The Cultures within Ancient Greek Culture

Contact, Conflict, Collaboration

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Introduction

The Cultures within Greek Culture

Carol Dougherty and Leslie Kurke

Culture and Cultures

We begin with two somewhat contradictory assumptions. First, at one level, we take "culture" as a theoretical category, "a way of both understanding and organizing human life" (Parekh 2000.143). Our notion of Greek culture along these lines, then, is a system of shared beliefs and practices by means of which Greeks (like all groups of human beings) structured, regulated, and comprehended their collective lives. This notion of culture as a theoretical category, its capacity for organizing and making sense of human experience, is, of course, particularly important for those of us engaged in the study of the past; it helps provide the analytic framework by which we, as scholars of antiquity, attempt to understand and explain the significance of individual artifacts or practices of that world. The assumption of "Greek culture" is what enables us to unify and connect the often arbitrarily preserved and idiosyncratic artifacts which are our only data – texts, papyri, pots, sculpture, architectural remains, etc.

And yet while we depend upon the heuristic potential of Greek culture as a theoretical category, we also acknowledge its limitations, and this leads us to our second assumption about culture – its lack of coherence and unity, its multiplicity, and its grounding in individual practices. Greek culture, like all others, was comprised of many disparate subgroups or subcultures, whose identity and existence were constantly shifting and realigning, whose rituals, beliefs, and practices alternately competed and collaborated.[1] Culture is articulated at several levels – reflected in language, embodied in customs and traditions – and is constantly under negotiation. It will contain both residual strains of its earlier iterations and emergent seeds of potential resistance to it.[2] And so, even if culture is conceptualized as a coherent system, it manifests itself as contradictory practices. In the multiplicity of practices, members of different subcultures confront each other, clash, reconcile, and contest value and meaning, and that contestation forms the material record that is available to us. William Sewell puts it well: "Cultural

coherence, to the extent that it exists, is as much the product of power and struggles for power as it is of semiotic logic" (Sewell 1999.57).[3]

And so our notion of Greek culture as a coherent theoretical category (one that was meaningful to them as much as to us – to the extent that we have gotten it right) depends upon this somewhat contradictory pluralizing notion of cultures as coexisting bounded and recognized worlds of beliefs and practices.[4] Rather than considering Greek culture as something simple, pure, and unproblematic – as the beginning, the source of Western civilization – we want to acknowledge, inventory, and debate the ways in which it is already actively engaged in a complicated process of negotiation, conflict, and collaboration between cultures or subcultures.[5] It is the ongoing dialectic between system and practice, between sameness and difference, that forms the basis for the essays that follow on "The Cultures within Greek Culture."

Ancient Multiculturalism

Classics as a discipline has long been the very paradigm for homogenized, unified models of culture. Indeed, this was precisely the traditional value and importance of "the Classics" (as it still is for modern conservative appropriations): the denial of difference, both within ancient cultures and in their inheritance by a modern elite.[6] But the intellectual ferment of the seventies and eighties decisively dismantled this old monolithic model of culture. In the wake of structuralism, for example, Raymond Williams and Stuart Hall (following Gramsci) developed the model of "hegemony" as a mobile and always unstable articulation of different groups and interests; Michel Foucault argued that power was decentralized but pervasive within the discourses and practices of culture, generating local resistances coextensive with the reach of power; and Pierre Bourdieu and Michel de Certeau highlighted the agency and improvisatory play of actors in the field of cultural practices.[7] At the same time, studies of nationalism, colonialism, and postcolonial encounters underscored the importance of diversity, cultural contact, and cultural exchange.

In response to these broader intellectual developments, classicists sought to stake out and preserve their territory in these new debates on "multiculturalism." Starting in the late eighties, Greek interaction with foreign cultures became a hot topic. The work of Walter Burkert, Martin West, and Martin Bernal, in particular, focused on questions of influence and cultural borrowing between Greece on the one hand and Egypt and the Near East on the other.[8] Whereas Burkert and West focused on "the indebtedness of Greek civilization to eastern stimuli," Martin Bernal's two-volume *Black Athena* emphasized Egypt as an equally important source of influence for Greek civilization.[9] The work of all three scholars has been extremely influential in articulating and emphasizing the

Near Eastern and Egyptian contributions to the development of Greek culture, and as a result, we now have a much richer sense of the complicated ways in which Greeks, Egyptians, and Phoenicians (for example) interacted with each other.

