The dynamics of religion and politics in ancient Greece

Perachora: a case study

Simke Kamphorst MA
Master Thesis

Simke Kamphorst MA
Student number: 0977748
Master thesis for the Research master Ancient History
Universiteit Leiden
Supervisor: Dr. F.G. Naerebout
18-06-2012

Front picture: The sanctuary of Hera Akraia, the area by the harbour, viewed from the east.
Source: personal photograph.

Contents

Introduction

The polytheism of ancient Greece has often proved to form an enigmatic problem to modern scholars, as it appeared to be so radically different from their own religious concepts. Evidently the most eye-catching difference in this respect is the opposition between on the one hand the one almighty god in the Western European paradigm, in which most of the modern scholars working on Greek religion live and have lived, and the multiple gods of the Greek pantheon on the other. Additionally, there was no orthodoxy in Greek religion, in the absence of a revelation or scripture, and of a closed order of accomplished ministers, requiring a minimum of theological knowledge for admittance. As a matter of fact, orthodoxy was never attempted or even considered desirable. Each community had its own particular rules for worship, and their gods, although most of them had the same name, were slightly different in character from one town to the next. These differences were accepted and respected as a result of the relationship each individual community had with the gods.[1]

A third fundamental difference lies in the position of religion in society. In the Western world, since the Reformation Church and state have been separated as institutions to an ever increasing extent. Complete separation has been envisioned as the ideal situation since the Enlightenment and the revolutions of the 18th century, although such a state of affairs will perhaps never be fully reached. Still, this development has changed the dominant intellectual view about the position of religion in society. Religious practice has come to be regarded as an abstract and separate category of life, and religious discourse as highly private, personal, spiritual and contemplative. Conversely, Greek religion was centred around ritual practice, often performed at public occasions and accompanying all activities of daily life. The primarily religious experience of everyday life, not only on the personal level but perceptible in all aspects of society, was reflected in the pervasiveness of ritual practice in all human activities. It is in the fascination for this amalgamation of religion and society that this thesis originated.

Within the broad spectrum of that theme, in this case it was the relationship between religion and politics that drew most of the attention. The research therefore had its starting point in a closer study of the concept of the Greek *polis*. This type of community is so eminently paradigmatic for what constituted politics in the ancient Greek world, that it is indeed the etymological origin of the word we use to point out that type of action. The term polis designates the type of community that was most significant in the Greek world throughout the Archaic and Classical periods. It was a political community, centred on an urban core surrounded by a mostly modest hinterland.[2] The term city-state, although not entirely homologous, may serve as a useful heuristic concept in studying the polis.[3] Poleis had very different constitutions, be they democratic, oligarchic or tyrannical, and these could also change over time for any given polis.[4] In addition to the territorial and the political dimension, a polis should be defined in terms of its population. Citizens made up the formal polis, and as supposedly indigenous inhabitants enjoyed full participation and privileges in the community.[5] They could for instance participate in central polis rituals, or attend the assembly. Women, although no full citizens in the sense that they could not participate in

---

1 C. Sourvinou-Inwood, "What is polis religion?", in: O. Murray and S. Price (eds), The Greek city. From Homer to Alexander (Oxford 1991), 295-322, 301.
2 M.H. Hansen, "Introduction", in: M.H. Hansen and T.H. Nielsen (eds.), An inventory of Archaic and Classical poleis (Oxford 2004), 3-153, 17.
3 M.H. Hansen, Polis and city-state. An ancient concept and its modern equivalent (Copenhagen 1998), 123.
4 Hansen, "Introduction", 81.
5 Idem, 40.

politics, may be counted in as citizens nonetheless, as they are said to be represented in politics by their men. Moreover, their role in certain religious rituals, and as mothers of citizens indicate that they were considered to be citizens of a kind themselves.[6] Foreigners, or metics, were free inhabitants, but their activities were more restricted. They were free to live in the city and engage in commerce, but they could not participate in the polis' politics or public religious ritual that was particular to the polis. They could not own any landed property, and they often had to pay special taxes to the community. Finally, a considerable group of slaves must be discerned. They were unfree and had no rights whatsoever in the polis.

The polis was self-ruling, and perhaps ideally autonomous, but in practice many relationships of domination and dependence existed between poleis.[7] Otherwise, no overarching Greek state existed. 'Greekness' is entirely dependent on a perception of common identity in terms of language, culture and the way of living in a polis, that emanated from the Greek heartland of Hellas and developed gradually through interaction. The limitations of that 'Greekness' to us seem rather arbitrary, as the type of community that the polis was, the language and the culture that determined it, were not actually limited to what was articulated as the 'Greek world' by the Greeks themselves.[8] Moreover, other forms of community existed within that Greek world, most notably the *ethnos*, which was a tribal polity that could stretch over considerable regions, but which had no centre around which it was organized. Ethne were typically rather loosely organized and only acted as a whole on particular occasions. Outside those occasions, the communities that made it up were directed inwardly and went their own way.[9]

In ancient texts, no clear definition of the concept of polis is ever given. The word *polis* may have its roots in the Mycenaean period, where an etymologically related word can be found in the Linear B tablets. The meaning of this word, *po-to-ri-jo*, is however unknown. Other connected meanings can be found in India and the Baltic, in words that designate fortified settlements. Possibly *polis*, and the related *akropolis* certainly, originally meant fortified (hilltop) settlement, and the meaning of *polis* gradually developed to designate the now familiar type of urban, territorial and political community of citizens by the early Archaic period. The earliest instances where we find the word polis used in this sense in written texts all date from the middle of the 7th century BC.[10] At that time however, the development of the polis itself as an institution had been ongoing perhaps for several centuries already. To this point we will return later. The heyday of the polis certainly was in the Classical period, when it was sometimes perceived as the only possible and respectable way of life in the Greek world.

---

[6] The debate on inclusiveness of women in the ancient concept of citizenship is discussed in B.E. Goff, *Citizen Bacchae: women's ritual practice in ancient Greece* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 2004). The subject is extensively treated by J.H. Blok, most notably in "Recht und Ritus der Polis. Zu Bürgerstatus und Geschlechtsverhältnissen im klassischen Athen", *HZ* 278 (2004), 1-26.

[7] M.H. Hansen, "The 'autonomous city-state'. Ancient fact or modern fiction?", in: M.H. Hansen and K. Raaflaub (eds.), *Studies in the Ancient Greek Polis*, *Papers of the Copenhagen Polis Centre* 2 (Stuttgart 1995), 21-43.

[8] J.M. Hall, *Hellenicity* (Chicago and London 2002) deals entirely with the development of 'Greek' identity.

[9] J.M. Hall, "Polis, community and ethnic identity", in: H. A. Shapiro (ed.), *A Cambridge companion to Archaic Greece* (Cambridge 2007), 40-61, 49-53.

[10] Hansen, "Introduction", 17. The texts mentioned here: M.L. West (ed.), *Iambi et elegi Graeci ante Alexandrum cantati, Volumen I: Archilochos, Hipponax, Theognidea* (2nd edition, Oxford 1989) Archilochos Fr. 228; M.L. West (ed.) *Iambi et elegi Graeci ante Alexandrum cantati, Volumen II: Callinus, Mimnermus, Semonides, Solon, Tyrtaeus, Minora adespota* (2nd edition, Oxford 1989) Tyrtaios Fr. 4.4; R. Meiggs and D.M. Lewis (eds.), *A selection of Greek historical inscriptions to the end of the fifth century B.C.* (Oxford 1996), no. 2.1-2 (oldest inscribed Greek law, from Dreros, Crete).

From the Hellenistic period onwards, the status of the polis changed, due to the changing political configuration of the Greek world. The Classical world of the polis was largely incorporated in the Macedonian kingdom, turning all poleis into dependent polities. Although self-rule was mostly preserved for the conduct of internal affairs, the powerful days of the hegemonic polis were over.[11] The polis as a form of community continued to exist under hegemonic rule, first of the Macedonians and their manifold heirs, and subsequently of the Romans. Most importantly for this research, significant changes occurred in religion in the Hellenistic period. In addition to the traditional Olympic gods and local heroes, in the fourth century BC a tendency towards deified abstract concepts, such as democracy or fate, was already visible. Moreover, from 338 onwards, Macedonian and subsequently Roman rulers were deified and received cults in many of the poleis.[12] The lifespan then of the polis as reconstructed here is usually demarcated by its so-characterized emergence by the end of the Dark Ages, that is the late 9th and early 8th centuries BC, a starting point which is much debated as we shall see. The transformation of the concept polis in the Hellenistic period is generally regarded as to constitute a definitive break with its original meaning. We should not forget however that within that lifespan the polis itself and its conceptualization were in constant flux and development as well.

