

CHAPTER V.

THE ACHEAN MOOT.

Circles Fossed and Unfossed—Various Views as to the Stone Circles—The Moot in Homer—The Shield of Achilles—The Moot in Phaeacia—The Posideum—The βοθρός—The Posideum a Prytaneum—The Θῶκος—Formalism in the Homeric Moot—The σκῆπτρον—Peristaliths of undressed stone not necessarily of Bronze Age—No significance in the number of stones in the Circle—The Achæans of Homer a Celtic Race—The Homeric Moot modelled upon a Grave—The Greek Theatre and the ἱερὸς κύκλος—The Square Agora of historical Greece—The Athenian Πνύξ—Curtius' Excavations—Plutarch on the reconstruction of the Pnyx—Achæan blood in Athens—The Agora in Thessaly.

In the evolution of the sepulchral barrow the peristalithic ring was shown to be one of the latest forms. There is another class of megalithic monuments, the great stone circles, of which the form was obviously determined by that of the peristalithic ring-barrow, although repeated efforts have failed to establish their sepulchral purpose. Many *small* circles have been proved to be sepulchral, and of these a large proportion are fossed, some of them heavily fossed; while there are a few very large circles such as those of Stonehenge and Avebury and Arbor Low, Stenness and the Ring of Brogar, all conspicuously fossed, of which the purpose cannot be proved sepulchral. It is the differentiating feature of the circles now to be considered that they have no fosse whatever.

In no part of the world are such circles so numerous

and so well preserved as in the British Isles,¹ yet their age and their purpose are still matters of dispute. Authority is all but unanimous in attributing them to the age of Bronze at the latest, while there are three theories of their purpose more prominent than the rest: some writers, despite the lack of evidence, still maintain that they were sepulchral; many believe them to have been built as astronomical observatories; while the third party believe them to have been the moots of their builders. It is the purpose of the following chapters to provide proof that the last is the correct view, and to show also that their date is, as archaeology counts dates, very recent. Possibly there exist a few sepulchral cromlechs of the Bronze age or even earlier, but there is no evidence at all to show the circles now under consideration to be of such antiquity. On the other hand there is a mass of evidence, historical, documentary, linguistic, and archaeological, to prove that most of them, and probably all the more important of them, belong to the Iron age.

Homer explicitly tells us that the Achæans, and the various related tribes of the Greece of their time, used stone circles as moots. The Achæans were a Celtic people, specifically Cimbric Celts from the neighbourhood of Jutland, who entered Greece *circa* 1300 B.C. and dominated the country for more than 300 years.²

In Homeric Greece (*circa* 1000 B.C.) war and the moot divided between them the interests of the ruling class, and in these two arenas alone was distinction to be won.³ The position of a leader (βασιλεύς) was gained indeed by strength of arm in battle, but it was retained only by eloquence in the moot.⁴ Of the weapons and the art of war in that age there is nothing left to be said. Of the Homeric polity—a curious polity in which democracy was at issue with monarchy, and the aristocratic principle

¹ The total number has been put at 'some two hundred' (R. Munro, *Prehistoric Britain*, p. 192), but any estimate which fails to distinguish between the fossed and the unfossed circle is necessarily otiose.

² Ridgeway, *Early Age of Greece* (1901).

³ See for example *Il.* i, 490, of Achilles in his wrath—

οὔτε ποτ' εἰς ἀγορὴν πωλέσκετο κυδιάνειραν
οὔτε ποτ' ἐς πόλεμον.

and *Il.* ii, 202, where the mere commoner is described as being

οὔτε ποτ' ἐν πολέμῳ ἐναρίθμιος, οὔτ' ἐνὶ βουλῇ.

⁴ This, a commonplace of historical Athens, was equally true of all Greek communities at all times. Cp. Hesiod, *Theog.* 79, *sqq.* It was just as true of Saxon England; *vide* J. R. Green, *Making of England* (1882), pp. 193-4.

of heredity was at issue with the democratic principle of election—little can be said that is new. To the importance of the moot much attention has been given, as also to its very peculiar rules of procedure; but little or no notice has yet been taken of its plan.

Apart from incidental allusions, Homer twice sketches for us the moot of his day. In the *Iliad* is a *genre* picture, descriptive of a typical moot in a typical community of the time. In the *Odyssey* is a sketch of the particular moot of a particular city of exceptional importance. It could be wished that both descriptions were more detailed, but that is no reason why due weight should not be given to the little that is said.

The essential feature was the session of the notables¹ in a circle. They sat upon seats of stone, the *ἱερὸς κύκλος*,² the commonalty gathering around outside the circle³ to look and listen. The circle of seats might be further provided with a peristalith of standing stones, but this was unnecessary and exceptional.

Engraved upon the shield of Achilles were two scenes of civic life. The one shewed a community (*πόλις*) at war, the other a community at peace; and as types of the happenings of peace the artist selected a wedding and a court of law. Called to adjudicate in a case of repudiated debt, the notables 'were sitting upon the smooth stones in the sacred circle.'⁴ It was 'in the *agora*,' and the commonalty swarmed round to watch the proceedings. There was therefore no impediment to their sight or hearing, no wall or fosse about the *ἱερὸς κύκλος*. As heralds were needed to keep back the throng,⁵ there was

¹ *Γέροντες*. The word has here no necessary reference to age, albeit age gave a natural priority; e.g. *Odys.* ii, 15, where the debate is opened by Aegyptius 'bowed with years.' It means no more than the Latin *senatores* and the Anglo-Saxon *ealdormen*.

² So in Euripides occurs (*Orestes* 919) *ἀγορᾶς κύκλος*, and in Sophocles (*Oed. Tyr.* 161) *κυκλόνει ἀγορᾶς θρόνον θάσσει* (*Ἀρτεμης*).

³ It is usual and convenient to speak of the whole as the *ἀγορά*, but the *κύκλος* was a separate thing. The term *ἀγορά* (from the root of *ἀγείρειν*) is exactly parallel with 'moot' (from 'meet'); and from *ἀγορά* came *ἀγορεύειν*, 'to debate,

make a speech,' exactly as from the substantive 'moot' comes the verb 'to moot,' and exactly as the word 'ring' has produced the verb 'to harangue.'

⁴ *Iliad* xviii, 497, *ἥατ' ἐπὶ ξεστοῖσι λίθοις ἱερῷ ἐνὶ κύκλῳ*. 'Polished,' the usual rendering of *ξεστός*, is misleading. It is the stock Homeric epithet of dining-tables, but no one would maintain that those tables resembled polished mahogany. The word rather means 'knapped,' i.e. rough-dressed, and Homer would doubtless have applied it to the stone-dressed sarsens of Stonchenge.

⁵ *Iliad* xviii, 504, *κήρυκες δ' ἄρα λαὸν ἐρήτυον*. Cp. *Iliad* ii, 96.

no barrier of any sort.¹ Moreover as heralds were unarmed and controlled the crowd by voice only,² it appears that it was not permitted to carry arms in the moot.³ We are explicitly told that the court was circular and that it was a *locus consecratus*. The account further implies that the primary purpose of the civic moot was that of a court of law, for there could hardly be a more frequent matter of dispute than a repudiated debt. The whole purpose of the imagined artist of the shield was obviously to portray a *typical* scene, not one that was in any detail unusual.⁴

The moot of the sea-faring Phaeacians in Scheria lay close beside their port⁵ and immediately without the city's gates, beside the only road leading thereto.⁶ There was the usual circle of smooth stones⁷ to serve as seats for the moot-men, but further there were other great stones bedded in the soil around it.⁸ These were different from those which served as seats, for they were untouched.⁹ There was no vallum, fosse, or any sort of screen or barrier between the *ἱερὸς κύκλος* and its surroundings, and as

¹ The same follows from the scene with Thersites in *Iliad* ii, 211, *sqq.* Thersites was one of the crowd outside the *κύκλος*, but he was able to intervene in the debate of the elders.

² *Iliad* ii, 97, *βοῶντες*. The requirements of the moot are sufficient explanation of the value attached in Homer to the possession of a powerful voice. The name of *κήρυξ* literally signifies 'crier,' and the stock Homeric epithet is *λεγύφθογγος*.

³ The sword might be worn, but it might not be drawn. Had Achilles drawn his sword, the act would have broken up the moot (*Iliad* i, 190). Telemachus again comes to the moot armed with sword and spear (*Odys.* ii, 1-11), but he brought with him also a couple of hounds. Even on the occasion of a moot of the Trojans during the siege of Troy, the commonalty at any rate were unarmed (*Iliad* ii, 808).