Thus the work of Burkert, West, and Bernal has had the salutary effect of stimulating a great deal of interest and further discussion within the field. But for all three, there is an odd misfit between their ostensible project and their implicit theoretical assumptions: their goal to demonstrate the multicultural and mixed origins of Greek and Western civilization is a worthy one, but many of the assumptions on which their work is based seem to derive unexamined from the very nineteenth-century approach that they critique. This is especially true of their notions of culture, ethnicity, and cultural contact. Most work done in this field offers no explicit discussion or theorization of the term "culture," although this is an essential concept for understanding cross-cultural exchange. Thus, for example, M. L. West offers the following naturalizing image as his only analysis of "culture" in his 630-page collection of Near Eastern borrowings in Greek literature: "Culture, like all forms of gas, tends to spread from where it is densest into adjacent areas where it is less dense" (West 1997.1). His choice of metaphor reduces cultural contact and transformation to a simple, inevitable act of nature, thereby completely obscuring the importance of agency and ideology in the constructedness and arbitrariness of human culture.[10] We might also call this an all-or-nothing model of culture that posits cultural influence or borrowing as movement from a space of fullness to a space of emptiness, without complexity or remainder. In the nineteenth century, the most prevalent version of this model was the notion of "Hellenization," which assumed that the potent force of Greek culture moved in to fill a cultural vacuum (e.g., for the Etruscans, who apparently had no mythology of their own). In spite of their explicit critique of this nineteenth-century approach, modern scholars like West and Bernal have simply reversed the terms. Rather than looking for more complex models of culture and cultural interaction, they have simply identified Greece itself as the cultural vacuum filled (and so entirely constituted) by the "denser" cultures of Egypt and the Near East.[11]

At the same time, for these scholars the only meaningful kind of difference is ethnic or racial – Greeks opposed to, borrowing from, or even descended from Egyptians, Phoenicians, or peoples of the Near East. The assumption is that ethnicity is clearly defined, fixed, and unchanging and that the categories are unproblematic – all Greeks are equally and immutably Greek; all Phoenicians Phoenician. But much recent scholarship on ancient and modern ethnicity has challenged this essentializing, external model of ethnicity, emphasizing instead the ways in which ethnic identity is discursively constructed by group members actively shaping (and sometimes changing) the terms and criteria of their self-identification.[12] In the terms employed by Jonathan Hall in his contribution to this volume, traditional

work on cross-cultural exchange knows only "etic" definitions of culture and ethnicity – that is, those imposed from outside by the scholar as analyst; but there should be space for interrogating ancient "emic," or internal, notions of ethnicity or group affiliation as well.[13]

Finally, the work of Burkert, West, and Bernal seems to embrace a nineteenth-century myth of origins, in that they assume that establishing "influence" or "borrowing" entirely explains some phenomenon. Thus, although both Burkert and West emphasize the need for situations of sustained and extensive contact between cultures – intermarriage, bicultural trading colonies, immigrant craftsmen – to enable such cultural transmission, they focus almost entirely on simply identifying examples of Near Eastern influence on Greek culture.[14] What is missing from their work is attention to what happens at the other end of the exchange spectrum. By emphasizing the source of influence, their work overlooks the mechanics of cultural contact in all its complexity and messiness.

But this is precisely the goal of this volume: to grapple with these issues of culture and cultural contact.[15] In the essays that follow, we want to emphasize both ends of the cross-cultural exchange: recognizing the source of influence while also investigating the mechanics of cross-cultural contact – what happens on the receiving end. In interrogating the process of cultural transformation – what happens to a Near Eastern theme, for example, once it takes root in Greece – our goal is not to erase consciousness of the source of influence but rather to recognize that cross-cultural contact and influence are complicated processes that move in both directions.[16]

In this respect, cultural critics working on modern postcolonialism have developed more nuanced models of cultural exchange and interaction that have been very helpful for our project – precisely because we are hampered by a relative paucity of evidence. The contemporary cultural critic Paul Gilroy, for example, emphasizes the volatility and complexity of cultures in contact rather than simply relying on the metaphor of borrowing and lending.[17] In response to those who have insisted on cultural nationalism and strong breaks between the histories and experiences of blacks and whites, Gilroy's study of new world exploitation and settlement highlights instead a sense of doubleness and the dynamism of cultural intermixture: "the stereophonic, bilingual, bifocal cultural forms" that emerge from what he calls heuristically the "Black Atlantic" world (Gilroy 1993.2–3). One such cultural form is black music, which Gilroy reads not as "the intuitive expression of some racial essence," but rather as a hybrid and productive force within the historical and political development of slavery: "Artistic expression, expanded beyond recognition from the grudging gifts offered by the masters as a token substitute for freedom from bondage, therefore becomes the means toward both individual self-fashioning and communal liberation" (Gilroy 1993.40). In other words, the transfer of culture, the transformation of cultures is a dynamic process and one in which power differentials often work through and inform cultural formations in unexpected ways.

Thus Gilroy's model of the "Black Atlantic" offers us a rich and detailed analyis of different patterns of cultural interaction. Two of these are of particular interest to us: one we might call *cross-cultural enantiosemantics* – that is, the same term or symbolic element, once adapted into another culture, precisely inverts its meaning (as, in a sense, black music does in Gilroy's reading). To take a small example from this volume: Jonathan Hall cites the evidence that Greek hoplite armor became a luxury commodity among the indigenous peoples of South Italy in the seventh century B.C.E., used in particular for cavalry fighting (Hall, this volume p. 24). That is to say, we cannot assume *a priori* that cultural borrowings maintain the same practical functions or symbolic significance upon their migration into a new cultural context. A related complexity is what we might call the *reflexivity* of cultural exchange: elements absorbed into another culture and transformed within it may then also affect their function or configuration within the original culture in an ongoing and reciprocal negotiation. It is within this kind of framework, to take another example from the volume, that we want to think about Greco-Etruscan contact in the archaic period. Do Etruscan aristocrats try on the Greek mythic mantle of Odysseus as a way to insinuate themselves into the Greek world, taking advantage of an authoritative mythic system that is missing from their own culture?[18] Or, in translating Odysseus as Uthuze, are they perhaps also making other more subtle, even subversive, changes that will inevitably alter Greek notions of the wandering hero in turn? In other words, identifying the source of influence is just the beginning of the story, just where it begins to get interesting. Instead of a one-way voyage of influence from the Near East to Greece, we prefer to describe cross-cultural contact as a series of expeditions moving from west to east as well as from east to west, carrying cargo, craftsmen, and colonists; exchanging goods, ideas, and customs; transforming, bartering, and teaching.

