In Memoriam

In Memoriam:
Commemoration, Communal Memory and Gender Values in the Ancient Graeco-Roman World

Edited by

Helène Whittaker

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

INTRODUCTION

HELÈNE WHITTAKER

The past is never entirely dead and gone, but continues in various ways to inform the present. Memory consciously connects the present with the past on collective and individual levels.[1] In both modern and ancient societies deliberate and often elaborate attempts are made to preserve the memory of important individuals and events. On a collective level, memories of the past that have been deliberately cultivated are often inextricably associated with the definition of cultural or ethnic identity and origins. Communal memory plays an important role in holding societies together and is bound up with social and political organisation. Furthermore, it can be argued that shared values which are of crucial significance to the self-identity and social organisation of any society are, or at the very least are likely to be, materialised in some way, as the expression of abstract concepts in a tangible and visible form provides authority, stability and permanence. On an individual level, memory is often bound up with the expression of family or class identity and values. While the desire to cheat death by continuing to exist in the memories of future generations can be regarded as universal and part of the human condition, in any given society the possibilities of doing so will vary considerably according to a number of factors, the most important of which are social class and gender.

Ancient societies invested heavily in remembrance. This is evident from both the material and the textual sources.[2] The purpose of this book is to explore the usage of texts and material culture in constructing memory. A particular focus is on the relationship between an individual's gender and social status and the existence of opportunities for ensuring that he or she would be remembered after death. The papers cover a long time-span, from Archaic Greece to the Roman Imperial period, and deal with both archaeological and textual sources. The fact that seven of the nine papers investigate topics from the Roman Republican and Imperial periods can probably be seen to reflect general research trends. The material and textual evidence for the Roman world is particularly abundant and also very accessible and amenable to analysis in that the memory aspects of different types of texts and monuments are often very obvious

and sometimes directly articulated. In Roman society the past was considered normative and memory played a defining role in communicating social and political relations, as demonstrated, for example, by the overwhelming importance of the *mos maiorum*, the customs of the ancestors.

The papers in this volume have been arranged according to chronology. The first two chapters deal with Archaic and Classical Greece. Sven von Hofsten discusses the evidence that suggests that decorative patterns on textiles could commemorate mythical and historical events which were an important part of the collective memory. This further suggests that the well-known close association between women and weaving was not confined to the domestic sphere, but also had a significant public aspect. In the second chapter Susan Blundell looks at the depiction of children on Athenian vases, where they appear in both domestic and funerary scenes. As her statistical analyses indicate, on the whole children are quite rarely shown on Athenian vases and when they do occur their most common function seems to be as markers of the identity of adults. Boys are far more often depicted than girls and in funerary scenes their presence represents the legacy of the dead and the continuation of the *oikos*.

The remaining papers deal with Rome in the Late Republic and Imperial periods. Relatively few women received public commemoration in Ancient Rome, but some did and were remembered as examples of extraordinary virtue in the literary and historical tradition. Marja-Leena Hänninen argues that although the conduct and achievements of the women themselves were crucial to their status and reputation, it was their connections to illustrious male relatives that ensured they were recognised as exceptional and provided with a place in the Roman tradition. Helène Whittaker's paper explores the memory aspects of Caesar's *Bellum Civile*. R. H. Martin has called history the "continuation of politics by other means" and a crucial concern in the work was Caesar's desire to lay the ground for subsequent historical accounts of the Roman civil war.[3] Inscriptions that commemorate slaves and freedmen from the households of Domitia, the wife of Lucius Calpurnius Bibulus, and of her daughter Domitia Calvina constitute the starting point for Jesper Carlsen's paper, which analyses the information they provide concerning aspects of household organisation. The questions raised by the inscriptions about the location of the funerary monument of the Domitius family are also discussed. The empress Livia, wife of the first emperor and mother of the second, was both admired and vilified in later Roman literature. Valerie Hope looks at the different literary presentations of Livia as a mourning figure and relates them to gender expectations as well as to the tension

between her private and public roles. For Seneca, Livia's public mourning at the death of her son Drusus was a model of restrained grief. For Tacitus, on the other hand, her restraint at the death of her grandson Germanicus reflected a cold, scheming, and controlling personality.

The next two papers investigate the aspirations of those who did not belong to the upper levels of society. Lena Larsson Lovén discusses the commemoration of individuals on funerary monuments. A particular focus is on the commemoration of freed men/women/families on funerary monuments from the city of Rome. She argues that while former slaves chose to emulate the monuments and values of the elite in many respects, they were also concerned with promoting their own values, which could be at variance with those of the elite. Linnéa Johansson looks at the *lararia* found in Pompeii and the role that household cult played in the lower social levels of Pompeian society. Many of the lararia that have been found in houses that can be assumed to have belonged to freedmen are more elaborately decorated than those that have been found in larger and wealthier houses. Johansson suggests that freedmen found the household cult a convenient way of establishing a family history. Both these papers show that while investment in household cult and funerary commemoration by freedmen can be seen as a way of laying a claim to a rung on the social ladder, it can also be interpreted in more general terms as deriving from a human impulse to see the life of the individual in a wider familial context which transcends the boundaries between life and death, something that was denied to slaves.