⁴ Bishop Browne (*Antiquities in the Neighbourhood of Duneech*, 1921, p. 34) declines to accept the Homeric picture as evidence that the *ἱερὸς κύκλος* was the normal judicial moot, averring that repudiation of a debt was a matter beyond the competence of the head of the community, and for that reason referred to the collective elders. If the 'head of the community' were not competent to deal with so

commonplace a matter as this, it is not obvious that he was competent to deal with any case whatever, and every case must have required the judgment of the elders; in which event the elders certainly constituted the normal court for all offences, and the picture of the shield is a normal and typical scene of civil life. The 'head of the community' in Achaean times was not an autocrat, but a *princeps* (Stubbs, *Const. Hist.* i, 31). Alcinoüs was *βασιλεὺς* in Phaeacia, but there were twelve other *βασιλεῖς* (*Od.* viii, 390) who were his unquestioned assessors.

⁵ *Odys.* viii, 5, *παρὰ νηυσὶ τέτυκτο*. Cp. *ibid.* vi, 266.

⁶ The city is described as built upon a promontory accessible by one road only, on right and left of which the sea formed bays which served for harbours (*Odys.* vi, 262-7).

⁷ *Odys.* viii, 6, *καθίζον ἐπὶ ξεστοῖσι λίθοις*.

⁸ *Odys.* vi, 267, *ῥυτοῖσιν λάεσσι κατωρυχέσσ' ἀραρυῖα*. The word *ἀραρυῖα* means 'provided with,' not 'walled.' Cp. *Il.* xv, 737, *πόλις πυργοῖς ἀραρυῖα*; *Odys.* vii, 45, *τείχεα σκολόπεσσιν ἀρηρότα*.

⁹ The seats are *λίθοι*, the other stones are *λάες*, and the different words imply a difference in size. The big stones are

before the townsfolk crowd all the vicinity¹ to watch the proceedings. As before the heralds are present.² The proceedings comprised the formal introduction of the stranger Ulysses to the notables, and thereafter a programme of entertainment; foot-races, discus-throwing, ball-play, dancing, and music. In the centre of the *ἱερὸς κύκλος* was a *καλὸν Ποσιδήϊον*.³ What was this?

It was something consecrated to the god Poseidon, but it certainly was not a 'temple of Poseidon,'⁴ for any such structure, however primitive, if it stood anywhere within the *ἱερὸς κύκλος*, would have interrupted the sight and the hearing not of the onlookers only, but of the notables in session, and would have completely spoilt for some of them the various items in the programme. It was rather an 'altar of Poseidon,' and even so no altar as that is commonly envisaged, but the earlier kind of altar which was rather a hearth or a pit (*βοθρός*). A construction of this kind would allow every member of the council to see and hear every other, and it would not materially interfere with any such sports as Homer's account describes. Speaking of the dance the poet expressly tells us that as a preliminary 'the dancing-floor was smoothed,'⁵ and the reference is probably to sweeping

not called *ἔστροι*; the stone seats are always so called. In front of Nestor's palace in Pylos were stone seats (*ἔστροι λίθοι*) so highly finished that they 'glistened as if oiled' (*Odys.* iii, 406); but the big stones (*λᾶες*) were natural blocks taken (*ῥυτοί*) as they were found. Cp. *Odys.* xiv, 10, where Eumaeus' hog-yard is built *ῥυτοῖσιν λᾶεσσιν*, i.e. of 'Cyclopean' masonry, not of squared stone. One may see just such 'Cyclopean' pig-styes and cow-sheds in West Cornwall to-day. The epithet *κατωρυχῆς* certainly suggests that the stones at Scheria were set pillar-wise rather than in a contiguous ring, though examples are forthcoming (ch. x) to shew that either way was permissible in a moot-circle.

¹ *Odys.* viii, 16, *ἀγοραί τε καὶ ἔδραι*, 'every place where men could gather and sit.' So the *κύκλος* was merely the central space (*μέσση ἀγορή*, *Odys.* ii, 37), and all the surrounding ground could be included in the name of *ἀγορά*. From other passages it appears that the circle could specifically be called also *βουλή* (*Iliad* ii, 53, 84) or *θῶκος*, 'session' (*Odys.* ii, 26).

Even the commonalty sat (cf. *Iliad* ii, 96, 99, 211), which Curtius (*Hist. Greece*, Eng. trans. 1868, i, 151) mistakenly took as a proof of their growing political importance. More correctly it was a survival from an importance already largely lost. Only the notables were provided with something to sit upon.

² *Odys.* viii, 8, 107, 261, 418.

³ *Odys.* vi, 266.

⁴ It is so rendered in Liddell and Scott's *Greek-English Lexicon*.

⁵ *Odys.* viii, 260, *λείναν δὲ χορόν, καλὸν δ' εὔρυναν ἀγῶνα*. Cp. the term *κονίστρα*, 'sanded floor,' sometimes applied to the orchestra. The *θυμέλη* was at times boarded over, so that it should not interfere with the dancers (Guhl and Koner, *Life of the Greeks and Romans*, Eng. trans., p. 130). The word *χορός* is used again in *Odys.* vi, 65 with plain reference to the *ἱερὸς κύκλος*. In *Iliad* xviii, 376 *ἀγών* is used as the equivalent of *ἀγορά* (*θεῶν*), and according to the grammarian Eustathius *ἀγών* was the usual term for *ἀγορά* amongst the Boeotians.

up the heap of loose ashes which would necessarily accumulate about the central 'altar': they would be swept into the *βοθρός*, or scattered evenly about, so as to leave a dancing-floor that was at once wide and smooth, as we are told it was.

It is doubtful whether any passage in Homer of necessity implies any other kind of 'altar' than this. On the other hand the poet was quite familiar with the *βοθρός*, for he makes Ulysses 'dig' one and offer sacrifice therein when desirous to call up the ghost of Tiresias.¹ It was merely a hole in the ground, dug for the occasion.² One is told that such pits were necessary in the cult of the dead and the gods of the dead; but if authority be right in identifying the *βοθρός* in the court of the palace of Tiryns with the altar (*βωμός*) of Zeus Herceius of the Homeric poems,³ such pits must have been used in the Homeric age even in the cult of the *Di Superi*.⁴

In the centre of the court of the palace at Tiryns was a small rectangular pavement of limestone slabs rising some ten inches above the general floor.⁵ In the centre of this pavement was a circular hole (diam. 45½—47½ in.) steined with rudely fashioned blocks of sandstone to a depth of 35 inches. Below this 'were neither side-walls nor masonry nor any artificial floor,' but the natural rock had been excavated to a depth of 3 ft. more, so as to form a rough bowl-like cavity. The discoverer, who unfortunately has not put on record the character of the filling of this cavity, at first imagined that he had found a well, but on further investigation rightly pronounced it to be a sacrificial pit, the Homeric *βωμός* of Zeus Herceius. The kerb of the *βοθρός* was flush with the surrounding pavement.⁶

¹ *Odys.* x, 517, xi, 25, *βοθρόν δρυξε*. It was in the remote West, 'where is the people and the city of the warrior Cimmerians, lapped in mist and cloud.' We shall presently find (ch. viii) just such *βοθροί* in just such a land of the remote West.

² So Periander burns, as an offering to his dead wife Melissa, the finery of the women of Corinth *ἐς δρυγμα συμφορήσας*, i.e. in a *βοθρός* dug for the occasion (Herod. v, 92).

³ *Odys.* xxii, 334, in the palace of Ulysses in Ithaca.

⁴ So they were subsequently. There was one in the Askleion at Athens,

another in Samothrace, and yet others in the theatres at Peiraeus and Epidauros.

⁵ As *βωμός* (from the root of *βαλναι*) originally meant 'a step, something to stand on,' it was naturally applied to such a platform as this, and as naturally extended in later times to the familiar pedestal-altars which took the place (in many rituals) of the sunken *βοθρός*. So in *Il.* viii, 48, *βωμὸς θυήεις*. Intermediate are its uses for the 'pedestal' of a statue (*Odys.* vii, 100), and for the 'platform' or 'pavement' whereon stood the war-chariot when not in use (*Il.* viii, 441).

⁶ Schliemann, *Tiryns* (1886), pp. 337-40.