It is important to note, however, that in spite of our emphasis here on what we see as the changes, the inversions, the enantiosemantics that are an inevitable part of cross-cultural contact and transformation, we have not joined those, including Plato, who celebrate exclusively the ways in which the Greeks transformed or improved upon whatever they took from other cultures:

> ὅ τί περ ἂν Ἕλληνες βαρβάρων παραλάβωσι, κάλλιον τοῦτο εἰς τέλος ἀπεργάζονται.
>
> Whatever the Greeks take from foreigners, they transform this into a better result. (Plato *Epinomis* 987d)

Of course the Greeks adapted, modified, and transformed elements of foreign cultures to make them "better," that is, better suited to Greek culture. But the opposite is certainly also true, and it is the ongoing reciprocity of cultural contact – the transformations that continue to take place at both ends of the cultural exchange – that we are interested in exploring here.

Thus, this volume takes one starting point from discussions of Greco-foreign interaction, but tries to insert them into more complicated models of cultural

contact – focusing on the micromechanics of cultural exchange and the permeability of cultural boundaries. In addition to noting the source of influence, we suggest that we must attend to precisely what gets borrowed or exchanged; how it gets adapted within the grammar of a new cultural system; and whether foreign elements are differentially deployed by different subcultures within the adapting culture as weapons in internal struggles or competition.

Second, we argue that awareness of cultural exchange and contact between Greeks and non-Greeks must go hand in hand with analysis of the diverse and competing forces at work within Greek culture itself. Traditional discussions of "Greece and the East" tend to treat both sides in the exchange as static and unchanging monoliths.[19] There are many kinds of diversity within Greek culture that this traditional discourse thus elides or ignores. Ethnicity is only one facet of culture, and we want to broaden the notion of culture itself beyond national and ethnic definitions to include a wide variety of groups and subcultures whose contact, conflict, and collaboration combine to comprise what we understand as "Greekness." Indeed, it is our contention that the same models of cultural exchange and cultural contact can be very fruitfully applied to intracultural processes as well, and this is where most of the essays in the volume focus their attention.

A New Cultural Poetics

This exploration of diversity within Greek culture is where Cultural Poetics – especially developments of the last decade – can contribute. As did those in our earlier collection, the essays in this volume continue to emphasize the interconnectedness of material from a culture and to appreciate the importance of the symbolic. We insist, furthermore, that symbolic material be seen as embedded in social, political, and cultural discourses and as subject to change and renegotiation through time. In effect, our goal may be seen as an effort to historicize and politicize a structuralist approach to myth and text. At the same time, it differs from traditional ancient history in a couple of important ways. First, in addition to battles and political maneuvers, we consider texts as events in themselves, which, rightly read, reveal the ideological structures that shape them and that they shape. Second, we are not concerned with establishing the reality of events reported in ancient sources, their chronological sequence, or the motives of individual agents. Rather, we set out to chart how a traditional culture accommodates change through rhetorical, representational, and ideological adjustments. Finally, we refuse to make a strict division between the political and the cultural in archaic and classical Greece. Insofar as all artistic production – visual, verbal, and musical – is embedded in the cultural system, political battles broadly understood (who has power? what constitutes political identity?) also play themselves out in cultural arenas, and the two are inextricable.

"Cultural Poetics" or cultural criticism has, of course, itself evolved since the late eighties and early nineties, and the papers here reflect some of these changes. In particular, second-generation New Historicists have tried to get beyond the analysis of elite culture alone (which was still mainly the purview of the first generation of New Historicists) to focus on a broader range of peoples, objects, and practices.[20] One way of charting this difference is by noting the shift in metaphors and emphases in the newer New Historicism. First-generation New Historicists, influenced by the "interpretive anthropology" of Clifford Geertz, tended to treat all aspects of culture as "texts" or "performances" requiring semiotic analysis.[21] As Victoria Bonnell and Lynn Hunt observe in their Introduction to the 1999 volume *Beyond the Cultural Turn*, insofar as Geertz treats "symbols, rituals, events, historical artifacts, social arrangements, and belief systems" as texts, he's assuming and explicating their "internal consistency as part of a system of meaning" (Bonnell and Hunt 1999b.2–3). That is to say, Geertz is a kind of "New Critic" of cultural formations, finding unity and consistency produced through the ambiguity and metaphors of the "texts" of culture.[22] Thus the hermeneutic models of "text" and "performance" often seemed to presuppose a single, unitary immanent meaning, instilled by a cultural "transcendent author" or "actor"; and, at least in the work of first-generation New Historicists, that author or actor was usually elite.