The centrality of the polis in any research into the political history of Greece is warranted by its conspicuous presence in ancient writing. The Greeks used all kinds of derivatives of *polis* to speak about political action.[13] This indicates that any such action was considered to be eminently appropriate to the institutional environment of the polis. One's political identity was entirely defined by the polis to which one belonged. Among all the forms of community that were known to the Greeks, the polis was deemed to be the most respectable and advanced, as is put forward, among others, by Aristotle on several occasions.[14] For the purpose of this research, the polis is an important starting point, exactly because of its pre-eminence in political thought and action. Moreover, the religious dimension arises from literature as an integral aspect of the ancient conception of the polis. Thucydides describes how the countrymen of Attica had to leave their houses and sanctuaries to move to the city of Athens. He relates how they felt almost as if they were leaving their polis.[15] This passage may be explained as if they felt that Athens was not their polis, and they were much more attached to their local demes. However, from a broader perspective, we may infer that Thucydides perceived of the polis as not only people, but also as houses, and most importantly sanctuaries. From Lykourgos' speech *Against Leokrates* the same view emerges: the polis is equated with its laws, with fatherland, and also with its sanctuaries.[16]

In recent scholarship on the polis, however, the role of religion has been greatly downplayed. In 1993, a research centre devoted to the study of the polis in all its appearances was set up in Copenhagen, known as the Copenhagen Polis Centre. A broad range of excellent scholars in classics, archaeology, history, anthropology, etc., set out to investigate the polis as its ancient concept, as a social phenomenon in comparison to similar communities in other cultures and periods, and in its historical appearance in the form of individual poleis. Part of the project was aimed at the abstraction of both conceptual and concrete defining characteristics of the polis in general from literature, combined with archaeological finds from urban centres known to be poleis. The resulting features were tested against all known poleis, and subsequently used to establish polis status for communities otherwise not defined as such,

---

[11] M.H. Hansen, "The 'autonomous city-state'", 41.
[12] Hansen, "Introduction", 10-11, 20.
[13] Idem, 12.
[14] E.g. Aristotle, *Politeia* 1.1251a, 1.1252b, 1.1253a.
[15] Thucydides, 2.16.2.
[16] Lykourgos, *Against Leokrates*, 1.1 explicitly states this connection, but it is pervasive throughout the speech.

known from either literary or archaeological sources or both. During more than 10 years of research, the Centre published its work in progress in 15 volumes of papers, finally culminating in 2004 in an inventory of Archaic and Classical poleis.[17]

This inventory contains 1035 poleis that can be identified as poleis with some certainty at some point between the early Archaic and the beginning of the Hellenistic period, and a multitude of communities that may or may not be poleis, but for which evidence is inconclusive or simply lacking. In the introduction to the inventory, the director and undoubtedly the most prolific member of the Polis Centre, Mogens Herman Hansen summarizes the most important conclusions of the project. All contributions to the conceptual understanding of polis are mentioned in these 150 pages. However, the religious dimension of the polis receives a meagre 4 pages, in which Hansen states explicitly that religion, although a very important aspect of the polis, can very well be detached from the political component and therefore remains largely unexplored in the project.[18] One of the aims of this thesis is to demonstrate why this choice is essentially unjustifiable.

From the Western perspective as already sketched, this intertwining of religion with political concerns seems to be rather awkward. If we add the flexibility of Greek religion to the equation, the situation may even be considered perverse, for manipulation seems an inevitable result. Politicians may abuse religion at will to legitimate their unpopular decisions, serving their own interests best. A famous example often adduced to demonstrate that this is not merely ill-founded modern suspicion, is Herodotos' account of Peisistratos' return to Athens after his first exile.[19] Peisistratos entered the city, standing on a chariot and accompanied by a woman called Phye. Phye was tall and beautiful, and on top of that, she was dressed up as Athena. Herodotos expresses his surprise at the silliness of the Greeks in this case, apparently because they actually believed that the woman was Athena, and that she was the one who fully supported Peisistratos' return. Herodotos' comments are taken to be a sign that this was a case of vulgar delusion of the masses, a scene entirely fabricated to mislead them into accepting Peisistratos' rehabilitation.[20]

Another great example of supposed manipulation on an even larger scale are the institutional reforms issued by Kleisthenes in the year 508/507 BC. The old subdivision of the Attic population into 4 tribes apparently had become inadequate. Kleisthenes devised a new and intricate system of tiers of subdivisions, the smallest being the 139 *demes*, distributed over 30 *trittyes*. Every three trittyes formed one of ten *phylai*, the new tribes, in a way that every tribe consisted of one *trittus* from the city, one from the countryside, and one from the coast. Each of the new tribes was provided with an eponymous hero, chosen from a long-list of hundred candidates by the oracle of Delphi. It is said that these heroes, and the involvement of the oracle by Kleisthenes formed a cover-up for his actual motives for the reform, because the introduction of democratic government that was linked to the new tribes ensured that his rivals could never again become as powerful as they had been before.[21] As might be already expected however, motivations and practices in these situations are much more nuanced then sketched above. Religion was not simply an instrument that could be cynically used to have one's own way, for that would suggest a great deal of naivety on the part of the masses, while only a small group, those in political power, were 'enlightened', so to speak. The goal of this research is to offer an alternative view, based both on a critical assessment of selected

---

[17] M.H. Hansen and T.H. Nielsen (eds.), *An inventory of Archaic and Classical poleis* (Oxford 2004).

[18] Hansen, "Introduction", 130-131.

[19] Herodotos i 60.2-5.

[20] W.R. Connor, "Tribes, festivals and processions; civic ceremonial and political manipulation in Archaic Greece", *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 107 (1987), 40-50, n.12.

[21] Sourvinou-Inwood, "What is polis religion?", 310-311.

scholarly theory on the subject, and on the examination of a case, demonstrating how the conclusions of these theoretical approaches may turn out in practice.

Two approaches will be closely examined. The first, a doctoral thesis by François de Polignac, first published in 1984, explicitly treats border sanctuaries, designated as extra-urban sanctuaries. In his theory, de Polignac assigns these sanctuaries an instrumental role in the so-called emergence of the polis, which he dates to the early 8th century BC. The theory is highly imaginative, but it has been rightly criticized for shortcomings, both in itself, and due to the restrictions of the general framework of Structuralism, the theoretical current from which it originated. In the first chapter both the theory and its criticisms will be discussed. An alternative theory, although not completely different from de Polignac's, is mainly represented by Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood. She coined the term 'polis religion' in her seminal article "What is polis religion?", published in 1991, in which she covered essentially the relationship between the polis as a political institution, and its religion. Since then, her model has been elaborated, adjusted and nuanced on several points. In the second chapter of this thesis, 'polis religion' as a model will be considered. The third chapter is a comparative assessment of both theories, identifying the valuable elements of either, and suggesting some adaptations.

In the second part, the case of the sanctuary of Hera Akraia on the Perachora peninsula will be discussed. As it appears from the archaeological record, this sanctuary first originated around the beginning of the 8th century, in a border area between the poleis of Korinth and Megara. For de Polignac, it is one of the exemplary sanctuaries he uses to show how the organizing principles of his model work. In this discussion however, it is demonstrated that a rather different dynamic may actually be at work, which can be explained more adequately in terms of the adapted polis religion model.

1   The rise of religion and the emergence of the polis

An important French approach to religion in Antiquity, that dominated this field in France in the second half of the 20th century is that of the Structuralist school. François de Polignac in 1984 published his doctoral thesis *La naissance de la cité grecque*[22], which was an unmistakable product of this current of thought. In this work, de Polignac attributed a dominant role to religion in the development of the polis as an institution in the early Archaic period. The intimate connection he suggests implies that religion was the single most important factor in political developments. Therefore, de Polignac's theory has to be critically assessed for the model of interactions it offers for the early Archaic period, because dynamics of later periods subsequently may have built on it.