In the last chapter Jussi Rantala discusses the political and symbolic roles that different groups of women, the empress Julia Domna, the Vestal Virgins, and the group of matrons played in the Secular Games that were celebrated by the emperor Septimius Severus in AD 204. The importance of their roles is evident from their prominence in the commemorative inscription which was set up in the Campus Martius. The inscription linked the Severan Games to those held in earlier centuries, in particular to the Games celebrated by Augustus in 17 BC.

This book has its origins in an explorative workshop entitled *Commemoration, Communal Memory, and Gender Values in the Ancient Graeco-Roman World* that took place at the University of Gothenburg in August 2008. The workshop was organised by Lena Larsson Lovén (University of Gothenburg), Katariina Mustakallio (University of Tampere), Marjatta Nielsen (University of Copenhagen), and Helène Whittaker (University of Tromsø). We are indebted to the *Joint Committee for Nordic Research Councils for the Humanities and the Social Sciences* (NOS-HS) for funding the conference.

Notes

[1] Cf. Halbwachs 1952; Connerton 1989; Nora 1984-1992; Assmann 1992.
[2] The role of memory in the Graeco-Roman world has received increasing attention in both Classical Archaeology and Philology in recent years. Mention can be made of Koortbojan 1995; Golden & Toohey 1997; Davies 1997; Flower 1996, 2006; Corbier 2006; Pollini 2007,
[3] Martin 1969, 119.

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CHAPTER ONE

WEAVING AS A MEANS OF PRESERVING THE COLLECTIVE MEMORY IN ARCHAIC AND CLASSICAL GREECE

SVEN VON HOFSTEN

In ancient Greek society where a large part of the population was illiterate, oral tradition was of great importance in transferring common myths and history from one generation to the next. However, the pictorial media were certainly also very important in keeping memory of the past alive in a society where the use of writing was relatively limited. Thanks to tens of thousands of preserved vase paintings and a large number of images in other media, such as sculptures and temple friezes, with mytho-historical themes, this assumption must be considered very reasonable. It can furthermore be suggested that various types of textiles played a prominent role in keeping mytho-historical traditions alive. Unfortunately, very few ancient textiles have been preserved, and our first-hand knowledge of the types of images that occurred on textiles is therefore very restricted. We might therefore perhaps imagine that the decoration consisted merely of different kinds of ornamental patterns and figures without any specific meaning connected to a narrative tradition. In this paper I will argue that many of the motifs that were rendered on different types of textiles in the Archaic and Classical periods seem to have represented narrative scenes similar to those found in contemporary vase painting. Furthermore, I will propose that large tapestries with figurative scenes that were similar to the large wall paintings with mythological and historical scenes that we know of from literary sources may have existed.

Descriptions of textiles in Greek literature

Cloth is a most perishable material, and I cannot therefore present very much direct evidence from the Archaic and Classical periods. So let us

instead start by having a look at some passages in ancient literature which offer glimpses of what richly decorated woven textiles might have looked like. An often quoted and illuminating passage in the *Iliad* describes Helen working "on a great purple web of double width, into which she was weaving some of the many battles between the horse-taming Trojans and the bronze-clad Achaeans" (3.125-128).[1] This description brings to mind the famous tapestry from the Middle Ages known as the Bayeux tapestry, which also depicts many battles, among them the battle of Hastings in 1066.[2]

Elizabeth Barber has noted further descriptions of what she calls story-cloths. Decorated cloths are mentioned in two tragedies by Euripides. In the *Iphigenia in Tauris* and in the *Ion* the heroines describe the scenes of myth on cloths which they had woven when they were young maidens. In the *Ion* a huge outdoor pavilion (measuring 100 x 100 feet) consisting of a large number of cloths taken from the temple storerooms is also mentioned.[3] There is a long description of the tapestry forming the ceiling, which had been taken from the Amazons and dedicated by Heracles to the god. The motifs here were from the night sky: "Uranus was mustering the stars [...] Helios drove his horses [...] black-robed Night, drawn by a pair, urged on her chariot". And on the sides of the pavilion there were "tapestries also, but of barbarian design. These depicted fine ships,[4] which fought with Greeks, and creatures, half-man and half-beast, and horsemen chasing deer or lion hunts. And at the entrance, Cecrops," ... (Euripides, *Ion*, 1133-1165).[5]

Another vivid description of a tapestry can be found in Theocritus' *Idyll* 15. The poem relates how two Syracusan women, Gorgo and Praxinoa, residents of Alexandria, went to the royal palace to witness a festival of Adonis, which Queen Arsinoe was staging in honour of her mother Berenice. In the palace they admire some beautiful tapestries: ... "So delicate and pretty—clothes fit for the gods, you'd say [...] such artists, to make their design appear so true to life. How naturally the figures stand, how naturally they move! They seem alive, not woven. [...] how wonderfully [Adonis] reclines on his silver couch" ... (*Idyll* 15, 78-86).[6]

In Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica* (1.730-1.767) there is a detailed description (*ekphrasis*) of a cloak woven by Athena and given to Jason. Seven myths were depicted on the cloak.[7] Allan Shapiro has suggested that tapestries which furnished the tent of Ptolemy Philadelphus, could have influenced Apollonius' description of this richly figured cloth. These were displayed in Alexandria and could have been seen by Apollonius. They are described by Kallixenos of Rhodes (quoted by Athenaeus [5.196]). Among

these textiles there were military cloaks woven with portraits of historical kings and mythological subjects.[8]

The story of Philomela, as told by Ovid (*Metamorphoses* 6.572.586), Sophocles (*Tereus*, fragment), and Apollodorus (*Bibliotheca* III.14.8) constitutes a very clear and explicit example of how a fabric could tell a story and thereby be a substitute for spoken words. Tereus, the husband of her sister Procne, raped Philomela, daughter of King Pandion of Attica. To keep her from revealing his crime Tereus tore out (or cut off) her tongue. This did not, however, prevent her from telling Procne and others what a dreadful crime Tereus had committed; deprived of spoken words Philomela wove her story into a tapestry. Another myth with a somewhat similar theme is the well-known story of the weaving-contest between Athena and Arachne (Ovid 6.129-145). Arachne boasted that she could make finer tapestries than Athena and chose as the topic for her fabric the adulterous behaviour of Zeus. Such a challenge against the gods could not of course be tolerated, and as a punishment Arachne was transformed into a spider and forced to weave for all eternity.

Textiles described in historical sources

The most renowned story-cloth mentioned in the Greek historical sources is probably the *peplos* of Athena Polias. In Athens a new *peplos* was dedicated to the goddess at the beginning of every year, that is at the Panathenaia in July/August. The colour of the cloth is said to have been saffron yellow and it was decorated with scenes of Athena and Zeus fighting the Giants, as well as with other motifs, such as horses and chariots. Some sources describe the *peplos* as so large that it was exposed as a sail on a wheeled ship that was drawn up to the Acropolis.[9] John Mansfield has, however, convincingly argued for the existence of *two* different types of *peploi*; a smaller *peplos* (i.e. the robe), which was dedicated every year, and a large *peplos* (i.e. the tapestry or "sail"), which was dedicated at the Great *Panathenaia*, that is every four years.[10] The tradition of dedicating a garment to the goddess could perhaps have started already in the Mycenaean age.[11] The larger cloth could, of course, not have been used as a dress for the *xoanon*, which is believed to have been life-size.[12] It was instead probably hung up as a tapestry on the wall behind the cult statue (the smaller one could of course also been displayed in this manner before being draped over the statue). The size of the larger cloth/*peplos* was, according to Barber, probably between four and eight square meters.[13] It is important to point out here that the word *peplos* originally seems to have signified just a rectangular piece of cloth, and that

its meaning as a robe is secondary.[14] The central motif on the east frieze of the Parthenon represents the moment when the *peplos* was handed over to the *Archon Basileus* or to the priestess of Athena. It is here depicted as having been folded together, but in the next stage of the ceremony it was perhaps hung up as a tapestry in the temple, rather than being wrapped around the cult statue as a garment. Whether it is the smaller or the larger peplos that is represented in the Parthenon frieze is not clear. Athens was, however, not the only place where there was a tradition of weaving a cloth as a dedication to a god. According to John Mansfield this practice was part of the cult of Hera at the Argive Heraion and at Olympia, of Apollo at Amyklai, and of Athena at Argos.[15]

The "Sybarite *himation*", described by pseudo-Aristotle in the *De miris auscultationibus* (96.838a), constitutes another illuminating example of a richly decorated textile being dedicated to a god.[16] This *himation* had originally been owned by Alcisthenes from Sybaris (it is not clear whether he lived in the late Archaic or Classical period); later it was given to the treasure of Hera Lacinia and there it was on view at the feasts of the Lacinia. However, some time after 383 BC the tyrant of Syracuse, Dionysius the Elder (406-367 BC), who was a connoisseur of textiles, ransacked the sanctuary and it came into his hands; later he sold the *himation* to the Carthaginians for the enormous sum of one hundred and twenty talents (= annual salary for 2700 mercenaries). It is thus quite clear that it was regarded as a most outstanding piece of cloth. Its length was fifteen cubits (= 6.6 metres), but its breadth is uncertain (perhaps c. 1.4 metres). The Sybarite *himation* was decorated with both mythological and historical subjects, and the original owner himself also figured on the cloth. He was probably shown being crowned by a personification of Sybaris.[17] The central motif is thought to have rendered the beginning of the *Cypria*, the abduction of Helen in the presence of Zeus, Athena, Aphrodite, Themis, Hera and Apollo. The upper border showed Susa and the lower part of Persepolis. As Jacobsthal suggests the cities could have been represented as "long lines of crenellated city-walls with towers at equal intervals [...] well suited to the necessarily ornamental character of narrow borders",[18] or as Robertson suggests "a procession of Scythians at the top and a procession of Persians at the bottom".[19] According to pseudo-Aristotle the himation was "of such magnificence that it was exhibited at Lacinia during the festival of Hera, to which all the Italians assemble, and it was admired more than all the things that were exhibited there".[20] The most natural way of exhibiting such a large *himation* must have been to hang it up (in one way or another) on a wall, probably inside the temple. It is important to keep in mind that there does not seem to be