We might describe the shift in more recent New Historicism/cultural studies as an attempt instead to see and analyze the inconsistencies, incoherences, and ideological fissures in culture as signs of difference and diversity within (and we might read this as a deconstructive turn on Geertz' "New Criticism" of culture).[23] Hence, emphasis has shifted from "texts" and "performances" to the multiplicity of concrete "practices" and "processes." With this choice of metaphors, newer New Historicists focus more on materiality, on the everyday, and on the bodily or embodiedness of practices, as domains that are more likely to offer us access to non–elite or marginalized elements in culture.[24]

Another aspect of this shift is a greater focus on narrative, competing narratives, and the circulation of stories.[25] Victoria Bonnell and Lynn Hunt offer a useful perspective on this pervasive interest in narrative in current cultural analysis:

> Narrative provides a link between culture as system and culture as practice. If culture is more than a predetermined representation of some prior social reality, then it must depend on a continuing process of deconstruction and reconstruction of public and private narratives. Narrative is an arena in which meaning takes form, in which individuals connect to the public and social world, and in which change therefore becomes possible. (Bonnell and Hunt 1999b.17)

Thus narrative, insofar as it is a mediating term between individuals and the public sphere, at least potentially makes visible different groups and competing interests within culture, and, as Bonnell and Hunt observe, can offer one way to negotiate the dialectic between culture as system and culture as practice. Myth can represent the hegemonic or institutional version, but stories tend to proliferate

within culture, and their circulation can also be a means of contesting or revising the dominant account over time.

Many of the same thematic and methodological shifts are visible between our first and second volumes. Thus in the first volume, the dominant metaphors for our interpretive agenda were "text" and "performance," and many of the essays focused almost entirely on elite culture (e.g., Kurke on the ideology of athletic victory; Sinos on Peisistratos' exploitation of the imagery of epiphany; Szegedy-Maszak on Thucydides' evocation of Solonian echoes to characterize Pericles). Other contributors to the volume were looking mainly at the coherence of symbolic structures whose purpose was to produce consensus within communities – that is, at rituals and institutions whose function necessitated a high degree of coherence and systematicity (e.g., Boedeker on the importance of the bones of Orestes within Spartan ideology; Dougherty on the poetics of colonization; Martin on wisdom as performance).[26] The exception in the first volume was Josiah Ober's paper on the Athenian Revolution of 508/7 B.C.E., conceptualized as a competition of performative utterances within a leaderless mass revolt. The contributors to the present volume might thus be said to be following the example of Ober, but extending his model of contestation beyond the narrowly political.

Ten years later, all the contributors to the present volume are engaged in an attempt to chronicle or excavate difference or diversity within or between cultures, however difficult this might be given the paucity of evidence. Thus we might note that several of the literary scholars have shifted their gaze to vases and vase-painting in this volume (e.g., Dougherty, Martin, Nicholson), for, as Antonaccio observes, the sheer volume of pottery evidence gives us access to a kind of popular culture the literary sources by and large do not represent. There has also been a general shift between the two volumes from "high" to "low" culture (e.g., Kurke), from the exceptional to the everyday (e.g., Antonaccio, Martin), and from the body as semiotic system to the body as irreducible ground of practice (e.g., Martin).[27] Narrative and narrative forms are a significant object of analysis for many of the contributors, read as the means by which different groups within or between cultures compete or negotiate (e.g., Hall, Dougherty, Neer, Kurke, Martin, Wilson).

Through such attention to everyday practices and embodied forms, the contributors aim to offer a corrective to essentializing, external models of cultural difference that still tend to dominate the scholarly discourses of Classics and Ancient History. It is our contention that cross-cultural contact is not the only possible way of conceiving diversity, nor should the discussion of diversity be limited to ethnic or national differences. For, as Jonathan Hall has compellingly demonstrated, ancient Greek ethnic categories (e.g., Ionian, Dorian, Achaian, Hellenic), like their modern counterparts, have no objective or natural, biological basis. They are instead consciously chosen and discursively constructed by self-identifying group members, and their definitions and salient features change and vary over time, depending on the particular needs of the communities involved.[28]

Vectors of Culture

Given that ancient ethnicity operated as what Benedict Anderson would call a socially constructed "imagined community," we want to construe a notion of culture that transcends essentialized national and ethnic definitions to include the entire range and variety of groups and subcultures that comprise Greek culture.[29] Thus our contributors offer a wide array of different ways of conceiving diversity within culture. These different models of intracultural diversity combine and overlap within many of the essays in the different sections, but we tease them out and isolate them here for analytic purposes:

