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Daimones in the Thracian Sea: Mysteries, Iron, and Metaphors

Abstract: The *daimones* associated with the mystery cult of Samothrace have been interpreted as the distant memory of prehistoric smiths or dismissed from investigation altogether because of their absence from the epigraphic record. Anthropological models of metaphor formation offer a more nuanced approach to understanding their functions in the cult. The *daimones*' ethnicity suggests a response to cultural interactions and economic production in the region; their metallurgical skills provided a key metaphor articulating a range of concepts which defined the rites, including secrecy, regional identity, and cosmological speculation.

Daimones have been alternatively central or marginalized in investigations of the mystery cult of the Great Gods on Samothrace. Those who followed the literary sources built wonderful theories of wandering smiths and Semitic adventurers, coming to the mountainous bulk of the island while seeking metallurgical riches; here they gathered for ceremonies which brought journeyman smiths into full group membership.[1] These narratives were built on models of ritual practice drawn from some of the most epochal playbooks in the history of anthropology: van Gennep, Durkheim, Smith. Those who pursued the material remains, in contrast, found neither *daimones* nor smiths in any form – epigraphy, iconography, or metallurgical residue. In the mid-twentieth century this discrepancy began to encourage some scholars to reject them from analysis of the rites, and initiated a split in interpretive models which Burkert characterized as *concordia discours*.[2] The island is as rich in inscriptions and architecture as its literary references are in *daimones*. These material data corroborated the historical texts which compared the cult to Eleusis in wealth and status, and provided a Samothracian story which did not need the *daimones* to cohere. Comparison with Eleusis assumed an accordingly central place in analysis of the Samothracian rituals. This comparison cannot, however, cast any light on the *daimones*, which remain a productive avenue of investigation vis-à-vis the Samothracian rites. Some 800 years of literary evidence reflect their association with the cult; literary and epigraphic evidence affirm their celebration in mysteries on Samothrace's neighbors in the

1 Costa 1982; Burkert 1985, 167; Eliade 1962, 57; Faure 1964; Mattäus and Schumacher-Matthäus 1986; Marinatos 1962.

2 Burkert 1993; for arguments rejecting the *daimones*, see Linforth 1924, 1926, 1928; Hemberg 1950; Cole 1984; *contra* Graham 2002.

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Thracian sea, Imbros and Lemnos.[3] Inscriptions beyond the island identify the *daimones* of literary texts as the gods of the Samothracian rites; and an inscription from Kavala on the Samothracian peraia provides a local confirmation that the *daimones* named *Kabeiroi* figured in the Samothracian cult.[4]

The *daimones*' relevance for Samothrace is not merely a matter of choosing literary over epigraphic or archaeological data: it is also a question of different theoretical approaches to the archaeology of cult, and the intellectual goals of the investigation. Burkert's *concordia discours* reflects the division between culture-historical, processual and post-processual archaeologies, and thus between singular and pluralistic models of analysis. Culture-historical archaeology aims at a historically accurate reconstruction – the completion of an inscription, the reconstruction of building, the correct establishment of its date – as the foundation from which any historical investigation must proceed[5]. Processual archaeology postulates the obtainability of objective results through scientific methodologies: it is positivist, materialist and artifact-centered,[6] and shares with culture-historical archaeology a drive for simplification. Post-processual archaeology, in contrast, regards the discipline as a never-ending exploration of multiple cultural pasts. It seeks to elaborate and amplify by exploring connections and associations within the ancient data. Its goal is the understanding of society as a communicative medium; its methodologies embrace structural, Marxist, feminist, semiotic and post-positivist social sciences. It is often the methodology for archaeologies of religion.

A processual archaeology would address the *daimones* if the Samothracian site produced material evidence of their presence; culture-historical archaeology, to the extent that one could identify the historical personae associated with the rites. The hypotheses for the *daimones* as Phoenician sailors and itinerant smiths responded to culture-historical archaeology, although these hypotheses have severe limitations in terms of the historical accuracy which their proponents sought. The impulse to correlate the *daimones* with human groups, however, has deep historical precedent going back to antiquity. Strabo complained that his contemporaries could not distinguish the Samothracian *daimones* from the ethnic groups which were known by the same name (10.3.7). This movement between the mythic and the historical was a part of their ancient context, and an investigation of the relationship between the *daimones* and a historical reality may shed light on the ancient uses of the *daimon*. A more nuanced model for their investigation, however, is needed than the nineteenth century approaches which viewed myth as rudimentary history, as imperfect as it was primitive, valuable to the extent that it preserved kernels of historical truth. This concern for historical accuracy was commensurate with contemporary cul-

3 Samothrace: literary sources collected in Lewis 1958, literary and epigraphic texts to the mid-20th century in Hemberg 1950. Lemnos: Beschi 1996–1997. Imbros: Cigdem 1997.

4 Karadima and Dimitrova 2003; Dimitrova 2008: 83–90.

5 Trigger 2006, 235–41.

6 Hodder and Shanks 2007; Trigger 2007, 444 ff.

ture-historical archaeology. Anthropological studies of metaphor formation offer a route more suited to both the ritual context of Samothrace and the complex, polysemic data regarding the *daimones* of the rites.

Metaphor formation and these older models of mythology share a concern to connect the imaginary and the historical worlds. Anthropological models of metaphor differ, however, in emphasizing the function of the imaginary world as a locus in which ideas are combined, connections are formed, and meanings created. These may then be used to address problems and questions in the real world. Metaphors are formed by mapping a concept from a source domain to a target domain. Source domains are familiar phenomena, usually the physical world; they are typically concrete and common-sense. Target domains are best understood as the realm of abstract concepts. The metaphors that result are creations of cultural choice, rather than historical detritus; the connections they form are relevant to the specific contexts in which the metaphors function, and their power is indexed by the number of semantic fields they connect. [7] An approach to the Samothracian *daimones* in light of metaphor formation suggests that both the ethnicity and the metallurgy which inspired the earlier models can be understood as concepts moved from the concrete to the analytical domains through the Samothracian *daimones*. The data for both domains, though fragmentary and incomplete, are sufficient to suggest that the *daimones*' ethnicity enabled a response to cultural interactions and economic productions which were central to economic well-being in the region, and that their metallurgy served as a key metaphor, an elaborating symbol which articulated the relationship among a complex range of concepts which defined the rites: secrecy, regional identity, and cosmological speculation. Our investigation begins with a view of the primary domain – the geographic and historical setting of the rites – as a background for the *daimones*' ethnicity, and concludes with closer consideration of the semantic connections around the iron which the island's *daimones* invent.

Ancient literary sources explaining Greek interest in the Thracian sea are slender, largely legendary, and much later than the time of the Greek's arrival.[8] Insight beyond these texts derives from a range of data and critical perspectives. Geography, earth sciences and nesiology establish the region as a natural corridor between the Aegean and the Pontus; Bronze Age studies, often informed by world systems models, have identified trading zones connecting the northern Aegean with Near Eastern, Anatolian, and Greek cultural centers. Ceramic studies have been critical in Iron Age studies; texts and inscriptions mark the onset of the Greek colonial presence in the region. Movement across cultural divides characterizes the region in all these periods, and raises the possibility that long-established networks of communication

7 Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Alonso 1994; Quinn 1991; Ortner 1973.