any fundamental difference between a woven cloth which was displayed on a wall as a tapestry and one used as a garment.[21] In both cases it is a matter of a rectangular piece of fabric; it is up to the owner whether he (or she) would like to wear it as a dress or hang it up on a wall, or display it in some other appropriate connection (e.g. as a funeral cloth).

It is well known that myths and historical events were commemorated on large wall paintings, or rather on wooden panels (*sanides*) in the Classical period. Among the more famous examples are the paintings in the *Lesche* of the Knidians at Delphi and the ones in the *Stoa Poikile* in Athens, both of which were created around 460 BC. These were described in detail by Pausanias in the second century AD. In the *Lesche* there were two very large paintings by Polygnotus (26 m long with life-size figures); one rendered Odysseus' visit to *Hades*; the other one represented scenes from the *Ilioupersis* (10.25.1-32). In the *Stoa Poikile*, Polygnotus had, together with Mikon and Panainus, painted the Athenians fighting the Amazons, the Capture of Troy, the Athenians defeating the Spartans at Argive Oinoe, and the Athenian victory over the Persians at Marathon.[22] Since the motifs found on textiles and in wall paintings seem to have been very similar, it is not unreasonable to assume that large story cloths could have been exposed in similar contexts to wall paintings. They could thus have played an important part, comparable to that played by large paintings and sculptural representations, such as temple friezes, in preserving the memory of the heroic past.

Representations of dresses in vase painting

The literary sources give us a general idea about the types of motifs that could occur on fabrics, but they do not tell us very much about how the scenes were actually arranged. Since textiles decorated with representations of myths or historical events have scarcely been preserved, we have to turn to images of dresses to get an idea of what such fabrics would have looked like. Fortunately, there are a lot of rather detailed renderings of garments in Attic vase painting, black figure as well as red figure. Let us start by studying the shoulder-frieze of the François Vase, which represents the procession of the gods at the wedding of Peleus and Thetis. Of special interest here are the garments of Hera and Ourania (Fig. 1-1), of one of the Horai (season goddesses), of one of the Moirai (fate goddesses), and of Theseus. We can note that the figures on the garments are arranged in friezes (or bands), that is in a similar manner to the decorative scheme found in vase painting (at least down to the early Classical period). At first glance the pattern on these garments may merely look like a repeated

genre scene of two people in a chariot drawn by a winged horse (or horses), but the intention was perhaps to remind the onlooker of a specific procession, like the one the gods themselves are shown participating in on the vase. We may also draw a comparison with a Melian amphora (Fig. 1-2), which renders Apollo being welcomed by Artemis on his return from the Hyperboreans. Was the painter of this amphora perhaps copying a tapestry adorned with such a scene? This possibility leads us to consider a possible relationship between vase painting and motifs on textiles.

Elizabeth Barber has convincingly demonstrated how closely much of Greek vase painting seems to have imitated textile prototypes.[23] Characteristic traces of the textile prototypes are the small filling ornaments (rosettes etc.), which often occupy the space between the figures in a pictorial scene.[24] In a painting such filling ornaments do not fulfil any real function, but on a fabric, on the other hand, they are necessary to keep the warp in place. We can also point to the recurring arrangement of stacked friezes on the vases as a feature that seems to echo textile forerunners; see for example the garments (which I just mentioned) on the François Vase and the garments on a *dinos* known as the "Sophilos Dinos". Another example that supports the idea that this arrangement of friezes derives from textiles comes from late Archaic sculpture. A statue of a young woman from the Acropolis at Athens, the "Peplos Kore", wears a dress decorated with stacked friezes of lions, panthers, boars, ibexes, sphinxes and riders.[25] The principle of putting figures and ornaments in friezes on vases speaks then in favour of a textile way of composing scenes. A well-known red figure vase painting which shows Penelope sitting at the loom and waiting for Odysseus to return from the Trojan War constitutes a very clear illustration of this design principle (Fig. 1-3). As we can see here one of the friezes seems to be finished. To create one horizontal frieze after another is quite simply the most natural way to weave; the order of the figures would then, more or less automatically, run from one side of the cloth to the other. It is here also important to point out that a large tapestry obviously did not consist of a single piece of cloth, but must rather have consisted of several separate cloths that had been stitched together.[26] The width of a cloth could obviously not be wider than the loom.[27] However, the weaver could overcome the limitation of the loom's size in this regard by letting the friezes run vertically in the loom.[28]