The *βοθρός* which Ulysses dug 'in the land of the Cimmerians,' as we are twice told, was some 15 inches only in diameter.¹ Such things therefore might be very small, and a pit very much smaller than that at Tiryns might quite legitimately be spoken of as a 'fine' one

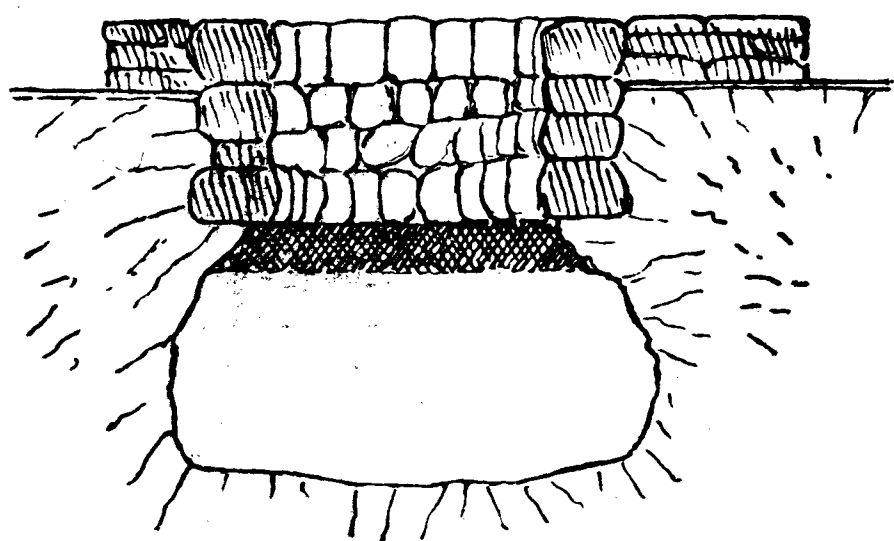
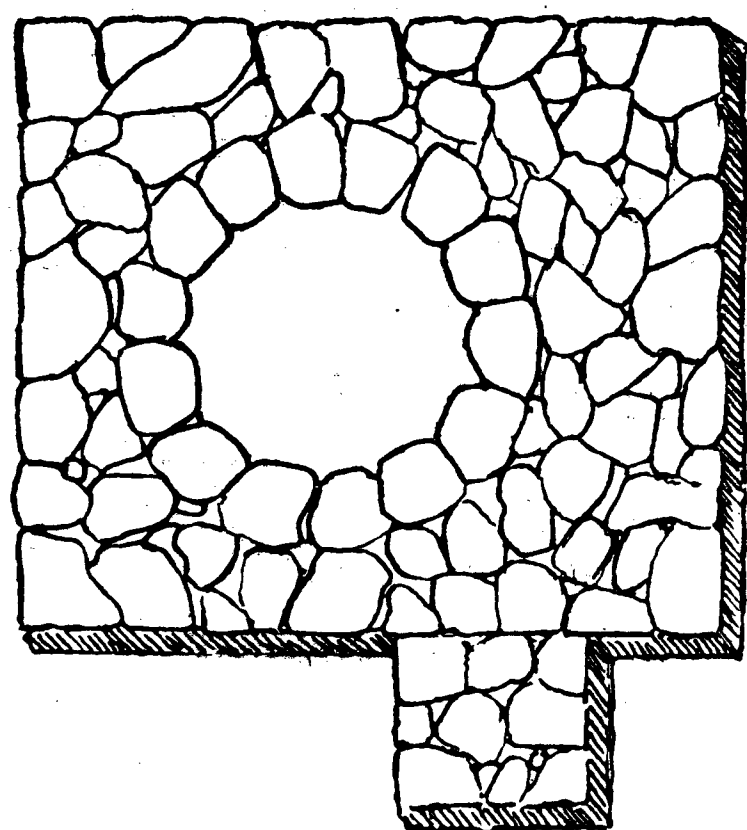


FIG. I. THE 'BOTHROS' OF THE PALACE OF TIRYNS: PLAN AND SECTION.
(After Schliemann, by kind permission of Mr. John Murray).

(*καλόν*). Homer's narrative does not admit of the presence, in the sacred circle of Scheria, of anything bulky or obtrusive. He does not mention any *βοθρός* at all in the *κύκλος* figured on the shield of Achilles; it was doubt-

¹ *Odyss.* x, 517, *πυγούσιον ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα*; *πύγων* is given as 1'2135 ft., practically cp. *ibid.*, xi, 25. The precise length of the 1 ft. 2½ in.

less there, for that also was a *ἱερὸς κύκλος*, but it was insignificant, like the *πόλις* to which it belonged. Some sort of *βοθρός* was as essential to the *κύκλος* as is an altar to a church, and like the latter it would commonly be taken for granted. It would be mentioned only when, like the *βοθρός* of Scheria, it was of unusual size or elaboration.

Agamemnon, making the oath, seals it by the blood of a ram. At the moment he was attending an *agora*,¹ and was therefore in the *ἱερὸς κύκλος*, for he took part in the debate.² Standing *ἐν μέσση ἀγορῇ*³ he slew the ram, invoking Zeus and Helios, but also Ge and the Erinyes.⁴ It is reasonable to assume that the scene of the sacrifice was the *βοθρός*, exactly as it was when Ulysses sacrificed his ram to the dead, although the fact is not specifically mentioned.

The consecration of this particular *κύκλος* of Scheria was to the god Poseidon. That deity the men of Phaeacia might have been expected to choose for their patron god because they were great sea-folk.⁵ But there was another reason. The poet is at pains to explain⁶ that Alcinoüs, king of the Phaeacians, was himself a grandson of Poseidon, and this puts the *καλὸν Ποσιδῆϊον* in a wholly new light. Sacrifices offered to Poseidon were sacrifices offered to the ancestors of the king, and the *καλὸν Ποσιδῆϊον* was neither more nor less than the Achean *πρυτανεῖον*, the symbolical grave of the founder⁷ of the State. In post-Homeric Greece every *πόλις* had its *ἀγορά* and its *πρυτανεῖον*, and usually the latter stood within the former. The *ἀγορά* was the moot, the *πρυτανεῖον* was the municipal building, the town-hall of that time. Even so in the Homeric Age: in the *ἀγορά* stood the *ἱερὸς κύκλος* with its central *βοθρός* or symbolical founder's tomb. The *ἱερὸς κύκλος* was the town-hall of its day: the *ἱερὸς κύκλος* was modelled upon the barrows or graves of great men.

¹ *Iliad* xix, 249.

² *Ibid.* v, 78.

³ *Ibid.* v, 249.

⁴ *Ibid.* v, 258-260.

⁵ *Odyss.* vi, 270-1.

⁶ The actual founder was Nausithoüs, son of Poseidon, and father of Alcinoüs

(*Odyss.* vii, 56-66), but in *Odyss.* xiii, 130 Poseidon claims the Phaeacians as his own.

⁷ There are traces of a time when Poseidon was regarded as a Chthonic deity (e.g., *Odyss.* iii, 6, where Nestor sacrifices to him black bulls) and also as peculiarly the builder of cities (as when he built Troy), i.e. god of the 'founder's tomb' upon which the city was reared.

The Trojans had an *agora* upon their citadel-hill, at the gates of the royal palace.¹ Even the forces which sailed with Agamemnon to Troy had each their own, and it lay close beside the spot where was beached their leader's vessel. Those of the Danai,² the Myrmidons, and the Pylians are mentioned. But there is nothing said to add to our knowledge of the form of the thing, save that the *agora* of the Myrmidons was the place 'where stood also the altars of their gods.'³ The altars of an expeditionary force would assuredly not be anything very imposing or very permanent. But the point of importance is that very evidently the poet thought of a moot as essential to every πόλις and to every body of civilised beings. It is proof indeed of the savagery of the Cyclopes that they neither sow nor reap, but a yet greater proof is that they have neither moots nor laws.⁴ 'Moot' and 'law' were correlative terms; there could not be the one without the other.⁵ The moot was the necessary scene of every public act. Its usual position was at the gates of the community or at the gates of the chieftain—at the threshold of authority—and all that was necessary was the circle of stone seats and the central βοθρός which made the circle sacred. The stone seats were tooled: so much at any rate the word ξεστός must imply, though it says nothing of the kind of tool used. Probably all the other seats were much alike, but one of them was of special dignity, for when Telemachus at long last asserts his birth-right as prince in Ithaca and comes into the ἱερὸς κύκλος, he 'sat in his father's seat (θῶκος), and the notables made way for him.'⁶ Here at any rate was one particular seat which was recognised as the King's throne, the 'chair.'