1. Class/status – non-elite culture: Several of the contributors are trying to get access, if possible, to non-elite culture. Given the kinds of remains we have from antiquity, this can be a particularly challenging operation. Since we have only about five to ten percent of all ancient literary production preserved (and far less for archaeological remains), our sources are limited. Almost all the literary texts we have must be presumed to have been produced by elites of birth, wealth, and education. Yet it is a fair assumption that other groups, lacking wealth and status, contested the dominant cultural norms, or, at the very least, cultivated their own independent realms of belief and action.[30] How to recover these in their cultural and historical specificity?[31] Our contributors evince exemplary resourcefulness, turning to different domains of evidence that have tended to be marginal to the traditional practices of the field. Thus Carla Antonaccio focuses on the hybridity of modest grave assemblages from ancient Sicily, while Leslie Kurke turns to the *Life of Aesop* traditions, fixed in writing many centuries after the period under consideration, to shed light on much earlier, orally circulated tales. Another strategy is to look for tensions or divergences within a dossier of material and read these as evidence for ideological struggle or difference. Thus Nigel Nicholson, for example, first notes a pattern of the occlusion of charioteers from victory monuments – a pattern which then allows him to see Pindar's *Pythian* 5 and certain other victory monuments as anomalous, as perhaps memorials left behind by charioteers themselves. This kind of reconstruction is inevitably speculative, but we contend that it is an effort we must make if we are to understand the ancient world in all its texture and complexity.

2. Location: There are cases where a particular spatial location generates a distinctive culture or meeting of cultures. Our prime example of the importance of location is Delphi as an "internal contact zone." Delphi was an anomalous and important site, at once an international sanctuary and a place preeminently Greek. Even within the Greek world, it was a site where many different groups, subcultures, and ideologies met and jostled each other. Thus, just as Italy and Sicily represent contact zones between Greeks and native peoples, we might think of Delphi as an "internal contact zone" within Greek culture and the Greek imaginary. Modern historical and archaeological analyses of the role of Delphi emphasize its marginality from the perspective of Greek poleis, sited outside the

territory of the major city-states. In the archaic and classical periods, Delphi's marginal status made it an ideal site for elite display beyond the restrictive norms of individual cities (as the archaeological record of dedications attests), while its quadrennial games provided a forum for elite competition and networking.[32]

But if Delphi was outside or marginal from the perspective of Greek poleis, it was symbolically central as oracle and Panhellenic shrine. Jonathan Hall, in this volume and elsewhere, links Delphi's rise to prominence with an evolving notion of Hellas as a geographic entity (fostered, he argues, by Thessaly as a prominent member of the Amphiktyony that oversaw the running of the Delphic shrine). Hence the tradition that Delphi was the center or navel of the world bespeaks its importance in an emergent sense of Hellenic identity.[33] At the same time, much recent scholarship on the Delphic Oracle has emphasized its important contribution to early Greek state formation, especially in the areas of colonization and the development of legal codes.[34] Finally, the Delphic Oracle was in the Greek imaginary the site of interpretation and self-exploration par excellence.

Given the complexity and diversity of Delphi's functions, the question arises: were there conflicts or tensions among the different constituencies and interests it served? Foreign dynasts like Croesus or Amasis, *ethnê* and members of the Amphiktyony like Thessaly, colonial Greeks looking to affirm their Hellenic identity, elites from individual Greek cities competing and networking with each other, and polis representatives relying on the oracle to resolve issues of civic crisis – all converged on Delphi with their different, often competing agendas. So what happened when different groups interacted at Delphi? Was Delphi particularly fertile ground for identity formation and the contesting, negotiating, or performing of identity?[35] Finally, was Delphi a place where all the different aspects of Greek culture invited questioning and interpretation? Several contributors apply these questions to dedications, the practices of athletic competition and memorialization, and sacrificial practices and oracular consultation, to explore this weird middle zone of Delphi. The three essays on Delphi by Neer, Nicholson, and Kurke suggest that it was precisely Delphi's marginal location but symbolic centrality that allowed class/status conflicts to be particularly intense and their negotiations particularly visible there. In contrast to individual cities, whose community ideologies necessitated effacing evidence of such conflicts, Delphi offered them a Panhellenic stage.

Together, the three papers that center on Delphi suggest the multiplicity of possible outcomes, since Kurke's is a story of conflict, while Nicholson's and Neer's are stories of reconciliation. This diversity of outcomes posited by Neer, Nicholson, and Kurke offers some confirmation, in turn, for the kinds of complexities of intercultural interaction proposed by other contributors. That is to say, we need not look as far afield as Gilroy and other postcolonial critics for empirical corroboration for the kinds of interactions suggested; at Delphi, an analogous internal contact zone where we have sufficient evidence to judge, we see similar

mechanisms at work. Thus in external contact zones, even where we may not have sufficient evidence to know exactly what transformations occurred in Etruscan culture, for example, we have support for presuming that the operations were varied, complex, and culturally specific.