8 Tiverios 2008.

and exchange were themselves among the attractions of the Thracian sea, in addition to the timber and ores in which the region abounded.[9]

The three islands where the rites of Great Gods were celebrated – Samothrace, Imbros and Lemnos – share a common sea-lane, mutual intervisibility, and geographical positions opposite mainlands filled, in the Greek tradition, with legendary resources and ferociously military ethnicities. Travel on the Mediterranean Sea runs along well-established routes that emerge from a combination of environmental factors, technological skill, and cultural choice. The environmental factors were in place from the mid-Holcene, ca. 5000 BC, when both the Hellespont and the Bosporos were fully operational, and set in motion the circulation of currents exiting from the Black Sea into the Aegean.[10] These combined with winds, anchorages, and havens for repair and supplies to shape preferred routes as early as the Final Neolithic. Some 780 coastal and island settlements, dated from 6000 – 3000 BC, corroborate the oceanographic and meteorological data and provide the parameters of six major prehistoric sea-lanes routes.[11] Four of these start or end at the maritime crossroads of the Hellespont. One runs along the northern Aegean coast, the eventual *peraiai* of Thasos and Samothrace; its island settlements include Aghios Floros on Imbros and Mikro Vouni on Samothrace, where a roundel attests a Minoan administrative presence.[12] Land routes on the Thracian shore linked these maritime pathways to the Balkan hinterland. A second route centers on Lemnos as a stepping stone for open sea crossings between the Northeast and Southwest Aegean. There, a rock-cut sanctuary overlooked the harbor at Myrina: its stone-carved steps, leading up to lookout points, and carvings of ships suggest appeals for divine protection of sea travel as early as the Bronze Age.[13] Navigators set their courses either by the stars or through the use of landmarks, and the intervisibility of Lemnos, Imbros and Samothrace would encourage sailors to direct their course among the three islands.[14] Toponyms, epithets and narratives helped perpetuate these routes.[15] The three islands of the *Kabeiroi* have epithets which suggest the mariner's perspective and mnemonic devices. Samothrace, whose Mt. Fengari reaches 1611 meters high and is the most visible peak in the region, was the 'white island' or 'high and lofty'; Imbros is 'craggy'; Lemnos 'smoke-shrouded'.[16] The gods exploited the islands' visibility in ways analogous to those of mortal sailors: Poseidon watched the

9 Cultraro 2005; Matsas 1995.

10 Morton 2001, 5 – 8; Papageorgiou 2008; Maran 2007.

11 Papageorgiou 2008.

12 Matsas 1991, 1995.

13 Marangou 2009.

14 Ogilvie 1916; Marangou and Della Casa 2008.

15 Morton 2001, 245 – 52.

16 Samothrace: Priscian *Periegesis* 544 – 45 (*GGM* II 195); Antiphon *Oratio* 15 fr. 50; Scholia Laurentiana to Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 1.917; Anon. *Geographia* quoted in *FHG* II, 218 n; Eustathius *Commentarii in Dionysii 'Periegesin'* 533 (*GGM* II 322); Heraclides *Respublicae* 21, *FGH* 548 F 5b; Scholia Townleiana to *Iliad* Ω 78; Eustathius *in Iliadem* Ω 78; Imbros, *Iliad* 13.33, 24.78; Lemnos, *Iliad* 24.753.

battle at Troy from Samothrace's peak (*Iliad* 13.10 – 18, 33); Hera traveled from Athos to Mt. Ida via Lemnos and Imbros (*Iliad* 14.229 – 30, 281). The sanctuaries of the gods themselves suggest a concern for intervisibility. The Lemnian Kabeirion faces toward Samothrace and overlooks, overlooking the sea route coming from the Northeast; at Troy, the sanctuary attributed to the Samothracian Gods faces the island over the sea.[17]

These maritime tracks figure prominently in the Bronze Age exchange systems whose operations have been studied through world systems models.[18] The models posit the existence of interconnected, hierarchical systems, linked through networks of communication, in prehistoric and precapitalist societies. Nodes in the system were points of confluence at which cultures alternatively competed or cooperated for control of resources. V. Sahoglu identifies Samothrace, Lemnos and Imbros as the northern fringe of the Anatolian networks, P. Mountjoy of the East Aegean-West Anatolian interface; M. Cultraro identifies them as the northern string which connected mainland Greece with the Dardanelles, C. Gates and A. Privitera as the periphery of the Mycenaean world. Troy, whose maritime gateway the islands marked, was itself a gateway to the core regions of the east in the Early Bronze Period; E. Cline characterizes it as a contested periphery between Mycenaeans and Hittites[19]. Lemnos' pre-eminence in Early Bronze Age metallurgy created close connections between the island and the Anatolian site. L. Beschi has argued for a cultural koine among Poliochni, Myrina, Troy and others in the Thracian-Phrygian area.[20] Metal goods and technologies have played an important role in tracing these networks. Hephaistos, his sons the *Kabeiroi*, and the Sintians appear frequently in the literature as mythological recollections of Lemnos' prehistoric exchange: D. Matsas identified *Kabeiroi* on the Minoan roundel from Mikro Vouni.[21]

These connections between the northeastern Aegean islands and Troy are traced in Iron Age contexts through the ceramic known as G 2 – 3 ware. Though found in Troy, Lesbos, Lemnos, Thasos, Samothrace, Neapolis, Eion, and Skyros, its only production centers seem to have been Lemnos and Troy.[22] It is a fine ware, and appears often in votive and ritual contexts. The regions in which it is found include a strong non-Greek element in the population: Thracians on the northern Aegean coast, Tyrrhenians on Lemnos, Anatolians in northwest Asia Minor and on Lesbos. It has played an especially important role in discussions of Samothrace. The earliest evidence for activity in the sanctuary is a *bothros* under the Hall of Choral Dancers which held a rich deposit of 20 intact vases and 31 fragments, all suitable for drinking, pouring and storage of liquids.[23] This is often interpreted as a sign of Greek arrival. Ilieva has argued, in

17 Lawall 2003.

18 Berg 1999.

19 Sahoglu 2005; Mountjoy 1998; Cultraro 2005; Gates 1995; Nakou 1997; Cline 2008.

20 Beschi 1994; Bass 1970.

21 Pernicka 2003; Marangou 2009; Kohl 1987; Privitera 2005; Matsas 1991, 1995; Nakou 1997.

22 Ilieva 2005, 2009; Graham 2002; Matsas 2007.

23 Ilieva 2007.

contrast, that it represents a sign of the local Thracian taste for imported luxuries, and an advertisement by the dedicators of their access to the networks which connected them to their neighbors in the region – access which was itself a sign of prestige. These are the networks which could benefit the incoming Greeks, for whom the resources of the island itself would prove inadequate.

If Samothrace, Imbros and Lemnos together formed a gateway to Troy and the Bosporos, Samothrace typifies the island-to-mainland bridgehead created by the establishment of *peraiai*. [24] Samothracian Greeks did not find sufficient resources to support themselves on the island, and established holdings on the mainland opposite, in the fertile strip of coastland mainland which reached from Mesembria in the west to the Hebros in the East. Funke has characterized *peraiai* as influence zones which compensate for the narrowness of island economies by connecting them with continental resources. Cooperation between islanders and mainlanders ensured mutual benefit for both parties. The Samothracian Greeks proved so successful that Casson has called them the 'pioneers of Odryssian trade'.[25] Sale provided a port; the territory offered trees for shipbuilding, metallurgical resources, and a major coastal road. Samothrace affirmed its ownership with inscriptions which mark the land as the property of the Great Gods of Samothrace.[26] Archaeological and epigraphical evidence indicates that Thracians and Greeks worked together as partners, building networks of exchange which favored economic development beneficial to both groups, in an environment of mutual cultural influence. This contrasts with the previous models of Greek-Thracian interactions based on the Greek literary record: these defined 'Thracian' as the generalized non-Greek population, emphasized conflict between the two groups, and stressed the eventual triumph of Hellenic culture.[27]

The story of ironworking in the region reflects the rich resources, persistence of local identity, and need for cooperation which characterized the Greek penetration of the area. Greek and Latin authors note the plentiful metallurgical resources of the regions and the skills of its inhabitants: iron artifacts have been found at virtually all excavated sites in Aegean Thrace, and slag heaps attest local processing of ores.[28] Almost all important sources of minerals and fuel, as well as routes to the interior, lay beyond the territory of Greek colonists. Thracians retained control of the mines and of iron production throughout the Greek colonial and the Roman imperial period, in strong contrast to the usual Roman practice of installing their own over-

24 for discussion of the role of Lemnos and Imbros as ports along the route of the Athenian grain trade, *SEG* 44 – 35; *SEG* 47 – 13; Stroud 1998; Moreno 2007; Braund 2007; Foucart 1878; Garnsey 1985; Noonan 1973. For colonization of the Samothracian peraia, Tiverios 2008; Funke 1999; Isaac 1986, 127 – 28, 135 – 36; Constantakopoulou 2007, 231 – 38.