¹ *Iliad* ii, 788, Ἰλίου ἐν πόλει ἄκρη. . . . παρὰ Πριάμοιο θύρῃσι. Cp. *ibid.* vii, 345, *Odyss.* viii, 503-4.

² *Il.* vii, 383, νηὶ παρὰ πρύμνῃ Ἀγαμέμνονος.

³ *Il.* xi, 808, τη δὴ καὶ σφι θεῶν ἐτετεύχαστο βωμοί.

⁴ *Odyss.* ix, 112, τοῖσιν δ' οὐτ' ἀγοραὶ βουλήφοροι οὔτε θέμιστες.

⁵ Cp. *Il.* xi, 107, ἵνα σφ' ἀγορὴ τε θέμισ τε. In *Odyss.* ii, 69 Themis is called the presiding deity of the *agora*, and in *Il.* xx, 4 she actually convenes the assembly of the immortals in Olympus. In *Theog.* 430, *sqq.* Hesiod agrees with Sophocles (*O.T.* 161)

in making Hecate (Artemis) the presiding goddess; but in *ibid.* 901 he calls Themis the mother of Dike (Justice), and in *ibid.* 434 he uses δίκη as a synonym for the moot itself, ἐν τε δίκη βασιλεῦσι πᾶρ' αἰδοίοισι καθίζει (Εκάτη). On the significance of δίκη, see Harrison, *Themis* (1912), p. 482.

⁶ *Odyss.* ii, 14, ἔξετο δ' ἐν πατρὸς θῶκῳ, εἶξαν δὲ γέροντες. The word θῶκος suggests something different from the ordinary run of the seats. It is used again of the council of the gods in Olympus (*Odyss.* v. 3, θῶκόνδε καθίζανον; cf. *Il.* viii, 439, θεῶν δ' ἐξέλετο θῶκους), and generally of the 'seats of

Ulysses and Diomedes, being severely wounded and therefore unfit to walk more than is imperative, 'sit down at the entry of the moot.'¹ As Ulysses presently takes part in the ensuing debate, it is clear that he was sitting within the ἱερὸς κύκλος. It is perhaps permissible to infer that the moot had but one entrance, that the wounded men took the seats immediately next the entrance, and that such a procedure was not usual with men of such distinction,² i.e., that the more honourable seats were those furthest from the entrance. If so, the most honourable seat of all, the θῶκος, was that directly opposite to the entrance, at the middle point of the whole penannular circle of seats.³ Such was its position in the κύκλος at Ithaca, for Telemachus, rising from the θῶκος to speak, was ἐν μέσση ἀγορῇ.⁴

Very remarkable is the suggestion of rigid formality pervading all mention of the moot and of the procedure therein. Every smallest detail is the outcome of long tradition, and all is done according to precedent. Every one attending it must be seated,⁵ but anyone addressing the moot must rise, and no one else might do so.⁶ Any speaker might plead privilege if in debate he traversed the wishes of those who elsewhere were his superiors in authority.⁷ No business could be done after sundown, and to call a moot after that hour entailed disastrous consequences.⁸ It was proper to attend the moot, whether as an elder or as an athlete, in one's best clothes.⁹ Even

the mighty,' gods, nymphs, kings and high officials. See Liddell and Scott's *Lexicon*. That it was a regular feature of the ἱερὸς κύκλος is suggested by *Odyss.* ii, 26; for many a long year there had been in Ithaca οὔτε ἀγορὴ οὔτε θῶκος, as we might say 'neither court nor bench.' Sophocles (*O.T.* 161) calls it θρόνος.

¹ *Il.* xix, 50, καὶ δὲ μετὰ πρῶτῃ ἀγορῇ ἴζοντο.

² Ulysses was himself a σκηπτούχος βασιλεὺς (*Odyss.* v, 9).

³ Such appears to have been the rule amongst the ancient Germans, as it is to this day in England in the case of formal banquets. So it was in the Greek theatre.

⁴ *Odyss.* ii, 37.

⁵ Therefore ἀγορὰν καθίζειν is the contrary of ἀγορὰν λύειν (*Odyss.* ii, 69). It is expressly mentioned that when the Trojans assembled in moot to discuss the

reappearance of Achilles, they were too scared to sit down: ὀρθῶν δ' ἐσταδῶν ἀγορὴ γένετ', οὐδὲ τις ἔτλη ἕζεσθαι (*Iliad* xviii, 245).

⁶ From *Il.* ii, 211 it is clear that even Thersites stands up to speak. The same rule prevailed in historical Athens (*Demos. De Corona* 169, πᾶς ὁ δῆμος ἀνω καθήτο), and apparently even in Sparta (*Thuc.* i, 87, ἀναστάντες διέστησαν).

⁷ *Il.* ix, 33, where young Diomedes moves to reject the resolution moved by his generalissimo Agamemnon, ἡ θέμις ἐστίν, ἀναξ, ἀγορῇ.

⁸ *Odyss.* iii, 138, viii, 417. So in historical Athens: nothing could be done at the moment of the receipt of the news of the fall of Elatea, ἐσπέρα μὲν γὰρ ἦν (*Demos. De Corona*, 169). So also in Rome: *solis occasus suprema tempestas esto*.

⁹ *Odyss.* vi, 60-65.

the number of the heralds is apparently fixed: they are nine,¹ and nine also is the number of the 'stewards' who superintend the games at Scheria.² Most of all does formality shew itself in connexion with the mace (σκήπτρον). It is synonymous with judgment,³ a thing of divine provenance.⁴ The moot cannot be convened save by virtue of this symbol,⁵ and no man may refuse to obey its summons. No speaker may 'address the House' without it: a herald places it in the speaker's hand, and presently passes it on to another.⁶ To throw it down marks the end of a speech.⁷ It is 'golden,' 'set with studs of gold.'⁸

It is impossible not to recognise in it 'that mysterious, but often highly ornamental object, the so-called *bâton de commandement*,' known as early as the so-called Solutréan age, and a common find in the Magdalénian period.⁹ It is equally impossible not to recognise in it the ancestor of the mace which holds so essential a place in the moots of modern England, in parliamentary and in civic business.¹⁰

It is abundantly clear from Homer's language that the stones which served for seats were dressed to fit them for that purpose. It is equally clear that the circle of standing stones which was to be seen in the moot of Scheria was not essential. It was merely a decorative accessory¹¹, an exceptional feature, not to be looked for in the typical moot. And it is clear also that these standing stones were not tooled.

Now as the Achæans were well acquainted with the use of iron, it follows that circles of untooled standing stones were habitually constructed by a people who were familiar with iron; and that the same people used tooled stones

¹ *Il.* ii, 96.

² *Odyss.* viii, 258, αἰσυννῆται δὲ κριτοὶ ἐννέα. They seem to be distinct from the heralds (κήρυκες) and of greater dignity. The style of αἰσυννῆτης survived into classical times as that of the chief magistrates of certain Greek communities, and in some cases their number was again nine. It was the number also of the Athenian archons. What is the connexion between these facts?

³ *Il.* ii, 206, σκήπτρόν τ' ἡδὲ θέμιστας.

⁴ *Il.* ii, 101.

⁵ *Il.* xviii, 498, xxiii, 507; *Odyss.* ii, 37.

⁶ *Il.* i, 245; *Odyss.* ii, 80.

⁷ *Il.* ii, 268, i, 246.

⁸ In historical times it was replaced by the bugle; cf. the Roman *buccina* and the Saxon moot-horn.

⁹ R. Munro, *Prehistoric Britain*, p. 95.

¹⁰ The original also, in all probability, of the staff carried by the verger before any of the clergy who may be about to address the congregation either from the lectern or from the pulpit.

¹¹ Had there been any hidden meaning in the peristalithic stones, e.g. in their number, the poet could scarcely have passed by the opportunity for enlarging upon it.

(ξεστοὶ λίθοι) and untooled stones (ῥυτοὶ λάες) in one and the same construction. Therefore the fact that a circle is built of unhewn stones is no proof that it belongs to the age of Stone, or even to the age of Bronze. The use of untooled stones for such monuments may have been, and probably was, a survival from the age of Stone; but that is quite another matter.