Fig. 1-1

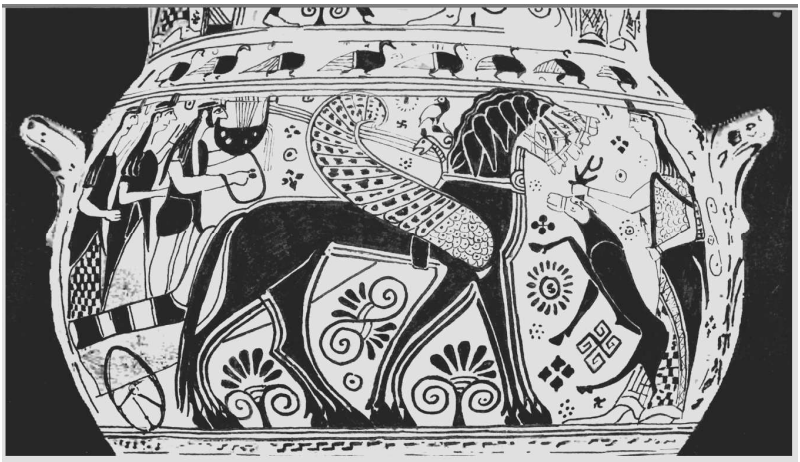

Fig. 1-2

Fig. 1-3

A famous red figure *skyphos* by Makron depicts Demeter sending Triptolemus on his mission. The figures on the mantle of goddess are arranged in friezes, and among these we can notice a fine example of a race chariot (Fig. 1-4). Is this just a decorative genre motif, or should we rather suspect it of being a foreshortened version of a mytho-historical scene, such as the games at the funeral of Patroclus as rendered on the François Vase? A large number of other depictions of dresses with figural scenes exist, but in most cases, it is very uncertain whether a specific episode is being alluded to or not. A Daedalic style terracotta relief of a woman dressed in a *peplos* depicts, however, without any doubt a well-known episode from the Trojan War (Fig. 1-5).[29] In the uppermost frieze of the *peplos* we can with certainty recognise the popular scene of Ajax carrying the dead body of Achilles from the battlefield. A close parallel to this composition is found on each handle of the François Vase (Fig. 1-6). The men and women in the two friezes below are perhaps performing a dance in honour of the deceased hero.

Fig. 1-4

Fig. 1-5

Fig. 1-6

Of interest is also a very detailed reproduction of a richly decorated veil, the so-called “Veil of Despoina” (Fig. 1-7). In the temple at Lycosoura in Messenia there was a cult statue group consisting of Despoina (a local variant of *Kore*) sitting on a throne with her mother Demeter, flanked by

Artemis and the titan Anytos.[30] The decoration of the veil is executed in relief. In my view it was perhaps intended to imitate the texture of embroidery. It is possible to discern four figural bands separated by ornamental bands. At the top there are eagles and thunderbolts, then we have Triton and two Nereids, one riding a hippocampus (not seen on this picture) the other one sitting on Triton's fishtail, and some dolphins; below, there are two winged women with censers (only one of them is seen in this picture); in the bottom frieze we can observe animals dressed in tunics; some of them are playing an instrument while others are dancing.[31] The renderings probably refer to particular myths. The general effect of the composition, with alternating ornamental and figurative bands of varying widths, seems to be not uncommon. A somewhat similar design is seen on the dresses of actors figuring on a number of Attic red figure vases, for example on a crater by the Pronomos Painter.[32] Noteworthy are the figural bands with horses, sphinxes, people etc. A good example of this design can also be found on a volute crater by the Talos Painter illustrating "Talos and the Argonauts". In the dress-borders of the Argonauts there seems to be rendered a dramatic event with warriors, women and other participants gesticulating with their arms in an animated way (Fig. 1-8). Could it perhaps be meant to depict people fleeing from Troy as it burned? The figure to the left of Talos could then be Aeneas carrying Anchises and/or the cult statues of the household gods.

Preserved Greek textiles with mythological depictions

Among the very few ancient Greek textiles that have actually been preserved mention must be made of the rich finds from both sides of the Kerch Strait in the Black Sea: Kerch on the Crimea (the Greek colony of Pantikapaion) and the Taman peninsula. These finds were excavated in the late nineteenth century.[33] One of the most interesting finds was discovered in Kurgan 6 (one of the graves in the mounds called the "Seven Brothers") on the Taman peninsula, which comprised about fifty relatively well-preserved fragments of a woollen cloth, dated to the early fourth century BC (Fig. 1-9)[34]. It had probably been draped over a wooden sarcophagus. The decoration had, however, not been woven into the fabric, but painted on it by using a batik technique.[35] This would have been a faster and cheaper way of making patterns on textiles, and it seems reasonable to assume that the cloth was meant to look like a true woven tapestry.[36] It consisted of a number of bands (at least eleven) that had been stitched together.[37] According to Dora Gerziger's reconstruction drawing of a part of the funeral cloth, every other band probably consisted of a narrative