25 Markov 1980; Isaac 1986, 126; Casson 1971, 92 – 93.

26 McCredie 1968, 220 – 21.

27 Dimitrov 2009, xxi-xv; Archibald 1983, 1998, 2010; Bouzek and Domaradzka 2006; Kostoglou 2008, 24 – 35, 53 – 54; Xydopoulos 2004; Owen 2005.

28 Kostoglou 2008, 24 – 30.

seers for mines and industry. Technological knowledge for working the local ores also lay beyond Greek grasp. Analysis of iron artifacts from three sites – Messemvria-Zone, Avdera, and Kalyva-Kastro – show that objects were made from distinct local ores, which required different techniques, fuels, fluxes, and furnaces. Production remained at the household and workshop level. These technological traditions represent local cognitive systems, shared knowledge within a small community, and the finished products had great symbolic as well as socio-economic meaning. In Messemvria-Zone, established as a Samothracian emporium, indigenous Thracians had mastered all known techniques for manufacturing steel, and even achieved cast iron. Iron votives in the sixth century contexts of the temple of Apollo reflect the symbolic weight of the smith's products: these include spearheads, steeled *obeloi*, and a bar of iron formed from a single bloom. Only three such bars are known in Greek contexts, though they circulated widely in contemporary Europe.[29] The Messemvrians' skills, however, did not transfer to Avdera or to Kalyva-Kastro. Avdera shows no iron finds or waste until the Roman period, and never achieved high quality steel; Kalyva-Kastro, in contrast to Messemvria's shaft furnaces, smelted iron oxides only in bowl furnaces, and shows no evidence of welding. The particularities of local tradition contradict the tendency of Greek and Roman writers to group all Thracians into a single collective, and reflect the capacity of metalworking to mark group identity. While the technologies of each town were conditioned by the requirements of local ores and fuels, they were also a matter of cultural choice, which maintained a tightly indigenous network. Newcomers to the region could not import their own technologies, and native iron workers retained positions of importance into the Roman period. Military leaders, Philipp II among them, needed increasing access to local knowledge as their demands for iron increased.[30]

Samothrace's name reflected the meeting of Greeks and Thracians. Pseudo-Scymnus claims the Thracian element in its name derives from the island's geographic position (*Periegesis* 676–95, *GGM* I 222–23), Eustathius from the Thracian women brought as captives by the Greek settlers (*in Iliadem* Ω 78); Strabo reports that Mt. Saos was named for the Thracian people called Saii who preceded the Greeks (10.2.17). [31] The Thracians who met the Greek colonists had established megalithic tombs at Vrychos hill, dated from the eleventh to the sixth century, and Iron Age settlements in rough, defensive sites away from the coast; their choice of locations reflected the preferences of their mainland counterparts. Thracian ceramic styles on the island parallel those at Zone on the Thracian coast and south-central and southeast Bulgaria. The identity of the Greeks, whether Aeolians or Ionians, has been long debated; that their interactions with the Thracians was essentially

29 Kostoglou 2003; Archibald 2010, 336–37.

30 Kostoglou 2010.

31 See also Dionysius *Periegesis* 524, *GGM* II 135; Avienus, *Descriptio orbis terrae* 702–3, *GGM* II 183: Diodorus Siculus 3.55.8–9; Eustathius, *Commentarii in Dionysii 'Periegesin'* 524, *GGM* II 317.

peaceful, however, is widely accepted.[32] The most striking evidence for this cooperation are Thracian inscriptions in Greek letters,[33] dated between the sixth and the first centuries BC. Some 75 ceramic inscriptions, and one fourth-century BC stele, come from the context of the sanctuary itself. These offer corroboration and a chronological range for the statement of Diodorus Siculus that the language of the autochthonous Samothracians was the *lingua sacra* of the Samothracian rites 'down to our own time' (5.47.3).[34] Similar inscriptions using Greek letters to write the Thracian language have been found on three *kylikes*, dated to the late sixth to mid-fifth century, at the sanctuary of Mandal Panagia on Samothrace; Brixhe identified parallels between these inscriptions and dedicatory formulae found at Zonē, and suggested that the divine recipient at Mandal Panayia was Thracian Bendis, syncretized with Greek Artemis.[35] Thracian inscriptions and *dipinti* in Greek letters have also been found at the Lemnian Kabeirion, dated to before the period of Greek colonization.[36] Language is an exceptionally powerful token of ethnic identity. In the primary domain of its historical context, the Thracian language was the signal of the Greeks' new partners in trade, the owners of local knowledge and users of the networks which reached beyond the island's confines. The transfer of this language from the primary to the secondary domain – from the historical context to the sacred and symbolic – opened the door to its metaphoric function. That function may be measured by identifying the concepts to which it was attached: the *daimones* associated with the rites represent a pathway to identifying these.

The *Kabeiroi* are assigned a range of genealogies and ethnicities, which vary from one location to another. On Samothrace, they have been identified as Pelasgian, Thracian, Phoenician, or Anatolian. Each of these ethnicities offers some correlation to historical interactions in the Thracian Sea. Herodotus claimed the Pelasgians inhabited Samothrace before the Greeks (2.51), established the mysteries, and taught them to the Athenians (2.51); Dionysius of Halicarnassus affirms that Pelasgians celebrated the *daimones*, citing Myrsilus of Lesbos as his authority (*Antiquitates Romanae* 1.23.5). The Pelasgians are a famously imprecise ethnicity. They may be pre-Greek, though they are not consistently so; their geographic range includes northwest

32 Matsas 2007; Graham 2002; Ilieva 2005.

33 Bonfante 1955; Matsas 2007: 390; for the inscriptions on the Samothracian peraia at Messemvria-Zone which confirmed the language as Thracian, see Brixhe 2006. One burial in the southern necropolis on Samothrace has been cited as evidence for non-Greek customs: in grave S 252, a young man was buried with a G 2–3 kantharos in the late 7th or early 6th century. The top of his cranium was split from his skull and replaced with another cranium: Dusenberry 1998, 409 compared this to Scythian customs, Graham 2002, 244–47, Archibald 1998, 61, and Matsas 2007, 388 and n. 11 note Thracian parallels. The consensus is that one burial constitutes meager evidence.

34 Jacoby, *FGH* IIIb, 470–71 noted that the date of 'our time' may be Diodorus' own century, or that of his source, which could be as early as the third century BC. Graham 2002, 254–255, n. 150, suggests the first century is likely.