Further, as the untooled standing stones were no essential feature of the moot, but an adjunct only, it follows that all the care and study which have been expended upon them have been beside the mark, and there is no likelihood that any significance attached to their number, size, or precise arrangement. These would vary with the means, ambition, and whim of the community which reared them, possibly with tribal custom, assuredly with the locality and the kind of stone available. The essentials were the circle of stone seats and the βοθρός only. It is for these that archaeology must search, and seeing that time has dealt so hardly with the mightier unhewn stones of the peristalith, there is little chance that the smaller stones of the ἱερὸς κύκλος will have escaped very often. They offered themselves too readily to the road-mender and to the builder, not only because of their handier size, but because also they were dressed into convenient shape. There will be adduced later indisputable cases of their survival, albeit not on Greek soil. Meanwhile it is to be remembered that wherever is found the peristalith, there may have existed also the circle of seats within it. The peristalith is not itself the moot, nor any necessary part thereof, but it may mark the spot where once was a moot. Probably there were many moots even in Greece, which, like that of the little πόλις of the shield, never boasted a peristalith at all. Such indeed must have been the case wherever suitable stone was scarce. So far from typical was the elaborate moot of the Phaeacians that even Ulysses, with all his wide experience of men and cities, viewed it with admiration.¹

Where had Homer seen or heard of a megalithic circle? There are few or none to be found in Europe to-day out-

¹ *Odyss.* vii, 44, θαύμαζεν.

side the lands in the north-west of the Continent once occupied, if not still occupied, by Brythonic peoples. Sir William Ridgeway has established the fact that the Achæans of Homer were actually a Brythonic tribe of invaders from the north-west of Europe, and this without calling in as evidence these pictures of the Achæan moot, which entirely corroborate his conclusions. The Homeric poems were composed about 1000 B.C. So early then the stone moot-circle was so familiar to the poet's mind that he could neither envisage moots of any other kind, nor conceive a civilised community which had not its own *ἱερὸς κύκλος*.

It was shewn in an earlier chapter (ch. iii) that, while the peristalithic mound is in point of evolution earlier than the flat peristalithic cromlech, both forms might be expected to be in simultaneous use. Homer confirms the statement, for while his *ἱερὸς κύκλος*, of the later type, is represented as being in customary use for moots, his heroes are buried under peristalithic mounds of the older type.¹ His moot-circle is merely the peristalithic cromlech adapted to a special purpose. The sepulchral cromlech, because it was a private place, was frequently, if not invariably, fossed; the moot-circle was always unfossed, because it was a public place. The consecration of the sepulchral cromlech is the actual grave of the person therein buried; that of the moot-circle is a symbolical grave. Paganism knew of no necessary distinction between an altar and a grave. The actual grave of the sepulchral cromlech might also be an altar, and the altar of the moot-circle was the *βοθρός* which symbolised a grave.

Sir W. Ridgeway has demonstrated² that the Greek theatre was developed out of the barrow, was in fact a symbolical barrow of highly specialised design to accommodate a great concourse of spectators assembled to witness a peculiar kind of performance in honour of the dead. Its central point was the *θυμέλη*, 'a true altar for offering burnt-sacrifice to the gods,' but on occasion serving to represent a tomb. About it lay the flat circular *ὀρχήστρα* where the chorus performed its ceremonial dances; and round this again rose one behind another the seats of the

cavea. The theatre was commonly constructed in the sloping flank of a hill¹ and at the lower side of the whole rose the stage.

Who can fail to recognise in the plan of such a theatre that of the *ἱερὸς κύκλος* of Homer? The *βοθρός* answers to the *θυμέλη*, or in some cases, as for example at Peiræus, remains unaltered.² The *κύκλος* itself is intact in the

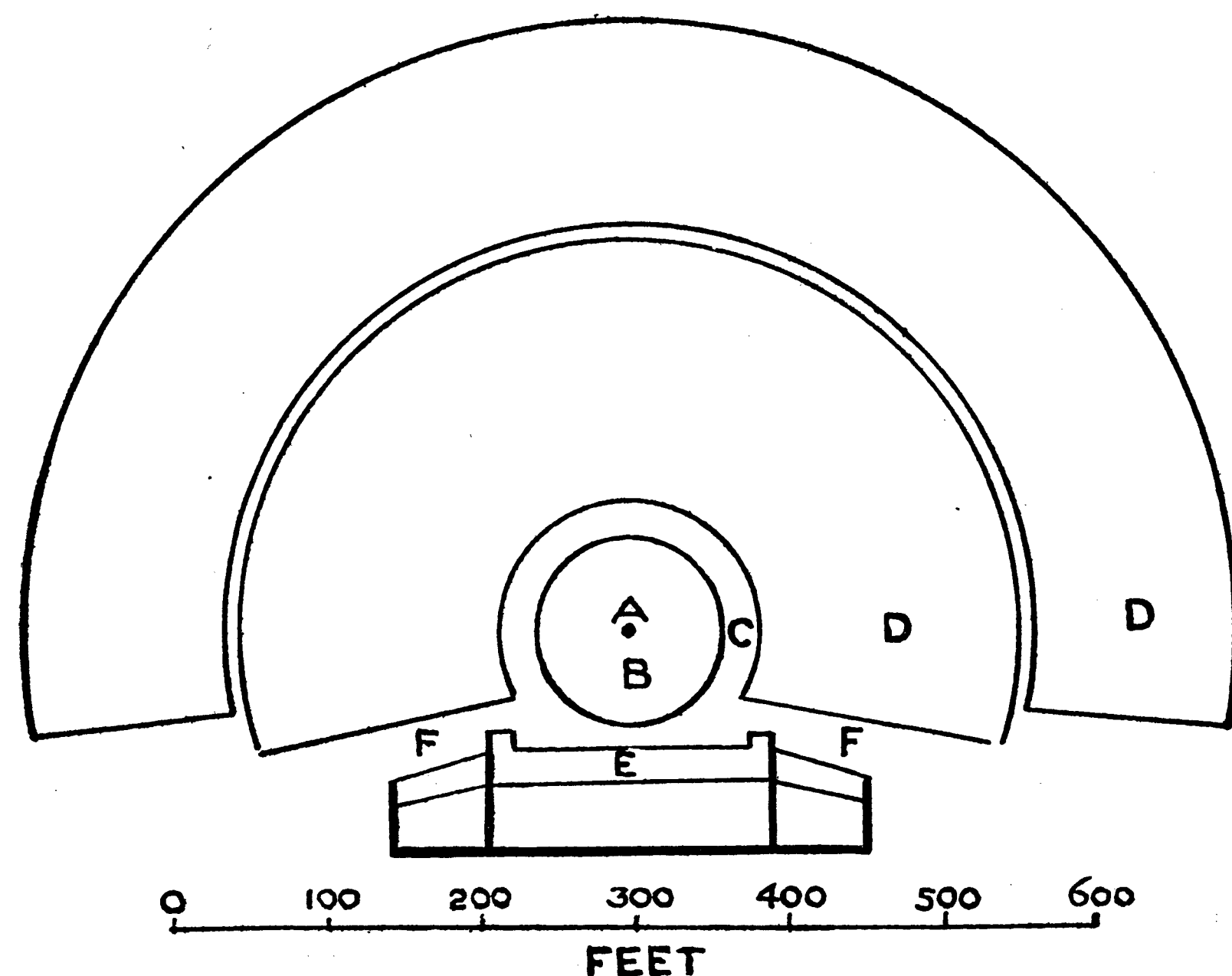


FIG. 2. THEATRE OF EPIDAUROS: simplified plan.

A, *Θυμέλη* (*βοθρός*); B, *ὀρχήστρα* ringed by circle of flat stones; C, *Εὐρίπος* (canal); D, Tiers of seats in *cavea*; E, Stage; FF, *Παροδοί*.

¹ One of the very few Greek examples to the contrary is the theatre of Mantinea, 'where the natural height has been supplied by an artificial one, which simply consists of an earth wall propped by surrounding walls of polygonal stones' (Guhl and Koner, *Life of the Greeks and Romans*, Eng. trans., p. 123). From the method of construction it followed that the floor of the theatre was normally sunk below the natural surface, a characteristic also of the Latin *circus*.