1.1   The bi-polar city

The emergence of the polis has been and still is a much debated topic among scholars. The material used to support opinions in this debate has been derived from very different sources, very much according to contemporary scholarly fashion. Most 19th and early 20th century scholarship on this development has followed the model proposed by Aristotle. According to that model, at some point in the past, smaller family groups joined together to form larger communities. In the process, the traditional kings and heads of family as personal authorities were replaced by general law. All social, cultural and political institutions that had previously existed in the smaller family-groups got absorbed into the new society. In terms of religion, the cults of subgroups were integrated in the larger community, and became subordinate to the cult of a chosen patron deity. The patron deity replaced the king as the protector of justice and order.. As such, this deity resided in the physical centre of the new community.[23] The veracity of this model was not questioned until very late, but eventually textual criticism identified Aristotle's propositions as an ideology of state formation rather than as a historical account of the process. Archaeologists as well doubted the use of Aristotle's model to describe what really happened.[24]

De Polignac's thesis developed as a result of this reassessment of the archaeological material. It built on the observation that some notable changes occurred in the archaeological record of the early Archaic period, pertaining to material of religious character. De Polignac assumed that this shift signifies a change in the importance of religion for Greek society. He explained how three developments, visible in the archaeological record, stand out. First, apart from a few large sites, no sacrificial deposits have been found in purely religious contexts for the period prior to the 8th century. Conversely, from the 8th century onward, ever larger and richer deposits can be found outside funerary or settlement sites, of which votives, especially crafted for the purpose of dedication, constitute an important part. Other items are animal remains, pottery and cooking pots used for banquets, and from the 7th century, weapons. Second, deposits at graves, common before the 8th century, gradually diminished in favour of the new deposits in cult-like contexts. Thirdly, de Polignac maintained that from early in the 8th century onwards, a monumental architecture developed for buildings central to cults, which

---

[22] This section is for a large part based on that doctoral thesis. It first appeared in French: F. de Polignac, *La naissance de la cité grecque* (Paris 1984). It was translated into English by Janet Lloyd, who did several translations of important works of the great Structuralists Pierre Vidal Naquet, Jean-Pierre Vernant, and Marcel Detienne. For this translation de Polignac entirely revised and updated his text, and Claude Mossé, his supervisor at the Centre Louis Gernet, wrote the preface. It appeared under the title F. de Polignac, *Cults, territory and the origins of the Greek city-state* (Chicago and London 1995).
[23] Aristotle, *Politeia* 1.1252b.
[24] J.K. Davies, "The 'Origins of the Greek polis'. Where should we be looking?", in: L.G. Mitchell and P.J. Rhodes (eds.), *The development of the polis in Archaic Greece* (London and New York 1997), 24-38, 26.

distinguished them from common houses, and also increasingly from banqueting-halls formerly associated with rites. These temples were erected on demarcated cult-sites, often where the sacrificial deposits had already designated the area as reserved for religious purposes. De Polignac also assigned the development of the first stone altars to this period, as well as the erection of *temenos*-walls or boundary stones around sanctuaries, to define sacred space within the human realm.[25]

De Polignac linked the perceived development of these cult-sites to increasing contact between peoples from the 10th century onwards. The earliest of these locations developed at points in rural areas where semi-nomadic pastoral groups frequently met to exchange food, goods, information, and brides. According to de Polignac, exchange at these sites intensified through demographic growth in the period under consideration. The growth of the population presumably increased pressure on the land, and cultivation became more and more important in addition to nomadic pastoralism. On the one hand, contact and deliberation at those meeting points therefore must have become increasingly necessary to keep peace among several peoples dwelling in the same region and claiming the land for permanent settlement.[26]

On the other hand, these smaller groups would have tended to join into larger, settled communities to cope together with outside pressure on the land. As an answer to these pressures, the aristocrats of these newly formed communities allegedly stood together in the hoplite phalanx, a tactical invention de Polignac ascribed to this period. This hoplite formation was much more effective in the defence of land than the older man-to-man battles and raids, aimed at short term gain of animals and carry-on valuables. As such, the assumed emergence of hoplite warfare in the 8th century according to de Polignac testifies to an important change of interest for communities towards securing land for their members. The community itself, increasingly concerned with agriculture and storage more than with pasturage and hunting, settled in the most favourable location within the territory. This settlement would gradually develop into an urban core, surrounded by smaller villages and farms, and as such it constituted the centre from which control over the territory was organized. Thus, to return to the invention of hoplite warfare, according to de Polignac it is one of the first signs of a radically new conception in the Archaic period of a given geographical space appropriated by a settled community, as delineated territory.[27]

Along with a changing attitude towards space in general, de Polignac stated that a new conception of sacred space came into being. The sanctuary with its monumental architecture and clear boundaries, he found, marks both the inclusiveness of the sacred space in the human realm, and its status apart from it, whereas before no distinction was made between everyday living space and reserved space for cultic practices. Through the conceptualization of sacred as separate from human space, it could become a place of mediation between human and divine worlds: it was part of both but belonged to neither. However, for such an enterprise as the building of a monumental temple, wealth and centralized power were required. Both of these were increasingly concentrated in settled communities in the 8th century. De Polignac stressed the collective investment a community put into the building of a temple, and thus its demonstration of pride of itself. This effect was reciprocal: by arousing this pride in its users, the temple strengthened the sense of inclusiveness of those who belonged to the community. The erection of a temple by a community therefore constituted the appropriation of the cult and the sacred space attached to it, by that community. De Polignac gave four types of sanctuary: those on an akropolis, those in the agora, sanctuaries on the edge of the urban area (suburban or peri-urban) and those at a considerable distance of the centre (extra-urban). In

---

[25] De Polignac, *The origins of the Greek city-state*, 11-20.
[26] Idem, 38-39.
[27] Idem, 48-49.

the early Archaic period, he remarked that the developing sanctuaries surprisingly often belonged to this last category.[28]

De Polignac contended that the extra-urban sanctuaries were built first, according to deliberate choice, whereas those in the centre developed later and organically, out of domestic cults. It has been suggested that the extra-urban cults were hold-overs of Mycenaean religious practices, especially revered for their antiquity, but de Polignac dismissed this explanation. Many of these cult-sites he conceded were indeed built on Mycenaean ruins; this does not always indicate continuity of religious practices however, as these ruins were mostly habitations, and had been deserted during the so-called Dark Ages. Some cult-sites seem to have been deliberately chosen to suggest great antiquity, but as this type is hardly prolific, (suggested) antiquity cannot explain why the extra-urban sanctuaries became more important than others.[29]

According to de Polignac, they were located on a spot that was visible from the entire urban settlement, but near or on the boundary of the territory. The territory was thus marked by two poles: the urban centre and the sanctuary near or on the border. The sanctuary, as an achievement by the community and a meeting point for all the inhabitants, strengthened the unity of the community. The procession from the centre to the peripheral sanctuary both symbolized this unity, and made it tangible in the act of communal celebration. The form of the procession and its corresponding festivities reflected the hierarchic order of the community and actively reconfirmed it. The fact, as perceived by de Polignac, that territory, community and common identity were articulated for the first time in the extra-urban sanctuaries signifies that the people participating in these cults were actually aware of these concepts. Consequently, the appearance of the extra-urban sanctuaries and their festivities should be presumed to signify the very moment at which these concepts were effectively conceived.[30]

De Polignac conceived of both the emergence of the hoplite phalanx and the developments in the religious context as marked discontinuities with the preceding periods, which evidently occurred simultaneously. Therefore, he assumed they had to be linked together as part of a much larger discontinuity. Thus, their concert appearance according to de Polignac can be used as a definitive sign of the emergence of *polis*, in its Classical sense, as a meaningful concept in the minds of 8th century BC Greeks about their community and its territory. He defines the emergence of the polis as the formalization of social coherence alongside the process of defining a territory. At the beginning of this process, religion had been the cohesive force that brought groups together when tensions between them increased due to population growth. It retained that function in the newly formed poleis, where it also demarcated the community's territory that had been secured through innovative hoplite warfare. Extra-urban sanctuaries were functionally opposed to the urban sanctuaries that developed shortly afterwards, and which marked the decision-taking centre of the polis. De Polignac posited this as the bi-polar model of the polis, central to his thesis, and to which Athens formed the only important exception.[31]

---

[28] Idem, 24-25.
[29] Idem, 29.
[30] Idem, 40.
[31] Idem, 81.

1.2   Rise of the polis

De Polignac conceived of the coming into being of the polis as a veritable birth, a phenomenon that appeared within a short period of time. As he sees it, the development was initiated when several groups of nomadic people were drawn closer together into one community, within a geographical space more or less demarcated by natural boundaries, through demographic pressure. Religion, and especially the extra-urban sanctuary were instrumental in forming and articulating the unity of the community on a symbolic level, and expressing certain boundaries to the territory on a physical level. The combination of the symbolic and the physical aspect in the sanctuary tied the community to the territory.