3. Other kinds of subcultures or "imagined communities" based, for example, on profession, musical culture, or religious affiliation; what Richard Martin in his paper terms "micro-cultures": Rather than limiting ourselves to cross-cultural contact and the ways in which Delphi helped Greeks negotiate aspects of Greekness, we want to excavate still other kinds of difference and diversity within Greek culture. In this sense, we concur with Jonathan Hall in defining culture (for purposes of analysis) as a "reified semiotic code" shared by a given group:

> And those to whom this reified semiotic code is intelligible constitute a cultural group or a culture in the pluralistic sense – a category that is certainly more heterogeneous and labile than standard definitions of a "culture," but an entity nonetheless. The *nature* of the elements selected as symbols will determine the *kind* of cultural group under consideration – notions of theological dogma and clerical authority for a religious group, attitudes oriented around biological sex for a gender group, and putative subscription to fictive kinship in the case of an ethnic group. (Hall, this volume, p. 25)

That is to say, groups within society form multiple subcultures based on the different symbolic elements they choose to endow with relevance and importance.

This notion of subculture is already at work in Nigel Nicholson's attempt to reconstruct a particular distinctive culture of professional charioteers. But for this "heterogeneous and labile" model of culture, ancient Athens presents a particular challenge, and so our last three papers focus on Athens. In both ancient ideology and modern scholarship, Athens is the *Paradebeispiel* for a homogeneous, hegemonic democratic culture. Ancient myths of autochthony, cultural preeminence, and homogeneity are reinforced by the material and literary remains. Think of the ubiquitous and strikingly consistent Attic pottery styles and coinage; or Attic comedy and tragedy – the most familiar of ancient genres, which significantly engaged the entire polis as performers and audience. It is hard for moderns to resist the power and coherence of Athenian democratic culture as it is modeled, for example, by Thucydides' Pericles in the Funeral Oration. And indeed, scholars who have set out to look for diverse or different cultures within Athenian culture have mainly been frustrated. Thus in a recent article, Ian Morris focuses on a mining village in Thorikos, looking for archaeological evidence of distinctive slave culture. His conclusions are largely negative:

> There is no sign of the excluded constructing alternative material cultures, and even the limited forms of resistance that may imply. As a tentative hypothesis, I suggest that the "mainstream" material culture of Athens was so pervasive because Athenian male citizen culture as a whole was unusually hegemonic, filling every corner of the conceptual landscape, allowing no space for alternatives.[36] (Morris 1998.196–7)

How then do we access difference – the rifts or fissures that must have existed even within the dominant democratic culture of Athens? One route is that taken by Josiah Ober, who has recently read the ancient critics of Athenian democracy as engaged in a single contentious conversation (with each other and with the Athenian public sphere) from the late fifth century through the fourth.[37] This is a valuable contribution, which we might read as an extended ethnography of one particular Athenian subculture.

But this kind of approach does not and cannot tell the whole story, since it continues to operate within the limits of the ancient (Athenian) assumption that there is a complete separation between politics and culture and that only politics matters. This neat separation of culture and politics is, in fact, an ideological construct of the late fifth century, perhaps most powerfully articulated in Pericles' Funeral Oration:

> It is with tolerance that we behave both in public affairs and in our suspicion about each other's daily activities, not being angry at our neighbor if he does something as he pleases, nor putting on our faces attitudes of disappointment which inflict no punishment but are nonetheless irritating. And while in private matters we associate without being offended, in public affairs we are the most law-abiding through fear and reverence, because of our obedience to whoever is in power and to the laws . . . (Thucydides 2.37.2–3)

Here Pericles, through studied contrasts, constitutes over and over again the complete separation of the public sphere (τὸ κοινόν, τὰ δημόσια) from individual citizens' private lives and pursuits (τῶν καθ' ἡμέραν ἐπιτηδευμάτων, τὰ ἴδια). The former, the sphere of politics, is characterized by unanimity, perfect cooperation, and respect for law; the latter, what is generally understood as the domain of culture, allows for difference and diversity of pleasures and pursuits, accorded full freedom and tolerance. But by that very gesture of tolerance, the sphere of culture is made at once invisible and irrelevant to the workings of the democratic polity; as Pericles will go on to observe, "We alone consider the man who has no share in politics not to be minding his own business (ἀπράγμονα), but to have no business (ἀχρεῖον) here at all" (Thucydides 2.40.2).[38]

In order to locate rifts and fissures within Athenian democratic culture, we must deconstruct this ideological myth of the neat opposition of public and private, the happy coexistence and noninterference of political homogeneity and cultural tolerance. For Athenians, like members of any culture, formed groups and constructed notions of identity based on kinds of music, profession or work experience, religious affiliation, burial customs, and fighting tactics, as well as political ideology (and indeed, these different identity formations could interact and interfere with each other). Thus both Richard Martin and Peter Wilson offer analyses at the problematic interface of politics and culture in Athens, by focusing not on the city-scale performances of tragedy and comedy but on other, more private genres of musical culture and by tracing their imbrication in divergent

politics. Katarzyna Hagemajer Allen, in turn, excavates another subculture by considering the conscious and selective deployment of Eastern elements in Attic funerary monuments of the fourth century. In Hagemajer Allen's analysis, the complex hybridity of these Attic funerary monuments emerges as itself a cultural practice at least partly intended to deconstruct Pericles' neat opposition – to challenge and renegotiate the ideological subordination of private to public in fourth-century Athens.