² See Haigh, *Attic Theatre* (1907),

pp. 103, 108. It has been usual to regard these small pits as the sockets in which were placed altars. Sir W. Ridgeway suggested (*Origin of Tragedy*, p. 43) that they 'may well represent a *βοθρός* in which the offerings to dead heroes were placed.' It is not impossible that the peculiar diamond inlaid about the *θυμέλη* in the orchestra of the Dionysiac theatre in Athens may be a conventional survival of such a rectangular pavement as surrounded the *βοθρός* in the palace of Tiryns.

¹ For example, of Patroclus' barrow (*Iliad* xxiii, 255), *θεμελίᾳ τε προβάλλοντο*.

² *Origin of Tragedy* (Cambridge, 1910).

fully circular ὀρχήστρα. Of the ξεστοὶ λίθοι about a third have been supplanted by the stage, but the residue remain in the chairs of office round the *podium*, where sat the civic dignitaries, as they had sat in Achean times in the only formal seats provided. Midmost, in the place of honour, was the chair of the high priest of Dionysus, answering to the Homeric θῶκος. Behind was gathered the general audience upon ἀναβαθμοί, mere steps in the slope out of which was hollowed the *cavea*. The Greek theatre was but the ἱερὸς κύκλος revived,¹ after a long interval perhaps, for a special purpose, precisely as the amphitheatre of Italy was the primitive *circus* revived after a long interval for a special purpose (ch. vi). In Greece the purpose was the expression of a highly spiritualised form of ancestor-worship, the abstract cult of Death under the name of Dionysus replacing the concrete cults of many individual dead each in his own locality; and again we have a parallel in that βοθρός which Alcinoüs had consecrated to his reputed ancestor Poseidon. The parallelism becomes complete when it is recalled that the theatre subserved many other municipal purposes: presentations were made therein, public meetings on various matters were there convened, the theatre almost completely superseded the Pnyx as the municipal moot before the close of the fourth century B.C., and yet later generations actually made use of it as a place of burial.²

This view of the ultimate origin of the Dionysiac theatre is corroborated by excavation. Beneath the fourth-century ὀρχήστρα (diam. 64 ft. 4 in.) Dr. Dörpfeld found the remains of an earlier one, a mere circle (diam. 78 ft. 9 in.) without accessories; and the ὀρχήστρα of the theatre of Epidaurus, a structure in size practically identical with that of Athens, is still 'a complete circle defined by a ring of flat stones.' It gives point also to the otherwise meaningless remark of Pollux (viii, 132) that the Pnyx was

¹ The Dionysiac theatre, usually regarded as the oldest of the series, assumed its final form only towards 340 B.C., though there had been some sort of theatre on the site for many years before.

² Smith's *Dict. Classical Antiqs.* (1890), ii, 820a. Sepulchral inscriptions have been found within it, which would seem of

necessity to presume actual interments. Plutarch (*Timoleon* 38) speaks of the use as a moot of the theatre of Syracuse in the last years of Timoleon, who died 339 B.C. So Cornelius Nepos (xx, 4): *veniebat in theatrum, cum ibi concilium populi haberetur*. For the use of the theatre for municipal purposes in Antioch in first century A.D., see Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* viii, § 3, v, § 2.

'built in accordance with the simplicity of the past rather than with the elaboration of a theatre.' Clearly Pollux knew moot and theatre to be most intimately related.¹ And this again is illustrated by the very latest discoveries on the site of ancient Sparta, which shew that the place selected for the inscriptions recording the names of the community's yearly magistrates was the eastern retaining wall of the theatre.²

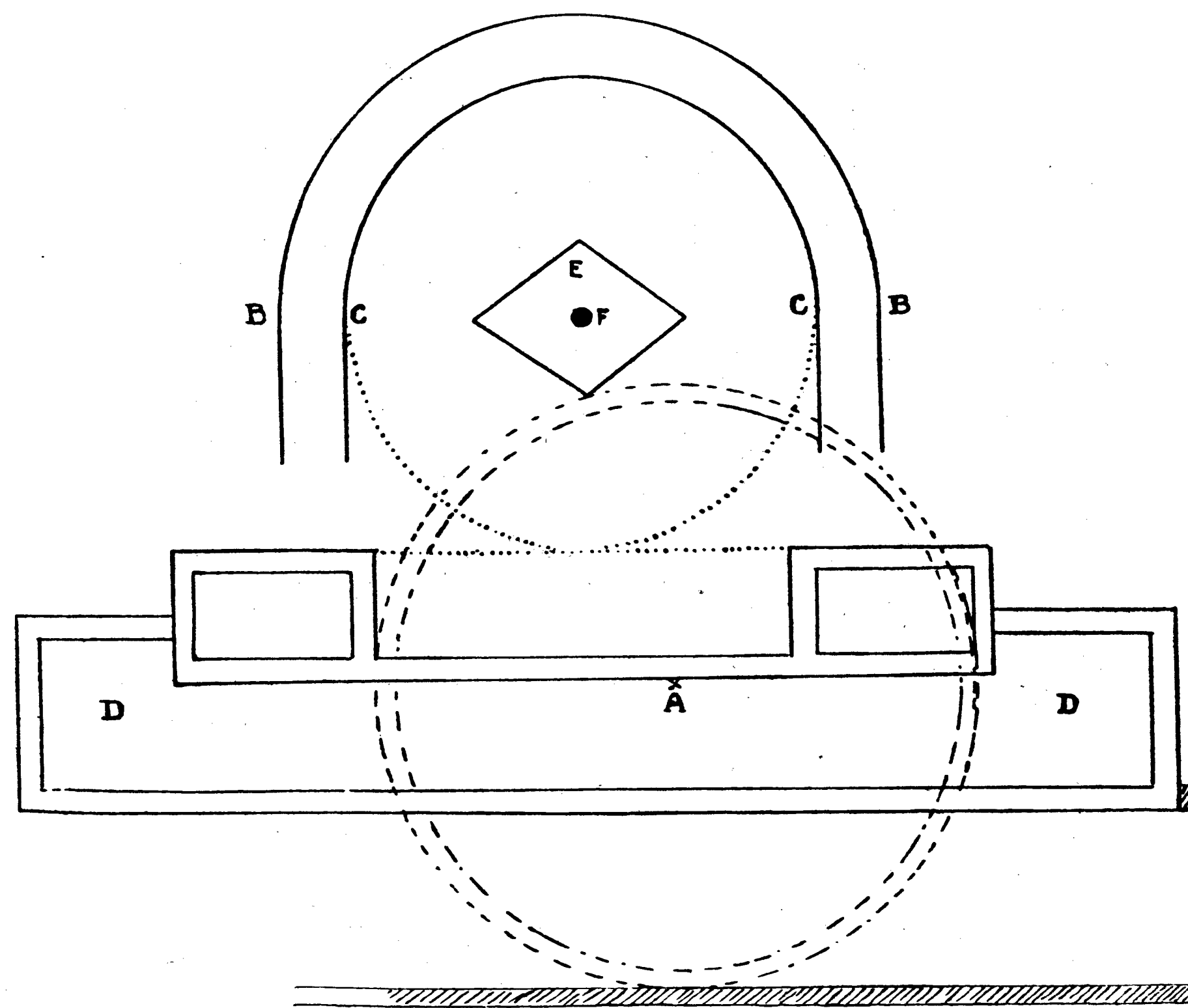


FIG. 3. DIONYSIAC THEATRE, ATHENS: THE OLDER AND NEWER ORCHESTRAS.

A, Centre of the older orchestra (radius 78 ft. 9 ins.); BB, podium of Dionysiac theatre (340 B.C.) with seats of state; CC, Dionysiac orchestra (radius, 64 ft. 4 ins.); DD, Stage buildings; E, the 'Diamond'; F, Θυμέλη.

¹ Miss Jane Harrison (*Mythology and Monts. of Ancient Athens*, pp. 108-110) remarks, as a fact 'of the utmost importance,' that 'an ancient place of assembly and an ancient theatre had much in common,

and were in structure practically the same in construction.'

² *The Times*, 13 Aug., 1924. The lists discovered are said to date 'early in the second century of our era.'