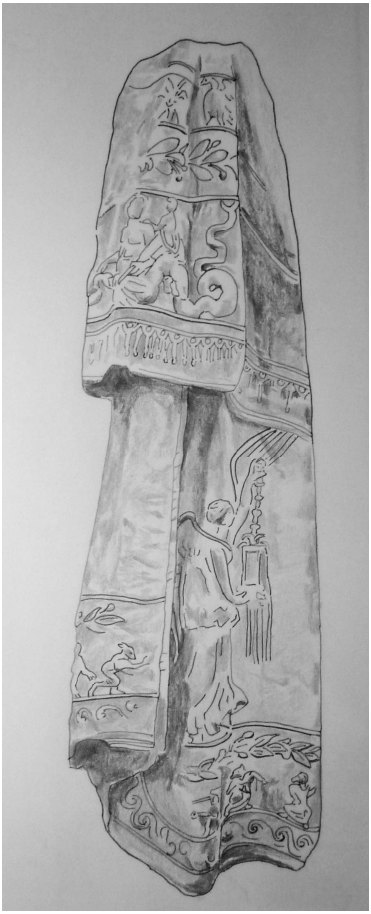

Fig. 1-7

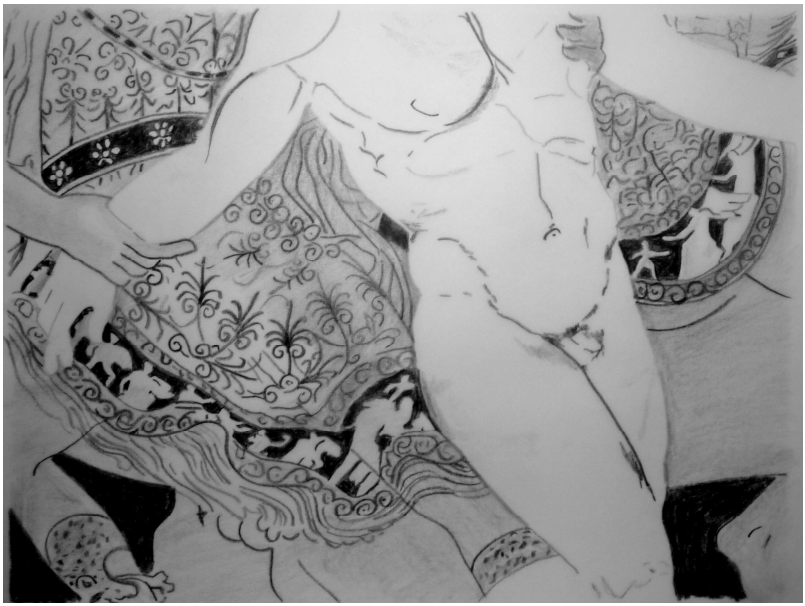

Fig. 1-8

scene, while the others were ornamental.[38] Among the preserved fragments we can observe running women gesticulating in a most animated way, two chariots drawn by galloping horses and a couple of fighting warriors.[39] All the women and men seem to be supplied with an inscription, and the following names can be deciphered: Athena, Nike, Iocasta, Phaidra, Eulimene (a nereid), Hippomedon (leader of the Seven against Thebes), Ioalaos, and Mopsos (twice).[40] The inscriptions thus clearly indicate that the funeral cloth was decorated with mythological episodes, but because of its fragmentary state it is difficult to give certain interpretations of the motifs. There seem also to have been friezes dominated by animals, such as griffins, panthers, boars and birds. The scenes had perhaps a connection, in some way or another, with the person in the sarcophagus; were they essential stories that the deceased was to keep in mind for all eternity? During the life of the deceased the cloth might very well have functioned as a wall hanging or a tapestry.[41]

Fig. 1-9

Terracotta model of an *ekphora* with a funeral cloth

A most illuminating example (Fig. 1-10) that shows how funeral cloths could have been exposed at an *ekphora* is provided by a terracotta model of a four-wheeled cart (originally drawn by horses) carrying the bier and four mourning women. The model was found at Vari in Attica and is dated to the middle of the seventh century.[42] The deceased was obviously lying on a large cloth (*stroma*), which was hanging over the bier, and on top of this there was a second cloth (*epiblema*), which covered the body of the deceased and even a part of the *stroma*. It is possible to discern some remains of the decoration painted on the cloths on the terracotta model. At first glance it seems only to consist of different ornaments such as hooks, stylised floral motifs, double spirals, zigzag lines etc. A closer look at the upper fabric reveals, however, a number of hoofed animals striding to the right. The cloth may very well have been decorated with mounted horses that were taking part in a funeral procession or had played some part in a mythical or historical episode.[43]