Thus the papers in this volume aim to articulate a view of culture that is not static or monolithic, but rather pluralistic and differentially interested. We will argue that in order to talk about the Greeks as a cultural entity with shared beliefs and customs, we must attempt to accommodate the many subgroups of Greek society that comprise the whole – the aristocracy, the demos, tyrants, slaves, merchants, artisans, flute players, lyre players, men, women, those who have married into the Greek world, and those who have married out. We must ask what happens when one or more of these subgroups comes into contact with the others (as they inevitably do)? When they compete for power, status, and identity? When they form alliances? What are the different stories that each subculture tells about being Greek? Does a common story emerge from all this diversity and difference? If it does, is it just a cover story?

Summary of Papers

The arrangement of papers in the volume sketches out a pattern of ever narrowing concentric circles that use place and location as a way to organize further our thinking about cross-cultural contact. Starting from the Western Mediterranean, where Greeks came into contact with non-Greeks, we move to Delphi as a mediating term or "internal contact zone," and finally to the negotiation of difference and diversity within the single polis of Athens. The three sections furthermore focus mainly on three different aspects of the meaning of "culture": the first on issues of nationality or ethnicity ("culture" as it is most broadly and conventionally understood); the second on divergent cultures based on class or status; and the third primarily on traditional arenas of "high" culture (musical culture, funerary architecture), but read with a difference.

The first section, entitled "The Circulation of Cultures," begins with definitions and methodology, then a look at the interactions of Greeks and non-Greeks in the archaic period. Our first paper, by Jonathan Hall, confronts head-on the definition of a key term for the whole volume: culture. Jonathan Hall asks, How do we define "culture"? and offers an internal or emic definition – as a repertoire of shared symbols available for deployment by participants. In these terms, Hall argues that we can recognize an archaic "elite culture," but challenges the idea that there was "an emic perception of a broader Hellenic community" before the second half of the fifth century B.C.E.

The second and third papers, by Carol Dougherty and Carla Antonaccio respectively, both build on Hall's emic definition of culture, using it to consider the material remains produced in the contact zones of ancient Italy and Sicily. Dougherty considers one object – the seventh-century Aristonothos Krater found in Caere. She argues that its iconography, with the scene of the blinding of Polyphemus on one side and (perhaps) a Greek vs. Etruscan naval battle on the other, represents a complex and polyvalent articulation of postcolonial encounters between Greeks and Etruscans in the West. Antonaccio, arguing for an emic perception of distinctive styles of artifacts in sixth- and fifth-century Greece, wants specifically to consider the deliberate hybridity of artifacts produced in the Greek West. Both Dougherty and Antonaccio draw on modern postcolonial theory in order to make the fact of contact or cultural exchange not the end of the story, but its beginning. That is, they are both attempting to describe the micromechanics of how cultural contact works – and they are reading individual objects for how they body forth that cultural interaction but also shape it in turn, in a dynamic process.

With Section II we turn to competing interests or cultures within individual poleis as they are played out at the Panhellenic site of Delphi. Thus Leslie Kurke considers the stories that circulate around the *Life of Aesop* (and especially his demise at Delphi) as the medium for a popular critique of elitist practices connected with Apollo's great oracular shrine. Nigel Nicholson explores the crisis precipitated within aristocratic ideology by what he sees as a growing commodification of athletic charioteers. Integrating the evidence of victory inscriptions and statues set up at Panhellenic sites, Panathenaic amphorae, and commissioned epinikia, he argues that these victory monuments regularly write the charioteer out of the victory altogether, since the charioteer's work "for pay" cannot be reconciled with the ideals of aristocratic competition. He also proposes that certain exceptional monuments that highlight the role of the charioteer may represent competing attempts by the charioteers themselves to commemorate their achievements – a kind of countermemorial by this otherwise occluded group.

Finally, Richard Neer considers the architectural treasuries at Delphi as a privileged site for negotiation between different ideological positions or subcultures within the dedicating cities. He focuses on the Siphnian Treasury – the oldest and most richly adorned of the treasuries at Delphi – for what it can tell us about the accommodations within the archaic polis of Siphnos. These three papers focus on three elements distinctive to Delphi as a Panhellenic site – the oracle, athletic competition, and lavish dedications – as practices at the margin through which different components within the cities compete or negotiate.

With the last section we focus on a single polis – Athens – and the layering of temporal and cultural differences that go to make up polis culture. Both Richard Martin and Peter Wilson will consider musical culture, or *mousikê*, as a site where politics informs cultural diversity within the city. Thus, Martin will consider two different forms of musical performance (*auloidia* and *kitharoidia*) in the archaic period, asking what these different performances signified for their audiences –

specifically, did they have different political significance? We might think of Martin's focus on audience as akin to Hall's notion of emic definitions of culture – in each case, the question is, what do the participants themselves think they are doing? And while Martin introduces genre as a key term within our framework of cultural diversity, Peter Wilson focuses specifically on two figures – the late fifth-century writer and oligarch Kritias and the archaic sympotic poet Anakreon. He explores in detail how the former appropriates the latter in the service of elite musical culture and oligarchic politics at the end of the fifth century.

