

were thought to transmit, they represent another example of material media with a socially constructed capacity for the transmission of some manner of perhaps generic agency.

The shrine model was a more likely means of presencing deity in ancient Southwest Asia. Such shrines were ubiquitous in ancient Southwest Asia and the Mediterranean.³⁶ The only examples that have been preserved have primarily been made of clay or sometimes stone, and the models generally fall into one of three different broad types (Katz 2016): (1) closed models, which were usually rectilinear or cylindrical, closely resembling buildings or sometimes pots, jars, or pithoi; (2) *naos* models, which tended to have an opening in the front that usually included a closing door, as well as concentric recesses to suggest compartmental depth (see figs. 2.3 and 2.4); and (3) open models, which tended to be taller and to be used as offering tables or altars of some kind. Across the three types, shrine models could perform a number of different functions. In early periods, and especially in Egypt, they seem to have been intended for the deceased. Many contain soot that suggest incense and other substances were burned in or upon them. Katz (2016, 126) suggests closed cylindrical models were likely intended as containers for food intended for priests or for deities. Some interpret the shrines as containers for offerings, or even as votive offerings themselves.

A distinct presencing function is suggested by a number of *naos* models that have space inside for the placement of miniature cultic media. A Middle Bronze IIB clay shrine model discovered in Ashkelon likely housed a bronze calf figurine covered in silver plating that was discovered in the same context (fig. 2.5). Temples were not as scarce in Iron Age Israel and Judah as previously thought (Nakhai 2015, 90–101; Finkelstein 2020), but the discovery of shrine models in cultic and other contexts suggests there was a desire to localize or perhaps mobilize the access to the divine that temples were thought to facilitate. The miniaturization and localization specifically of temple space is most likely for those shrines that had large openings flanked by pillars, by lions, or by sphynxes, represented roof beams, held doors at one time, concentrically represented progression through temple spaces, and included space for the placement of a

including being stationed around the body of a sick individual.... Finally, the base of a pillar figurine might be wielded by hand during a ritual.” On a personal note, one night in 2017 while I was contemplating the apotropaic function of pillar figurines, my then-five-year-old daughter came to me and announced that she had arranged her dolls in a perimeter around her bed to protect her from monsters while she slept. Surely the intuitions undergirding these ancient practices live on.

³⁶ Shrine models have been discovered in many locations in and around Israel and Judah, including Tel Dan, Tel Rekhes, Tel Rehov, Tirzah, Megiddo, Jerusalem, Khirbet Qeiyafa, and elsewhere. See Zevit 2001, 328–43; Mazar and Panitz-Cohen 2008; Garfinkel and Mumcuoglu 2015; Mazar 2015, 36–38; Garfinkel, Ganor, and Hasel 2018, 146–55.