35 Matsas 2007, 390 n. 19; Brixhe 2006.

36 Beschi 1996, 44–48; Beschi 2000, 77–78.

Asia Minor; and they appear on Lemnos and on Imbros, where they are identified with Tyrrheni.[37] Herodotus' Samothracian Pelasgians fall within these parameters, and correspond to the island's history of pre-Greek habitation and participation in the northeastern Aegean networks. Mnaseas provides the foundation for Thracian arguments: he lists the names of the *daimones* as Axieros, Axiokersa, and Axiokersos.[38] 'Axi' has been interpreted as 'great', based on Greek 'axios'; 'kers' is a common element in Thraco-Phrygian names; Hemberg connected 'Axio' with the Axios river in Thrace.[39] Pettazzoni argued that a Thracian identity represented the first stratum of *Kabeiroi* on Samothrace, replaced in turn by Phoenician and finally by Eleusinian types.[40] Arguments for Phoenician *Kabeiroi* draw together a rich combination of texts, epigraphy, historical linguistics, and historical evidence for Phoenician activity in the northeast Aegean, especially in connection with the mines on Thasos and at Pangaeum.[41] Philo of Byblos reports that the *Kabeiroi* were celebrated in Beirut as the sons of Sydyk and inventors of boats;[42] Herodotus compared them to *Pataiki*, apotropaic figures used on Phoenician ships (3.37).[43] The Phoenician prince Kadmos has been identified at all three island sanctuaries of the *Kabeiroi*, as well as Boiotian Thebes. He becomes the kinsman of the *daimones* on Lemnos, and his abduction of Harmonia is part of the Samothracian tradition by the fourth century BC.[44] An Imperial inscription on Imbros names 'Kasmeilos' alongside Titans and Theoi Megaloi (*IG* XII 8 no. 74). A Semitic etymology for *Kabeiroi* as a derivation of semitic *kbr,* 'great', made the Theoi Megaloi a Greek calque on a Levantine original.[45] Beekes has declared the argument disproved, and identified the origins of Kadmos in Anatolia, of Kabeiros in Asia Minor.[46] Anatolian evidence beyond the etymological includes Demetrius of Skepsis, who wrote that the *Kabeiroi* were named for Mt. Kabiros in Be-

37 Fowler 2003.

38 *FGH* 546 F 1b; Scholia Laurentiana to Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 1.917; cf. Scholia Parisina to Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 1.917.

39 Hemberg 1950, 87–89, 120–26; Lehmann, K. 1953, 6–7; Lehmann, K. 1955; Bonfante 1955; Welch 1996, 472 and n. 21.

40 Pettazzoni 1909.

41 Hemberg 1950, 318–325; Beekes 2004; Goceva 2002; Collini 1990; Burkert 1985, 457 and n. 23; Musti 2002; Mari 2002.

42 *FHG* III 569; Eusebius *Praeparatio Evangelica* 1.10; Damascius *Vita Isidori* 302; Baumgarten 1981, 170

43 Ehrhardt 1985, 369–70.

44 Akousilaos knows Kadmilos as the son of Kabeiro and Hephaistos, and father of the Kabeiroi (*FGH* 2 F 20, Strabo 10.3.21); Pherekydes (*FGH* 3 F 48) may have considered him the brother of the Kabeiroi and their sister nymphs. See also Hemberg 1950: 38–43, 92–96, 137, 165–66, 217–218, 316; Beekes 2004; Cole 1984: 66–67; Blakely 2010. Herodes of Priene received honors from Samothracian citizens for his poem about Kadmos' abduction of Harmonia: *I.Priene* (1906) 68; Rutherford 2007.

45 Hemberg 1950, 318–25; 316–17

46 Beekes 2004.

recyntia;[47] other toponymnic evidence includes the cities Kabeira in Pontus and Kabeiria in Cilicia.[48] Aristides identifies the *Kabeiroi* as the most ancient gods of Pergamon (*Panegyrikos* 2.469); Pausanias writes that Asia was sacred to them (1.4.6); Cicero identifies Kabeiros as the father of Dionysos-Sabazius (*de Natura Deorum* 3.58). Anatolian origins for the *Kabeiroi* complement the myths of Samothracian foundation: Dionysius of Halicarnassos wrote that Dardanos brought the rites from Samothrace to Phrygia (*Antiquitates Romanae* 1.61.2–4); Lucian (*de Dea Syria* 15) wrote that the rites of Phrygians, Lydians and Samothracians had a common origin; Diodorus Siculus and other authors claimed that the great mother goddess of Phrygia was the object of the island's rites, and Cybele appears on Samothracian coins (Diodorus Siculus 3.55.7–9).[49] The most striking evidence for Anatolian *Kabeiroi* is Nikolaos of Damascus who, probably relying on a local Ionian historian, reports the establishment of the cult of the *Kabeiroi* in Assessos at the end of the Neleid kingship in Miletus, ca. 700 BC.[50] Two young men, Tottes and Onnes, arrived at Assessos when it was under siege by Miletus: they had come out of Phrygia, and carried the *sacra* of the *Kabeiroi* in a sealed basket. They offered Assessos military victory in exchange for the establishment of the rites.[51] The story is exceptional in the clarity with which it links the Greeks of the seacoast to the cultural traditions of the interior.

The thousand-year span of the rites, the number and complexity of networks in which the northeast Aegean participated, and the flexibility which characterizes the *daimon* cautions against a reductive approach to the *daimones*' identity. The metaphoric power of their ethnicity – how effectively it draws together discrete semantic fields relevant to the rites – may be best seen through comparison with the *Kabeiroi* on Lemnos, who differ from the Samothracian in both their origins and their metallurgy. While the Samothracian *daimones* represent a wide geographic range, *Kabeiroi* on Lemnos represent the local, ancient, pre-Greek people. A lyric fragment indicates that the birth of Kabeiros was the focus of secret rites (*PMG* 985); Aeschylus describes them as a cheery, drunken crowd who greet the Argonauts at their arrival (fr. 45 Mette). Photios records that they fled from the crime of the Lemnian women, and identifies them as the sons of Hephaistos, the local alpha male.[52] Kinship with He-

47 Demetrius is cited in Strabo 10.3.20, and his theory repeated in the Scholia Parisina and Scholia Laurentiana to Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 1.917, the scholiast to Libanius *Oratio* 14.64, and Etymologicum Gudianum, Etymologicum Magnum, and Zonaras lexicon s.v. Kabeiroi: see Hemberg 1950, 126.

48 Hemberg 1950, 153–159.

49 Chapouthier 1935a, 156–60; Cole 1984, 26–37; Clarke 1869–70 offers an early argument for the Phrygian roots of Samothracian *daimones*.

50 *BNJ* 90 F 52: Hemberg 1950, 137–40.

51 Tottes and Onnes appear as well in Callimachus F 115 Pf as sons of Hephaistos, who learn their father's craft at his anvil: see Harder 2012, 875–77; Massimilla 1993; Bulloch 2006.

52 Photios s.v. Kabeiroi; Burkert 1970.

phaistos is one of the strongest characteristics of Lemnian *Kabeiroi*.[53] The *daimones* appear on the island's coins wearing the *pilos* and *chlamys* of their father;[54] Hesychius identifies them with *karkinoi*, tongs or crabs. Both images are appropriate for the smithing god.[55] This kinship with Hephaistos is the only reason for their association with metallurgy, on Lemnos and throughout the mythological record. No inventions are credited to them, in contrast to the iron of the Idaian *Daktyloi*; they offer no catalog of great works, comparable to the magical statues of the Telchines, the necklace of Harmonia, the shield of Achilles, or the animated golden maidens of their father.[56] Combined with their father, they have often been interpreted as a mythological reflection of the island's metallurgical tradition.[57] Hephaistos, however, is absent from Samothrace; neither genealogy nor iconography suggest an association with metalworking there, nor, indeed, is there any indication that mining played an important role in the Samothracian economy.

The Samothracian *Kabeiroi* are further distinct from the Lemnian in the number of *daimones* with whom they share the rites. Strabo notes that the *Kabeiroi* are virtually identical, in their function on Samothrace, with *Korybantes*, *Kouretes*, Idaian *Daktyloi* and *Telchines* (7 F 50; 10.3.7). Other authors confirm the celebration of all of these *daimones*, except the *Telchines*, on the island.[58] Strabo attributes the confusion to their common ritual function as ministers of the great goddess, whom they attend with ecstatic dances in arms. The narrative of these dances comes from the *daimones*' attendance at the birth of a god, typically Zeus but also Apollo and Artemis at Ephesos, on whom *Kouretes* attend, and Poseidon, who is given to the *Telchines* for safekeeping.[59] The *daimones* also share with the *Kabeiroi* a plurality of eth-

53 Akousilaos *FGH* 2 F 20, Pherekydes *FGH* 3 F 48, Nonnos *Dionysiaca* 14.17–22, 29.193–6; cf. Herodotus 3.37, who describes the *Kabeiroi* as Hephaistos' sons in Egypt.