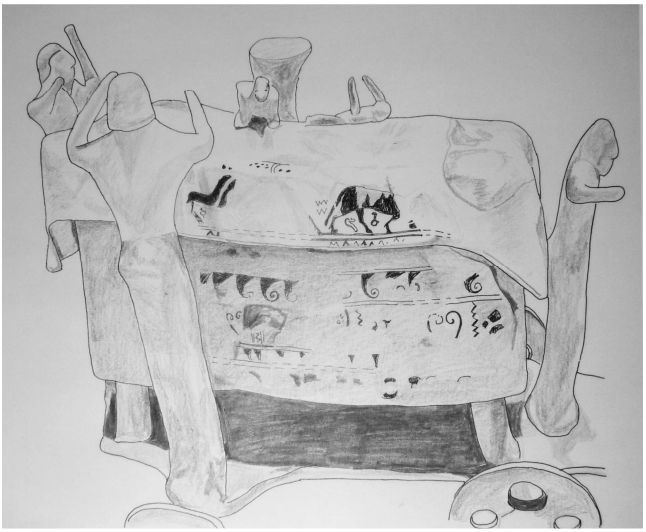

Fig. 1-10

Concluding remarks

The use of textiles as a means of recording historical and mythological events could perhaps be regarded as the contribution of women to the collective memory. However, as concerns large pictorial fabrics like Athena's sail/peplos we must also keep in mind the existence of a class of professional male weavers. The first *peplos* displayed as a sail was made by two male weavers, Acesas and Helicon.[44]

The fact that practically no ancient Greek textiles have been preserved has meant that this medium is for the most part mentioned only incidentally in the literature on Greek art. My hope is that I have here succeeded in demonstrating that figural textiles probably constituted a most significant medium for keeping the memory of the heroic past alive in the Archaic and Classical periods. I believe that tapestries, or story-cloths, as we may also call them, played a part in reminding people about their myths and history that was as least as important as the large wall paintings, temple-pediments, temple-friezes etc. The impact of figural textiles is furthermore clearly reflected in vase painting. As I have demonstrated, it seems very likely that many vase painters were more or less directly influenced by woven designs found on textiles.

Notes

[1] Translation Rieu 1950.
[2] The Bayeux Tapestry is, however, an embroidery.
[3] Barber 1992, 112.
[4] According to Vickers 1999, 17: "Greek ships fighting Persian".
[5] Translation Willets 1992, 57-58.
[6] Translation Verity 2002. It is also worth mentioning a passage earlier in the text where the cost of Praxinoa's own dress is discussed, "More than two hundred drachmas in hard cash. I put my heart and soul into the embroidery" (*Idyll* 15, 34-37).
[7] 1. Cyclopes forging Zeus' thunderbolt; 2. Amphion and Zethos building Thebes; 3. Aphrodite holding Ares' shield; 4. Battle of sons of Elektryon and Taphians; 5. Chariot race of Pelops and Oinomaos; 6. Apollo killing Tityos; 7. Phrixos and the golden ram.
[8] Shapiro 1980, 263-286.
[9] Or just below at the Eleusinion; cf. "The *peplos*-sail was evidently left behind with the Panathenaic Ship at the Eleusinion and only removed and taken up to the Akropolis after the festival … was over. Here the ship and its decorated sail could be viewed and admired … The *peplos* dedicated … at the Great Panathenaia was presumable displayed in one of the temples on the Akropolis after the festival" (Mansfield 1985, 77-78).
[10] Mansfield 1985, 2-18.
[11] "While [the weaving and dedication of the garment] ... may, ... be a cult-practice of Mycenaean origin, the communal weaving of cult-garments for dedication is not. The cult-rituals in question must have originated in the eighth century B.C. (or later)…" (Mansfield 1985, 443).
[12] It could perhaps be tempting to connect the large *peplos* with Pheidias' colossal statue of Athena, but for the fact that it represented Athena Parthenos and not Athena Polias to whom the *peplos* was dedicated.
[13] Mansfield 1985, 58.
[14] Mansfield 1985, 4ff.
[15] Mansfield 1985, 443. It is also important to point out that the number of inventory inscriptions in sanctuaries makes it clear that textiles were rather common as private votives, for instance at the Artemis temple at Brauron. The inventories not only mention the type of cloth for every votive kept in the treasury, but also provide a description of the decoration, for example, "a new, patterned, mantle, it has a design in the middle, of Dionysos pouring libation, and a woman pouring wine for drinking" (Cleland 2005, 98-100, 133, line 31.32).
[16] Jacobsthal 1938, 205-216.
[17] See Robertson's commentary on whether the scene with Alcisthenes and Sybaris was doubled or not (Robertson 1939, 136).
[18] Jacobstahl 1938, 209-214.
[19] Robertson 1939, 136.
[20] Vickers 1999, 24.

