45 - 9 - 10 easier as well as automatically connects 13 with other parts of Ashlar Building. On the other hand, if we accept that Room 10 was accessible only from Room 9, we obtain a very clearly separated complex of rooms forming the sanctuary (Fig. 3). If my interpretation is correct, we

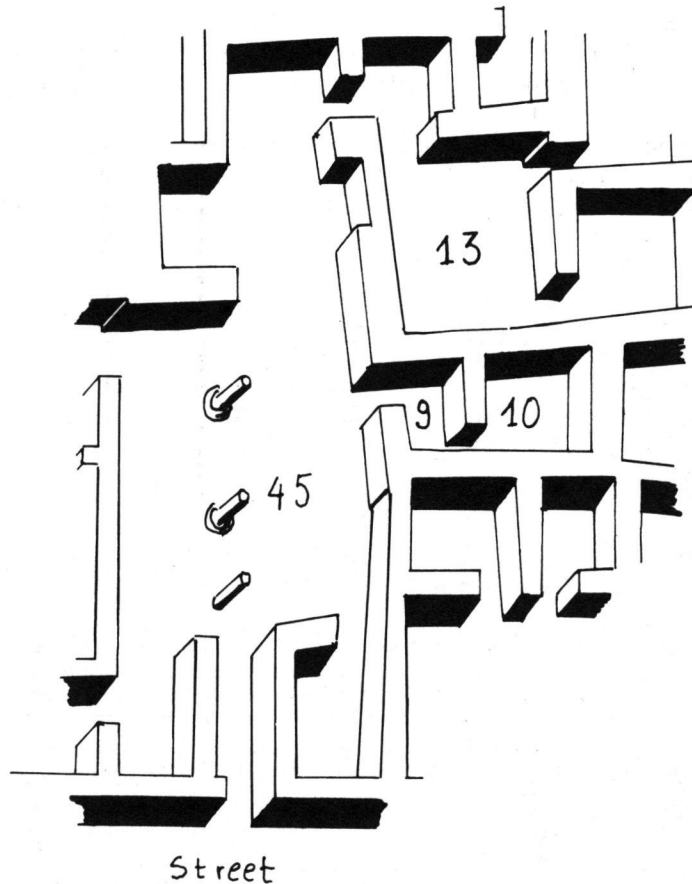


Fig. 3. Suggested reconstruction of the Horned God Sanctuary, Level IIIB. Drawing of the author.

should accept the sanctuary as having a bent-axis approach with antechamber (9) and cella (10). The entrance led in the first phase from the hall (or courtyard) 45, and in the second from Room 13. The last mentioned rooms were accessible from various parts of Ashlar Building; and 45 also from the street south of it.

As is generally accepted, Enkomi Level IIIA is a town built by Aegean refugees who introduced among others a new architectural style (ashlar masonry, megaron-plan) and first of all Mycenaean IIIC pottery.<sup>6</sup> Our sanctuary, however, is connected with the second wave of the Aegean refugees/raiders who within the reconstructed Ashlar Building introduced a ritual of the Horned God, a god who, according to P. Dikaios, may have been identified with Apollo Kereatas worshipped in Arcadia.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, the sanctuary should be considered as being an example of the Aegean tradition of sacral architecture. However, to my state of knowledge, no sacral building with a plan exactly related to the Horned God Sanctuary has been found in Aegean. But this is not a surprise. Amongst the Aegean cult places and temples discovered so far, there are so many differences, in respect to dimensions, inner and exterior layout, orientation, localization, entrance arrangement etc., that we are not able to distinguish any general characteristic temple type of the Aegean culture area.<sup>8</sup>

Finally, it may be well to mention two other characteristic features of the Horned God Sanctuary. First, alongside the northern and western walls of Room 10 there has been found a pottery deposit containing 276 Base-ring vessels laid upside-down, one on top the other.<sup>9</sup> An interesting parallels to this assemblage can be found in two places in Palestine.

In Ashdod, a famous Philistine city, there was discovered a sacral structure — an open air high-place — belonging to Level XIII (early 12<sup>th</sup> century B.C.). In the vicinity, there was a large group of vessels stacked down having a close affinity with Mycenaean IIIC 1 pottery found at Enkomi and many other places in Cyprus.<sup>10</sup> Also, in the Philistine temple at Tell Qasile (12<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> century B.C.) most of the bowls were found arranged in a similar way<sup>11</sup> as in Ashdod and Enkomi.

Second, as is known the statue of the Horned God was buried intentionally in Room 10 by the users of the sanctuary. The analogous cultic custom can be observed (apart from the other sanctuary at Enkomi belonging to the Ingot God<sup>12</sup>) at the above cited Philistine temple of Tell Qasile. There, in Favissa 125, the female anthropomorphic vessel has been found among the other cult objects.<sup>13</sup> According to the discoverer this vessel 'may have represented a fertility goddess worshipped in the temple'.<sup>14</sup>

6. *Ibid.*, for architecture pp. 514-516; for pottery pp. 260-261, 518, Cf. also pp. 519-523.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 527-528.

8. The cult places material derived from the Aegean culture area has been scrutinized in recent years by B. Rutkowski, *Cult Places in the Aegean World* (1972); cf. J.C. van Leuven 'Problems and methods of Prehellenic Naology' in R. Hägg and Marinatos (ed.), *Sanctuaries and Cults in the Aegean Bronze Age* (1981), pp. 11-25. For a short summary of the temples of Cyprus see: M.S. Selma, Al-Radi, *Phlamoudhi Vounari: A Sanctuary Site in Cyprus* (1983).

9. P. Dikaios, *op. cit.*, pp. 196-197, Plates 35, 36. A similar practice in the 'Copper God' temple at Enkomi: J.-C. Courtois, 'Le sanctuaire du dieu au lingot d'Enkomi-Alasia' in C.F.A. Schaeffer (ed.), *Alasia I* (1971).

10. T. Dothan, *The Philistines and their Material Culture* (1982), pp. 37, 251.

11. A. Mazar, 'Excavations at Tell Qasile. Part one. The Philistine Sanctuary: Architecture and Cult Objects' *Qedem* 12 (1980), p.118.

12. C.F.A. Schaeffer, 'Les Peuples de la Mer et leurs sanctuaires à Enkomi-Alasia aux XII<sup>e</sup> - XI<sup>e</sup> s. av. n. è.', in *Alasia I*.

13. A. Mazar, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-25, 78-81.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 73.

The above denotes very significant examples of cultural relations between the Horned God Sanctuary and the Philistine cities in Palestine and appear worthy of further detailed studies. Moreover, they give ample evidence to identify the Aegean invaders on Cyprus with the Philistines (or the Sea Peoples) who settled themselves in the conquered territory of the Cannanites, in Ashdod, Tell Qasile, and many other places.