54 Poole 1963, 214; Head 1887, 263; von Fritz 1904, 117, Taf. V 14, 15.

55 Hesychius s.v. Kabeiroi; Detienne/Vernant 1978, 259–76.

56 Blakely 2006, 13–54.

57 Doumas 1994; Beschi 1996.

58 *Kabeiroi:* Philo of Byblos in Eusebius *Praeparatio Evangelica* 1.10; Stesimbrotos of Thasos *FGH* 107 F 12, cited in Strabo 10.3.20; Herodotus 2.51–52; Himerius *Orationes* 9.12; Plutarch *Marcellus* 30.6; Strabo 10.3.15; Nonnos *Dionysiaca* 3.61–76; 4.183–5; 43.307–313; Athenagoras *Supplicatio pro Christianis* 4; Scholia to Aristophanes *Pax* 277–78; Etymologicum Gudianum, Zonaras Lexicon s.v. Kabiroi; Mnaseas *FGH* 548 F 2b = Strabo 7 F 50; Scholia to Libanius *Oratio* 14.64. Korybantes: Nonnos *Dionysiaka* 3.38–51, 61–76, 77–96, 324–42; 4.183–85; 43.307–313; Hippolytus *Refutatio omnium haeresium* 5.9.709; Dionysius Periegesis 524, *GGM*, II, 135; Priscian Periegesis 544–45 *GGM*, II, 195; Dionysius Scytobrachion *FGH* 32 F 7 = Diodorus Siculus 3.55.8–9; Diodorus Siculus 5.48.4–50.1; Lycophron Alexandra 72–80; Strabo 10.3.15; Strabo 7 F 50; Orphic Hymn 38 (37); Pherekydes *FGH* 3 F 48. Kouretes: Statius Achilleis 1.830–832; Orphic Hymn 38 (37); Scholia to Aristophanes Pax 277–78; Strabo 7 F 50; Strabo 10.3.15; Arnobius *Adversus Nationes* 3.43. Idaian Daktyloi: Ephoros FGH 70 F 104 = Diodorus Siculus 5.64.4; Nonnos 3.324–42; Arnobius *Adversus Nationes* 3.41–43; Strabo 7 F 50. See also Hemberg 1950, 302–11, 328–54.

59 Kouretes in Ephesos, Strabo 14.1.20; Telchines and Poseidon, Diodorus Siculus 5.55; Graf 1999; Bremmer 2008; Versnel 1993, 298 and n. 31.

nic identities: none were born on Samothrace. *Kouretes* may be Phrygian, Arcadian, Cretan or simply earth-born; *Korybantes* come from Anatolia when they attend on Kybele, but spring from whatever ground is close to baby Zeus when they attend on him. *Daktyloi* originate in Mount Ida, either Cretan or Trojan; when they join the Argonauts' expiatory rites on Mount Dindymene at Kyzikos, they come from Crete rather than the much closer Troad.[60] This is a striking contrast to the *Kabeiroi*'s rootedness in Lemnian identity.

The metaphoric force of this ethnicity may be indexed by its connection to the promise of the Samothracian rites that its initiates would have safe travel at sea. This promise was the least secret aspect of the rites. It figures in monuments, epigrams, inscriptions of thanks and literary references from Aristophanes onward, and was as unique to the Samothracian mysteries as Hephaistos and metallurgy were to Lemnian identity.[61] While the gods, in the form of *Dioskouroi*, were said to save ships on the high seas, it was human beings, in the form of cooperative locals in port, who were one of the most pragmatic components of safe sailing. Sailors heading into unfamiliar waters relied overwhelmingly on access to local knowledge to find their way safely. This was answered through a range of strategies. The one most rooted in the primary domain of lived experience was hiring local pilots who were expert in the waters ahead. More metaphoric and symbolic alternatives include the memorials, toponymns, and stories used to mark the route and humanize the landscape.[62] In the context of an initiation devoted to safe sailing, ritual play involving an encounter with the *daimones* who embodied the pre-Greek 'other' would be an additional symbolic mechanism toward this end. This is particularly the case if that 'other' could be located in the Thracian mainland on which Samothrace had established emporia, or in Anatolia, whose maritime gateway the islands of the *Kabeiroi* framed. This interpretation is consistent with the well-established function of Greek ritual centers as locations of cultural mediation. Foucart observed in 1878 that Greeks arriving on Imbros naturally sought the good will of the local gods; Cargill notes the function of the sanctuaries of the *Kabeiroi* on Lemnos and Imbros as

60 Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 1.1123–31 and scholia *ad loc*; sources collected in Blakely 2006, 17–52.

61 Aristophanes Pax 276–86; scholia ad loc.; Theophrastus Characteres 25.2; Callimachus Epigram 47, Anthologia Palatina 6.301; Apollonius Rhodius Argonautica 1.915–21; scholia Laurentiana and scholia Parisina ad loc.; Diodorus Siculus 4.43.1–2; 4.48.5–7; 4.49.8; Valerius Flaccus Argonautica 2.431–42; Orphic Argonautica 467–72; Cicero de Natura Deorum 3.37.89; Diogenes Laertius 6.2.59; Ovid Tristia 1.10.45–50; Anon. Comoedia nova, 1–18 in Page 1942; no. 61. At the Samothracian site, the dedication of an entire ship commemorated the gods' help in some maritime adventure; a marble ship's prow, likely a Rhodian trihemiola, served as the base for the statue of Athena Nike. Wescoat 2005; Sleeswyk 1982. Inscriptions thanking the gods for safety granted at sea have been found at Apameia Kibotos/Kelainai, Fasilar and Koptos: Apameia Kibotos, Ramsay 1897, no. 289, undated; CIG no. 3961. Koptos, OGIS I (1903), no. 69, 3rd century BC: SEG 26 1800. Fasilar, Sterrett 1888, 169 no. 277; Cronin 1902, 112; Lehmann, P.W. 1969, 252, fig. 210; Cole 1984, 61–66.

62 Morton 2001, 245–57.

places for Athenian cleruchies to forge their relations with the locals whose positions they usurped, sometimes unkindly. Malkin has traced this function in colonial contexts in the West; Doonan has applied the model to Greek colonists at Sinope.[63] Such encounters often yielded syncretization of Greek and local divinities. On Imbros, Athenians treat the local god Imbramos as Hermes; on Samothrace, the Greeks at Mandal Panayia made offerings to Artemis in what had been a sanctuary of Thracian Bendis.[64] The *Kabeiroi* remained, however, firmly non-Greek. Their resistance to assimilation raises the possibility that their ethnicity was of particular metaphoric use in the context of these mysteries – moving cultural mediation from the realm of historical necessity into ritual semantics, in the region where Greek seafarers met the Thracian masters of overland trade.

This model of metaphor formation is very different from those which identify the Samothracian rites as metallurgical mysteries. The latter have their roots in late nineteenth-century evolutionary anthropology, which identified metalworking as a critical step in human social evolution: Samothrace celebrated metallurgy as Eleusis celebrated agriculture. Fascination with medieval guilds, and concerns for workers' organizations, expanded this model to include prehistoric metallurgical guildsmen as the founders of the rites. Models of rites of passage turned the mysteries into coming of age rituals for journeyman smiths.[65] The thesis was based on a model common to Zenophanes and to Durkheim that smiths would celebrate divine smiths. Absence of evidence for smiths celebrating their craft in these mysteries did not dampen Gernet's enthusiasm for this model: he asserted the guildmen were sufficiently deep in prehistory that any traces of their actual activities had vanished.[66] The model also differs in interesting ways from archaeological and anthropological evidence for the ritual celebrations of smithing, and the juxtapositions of metallurgy and cult.[67] In terms of metaphor formation, the limitation of the model comes from the fact that it measures the metaphor only by its correlation to the imagined ancient society which would constitute its primary domain, rather than its function within the historical context in which its use is known – the rites themselves.