[21] Vickers 1999, 28.
[22] Pausanias 1.15.1-3. Pausanias has, however, probably misunderstood the painting and it was another battle that was rendered; cf. Taylor 1998, 223-243.
[23] Barber 1991, 365-372.
[24] Barber 1992, 111-112. To my mind, the influence of textile prototypes was perhaps even more tangible during the Geometric period than in later periods. It would seem quite obvious when studying, for example, the large grave vases from Dipylon that their images imitate woven patterns. Even in these cases we can see filling ornaments, which often seem to be out of context in the scene, for example, birds (typical standard motifs) which are sometimes placed under a table or a horse. The very static and geometric simplified way of rendering the figures clearly indicates a textile technique.
[25] Brinkmann 2004, 58-59, figs. 82-83. The kore is, however, not dressed in a *peplos*, but is wearing an *ependytes*, a tight-fitting sleeveless tunic of linen originating from the Near East, and under this she wears a white *chiton* (Miller 1989, 313-329).
[26] Vickers 1999, 31.
[27] "The normal limit for the width of a warp-weighted loom is 2-3m, but it is likely that professional weavers used wider high-warp (i.e. vertical) looms for weaving tapestries" (Mansfield 1985, 58).
[28] The majority of the vase painters, at least in the Archaic period, seem to have preferred stacked friezes, despite the fact that this was not necessarily the most obvious way of arranging the scenes; they could have started to paint one figure in the middle of the vase and then continued by placing the other figures wherever they liked. In the early Classical period, however, a break with this tradition can be noticed. The Niobid Painter represents an early example. In an attempt to create space he has placed the figures on different small elevations on the ground and the figures are no longer bound to a common base line. The inspiration for the Niobid Painter is by most scholars considered to be Polygnotus, "the inventor of painting" (Richter 1959, 264).
[29] De Caro 2003, 60 (colour plate).
[30] A description of the temple and the statue group is given by Pausanias (VIII, 37, 1-7).
[31] Wace 1934, 107-111.
[32] Naples, Museo Nazionale Archeologico, inv. 81673, c. 400 BC.
[33] Published by Ludolf Stephani in 1881.
[34] It should perhaps be pointed out that that the fragments in Fig.1-9 are not arranged in an absolute order, and that the lacunae should be larger (Stephani 1881, pl.4).
[35] Tolmachoff 1942, 18, "a process of covering parts of the pattern in turn with wax". Gerziger (1975, 51) claims that painted textiles must have been common in antiquity and refers to Herodot (I, 203) and Plinius (*Nat, Hist.* 35, 150).
[36] Gerziger (1975, 51) points out the similarity to red figure vases: "dreifarbig bemalt; von dem schwarzen Hintergrund heben sich die orangefarbenen Umrisse einer Zeichnung ab, deren einzelne Teile schwarz und dunkelrot nachgezogen sind." She writes that the painting imitates red figure technique, but I think it is

much more likely that the batik-textiles imitate woven textiles. It is true that our batik-cloth reminds us of red figure vase paintings, but this is due to the fact that the vase painters were also influenced by woven decorations (see my arguments above).

[37] Width c. 30 cm; length c. 3m (Gerziger 1975, 51, pls. 21-24; Stephani 1881, pls. 3-6). Illustrations also in: Tolmachoff 1942, pls. 8-15; Richter 1959, 369-371, figs. 491-494; Pekridou-Gorecki 1989, figs. 18, 20, 22, 26; Barber 1991, figs. 7.11-7.13 and 16.15.

[38] Gerziger 1975, 51-52, pl. 24 (reconstruction of a part of the cloth).

[39] Only the one in *Fig.9*, the other is turned in the opposite direction (Gerziger 1975, pl. 23:1); they belonged probably to the same frieze, due to the same type of border pattern.

[40] There are two individuals named Mopsos in Greek mythology, Gerziger believes that this one is the Mopsos from Thessaly, who participated in the Calydonian boar hunt, the fight against the centaurs at the wedding of Peirithous, and is the seer in the expedition of the Argonauts. The scenes on the cloth are, however, too fragmentary to make it possible to connect them to any specific episode. The letters EPI on a fragment indicates perhaps an *erinnye* because of a hand holding a snake (Gerziger 1975, 53-54).

[41] Fragments of another fine cloth were found inside the sarcophagus, lying across the legs of the deceased. It was a polychrome woollen cloth decorated with a woven pattern consisting of ducks and stags' heads (Stephani 1881, pl. 5, 2; Tolmachoff 1942, 22-23, pl. 2 (according to her it was a man's hat); Barber 1991, 206-207, fig. 7.12; Richer 1959, 369, fig. 494).

[42] Kurtz & Boardman 1971, 78, pl. 16; Karouzou 1981, 134-135 (colour plate).

[43] According to Barber (1991, 377-378) the cloths are decorated with "friezes of battling warriors and such". I have scrutinised the model and detailed photos, but have not been able to discover these.

[44] Mansfield 1985, 54-55; Barber 1992, 113; Vickers 1999, 31-33.

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