Katarzyna Hagemajer Allen considers a different kind of subculture by focusing on Attic funerary monuments of the fourth century which exhibit a complex set of borrowings and interactions with Persian, Lykian, and other Eastern tomb construction. She uses these funerary developments to challenge both ancient and modern myths of Athenian cultural homogeneity. For, as she demonstrates, the material record belies the ancient rhetoric of a complete separation of Greek and barbarian spheres purveyed in literary texts. Yet modern archaeologists, perhaps under the influence of this ancient Athenian cultural mirage, have been only too ready to dismiss and marginalize these hybrid tomb structures as uniformly those of metics and ethnic others in Athens. Hagemajer Allen effectively demonstrates, however, that such Eastern architectural elements, along with their symbolic valence, are the result of complex, multiple, and reciprocal cultural exchanges and that these elements are more pervasive and central to Athenian grave monuments than archaeologists have been willing to acknowledge. And so, with our last paper, we come around to the same issues confronted in Section I. For Hagemajer Allen challenges the easy equation of cultural diversity with ethnic difference, while she complicates any simple model of unilateral cultural borrowing.

Indeed, we might see the range of complex cultural interactions our contributors describe mapped between two ancient artifacts – Dougherty's seventh-century krater from Caere and Hagemajer Allen's fourth-century volute-krater attributed to the Meleager Painter (Figures 1, 3, and 29). The Aristonothos Krater from Caere depicts scenes of cultural conflict, but its very manufacture seems to tell a different story – of cross-cultural collaboration. The Meleager Painter's volute-krater strikingly combines Eastern and Western design features and depicts "a pair of komasts, one dressed in Hellenic, the other in Eastern fashion, walking side by side in step with the music – a picture of perfect harmony rarely seen in extant literature" (Hagemajer Allen, this volume, p. 230). Together, the two vessels stand metonymically for the complexity and even internal contradictions (between representation and manufacture, between artifact and literary discourse) that characterize Greek cultural encounters with "others" both within and without.

Finally, Josiah Ober, in his Postscript, explicitly engages the relation of Greek cultural diversity to Greek politics narrowly understood. Bringing the more evaluative focus of political theory to bear on what he calls the "thin coherence" of Greek culture, Ober explicitly articulates an important set of questions raised

implicitly by the essays collected in this volume. Do individual subcultures have an intrinsic right to exist, thereby demanding a collective claim to defense against the hegemonic culture? Is free access to cultural variety a fundamental good? Or paradoxically, are there normative arguments for the expression and maintenance of cultural coherence in the face of diversity? Is it through the existence of some kind of cultural identity on the national level that those without power can hope to share in the benefits and privileges of openness, change, and cultural mobility? Ober's essay not only points out that "the balance between cultural diversity and national unity within a political community is invariably a delicate one" (p. 250); his analysis of the open civil conflict that dominates late fifth-century Athenian politics also reminds us cultural historians of the real price that is paid when that balance is lost.

Notes

1. There is, of course, a vast sociological literature on subcultures: see, e.g., the classic work of Hebdige 1979. Much of this work focuses on youth subcultures, "spectacular subcultures," and deviancy, and is not directly pertinent to our definition and discussion. Much of it is also concerned with modern subcultures that define themselves based on musical forms and tastes, so it makes interesting reading when juxtaposed to the essays of Martin and Wilson in this volume. What we find most useful in Hebdige 1979 is the strong link made between subcultures and style; for an extinct culture like that of ancient Greece for which we have only material remains, we might say that "Greek culture" at all levels is just our reification of style. For an argument along these lines, see Neer forthcoming. For an attempt to make a similar connection between material culture and style for the ancient world, see Antonaccio in this volume. We are also interested in the ways in which contemporary critics identify the potential for subversive discourses within the distinctive language, dress, etc. of subcultures.
2. See Parekh 2000.144.
3. Cf. Gupta and Ferguson 1997.
4. Cf. Sewell 1999.39–40, 52–55 who argues that in addition to the notion of culture as a theoretical category, another sense of the term is in play, namely culture as a "concrete and bounded world of beliefs and practices" (p. 39).
5. Our assumption that Greek culture was formed from the interaction or contestation of cultures or subcultures within it allows us effectively to reconnect cultural history with social history and politics. For if cultural history has rejected the traditional assumption that social formations are already fixed and the stuff of culture merely epiphenomenal, it simultaneously runs the risk of conjuring up a sealed, autonomous world of representations and ideology, losing touch with what Clifford Geertz (1973.30) called the "hard surfaces of life." But if the common culture we study is in fact the product of the clashes, conflicts, and contestations in practice of different groups or subcultures, and if that contestation is legible in the style and content of the material record, this is the very stuff of politics, the concrete working out of social structure and power relations. For a critique along these lines of much of the cultural history practiced in the 1980s and 90s, see Bonnell and Hunt 1999b (their volume is significantly titled *Beyond the Cultural Turn*). For a similar critique within Classics/Ancient History, see Morris 2002.
6. Cf., for example, Bloom 1987; Hanson 1996; Hanson and Heath 1998, with the cogent criticisms of duBois 2001.