There is a role for metals in the Samothracian rites , but as a more nuanced and ritually specific metaphor than previous models have pursued. This role is articulated through a physical token – iron rings – and a mythological type – Idaian Daktyloi

63 Foucart 1878; Cargil 1995, 95–105; Doonan 2009, 69–78; Malkin 2002.

64 Imbramos: Cigdem 1997, 68; Parker 1996, 345–46; Cargill 1995, 103–04; Fredrich 1908, 97. Inscriptions to Hermes: *IG* XII (8) 68, 69, 87a, 89 a-b; Stephanus Byzantius s.v. Imbros writes that the island was sacred to Kabeiroi and Hermes, whom the Carians call Imbramos; Eustathius on Dionysius Periegetes 554, *GGM* II.317, notes that the Carians call Mercury Imbramus. Matsas 2007, 390 and n. 19.

65 Blakely 2006, 79–83.

66 Gernet and Boulanger 1932, 75–82; one exception is provided in the inscription *SIG* 3 (1920), 1140, a bronze smith Markos Kaikelios Sotas who mades a dedication to the Great Gods in Samothrace from his craft; Hemberg 1950, 179; von Fritze 1904, 126 n. 4; Cole 1984, 66.

67 Blakely 1999.

– whose narratives include accounts of transformation and siderogenesis. The iron associated with these daimones draws together the ritual dynamics of the mysteries, signs of regional identity, and the myths and cosmology associated with the rites. The *Daktyloi* were widely recognized as the inventors of iron. This achievement was recalled in universal histories and chronologies, and fueled etymological speculation that the *Daktyloi* were named for the crafter's hands, or the 'toes' of the mountains where mining occurs.[68] Hesiod knew of the Idaian *Daktyloi* as the inventors of iron working on Crete;[69] they appeared in the Phoronis epic as mountain-dwelling Phrygian magicians, named Kelmis, Damnameneus and Akmon, the attendants on a mountain mother and first inventors of the arts of Hephaistos.[70] In the fifth century, Pherekydes describes them as ironworkers, miners and magicians named for 'mother Ida'.[71] A fourth-century hymn to the Idaian *Daktyloi*, preserved on a fragmentary inscription in Eretria, refers to the workmen's tools (*IG* XII.IX 259).[72] The Daktyloi's arrival on Samothrace is reported by the fourth-century historian Ephoros, in an account which reflects his own historiographic goals of rationalization and a removal of the mythic from the historical. He does not name his sources, though he indicates that they were more than one.[73] His account of the *Daktyloi* may have been an attempt to resolve the ethnic and toponymic puzzles created by the existence of two Mt. Idas, one in Phrygia and one in Crete, and multiple locations for the ethnic group of the Mygdones.[74] Ephoros describes the *Daktyloi* as a historical tribe who came to Samothrace on their journey from their Phrygian homeland into Europe. They travelled in the company of Mygdon, a legendary ruler from Phrygia who had ruled the region around the river Sangarius. Mygdones are attested in both Bithynia and in Thrace, where they appear between the Axios and the Strymon.[75] While on the island the *Daktyloi* exercised their powers as *goetes*, introducing the locals to incantations, initiations, and mysteries; they taught these rites to Orpheus, who taught them in turn to the rest of the Greek world.

68 Marmor Parium *IG* XII(5) 444, 22; Kastor of Rhodes *FGH* 250 fr. 4; Thrasyllus *FGH* 253 fr. 1; Eusebius *Chronicle* 1.184.27; Diomedes Grammaticus 3. 474.75 P; 430.32 G; Nonnos *Dionysiaca* 14.25; Stesimbrotos *FGH* 107 fr. 12a, 12b; Apollonios of Rhodes *Argonautica* 1.1123 – 1130; Arnobius *Adversus Nationes* 3.41.43; Pollux *Onomastikon* 2.156.

69 Hesiod fr. 282 West; Pliny *Naturalis Historia* 7.57; cf. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 1.362.

70 *EGF* fr. 2; Blakely 2006, 192 – 214.

71 *FGH* 3 fr. 47; Blakely 2007.

72 Blakely 2006, 79 – 98.

73 Diodorus Siculus 5.64.–5; *BNJ* 70 F 104; Diodorus writes that Ephoros is among other historians who wrote this account of the *Daktyloi*.

74 Parker 2012 on *BNJ* 70 F 104

75 Pausanias 10.27.1; Scholia to Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 2.786; Erbse *Scholia Graeca in Homeri Iliadem* 3.189; Eustathius *Commentarii ad Homerem Ileadem et Odysseam*, *Iliad* 3.184; Hekatios *BNJ* 1 F 217; Strabo 7.3.2, 7 F 110; von Bredow 2012. The town Akmonia in Central Phrygia has been considered to be named for a mortal founder, a hero, or the anvil itself, based on its active mint: Alexander Polyhistor *BNJ* 273 F 73; Zgusta 1984, 30 – 32; Hemberg 1952.

Ephoros does not mention the *Daktyloi*'s ironworking, but a role for iron in the island's symbolic range is affirmed by the iron rings known as tokens of the rites. The rings were described by Lucretius (*de Rerum Naturae* 6.1043 – 1047), Pliny (*Naturalis Historia* 32.33), and Isidorus (*Origines* 19.32.5). 32 iron rings have now been recovered from the Samothracian site, largely from undatable contexts.[76] These rings could have been produced on the island itself. The sea floor of the Samothracian Plateau contains magnetite and titanium sands of unusually high concentration, up to 9.2 % of each element, in the bay around Kamariotissa, which is convenient to the sanctuary and is the best natural harbor on the island. These are the types of sands used to smelt iron in Thrace and the Black Sea in antiquity, using a technique which was not known elsewhere in Greece.[77] The evidence from Messemvria-Zone for regional strength in iron production and its connection to local identity recommends the semantic potential of this Samothracian iron. The Samothracian rings were also said to be magnetized. Lucretius wrote that a Samothracian ring danced, and iron filings moved, when they were placed in bronze basins and a magnetic stone was applied underneath (*DRN* 6.1043 – 1047); Samothrace was one of several places credited with the invention of magnetism (*Etymologicum Magnum* s.v. *magnetis*; Zenobius IV.22).

Writers from Thales through the church fathers suggested that magnetism was the sign of a daimon trapped in the stone.[78] That the Idaian *Daktyloi* could be those *daimones* is suggested by a narrative once so familiar it was a proverb. The story was told in Sopholes' *Kophoi Satyroi*. The fragments of the *Kophoi* offer evocative points of contact with elements familiar from mystery cults: the loss of immortality, a role for Prometheus, a wandering donkey and serpent who guarded a spring.[79] The proverb, Zenobius writes, consists of the phrase '*Kelmis en sidero*', and is used to refer to difficult personalities. Behind it is a story of the three Idaian *Daktyloi*, Kelmis, Damnameneus, and Akmon. The brothers met the mother in or at Mt. Ida, (ἐν τῇ Ἴδῃ). Kelmis did not receive her properly, and so caused offense. The result was that he was 'agreeably' closed up inside Ida; the adverb suggests that this fate pleased the goddess. There he turned into iron, whose hardness was a metaphor for his personality, and whose material was an appropriate complement for his brothers, 'Anvil' (Akmon) and 'Hammerer' (Damnameneus).[80] Walker emended the

76 Blakely 2012. I am very grateful to D. Matsas and to J.R. McCredie for granting me access to these rings in the summer of 2004.

77 C. Perissoratis et al 1987; Kostoglou 2003, 56

78 *DK* 11 A 22; Pliny *Naturalis Historia* 36.25; Porpyry *de Abstinentia* 4.20.264 – 265; Ausonius Magnus *Moselle* 316; Hopfner 1974 para. 596; Rufinus *Historiae ecclesiasicae* 1027.15 – 1028.1, Ps.-Prosper Aquitanus 834C; Radl 1988, 102, 106.