In the process as described, these aspects must have been closely intertwined, but de Polignac did not explain too much about the internal dynamics of community formation. It is not clear when and how contacts between different groups were initiated, and in what way these relationships were maintained. In de Polignac's model, this role was given to the elites of the groups concerned, who subsequently decided to rule the community in an oligarchic fashion, apparently without any trouble. This scenario lacks any signs of individual aristocrats trying to dominate the others in a monarchic fashion, causing struggles for power among them, a course that might be expected considering the original organization of the family groups of which the new community was composed. Similarly, the people who did not belong to the traditional ruling elite will not always have subsided to the authority of the elite. Internal struggles and signs of disunity were left out of de Polignac's account altogether.[32]

Evidently, if any such conflicts did occur, they must have been solved by the time the extra-urban sanctuaries according to de Polignac were erected, as he asserted that an enterprise such as the building of a temple could only be accomplished by a community with a central authority strong enough to command considerable manpower and financial means.[33] As for that matter, for the establishment of an effective hoplite phalanx, internal conflicts and distrust had to be resolved to a certain extent as well. Thus, the appearance of both the hoplite phalanx and the extra-urban sanctuaries must have lagged at least some time behind the formation of a community with a central authority and some sense of shared identity to be able to fulfil the role de Polignac assigned to them.[34]

However, the first signs of a fully developed hoplite phalanx, depicted on vases, are mostly dated around 650 BC, a date which de Polignac appears to accept.[35] It seems hardly plausible that the appearance of hoplite warfare signifies a changed concept of space and territory, when the result of that changed concept, the polis, had been evolving for the past 150 years already, according to de Polignac's own argument.[36] Hall also refutes de Polignac's claim that extra-urban sanctuaries were designed to mark a new concept of territorial borders datable to the 8th century BC. For the cases mentioned by de Polignac as most salient in this respect, some evidence to the contrary can be adduced. Firstly the temple at Isthmia has now been dated before the actual establishment of the polis to which it belonged. Also, the sanctuary for Hera on Samos appears to be the focus of 'international' more than local concern. Finally, the Heraion at Argos, according to de Polignac the example par excellence of a border sanctuary

---

[32] K.-W. Welwei, "de Polignac, La naissance de la cité grecque", *Gnomon* 59 (1987), 456-458, 457.

[33] Idem, 458. De Polignac, *The origins of the Greek city-state*, 49.

[34] In fact it can even be said that de Polignac ironically actually needs some form of the polis to be already in place, to semantically legitimate his use of the term 'extra-urban'.

[35] A.M. Snodgrass, *Early Greek armour and weapons from the end of the Bronze Age to 600 B.C.* (Edinburgh 1964), 202; De Polignac, *The origins of the Greek city-state*, 48-49.

[36] H. van Wees, "The Homeric way of war: The *Iliad* and the hoplite phalanx (II)", *Greece & Rome* 41-2 (1994) 131-155, most notably his conclusions.

appropriated by Argos at the very point it conceived of itself as a polis, was in fact shared by Argos, Mykenai, Tyrins and Midea, at least until the middle of the 5th century.[37]

Indeed, the rise of the polis has been a much debated issue in the disciplines of ancient history and archaeology alike, concerned with both the dating, and with the process itself. Victor Ehrenberg in 1937 was the first in his treatment of the question in his article 'When did the *polis* rise?'.[38] His assessment of the date of birth of the polis in the early 8th century was based entirely on evidence drawn from Homer and Hesiod.[39] Since then, fuel for the debate has been expanded by a significant increase in archaeological material, and a commendable tendency in both the historical and the archaeological discipline to borrow from one another, in order to reach a more comprehensive view.[40] This has resulted broadly in two diverging opinions, the one holding on to the emergence of the polis as datable, not exactly as an event, but as a swift and recognizable development that took at the most 50 to 100 years, to be located around the middle of the 8th century. Adherents to the second view assess the development of the polis as a very gradual process, for some stretching back as far as the 2nd millennium BC, and continuing until the eventual disappearance of the polis with the rise of Christianity. The 8th-century developments are asserted as an acceleration of trends that subsequently transformed Greek communal life towards the concept of polis as it was held in the Classical period. This latter view seems rightly to have gained ground more recently.

Rise of the polis: discontinuity of the 8th century BC

Proponents of a datable rise of the polis have adduced several arguments that picture the 8th century as a period of discontinuity, as does de Polignac. The preceding period is commonly referred to as the Dark Age, stretching roughly from 1100 BC, following the collapse of the Mycenaean palaces, to the early to mid-8th century. This period was once called the Dark Age, because very little was known about it. Archaeological research yielded very little material from this period, and even the basic writing known from the Linear B tablets was entirely absent from the finds. Initially therefore, the Dark Age was largely ignored. Once archaeologists showed renewed interest and moreover wielded more sophisticated methods and theories, these centuries appeared to be a very difficult and gloomy era, whence the name Dark Age seemed to be appropriate after all.

Apart from the obvious disappearance of the highly sophisticated palaces of the Mycenaean world, along with its scriptural system for palatial accounts, several aspects seem to have affected the quality of life in the Dark Ages according to this view. Population rates declined sharply, as can be discerned both from the number of graves from the period and the abandonment of settlements. Moreover, the skeletons found in those graves were smaller and ages at death lower than in preceding and ensuing periods, indicating that people's heights and life expectancy were perhaps affected by malnourishment. By contrast, the 8th century showed a dramatic rise in the number of graves, partly but certainly not wholly accountable through a change in burial practice. Additionally, the humans buried in them were considerably taller and of a higher age at death. This suggests that the population started to grow again, perhaps caused by beneficial climatological changes around this period.[41] The

---

[37] J.M. Hall, *A history of the Archaic Greek world. Ca. 1200-479 BCE* (Oxford 2007), 87. Cf. J.M. Hall, "How Argive was the 'Argive' Heraion? The political and cultic geography of the Argive plain, 900-400 B.C.", *AJA* 99 (1995), 577-613.

[38] V. Ehrenberg, "When did the *polis* rise?", *JHS* 57 (1937), 147-159.

[39] Hall, *A history of the Archaic Greek world,* 67.

[40] A.M. Snodgrass, "Archaeology and the study of the Greek city", in: J. Rich and A. Wallace-Hadrill (eds.), *City and country in the Ancient* world (London and New York 1991), 1-23, reprinted in: A.M. Snodgrass, *Archaeology and the emergence of Greece* (Ithaca NY 2006), 269-289, 270.

[41] I. Morris, "The Eighth century revolution", in: K. Raaflaub and H. van Wees (eds.), *A companion to Archaic Greece* (Malden and Oxford 2009), 65-80, 66.

increase in population triggered other developments that have been noted. Communities expanded, in terms of both the density of habitation within, and the size of the area of arable land they controlled.[42] Connected to this early urbanization, houses gradually became larger, and artisanal production was of a higher quality than before, because the concentration of settlement caused increasing wealth, safety and specialization.[43]

Finally, very much in accord with de Polignac's views, a religious transformation is assumed to have taken place in the 8th century, recognizable through a sudden shift from dedicating armour as grave gifts to putting up crafted items as dedications in public sanctuaries, along with a nascent tendency to monumentalize those sanctuaries. Both developments have been claimed to reflect a turn from individual towards communal concerns, that arose from the development of a new type of community: the polis.[44] As in de Polignac's thesis, this development was seen as an immediate result of population pressures. Local chiefs were inclined to work together to keep their communities from being superseded by aggressive neighbours. Gradually this cooperation would institutionalize and consolidate in the polis.

Rise of the polis: reaching back into the Dark Ages

In 1985, only months after de Polignac's dissertation was first published in France, a monograph appeared by Henri van Effenterre, tracing back the origins of the polis to at least the 2nd millennium BC.[45] His book being printed just slightly later than de Polignac's, van Effenterre managed to include some friendly criticism of the former, stating that to search for the birth of the polis is simply asking the wrong question.[46] And he was not the first to de-emphasize discontinuity of the Dark Age. Carol Thomas alluded to the point in a comparative analysis of five city-state cultures in 1981, while Nicholas Coldstream had characterized the 9th century as a period of consolidation of the polis in 1977.[47]

Today a modest continuity is supposed for the centuries between the Mycenaean and Archaic periods. Catherine Morgan denies a sharp decline of the Greek population at the beginning of the Dark Age, ascribing this 'artefact of archaeological research' to a faulty interpretation of the arbitrarily preserved material.[48] Many regional centres remained in use and settlements previously under the control of a Mycenaean-type palace even may have expanded after the collapse of the palatial system. This undermines the notion of a substantial increase of the population in the 8th century, as many of the people counted as increment by Snodgrass and Morris were in fact already there according to Morgan. In support, Jonathan Hall points to the continued occupation of several important settlement centres, such as Athens and Argos, throughout the Dark Age, before they developed into the Classical type of polis as we know them best.[49]

Morgan also notes that important regional religious centres, marked as new to the 8th century BC by de Polignac, had actually started to develop much earlier, some as early as the 10th century BC. She points out that ritual activity was often staged in ruler's dwellings on the one hand, and on the other, sanctuaries were also frequented as economic centres, with veritable

---

[42] A.M. Snodgrass, "Interaction by design: the Greek city state", in: C. Renfrew and J.F. Cherry (eds.), *Peer polity interaction and socio-political change* (Cambridge 1986), 47-58, reprinted in: A.M. Snodgrass, *Archaeology and the emergence of Greece* (Ithaca NY 2006), 234-257, 241-242. Morris, "The Eighth century revolution", 68.