The normal *agora* of historical Greece was of rectangular plan,¹ as for example at Olympia, where one might look to find preserved the most archaic tradition in such matters. The reason for the difference is obvious: the circle-moot of the Achaeans was an alien thing, forced upon Greece for a time, but ultimately supplanted by the native rectangular form, which is to be seen as far back as the theatral areas of Cnossos and Phaestos in Crete.² But in places, and probably in many of the smaller communities, the Achaean circle-moot would certainly persist as the scene of all communal business and all communal ritual. The traditional wagon-stage of Thespis was in all likelihood drawn up at the entrance-way of these local circles³ for the recurrent celebration of the great deeds of the local hero, and so originated that which has to this day remained the essential plan of all theatres the world over. When Peisistratus substituted for these unrehearsed performances at the multitude of local centres one pan-Athenaic performance (the *Dionysia*) in Athens, he was but repeating the action of Theseus in regard to the *prytanea* and with precisely the same purpose, *i.e.* the suppression of all local ancestor-cults.

Greece provides one unquestionable case of a circle-moot surviving into historical times, and that is the meeting-place of the Athenian *ecclesia*, the Pnyx.

There is no saying when the Pnyx first began to be used as the place of assembly. Its precursor was the Old Agora, upon which was later built the Odeum of Herodes Atticus. This was a roofed theatre, but its ground-plan was almost

¹ Vitruvius v, i, 1, *Graeci in quadrato . . . fora constituunt.*

² If references to the circle-moot in historical Greece are few, references to *loca consecrata* of the inevitable Celtic circular plan are numerous, especially in Pausanias: II, iii, 6-7, a *περίβολος λίθων* near the river Cheimarrhus, consecrated to *Chthonic* deities; II, xxxiv, 10-11, 'enclosures of large *unbewn* stones,' sacred to Demeter *Chthonia*, near Hermion; IX, viii, 3, a small *περίβολος λίθων* 'with pillars in it' between Thebes and Potniae; IX, xix, 2, 'a place surrounded by *unbewn* stones' near Glisas (a ruined fortress of Mycenaean character). His references to open-air sanctuaries on hill-tops are many; usually they were sacred to Helios, to

Apollo, or to Demeter, but there was one *ιερόν ἐν ὑπαιθρῳ* (IX, xxxiii, 1-3) sacred to the Praxidicae on Mt. Tilphusius. Stone circles were not likely to interest a Greek, because of their lack of architectural merit. Pausanias' pages abound in references to tombs of every kind and to the customs thereto attaching, some of them the precise doubles of customs lately surviving in connexion with similar tombs (barrows, etc.) in England. Stukeley made use (*Abury*, p. 5, etc.) of some of these to support his own theories about *dracontia*, occasionally straining Pausanias' words to that end.

³ As in Italy the *circus* was the accustomed scene of the annual *exodium*. See Juvenal III, 106, and below, p. 104.

identical with that of the unroofed Dionysiac theatre, and very possibly the shape of the Old Agora suggested its being thus utilised. It lay in the usual position of an Homeric moot, close to the entrance of its community, the original *πόλις* on the Acropolis.¹ The growth of that community presently demanding a more spacious place of assembly, this was found in the Pnyx; and this latter name, of uncertain origin,² came to be the specific name of the new moot, while the name of *Agora* was applied to the intervening space between the Pnyx and the Acropolis, where was gathered most of the market-business of Athens. In this area stood the original shrine of Dionysus ('in-the-marshes') on a spot known as the Old Orchestra, upon which was later built another Odeum (of Agrippa).³

The new moot, the scene of the triumphs of the Attic Ten, lay upon the north-eastern slope of the hill of the Pnyx. The highest part of its area was on the south side, whence it fell gently away to the Agora on the north-east, its outer edge built up with a semicircular wall of polygonal stone, still standing to a height of some 15 ft., so as to secure a more nearly horizontal surface.⁴ Along the upper side the outcrop of natural rock was dressed and faced with another wall which formed at the middle point a re-entering angle of 158°, in which stood the *βῆμα*, the platform from which the speakers addressed the assembly. This was a block of natural rock shaped to a rectangular figure, which from a base of three successive steps rose to a height of some 20 ft. above the ground. The area in front of it had the figure of three-fifths of a circle, the distance from the *bema* to the edge of the area varying from 60 yards at the sides to 80 yards at the centre. The area would accommodate the whole electoral population of the city, for the floor-space was some 6,230 square

¹ Within it is thought to have stood the *Prytaneum* of the Athens of the Theseian synoecismus (Smith, *Dict. Classical Antiqs.*, II, 514a), and the *prytaneum* was the founder's tomb (Ridgeway, *Origin of Tragedy*, p. 27), or at any rate the symbol thereof.

² The name is thought to be related in some way to *πυκινός*. Is the precise reference to be seen in the phrase in *Iliad* II, 55, *πυκινὴν ἡρτύνετο βουλὴν*?

³ Harrison, *Primitive Athens*, pp. 97-8. The various parts of the Agora, where assembled the various branches of trade, were spoken of as *κύκλοι*. Of these the Old Orchestra was apparently one, and devoted to the vendors of books (Plato, *Apol.* 26 E).

⁴ The same feature is found in some of the British stone circles, *e.g.* at Cadster, near Whaley Bridge (*Memorials of Old Derbyshire*, p. 83).

yards.¹ The measurements were in fact very much the same as those of the great theatre of Epidaurus, and only slightly larger than those of the Dionysiac theatre in Athens. There were a few wooden seats in front of the *bema* for the use of privileged persons; the rest of the audience stood, or sat on the ground. The *bema* was commonly known to the Athenians merely as 'the Stone'

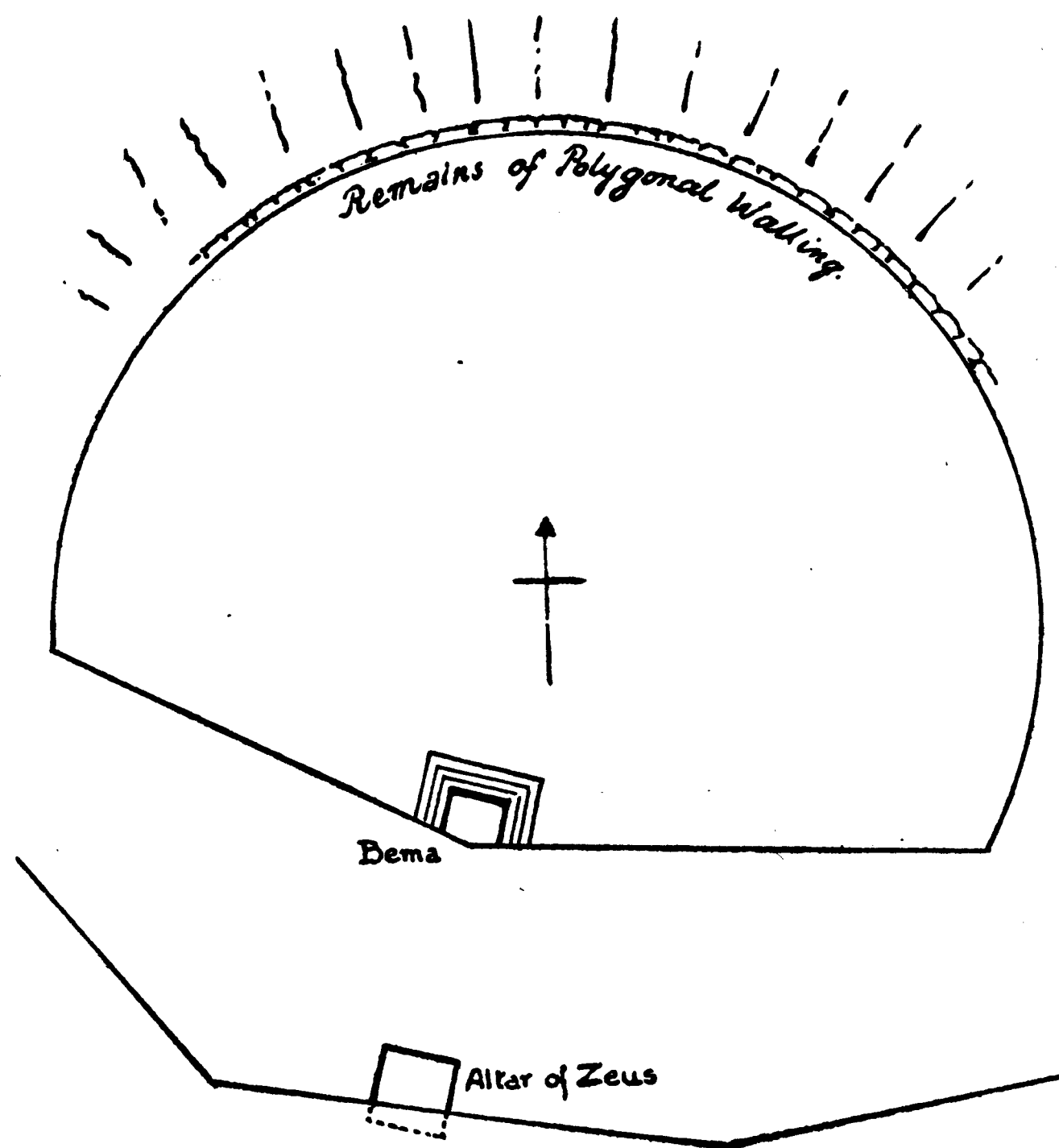


FIG. 4. DIAGRAM OF THE PNYX (FOURTH CENT. B.C.).