79 Krumeich et al. 1999, 349 – 55; Sophocles *TGF* fr. 335, 337. Accius suggests a role for Prometheus in the mysteries on Lemnos (Philoctetes fr. 525); Pausanias 9.25.6 knows him as a Kabeiros at Boiotian Thebes, to whom Demeter gave the mysteries. Bates 1934 offered a reconstruction of the play.

80 Hemberg 1950, 50; Hemberg 1952, 50 – 51.

text to add that Kelmis entered into a *taphos* at the lowest foundation of Ida.[81] No other editors accept the emendation, but Hellanicus indicates a subterranean meeting when he writes that the brothers met Rhea inside the mountain (ἐντὸς Ἴδης) (*FGH* 4 F 89). A magical papyrus of the fourth century BC may refer to the 'cave' of the Daktyls, though its reading is debated; the Daktyls' attendance on baby Zeus in Crete was a more familiar example of the *daimones*' association with caves. [82] Clement of Alexandria (*Protreptikos* 2.16) and Julius Firmicus Maternus (*de errore Profanarum Religionum* 10.11) told an analogous story of fratricide, burial and transformation, which they located at Mount Olympus and attributed to the *Kabeiroi*. Two brothers murdered a third, and buried his severed head at the foot of the mountain; his blood then gave rise to parsley, which initiates refused to eat. Rossignol in 1863 and Roussel in 1905 connected this story to the tale of Kelmis' transformation, and so claimed siderogenesis as the sacred narrative of Samothrace.

This claim lies beyond proof, due to the fragmentary state of the evidence as well as the secrecy which surrounded the mysteries. The story offers, however, an attractive semantic coherence between a physical token of the rites and the mythology of the island. An association between the rings and the daimones is consistent with the endless punning which characterizes ancient discussion of the *Daktyloi* as 'fingers' – named for the crafter's hands or the 'toes' of mountains where mining occurs.[83] A ring charged with ritual and *daimonic* force has parallels in the magical papyri, appropriate for the *Daktyloi*'s identity as *goetes*, ritual specialists in mediation between the human and the invisible worlds. Magnetized rings also respond to the aesthetic and communicative challenges created by the secrecy which defined mystery cults. Initiation into the mysteries was a matter to be celebrated and even advertised, at the same time that the contents of the rites could not be disclosed. The need to simultaneously reveal and conceal finds an ideal physical token in rings which demonstrated the presence of an invisible power whose true identity could not be disclosed. Though the object of substantial speculation, the actual mechanism of magnetism remained a matter of debate, and was recognized as a topos for inscrutability.[84]

Kelmis' subterranean location offers two semantic functions for Samothrace: resonance with local Thracian traditions of sacred caves, and a cosmological myth. Narratives of powerful *daimones* in underground locations were widely familiar in the Greek-speaking world. Their origins may be traced to the Northern Balkans and Thessaly, and their ritual celebrations were part of Thracian tradition.[85] These figures re-

81 Walker 1921, 32; Walker 1919, 613.

82 Hemberg 1952; Betz 1980; Brashear 1995, 3558.

83 Diomedes Grammaticus 3. 474.75 P; 430.32 G; Nonnos *Dionysiaca* 14.25; Stesimbrotos *FGH* 107 fr. 12a, 12b; Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 1.1123–1130; Arnobius *Adversus Nationes* 3.41.43; Pollux *Onomastikon* 2.156; Phoronis *PEG* fr. 2; Pherekydes *FGH* 3 F 47; Sophokles *TGF* fr. 337; Strabo 10.3.22.

84 Blakely 2012.

85 Ustinova 2002, 288; Schachter 1967, 14 and n. 30.

mained alive, though held underground, and had the power to heal or to make men immortal. Thracian king Rhesos, friend and kinsman to Orpheus, was celebrated in this form in the Rhodopi mountain; Pythagorean Zalmoxis was celebrated for spending three years underground and then re-emerging in the fourth.[86] Accounts of a Zerynthian cave on Samothrace, known to Lykophron, Nonnos and Aristophanes' scholiast, suggests the island's participation in this tradition. [87] Zerynthios is a Thracian figure, the male companion of the goddess Rheskynthis; Greeks called him Apollo, and his female counterpart Hekate, Aphrodite or Rhea. Both of their Thracian names show pre-Greek characteristics, and Apollo Zerynthios and his female companion were celebrated on the Thracian mainland, within the Samothracian peraia.[88] Lehmann found architectural rather than geological signs of this sacred cave in the Hieron, one of two structures at the Samothracian sanctuary whose interior, equipped with rows of bleacher-like benches, suggests a function as a place for initiation. The Hieron is exceptional in having a curved apse which was visible neither from the exterior nor the interior. The exterior of the building is rectlinear, and does not betray the semi-circle within; the view of the apse was hidden from those inside the building by a curtain which stretched across its front. The restriction of visual and physical access, in a cult defined by its secrecy, suggests the symbolic importance of the area. Within the apse, a semi-circular hole in the floor gave access to a large piece of red bedrock; the semi-circle repeated the shape of the apse, and the area was capped with a tent-like roof. The island's native stone, accessible beneath the floor, assumes the place more usually given to a cult statue. Entrance into this cave-like space, Lehmann proposed, would represent the culmination of initiation – making the cave of the Daktyloi only one of a number of cave-like spaces holding significance for the island's rites.[89]

Kelmis' transformation also provides a cosmological narrative of kinship between earth and sky. Kelmis, locked into his cave, embodies a subterranean location which resonates with the earthy quality of his association with iron, while Akmon and Damnameneus, in contrast, are associated with iron in the sky. That the sky was made of iron was a well-established trope in Greek poetry, appearing from Homer and Hesiod onward.[90] The anvils for which Akmon is named figure prominently in this imagery:

86 Euripides *Rhesus* 944, 966; Ustinova 2009, 100; Ustinova 2002.

87 Lycophron *Alexandra* 72–80; Nonnos *Dionysiaca* 13.393–407; Scholia to Nikander *Theriak*a 1.458–64; scholia to Aristophanes *Pax* 277–78.

88 Chapouthier 1935a, 171; Hemberg 1950, 85–86, 120–121; Theodossiev 2002. For their celebration on the the Samothracian peraia, see Livy 38.41.4; Stephanus Byzantius s.v. Zerynthus; scholia vetera to Lycophron *Alexandra* 77; Etymologicum Magnum s.v. Zerynthia; Nonnos 13.393–407; Nikander *Theriaka*, 1.458–64. The coastal city Zerynthos or Zerynthia lies west of the Hebrus in the Samothracian peraia.

89 Lehmann, P.W. 1969, 135–38; Ehrhardt 1985: 38–42. The extant remains date to the second century CE, though Lehmann believed it represented a continuation of longer practice.

90 Homer, *Iliad* 5.504, 17.425, 18.47, *Odyssey* 3.2, 8.274, 15. 329; Pindar, *Pythian* 10.27, *Nemean* 6.3; Herodotus 1.68; West 1997, 139–44.