[43] Morris, "The Eighth century revolution", 68.

[44] Snodgrass, "Archaeology and the study of the Greek city", 283-284.

[45] H. van Effenterre, *La cité grecque. Des origines à la défaite de Marathon* (Paris 1985).

[46] Van Effenterre, *La cité grecque*, 298.

[47] C.G. Thomas, "The Greek polis", in: C.G. Thomas and R. Griffeth (eds.), *The city-state in five cultures* (Santa Barbara and Oxford 1981), 31-69, 32-35; N. Coldstream, *Geometric Greece* (London 1977), 367.

[48] C.A. Morgan, "The Early Iron Age", in: K. Raaflaub and H. van Wees (eds.), *A companion to Archaic Greece* (Malden and Oxford 2009), 43-63, 46.

[49] Hall, *A history of the Archaic Greek world*, 72.

(seasonal) settlements of craftsmen and merchants arising around them. That way, the sacred is very hard to distinguish from the secular for the archaeologist; it may have existed, but it just does not stand out from the remains.[50] Moreover, based on this coalescence with large houses, both Morgan and Hall doubt that a communal sentiment or even joint venture was a precondition for monumental temples to be built. They rather suggest that early temples might as well have been individual projects in a competition for status.[51] The fact that some of those earliest temples have been found in areas from which poleis in later periods are notably absent ultimately renders a positive link between temple building and polis formation highly improbable.[52] Additionally, from new finds we know now that votive deposits occurred throughout the Dark Age as well.[53] Morgan therefore considers it unlikely that the perceived shift in dedicatory practice and temple building, that according to de Polignac reflected a new sense of community, was more than an acceleration of already common practices.[54]

Therefore, although Hall assumes slightly worse conditions for the period than Morgan does, the conclusions drawn are similar: the Dark Age was not as dark as it is normally depicted, and thus, its contrast to the 8th century as an age of revolution has been too heavily exaggerated.[55] The beneficial circumstances for the birth of a type of community as the polis have thus been much reduced. Instead, Hall indicates that communities had been developing ever since the Mycenaean period, towards what we know now as the polis.[56] He explains how several developments in the Dark Age should be assessed with regard to the development of the polis itself. For the urban aspect of the polis, it is conceded that very many of the poleis known from later periods never qualified as 'urban' by modern definitions. Conceivable material signs of urbanization, such as the building of fortification walls were not common practice for poleis in later periods either, leaving us with the unsatisfactory conclusion that we cannot know whether Dark Age settlements qualified as urban centres. Therefore, it is rather uneasy to state that urbanization took off in the 8th century, when this did not apply to most of the settlements.

To summarize, the scholarly debate tends towards a view of the development of the polis as a gradual process, of which strands are perceptible throughout the Dark Age. Indeed, the historically known lifespan of the word polis to designate communities, well into the centuries AD, shows that the concept of polis never stopped changing. The search for the exact beginnings of the type of community as it was conceived of in the Classical period is therefore an utterly a-historical enterprise. Moreover, every known polis went through its own formative stages, heyday and decline, at different times and in different ways. Although interaction between communities may have brought about certain uniformities and a sense of belonging together in the long term, it is still true, as Davies stated, that 'no one model for the 'rise of the polis' can possibly be valid'.[57] Finally, the discontinuities adduced by de Polignac as signs of that rise cannot have been related to such a development, both because of his invalid reasoning and for matters of chronology. The model of a bi-polar city as a device to date the birth of the polis may therefore be rejected. A second explanatory dimension of the model however may be useful in the context of this research.

---

[50] Morgan, "The Early Iron Age", 50.
[51] Idem, 62; Hall, *A history of the Archaic Greek world*, 86.
[52] Hall, *A history of the Archaic Greek world*, 86.
[53] Morgan, "The Early Iron Age", 53-54
[54] Hall, *A history of the Archaic Greek world*, 85.
[55] Idem, 62-65; Morgan, "The Early Iron Age", 43.
[56] Hall, *A history of the Archaic Greek world*, 41; Hall, "Polis, community, and ethnic identity", 45.
[57] Davies, "The 'Origins of the Greek polis'", 25.

1.3   Structuralism

De Polignac envisaged the extra-urban sanctuaries that developed in the 8th century as formative of the social integrity of the emerging polis. However, it was not just the mechanism of participation in the rites that he thought created a sense of identity and unity among the participants. The actual functions of the deities worshipped and the celebrations themselves were also instrumental in the forging of solidarity within the community. De Polignac claimed that the extra-urban sanctuary marked the transition of the ordered agrarian countryside to the wild uncultivated land that still fell just within the borders of the territory of that particular community. The contrast between cultivated and uncultivated land had increased through agriculture and settlement, and the dividing line between them was marked by the extra-urban sanctuary. To de Polignac, it expressed the difference between the orderly inside of the area, and the wild and unordered world outside of it.[58]

Both worlds were essential in the survival of the human community, the wild functioning as a counterweight to the ordered world. It showed the exact opposite: wild promiscuity vs. marriage and regulated procreation; non-institutionalized violence vs. sacrifice; unmediated relationships between men and gods vs. demarcated sanctuaries; cannibalism vs. domestication of animals and plants, intended for both consumption and sacrifice. The sanctuary assured safe communication between these worlds. It was erected to invite the deity to mediate between this wild land and the community that wanted to appropriate it. The deity that was worshipped in the sanctuary thus was given a role in defining the territory. In addition to the opposition ordered-wild in terms of nature, an opposition between societies, the self and the other, the civilized and the barbarian is involved here: the land was appropriated at the cost of other societies that might benefit from its use.[59]

De Polignac pointed to the fact that specific deities appeared to have had their own preferred location: Athena on the akropolis, Hera and Artemis in extra-urban sanctuaries. Apollo was worshipped both in central urban locations and in extra-urban sanctuaries.[60] In the distribution of sanctuaries for specific deities within a polis, de Polignac saw a systematic articulation of the functions of the territory. Each of them added to the identity of the polis as a whole, helping inhabitants to understand the role of its parts. The extra-urban sanctuaries thus were particularly important for the formation of a unified identity, because they contrasted inside to outside, both for those within and those without the territory. The deities that were worshipped in extra-urban sanctuaries by their nature explained the function of the sanctuary in that location.

Here, de Polignac proved himself to be a true exponent of the Structuralist current in ancient history, although he did not explicitly adduce its theoretical components. Structuralism had been borrowed indirectly from the discipline of Linguistics. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Ferdinand de Saussure was the first to formulate it as a theoretical approach to the structure of language He had characterized the semiotic system of languages on two basics. First, each meaning within a language is determined by the collection of its oppositions to and distinctions from other meanings in the system. This implies coherence of the system, as no meaning can be formulated independently from any others. Consequently, as all elements can be known, a coherent system is also bounded. Second, for the system to be useful, indeed, to exist at all, its premises need to be shared by a group of people, who can understand each others utterances exactly because they share its underlying linguistic structure and meaning.[61]

---

[58] De Polignac, *The origins of the Greek city-state*, 34-35.
[59] Idem, 39-40.
[60] Idem, 40-60.
[61] P. Matthews, *A short history of Structural linguistics* (Cambridge 2001), 9-10.