(ὁ λίθος), and the wall was remarkable for the 'archaic simplicity' of its construction.² The Pnyx was under the special tutelage of Zeus Agoraeus,³ whose altar stood on

¹ Dyer, *Ancient Athens*, who adds 'we have the authority of an eminent architect for saying that such an area would accommodate about 11,000 persons seated.' Gustave Fougères (*Guide Joanne*, 1911) calculates that it would hold 18,000 persons seated and more than 25,000 standing.

² Pollux, viii, 132, παλαιὰ ἀπλόγη.

³ Aristoph. *Knights*, v. 410, and Schol. thereon. In later (Roman) times, when the Pnyx was no longer used as an *agora*, this dedication was altered to Ζεὺς Ὑψιστος. It will be recalled that Zeus was an intrusive Celtic divinity, and not the general tutelary of Athens.

the summit of the rocky terrace behind the *bema*. The assemblies began at dawn and, as in the Homeric times, might not be continued after sundown. They were preceded by the sacrifice of sucking-pigs, ceremonial lustration, the burning of incense, and a form of prayer.

Curtius conducted a series of excavations on the site, of which the upshot was to prove that the whole had been reconstructed at a relatively late period. He found the original surface to have been from 14 ft. to 20 ft. below the present level, the whole area having been filled in to this depth and the semicircular retaining wall added to hold up the new floor. He satisfied himself that this wall is not of any great antiquity, its 'archaic simplicity' notwithstanding, and that it had once risen higher than now, so that the area when first remodelled may have been actually level or very nearly so. He found evidence that the earlier floor had been considerably smaller, and at the lowest point of it he found the remains of what was evidently another and earlier *bema*. The *bema* at present existing he shewed to stand on a foundation 14 ft. higher than the old floor, and to belong to the same date as the semicircular wall. This wall overlies the remains of a flight of steps leading up from the *Agora* to the older *bema*.¹

Plutarch states² that the whole arrangement of the Pnyx had been altered—that the *bema* had originally looked towards the sea, *i.e.* to the south or south-west, and that thereafter it faced in the opposite direction, *i.e.* to the north or north-east. The existing *bema* faces to the north-east, whereas that of which Curtius discovered the remains had stood at the opposite side of the area facing southward towards the sea. Thus, as Dyer urged, the evidence of the spade entirely bears out the statement of Plutarch.³

In an earlier form, therefore, the place of meeting upon the Pnyx was a sloping area facing to the north-east.

¹ An abstract of Curtius' work is given in Dyer's *Ancient Athens* (1873), appendix ii. Curtius, as Dyer shows, entirely misconstrued a great part of the evidence.

² *Vita Themistoclis*, c. 19.

³ *Ancient Athens*, pp. 470, sqq. Plutarch says the alteration was made by the Thirty Tyrants (404-403 B.C.), and supplies a reason

after his own fancy. It may not at present be possible to fix the actual date, but admittedly it was late. It is impossible to believe, with Forchhammer, Mure, and others, that no such alteration was ever made. Plutarch can scarcely have invented a tale of the kind, and Curtius' discoveries prove that it was no invention.

It was backed by the natural outcrop of rock, from the foot of which the ground fell away gently, forming a theatral area of circular plan.¹ At the lowest point was the original *bema*, so placed that the orator addressing the assembly had them ranged in front of him upon the sloping hill-side. This, as will presently appear, was precisely the arrangement in a great number of stone circles in the British Isles.² Whether there was ever on the Pnyx anything answering to the pillar-stones and other salient features of those circles, or to those of the *ἱερὸς κύκλος* of Homer, there is no means of knowing. It is impossible to prove that there was not; it is quite possible that there was.³ But Homer's own words tell us that pillar-stones such as those of the moot in Scheria were not usual and were still less essential. The essentials were simply the sacred circle of stone seats and the central *βοθρός* which was its consecration. The peculiar plan of the work on the Pnyx raises a very strong presumption that there was once something of the kind here, a circle that is, whether of stone seats only, or of these and an accompanying ring of pillar-stones. Without a doubt the *bema* or its equivalent had originally stood at the lower side of the arena, and without a doubt the whole was presently remodelled. Possibly there was no other reason for this than the fact that, when Athens was at her zenith, the earlier arrangement was found to be too confined. In its altered form the Pnyx could accommodate nearly twice as many persons as before.⁴ The *βοθρός*, it is to be noticed, seems to have been wholly eliminated.

But beneath the radical violence of the change can be traced the evidence of a lingering attachment to the older

¹ So truly theatral is the site that Wheler mistook it for the site of the Odeum of Pericles, which he believed to have been a circular building, Stuart for that of the Odeum of Herodes (the Regilla). Miss Jane Harrison speaks of it as a 'semicircular amphitheatre' (*Mythology and Monuments of Ancient Athens*, p. 109).

² When a speaker addresses an open-air assembly, his audience spontaneously arrange themselves in a circle so that the speaker's position is exactly that of the *bema* in the Pnyx; and the relation of the *bema* to the earlier Pnyx was precisely the same as that of the *scena* to the *cavea* of

the theatre, and as that of the recumbent stone or dais to the circles of Aberdeenshire (ch. viii).

³ Curtius' explorations were hindered, and at last stopped, by the enormous size of some of the blocks of stone which formed the filling of the later floor.

⁴ Most of what is known about the Pnyx, and of the *loci* for that knowledge, is summarised in Sir John Frazer's *Pausanias' Description of Greece* (1898), ii, pp. 375 sqq. He ignores, however, Plutarch's statement as to its reconstruction, nor does he seem to attach any importance to Curtius' work.

way. It is to be seen in that 'archaic simplicity' which Pollux noted, in the absence of any provision of seats for the multitude, in the ceremonies attending the opening of the assembly, in the avoidance of any roof, in the cessation of all business at sundown, and most of all in the fact that the new *βῆμα*, like the old, was still a mass of native rock. But despite all this the change entailed such consequences as are bound to follow upon any abrupt breach of an ancient tradition. The remodelled Pnyx had not the same hold upon the people as had the old one. Within a century or so it was abandoned altogether, except for electoral business, in favour of the Dionysiac theatre.

The evidence shews that through a long series of centuries the Athenians affected a moot of one and the same plan; that this plan was theatral; and that, as the growth of the community required it, they altered first the position, and then the size and other details of their moot. There was continuity in the evolution of the Pnyx, and evolution in its continuity. The point will be of importance when we come to deal with the stone circles of Britain.

There is evidence that Athens came under the influence of the dominant Achæans of the Homeric age, notably in the tradition that Achæus was the son of Xuthus, or that (as Euripides has it) Xuthus was himself an Achæan.¹ It is still more plainly implied in the famous assertion of the Spartan king Cleomenes² (508 B.C.) that he was entitled to enter the Athenian sanctuary of the Acropolis, 'because he was no Dorian, but an Achæan,' that is to say, a blood-relation of the Athenians.

The habitual tendency which led other business, and particularly that of buying and selling, to gather about the centres of municipal life and worship, explains how the term *ἀγορά* came so generally in Greece to denote a 'market-place' or 'market'; but it is clear from Aristotle³ that in some localities there was made the same distinction as certainly prevailed in Athens. Especially was it the practice amongst the Thessalians, who relegated all trade to a meeting-place of its own, the *ἀναγκαία ἀγορά*, reserving

¹ Ridgeway, *Early Age of Greece*, i, pp. 141, 151.

² Herod. v. 72.

³ *Politics* iv (vii), 12, 3 sqq.

more elevated matters for the ‘Free Agora’ (*ἀγορὰ ἐλευθέρα*)¹ though they still very properly permitted the association of this latter with athletic exercises, as had been the case in Homeric Greece.