Hesiod measures the distance between heaven and earth in terms of the time it would take an anvil to fall from one to the other (*Theogony* 722–724); Zeus punishes Hera by hanging her in the sky, fastening her ankles to anvils, *akmones*, (*Iliad* 15.18–21). Akmon also appears as the name of Ouranos or Ouranos' father, and Damnamaneus as the name for Helios, in the *Papyri Graecae Magicae*.[91] Presocratic and Neopythagorean authors, in fact, used the Idaian Daktyloi as metonyms for celestial rather than terrestrial iron.[92] Evidence from the Samothracian site – in both physical form and mythic analogy – suggests that it was the fraternal connection between the two realms, rather than the heavenly imagery alone, which served the needs of the Samothracian rituals. The architectural frame of the Hieron's apse offers a striking assertion of the chthonic element: carved snakes wound their way up two columns, between which hung the curtain hiding the apse.[93] Such snake-wrapped uprights are represented on four inscriptions found at the site, dated between the first and second centuries BC.[94] The stones are a departure from the overwhelmingly aniconic habit of Samothracian epigraphy: each of them shows a doorway framed by two upright burning torches, wound about with snakes. The use of this imagery on inscriptions proclaiming initiation and Samothracian affiliation affirms the importance of whatever happened at the apse of the Hieron; it also suggests that the columns themselves were topped with carved flames, paralleling marble torches found in Isthmia and Rome.[95] The combination of chthonic snakes and burning flame offers striking analogy to the iconographic range of the Dioskouroi, the brothers who numbered among the Samothracian gods from the Hellenistic period onward and who share, with the Daktyloi, a simultaneous presence in both earth and sky[96] The Dioskouroi's representation as stars was established by the fifth century BC; Diodorus Siculus connected this iconography specifically to the Samothracian rites.[97] The Argonauts, caught in a storm at sea after their visit to Samothrace, begged Orpheus, who alone had been initiated, to call on the Samothracian gods for help. As he did so, stars appeared above the brothers' heads, and

91 Hemberg 1950, 293; 1952, 51; Bonner 1950, 201; Huvelin 1901; Wessely 1886.

92 Blakely 2007.

93 Lehmann 1969:135–136.

94 Lehmann-Hartleben 1943: 26–41; Dimitrova 2008: 119–121 (IG XII (8) 190); 135–137 (IG XII Suppl. (1939) 149); 137–140 (IG XII (8) 189); 140–44 (IG XII (8) 191, 192, 211, 212, 259, and p. 39; IG XIV (1890), p. 776; CIG III (1850) 5926a and b; 5927; CIL III (1873) 718, 719, 721.

95 Lehmann 1969: 137 and n. 240.

96 Whether they lived apart from each other, as did Kelmis and his brothers, or moved together from one world to the next, remains an open question: Gantz 1993, 327–28; Matheson 1996, 228. For Dioskouroi as Samothracian gods, see Aristophanes Pax 276–86, Diodorus Siculus 4.43.1–2, Damascius Vita Isidori 302, Eusebius Praeparatio evangelica 1.10, Orphic hymn 38 (37), Ampelius, Liber memorialis 2.3, Scholia to Germanicus Caesar Aratea 146, Varro de Lingua Latina 5.10.57–58; Hemberg 1950, 144–146, 159–160, 172–180, 215–16, 225–239, 330, 334–335; Chapouthier 1935a, 181–183; Chapouthier 1935b, XVI fig. 42; 33, no. 10 and fig. 36; 33, no. 9; 39 and fig. 51; ID no.s 1562, 1581, 1582, 1902; Cole 1984, 74–81 and 153, nos. 25–28; Burkert 1985, 212–213; von Straten 1994, 261–63; Mikalson 2004, 199–201; Palagia 1992; Scherer 2006, 9–42.

97 Chapouthier 1935a, 131–135, 322–323; Hermary 1986, 587–88, 592–593.

their epiphany became a manifestation of Samothracian salvation (4.43.1–2).[98] This celestial association was balanced by mythic traditions that the twins divided their time between heaven and the underworld, as the immortal Pollux exchanged places with his mortal brother Castor. This chthonic and funerary aspect of the brothers took the iconographic form of snakes, appearing either around the doorway represented on their dokana or in conjunction with amphorae.[99] The combination of the chthonic snakes and potentially ouranic fire appears as well on a silver ring found at the site in 1941.[100] The ring shares the form and aesthetics of the now heavily corroded iron rings in both its form and its aesthetics. The iron of the rings, when polished to a high gleam, would have provided an aesthetic effect very much like silver.[101] Two-thirds of the iron rings found at the site have large round bezels, as does the silver ring. While the bezels of the iron rings are too deeply corroded to preserve any image, the silver ring preserves the outline of two entwined snakes flanked by shining stars, echoing both the frame of the Hieron's apse and the sign on the inscriptions. Lehmann proposed that the snakes were identified with Hermes, whom Hippolytus described standing before the door of the Anaktoron (*Refutatio omnium haeresium* 5.8.9–10). While the snakes could be iconographically linked to either Hermes or to the Dioskouroi, the combination of snakes and stars, from the perspective of natural sciences, would recall a combination of terrestrial and celestial locations appropriate to both the Dioskouroi and the Idaian brothers. The parallel semantics underscores the daimones' semantic usefulness, enlisting them among the many mechanisms used to communicate this sign in the context of the rites. This natural science perspective on the gods of the rites seems to materialize in Varro's claim that the Samothracian gods were earth and sky (*de Lingua Latina* 5.10.57–58); his friend and contemporary Cicero wrote of Samothrace that the mysteries, when carefully considered, had more to do with natural science than with theology (*de Natura Deorum* 1.42.119).

Cicero's perhaps dismissive tone about the rites recalls Strabo's complaint about their *daimones:* the permeability between the fantastic and the real. It is precisely that permeability, however, which opens up a productive investigative pathway. If the *daimones* associated with Samothrace provided a mechanism for moving ethnicity and iron from the natural to the symbolic world, the results were key metaphors of exceptional force, which may be indexed by the cohesion they reveal among symbols, ritual actions, and regional identity. The anthropological framework for metaphor formation suggests that the *daimones*' ethnicity imposes less a choice among the possible historical origins of the rite's founders than a recognition of the uses

98 Presocratic authors of the sixth century BC identified the brothers with St. Elmo's fire, the phosphorous glow which offered light to ships in danger: Xenophanes, Diehls VS 21 A 39; Metrodoros, VS 70 A 10; Homeric Hymn 33, Alcman Fr. 34, Euripides Helen 1495–1505, 1664–5; Jaisle 1907, 58–72.

99 Chapouthier 1935a: 4, 112, 317–320; Hermary 1986: 586–7, 589.

100 Lehmann, K. 1950, 9 and n. 31; Lehmann-Hartleben 1940, 355 and fig. 39.

101 Lehmann-Hartleben 1939, 138 fig. 6.

of that plurality itself. All the ethnicities are non-Greek, and so evoke the historical human social dynamics which helped ensure the safe seafaring which was the unique promise to the rite's participants. The *daimones* of the rites provide the mechanism for moving this familiar ancient reality into the domain of the gods who were the patrons, objects and guarantors of the rites.

Samothracian iron draws together a greater number of elements: economic resources, a physical token of initiation, the dynamics of secrecy, cosmological models, and regional ritual practices. The primary domain for the metaphors is the region of the northeastern Aegean; the secondary domain lies in the context of the rituals themselves. Ortner noted the situational specificity of key metaphors: powerful as they are, the joins they create among semantic fields are valid within the context of their use only. The distinctions between the Lemnian and Samothracian *daimones* supports this observation. The metallurgy of the Lemnian *Kabeiroi* articulates local identity, but shows little evidence of the mystification of elements from the natural world. The myths of the *Daktyloi*, in contrast, reveal the divine component of the iron rings and the repeated concern to articulate, in iconographic and mythic types, a connection between celestial and terrestrial realms.

Where Cicero and Strabo suggest a choice between the imaginary and the real, these models focus on the multiple connections between these categories. Previous investigations of the Samothracian daimones proceeded from an imagined prehistory, in which the *daimones*' metallurgy and ethnicity were unmediated reflections of the identity of the initiates. The analysis of the *daimones* as metaphors focuses on their use within the context of the ancient rites as we are able to construct them. Those constructions, and these models for the *daimones*, remain necessarily conjectural: the data are fragmentary, the context was sealed by secrecy, and change over time is more likely than consistency for rites practiced over a thousand years. The very uncertainty of the data, however, recommends an intellectual model which emphasizes plurality, possibility, and the non-canonical, all of which characterize the Greek cultural category of the *daimon*.[102]

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102 Smith 1978; Rexine 1985; Herter 1950; Burkert 1985, 179 – 82; Nowak 1960.

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