In the 1960's, cultural anthropologists, most notably Claude Lévi-Strauss, adopted Structuralism as a model to explain cultural phenomena, understanding 'culture' as a system of meaning comparable to language. At the same time, the 60's saw a tendency of the historical discipline towards the methods of anthropologists, in search of useful models to grasp the underlying propositions and mechanisms of historical phenomena, which of course are rarely articulated in the sources. Historians used these models to fill in the blanks the sources left for their specific topic of research, and to explain the resulting image in terms of universal human needs, fears and hopes, leading to particular types of behaviour. Structuralism was one of those models.[62] It allowed to reconstruct the system of meaning underlying cultural expressions, in order to assess the relationships between elements of a society, as they were perceived by its contemporary members.[63]

Structuralism was particularly popular among French historians, some of whom permanently straddled the line between anthropology and history. Notable French historians of ancient Greece, like Jean-Pierre Vernant, Pierre Vidal-Naquet, and Marcel Detienne applied Structuralist theories especially to religion, which they deemed particularly informative of a society's concepts.[64] An important issue in the discussion of Greek religion had been the nature of the gods, a recurring problem for the monotheistic scholars of the modern era. For if the gods were not almighty, according to what principle were their powers defined and limited? What exactly was a god? They seemed to be personalities who had powers pertaining to certain spheres of life which we as modern people can relate to, such as agriculture, marriage and family life, and travel. As such the gods were often portrayed in the 19th century, while the fields in which they operated were seen as simply those of primary concern to a primitive society. Scholars staged the gods and their powers crudely as the ultimate explanation for early Greeks for anything that they could not account for in empirical terms.

However, two problems occurred in doing so. For one, the spheres of influence of the gods largely overlapped, a feature that has sometimes been explained by a theory of 'Archaic substrate', as Parker calls it.[65] In this theory, Greek gods originally had been independent almighty gods of small societies. When several of these smaller societies joined in a larger, supposedly Greek one, the separate gods lost some of their superior powers, but also retained some of its traits. However, none of the Greek texts that in any way concern religion and the pantheon allude to such a development. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that it ever took place, and the overlap remained unexplained. Another discomforting issue was the sometimes irreconcilable combination of spheres of power within a single god. Moreover, some natural phenomena, like rivers, mountains and springs, as well as abstractions, such as victory, remorse or persuasion, were taken to be actual gods; they did not merely symbolize the god's power over the phenomenon itself. Although the Greeks tended to talk about their gods as if they were individuals with distinct characters, the features that they ascribed to each of them therefore often seemed either mutually exclusive within one personality, or inadequate at best to qualify as a personality at all.[66]

Therefore, in the 1960's, French historians introduced the Structuralist model of Greek religion as an answer to these problems. They saw the Greek pantheon as a system of

---

[62] J. Davidson, "History and Anthropology", in: P. Lambert and P. Schofield (eds.), *Making history: An introduction to the history and practices of a discipline* (London and New York 2004), 150-161, 155.

[63] M. Roberts, "Postmodernism and the linguistic turn", in: P. Lambert and P. Schofield (eds.), *Making history: An introduction to the history and practices of a discipline* (London and New York 2004), 227-240, 228.

[64] R. Parker, *On Greek religion* (Ithaca and London 2011), 87-88.
R.G.A. Buxton, "Introduction", in: R.L. Gordon (ed.), *Myth, religion and society, Structuralist essays by M. Detienne, L. Gernet, J.-P Vernant and P. Vidal-Naquet* (Cambridge 1981, transl. J. Lloyd), ix-xvii, xi-xv.

[65] Parker, *On Greek religion*, 84-85, 87.

[66] Idem, 94-95.

interrelated gods, in which each god had his own specific mode of activity. These modes were distinct from the fields in which their powers operated, such as seafaring, crafts or childbirth. The mode of activity rather related to the kind of situation in which the god interfered and with what kind of power he did so. Athena's power for example appeared in the form of cunning intelligence that was needed to resolve a problem or to delude an enemy, whereas Poseidon could solve the same situation with brute force.[67] In this way, a unity of action could be postulated within one god, while at the same time the actual fields where the gods operated could freely overlap. The modes of activity never overlapped, but could be individually defined in opposition to that of other gods, preferably in the form of binary oppositions.[68] The most explicit instance of this line of thought is Vernant's study of Hermes and Hestia, in which Hermes' mobility was opposed to the fixed location of Hestia in homes and in cities.[69]

The mode of activity of a god was at work in both myth and cult. Any expression about that god may be retraced to that unifying mode which according to Structuralists did not change over time. It follows that whenever Greeks invoked this or that god, it meant that they perceived that specific situation to be according to the mode of activity of that god. The appearance of gods in Greek discourse therefore should inform the Structuralist historian about the Greek valuation of that situation. Thus it can be said that the Greek pantheon as perceived by Structuralist historians was a collection of personifications of the abstract powers at work in the natural world, their mutual relationships and connection to specific situations and localities reflected in myth and ritual. As such, it is in perfect tune with the Structuralist notion of culture, in this case the element religion, as language about society.[70]

In de Polignac's work, Artemis was the clearest example of the Structuralist foundations for his theory. He characterized het mode of activity as 'managing the necessary passage between savagery and civilization and strictly maintaining the boundaries at the very moment they have been crossed'.[71] Thus, if we encounter Artemis we have to look for those circumstances in which she mediated between the wild and the civilized in that locality. A sanctuary out in the wild territory, but within the polis might have helped to resolve people's fears for the savage nature of that land. Sanctuaries for Artemis that were located even further away from the polis, where we know its borders may have been, according to de Polignac were deliberately built to mark a transition, namely that from one territory to another, the latter of which was foreign and thus comparable to savage.[72] Artemis mediated transition from adolescence to adulthood as well, and this matched with her borderline character because of a temporary inversion of norms for the adolescents during that transition. In doing so, she again stressed her importance for the existence of the polis: she ensured its preservation by guaranteeing the influx of new citizens. By guiding their passage to adulthood she made them fit to succeed the previous generations and to pass on their norms and rules.[73]

In the case of Hera, her processions, especially those in Argos, reflected her involvement in the fertility of the soil. The ox had an important role, either as a sacrifice or as a participant in the procession (or both), as it was an important animal for agriculture. Additionally, Hera watched over regulated human fecundity, as she was the protectress of marriage. She also guarded over the preservation of that which had been brought forth both by agriculture and by

---

[67] M. Detienne and J.-P Vernant, *Cunning intelligence in Greek culture and society* (Chicago 1991, transl. J. Lloyd).

[68] Parker, *On Greek religion*, 88, n. 60.

[69] J.-P. Vernant, "Hestia-Hermes", in: J.-P. Vernant, *Mythe et pensée chez les Grecs : études de psychologie historique* (Paris 1965), 97-143.

[70] Buxton, "Introduction", xiv-xv.

[71] J.-P. Vernant, "The figure and functions of Artemis in myth and cult" in: J.-P. Vernant and F.I. Zeitlin (ed.), *Mortals and immortals* (Princeton 1992), 195-206, 204.

[72] De Polignac, *The origins of the Greek city state*, 36.

[73] Idem, 44.

matrimony. Both aspects, marriage and agriculture, set the human world apart from its wild environment on the one hand, and guaranteed the preservation of the community on the other.[74] In a later article, de Polignac in a similar fashion characterized Hera's mode of activity as the integration of the foreign into the domestic.[75] In turn, Apollo was worshipped for his protection of agricultural fertility. His mode of activity was characterized by Detienne as one of exploring unknown areas and subsequently organizing them in an orderly way, especially where the foundation of temples is concerned.[76] Although de Polignac did not refer to such a mode, he undoubtedly had a similar characterization in mind when he called Apollo in the agora 'the protector of institutions'.[77] The god often had a *kourotrophic* character as well, like both Artemis and Hera, and the *kouroi* offered to him according to de Polignac symbolized the offering of youth, in exchange for adulthood.[78]

1.4   Integration

De Polignac brought to the fore a similarity between the deities worshipped in extra-urban locations that was expressed in two aspects. First, de Polignac observed that weapons and armour were often associated with these extra-urban deities, some of which otherwise had nothing to do with warfare, like Hera or Artemis. The type of weapons involved would be those that the polis had used successfully to ward off the enemy. Sometimes, the extra-urban sanctuaries themselves were even the subject of the conflict, especially when the ownership of the sanctuary was unclear, or in the case of a shared sanctuary. In the myths of the polis, the active role assigned to these deities in that kind of struggle supposedly reflected in a symbolic way the role of the sanctuary and the deity in forming and protecting the integrity of the territory in the longer term.[79]

Second, many of the extra-urban deities had a kourotrophic aspect. The epithet *Kourotrophos/ Kourotrophè* literally means 'nurturing the young'. De Polignac however drew specific attention to the fact that the second part of the word derives from the verb *trephein*, which means 'to nurture', but also 'to cohere similar elements'. Kourotrophic deities thus according to de Polignac were involved in the forging of unity within the community, principally indicated by the fact that they protected the influx of new citizens, but also by the secondary meaning of their epithet itself, which it perhaps acquired as a result of the implications of the first. Allegedly, the kourotrophic aspect of deities was especially articulated in the extra-urban sanctuaries as an expression of their integrative function for the community.[80]

However, not only initiation of adolescents into the adult world, so-called 'vertical' integration, was concerned here. 'Horizontal' integration, that is the incorporation of groups that were perceived to be of different ethnic or tribal background, was also mediated by extra-urban sanctuaries, chiefly by assimilation of different cult practices and by joint and equal participation in the community's cults. Myths and legends about rebellious groups that aimed at either equal integration in a polis, or segregation from its unity were frequently staged around the extra-urban sanctuary that ensured both the inclusive and exclusive integrity of the polis. On the other hand, myths and rites also often reflected the composite nature of the community and explained how the unity had come about, after intervention by the deity concerned. This important role in establishing a coherent society from separate and

---

[74] Idem, 41-43.
[75] F. de Polignac, "Héra, le navire et la demeure", in: J. de La Genière (ed.), *Héra: Images, espèces, cultes* (Naples 1997) 113-122.
[76] M. Detienne, *Apollon le couteau à la main* (Paris 1998), 232.
[77] De Polignac, *The origins of the Greek city state*, 87.
[78] Idem, 45.
[79] Idem, 49-50.
[80] Idem, 45.

sometimes conflicting groups was often expressed in the characterization of this deity as the founder of the polis.[81]

One more important instance of integration through cult which de Polignac adduced, is that of women. Women were excluded from political participation in the polis, but possessed a so-called 'latent' citizenship through their participation in the common cults. Additionally, some rites, especially the *Thesmophoria* for Demeter, were only accessible to women, where they exercised control over proceedings. These rites underlined the fact that women were essential in the perpetuation of the community: the rites themselves had to be performed to ensure continuity, and only the women could perform them. Consequently, as de Polignac stated, the sanctuaries where these rites were performed could hold political elements, like the altars of the *phratriai*, the civic institutions through which adolescents were admitted as citizens, and storage of the sacred objects that belonged to the city, and which symbolized its perpetuation.[82]

A telling example of integration through cult on multiple levels, given by de Polignac, is that of the Thracian women of Erythrae. They were outsiders to the polis, on the account of being both Thracians and women. However, their eventual integration as full members of the polis was mediated by cult, a development that was subsequently explained by a myth. It was said that a statue of Herakles on a raft had been drifting between Erythrae and the opposing island of Chios. Both poleis were interested to claim the statue and bring it into the city. At Erythrae, an oracle commanded that the women should cut their hair and tie it into a rope to haul the raft that held the statue onto the beach. The women of the polis however vainly declined, too proud of their precious long hair. The Thracian women, who lived in the polis as slaves and metics, did cut their hair and pulled in the raft. The worship of Herakles was thus claimed for Erythrae at the cost of the Chians. Henceforth, Herakles was honoured with a sanctuary in the polis, and the Thracian women, mocked and excluded before, were the exclusive participants in his cult.[83]

In this example de Polignac demonstrated how he thought the myth symbolically accounted for the concrete and important role the Thracian women had fulfilled in the preservation of the community at an early stage. De Polignac asserted that the Herakles-cult was especially founded as an occasion where colonists and indigenous people could celebrate together to promote mutual contact. For the Erythraeans, as colonists, could not have sustained a successful start-up of their polis without good relations with the surrounding peoples. The integration of Thracian women had perhaps occurred as a necessity to make up for a shortage of Greek women, as colonial expeditions would have been composed mostly of men. The Thracian women had thus saved the polis in an early stage, and as a consequence their role in the community was articulated in its cultic realities.[84]

1.5   Conclusion

Clearly, de Polignac assigned an important integrative role to cult in general, and extra-urban cults in particular. To him, this role was first given to religion in order to promote the formation of the polis, and subsequently continuously sustained the integration of new generations, outsiders and women into the established community, while clearly marking its boundaries as well. Although we have dismissed this first role as indicative of the emergence of the polis as such, the implied effects of the subsequent function of Greek religion are

---

[81] Idem, 70-71.
[82] Idem, 73.
[83] Pausanias, 7.5.5-8.
[84] De Polignac, *The origins of the Greek city-state*, 74-75.

interesting for the current research. For de Polignac strongly though not explicitly suggested that the 8th-century changes in religion were deliberately introduced by individuals or groups who thought they might benefit from these effects, in terms of power. To put it very simply: they supposedly erected extra-urban sanctuaries, and invested the deities in them with all kinds of symbolism as explained, with the express purpose of promoting a unified and thus stable community, in which they subsequently could more easily assume and maintain powerful positions. De Polignac thus seems to suggest that the mass of the people feared the gods, whereas the elite in power was perhaps not so impressed by their influence or did not believe in them altogether. This put the elite in a position where they could construct a religious discourse that worked to their benefit, because the people perceived of it as actual divine law. This may indeed qualify as manipulation.

The extent of this innovation in religion was not elaborated by de Polignac, he only characterized it as a discontinuity. However, by linking it to the emergence of the polis as a discontinuous event, as the very reason for these changes to be made, he implied that most of Greek religious discourse as we know it from the Archaic period onwards was invented from scratch. Even if the gods already existed with their names, de Polignac's theory certainly implies that their symbolic functions in borderline positions, and thus their modes of activity, were an invention of the 8th century. However, given that in Structuralist terms, the system of meanings was closed and functionally differentiated, innovations cannot have been made to individual elements of the system. Therefore, we might conclude that de Polignac envisaged a radical conversion of the entire religious discourse in the 8th century, if he would strictly adhere to Structuralist theory. Of course, these implications are exaggerated here, for the sake of the argument, for de Polignac nowhere makes such conclusions explicit. Indeed, he concedes that not much is known about Greek religion before the Archaic period.

Nonetheless, he did presume that it was different in important respects and that the changes were made deliberately to serve political purposes. Even if the changes were not motivated by such groundbreaking events as the emergence of the polis in the way de Polignac perceived it, he did provide us with a model of how and for what political purposes actual manipulation of religion might have taken place. To examine in how far these suggestions of de Polignac's theory can be used to describe interactions between politicians and the religious system, they will be compared to a second model, that of polis religion, which is explored in the next chapter.

2   Polis religion

Whereas de Polignac's treatment of religion focused on its role in historical change, it was also approached in a more synchronic manner, concentrating on its working mechanisms in the Classical polis. This approach can be subsumed under the heading 'polis religion'. The term polis religion was coined first by Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood in her 1990 article titled 'What is polis religion?', in which she assembled the most important contemporary maxims about the theme, mainly from Anglophone scholarship, into a coherent model.[85] The main tenet of this model was that the polis was the organizing principle of Greek religion. Religion was an integral part of the identity of the polis, reflecting its worldviews and social structures. To Sourvinou-Inwood therefore, religion, as part of culture, might be studied in order to reveal patterns of thought which otherwise would remain hidden. Although the model has received quite some criticism, the polis as an organizing principle of religion is still considered applicable, even if it cannot anymore be accepted as the only one. Therefore, polis religion, with considerable adjustments and nuances, is assessed here as a framework within which the relationship between religion and politics may be described.

2.1   The language of culture

Sourvinou-Inwood reconstructed the function of religion in the Greek world as a result of its development. Different from de Polignac, she maintained that religion was an aspect of that world that had organically grown and was adapted to the circumstances under which its practitioners had lived since prehistoric times. People tried to make sense of the world around them and found answers in a religious discourse. It also provided them with the reassuring perception that, through ritual, they could exercise some influence on that world.[86] However, divine will never revealed itself directly, let alone unequivocally, and it was therefore utterly unknowable. Consequently, knowledge about the divine and the best practices accorded could only be gained through trial and error, long term ancestral experience, also called tradition, and occasional portents, omens and prophecies, which should be approached with due caution as they could easily be misinterpreted.[87]

Whenever crisis occurred, the balance of religious practice with respect to divine wishes had obviously been tipped. If the religious system was purposely and violently disrupted, divine punishment was certainly imminent.[88] However, the reasons might not always be as clear, and ordeals sent by the gods might mean that either an existing practice had eventually turned out inadequate to accommodate divine will, some wrong had unwittingly been committed towards the gods, or circumstances had changed and practices had to change accordingly in order to restore cosmic balance. Whenever any unfortunate events arose, it was up to the humans to find out where they had gone wrong and what they could do about it.[89] It was best however to anticipate the reaction of the gods whenever possible. If for example the internal organization of the community changed, rites and cults had to be adjusted to this new configuration as well, to avoid imbalance. Sourvinou-Inwood assumed that this was exactly what moved Kleisthenes to put into place the ten eponymous heroes for his new tribes. These heroes were supposed to look after the well-being of each of the tribes. In searching for the adequate

---

[85] C. Sourvinou-Inwood, "What is polis religion?", in: O. Murray and S. Price (eds), *The Greek city. From Homer to Alexander* (Oxford 1991), 295-322.
[86] Sourvinou-Inwood, "What is polis religion?", 301-302; E. Kearns, "Order, interaction, authority", in: A. Powell (ed.), *The Greek world* (London 1995), 511-529, 518.
[87] Sourvinou-Inwood, "What is polis religion?", 303.
[88] Parker, *On Greek relgion*, 3-4.
[89] Sourvinou-Inwood, "What is polis religion?", 303.

adaptation, in Kleisthenes' case the oracle was of great help, and not strictly in matters of content. The fact that the oracle was willing to comply to his request to point out the ten heroes, meant that he could go home, not only knowing ten names, but also that Apollo approved of the changes made and the procedure followed.[90]

Therefore, the cults and rites a community, mustered to mediate between humans and gods, were perceived as a product of a continuous process of learning through trial and error how to comply with the cosmic balance. Every community went through its own process of learning, the outcome of which necessarily differed according to human diversity, and perhaps divine preferences and whims. Additionally, every community did have its particular realities in geographical, political, social and historical respects, each requiring their own religious articulation specific for that community. This did not only pertain to the gods proper, Olympic or lesser; heroes played an important role in that configuration as well. Therefore, differences between communities are accountable, both for modern scholars and for the ancient Greeks themselves, for Sourvinou-Inwood asserted that they acknowledged that their religious discourse was a human construct. Compounded in this manner, the religious system of a community naturally reflected its identity.[91]

Within a community, according to Sourvinou-Inwood's description, the religious discourse was coherent. She explained how before Archaic times, communities were very small, composed at most of a few extended families. Agreement on the right behaviour was reached within these groups, where the king or perhaps a group of elders had the last say. Knowledge of the religious discourse rested on their authority. In the polis, once it had developed as a larger community with a central authority, such agreement must have been harder to reach. Therefore, Sourvinou-Inwood postulated that the polis, in the limited sense of its governing bodies, organized this representation towards the divine by deciding on rules and laws concerning those religious practices, financing them and erecting monumental sanctuaries.[92] Greek religion as such, according to Sourvinou-Inwood, reflected the way in which a particular community thought about the external world, and the norms and conventions it derived from that worldview. Moreover, she claimed that changes to the religious discourse cannot be characterized as manipulation, as they were carried out in the spirit of that worldview. Actual experience was symbolically expressed in religion, as in cultural expressions at large, and religious practice therefore may be 'read' in order to uncover and understand the underlying worldview, as if it were a language.[93]

As we have seen, this aspect is very similar to the theory that had been developed by the French Structuralists, and was certainly corroborated by de Polignac, but it was also articulated in Anglophone scholarship, most notably by Clifford Geertz.[94] In her understanding of the theory, Sourvinou-Inwood added the notion that the 'translation' of the experiences of a society into religious expressions is grounded in the cultural context, and thus their meaning can only be fully understood when considered within that context. To grasp the meaning of this 'language', it had to be considered together with other cultural phenomena that equally reflect worldviews in the same cultural context of a specific community.[95] Here she differed from the French Structuralists, who maintained that the religious discourse of the Greeks, as a system of symbols for cultural meanings, was closed

---

[90] Idem, 310-311. Parker, *On Greek religion*, 265-272.

[91] Sourvinou-Inwood, "What is polis religion?", 301-305.

[92] Parker, *On Greek religion*, 48

[93] C. Sourvinou-Inwood, *'Reading' Greek culture. Text and images, rituals and myth* (Oxford 1991), 10; J. Kindt, "Polis religion – A critical appreciation", *Kernos* 22 (2009), 9-34, 11-12.

[94] Kearns, "Order, interaction, authority", 519. Kindt, "Polis religion", 14.

[95] Sourvinou-Inwood, *'Reading' Greek culture*, 5.

and its elements only had meaning in opposition to each other. Thus to understand one element, one only needs to know its opposing elements within the same system.

The purport of this difference is that in Sourvinou-Inwood's view, the worldview that was 'translated' from cultural expressions in general, and religion in this case in particular, was unique to the particular community that was researched. It could not be transposed invariably to other communities and therefore it could not serve to build a model that was applicable to the Greek world as a whole. A concrete example may help to clarify the difference. De Polignac observed that Artemis often had sanctuaries in peripheral places. He suggested that her function there was to mediate between the wild and the civilized, among others by watching over adolescents at the very moment their transition to adulthood took place. As such the placement of Artemis in that very location symbolized the edge of the community. To Sourvinou-Inwood, any given sanctuary of Artemis may or may not have this meaning, but this should be individually investigated, taking into account the whole cultural system of the community to which the sanctuary belonged. The initiatory role would not according to her automatically make Artemis a guardian of border area's, and thus in every single case the question would remain open whether her sanctuary was actually deliberately built in that location to mark it as a boundary to both insiders and outsiders.

2.2　Polis religion: embeddedness, order and identity

Still, Sourvinou-Inwood clearly postulated polis religion as a model to describe Greek religion throughout the Greek world. This pertained not so much to its contents, as more importantly to its role and organization in that world. Although she did not use this term herself, one of the central characteristics of religion in her model has been defined as 'embeddedness' in the polis. This term covers several different aspects that Sourvinou-Inwood attributed to Greek religion. It is used in the first place to mark its level of integration into all modes of daily life, as alluded to in the introduction to this chapter.

Secondly, embeddedness refers to the implicit suggestion that within one polis, religious discourse was consistent throughout.[96] According to Sourvinou-Inwood's description, the polis was the primary cultural unit in the Greek world, in the sense that religious (and so cultural) variety in the Greek world can be mapped onto polis borders. The polis would be the typical unit within which cultural unity existed.[97] Culture being the expression of an underlying worldview, it follows that this worldview was also consistent throughout the polis. Moreover, as she considered culture as a system of symbols, a language about that worldview, Sourvinou-Inwood implied that this worldview was in itself systematic and coherent.[98] To simplify her view into a single statement: within the polis a neatly organized differentiation existed between all featured cults and rituals, all working harmoniously together in order to keep the polis safe.

Finally, embeddedness pertains to the organizational structure of Greek religion, which is perceived to be entirely congruent with social and political structures within the polis, and organized by its political centre.[99] Sourvinou-Inwood asserted that the typical polis would muster several central cults, of which one might be designated as the most important. These cults were open to all citizens, and its rites and finances were administered by polis magistrates. Below the central polis level, different groups in society could express their identity through their own cults. These groups could be civic subdivisions, local communities

---

[96] Idem, 14.
[97] Sourvinou-Inwood, "What is polis religion?", 300-301.
[98] Kindt, "Polis religion", 15.
[99] Sourvinou-Inwood, "What is polis religion?", 302.

within the polis, such as phylai, demes or phratriai. The cults of the civic subdivisions were directed inwards, excluding from participation those who were not members of the group.

The subdivisions also participated in central polis cults as a group, their role in those cults reflecting their hierarchical position vis à vis the political centre. At the same time, the participation of the subdivisions as a group expressed the essential part they had as such in the formation of the polis as a whole. In this way, the ruling elite bound those particular cults firmly to the polis as a political, but also as a social and a geographical entity. Thus in the model of polis religion, as a rule, no cults are assumed to exist independently from the polis and its organizational structure.[100] If an individual was not in a way a member of a polis, he would also be excluded from religious life. Sourvinou-Inwood therefore postulated that the polis mediated participation in all religious activities.

The joint participation of citizens in these cults reinforced their perception of themselves as a group. Common rituals were performed in festivals, to which processions, sacrifice and subsequent communal banquets were central. These events brought together the members of the community and reinforced their connectedness. Their shared worldview and its ensuing rituals contrasted to the particularities of other communities, nurturing a feeling of belonging and identity. At the same time, these rituals in their organization reflected the relationships within the community. In the first place, the position of the ritual within the religious system of the polis at large expressed its importance for the polis. Moreover, the allocation of honourable tasks within the ritual, the order of appearance of individuals or groups in a procession and the distribution of sacrificial meat could all express the status of the people involved.[101] Participants were reminded in that way of the established hierarchy and the group to which one belonged, but rituals were also occasion for claims to desired status, expressed in the transgression of allotted roles, for example by wearing attire appropriate only to individuals of higher status, or taking a reserved position in a procession. Public acceptance of that transgression, mediated by ones merits to the community, confirmed an individual's enhanced position in the hierarchy. Conversely, public denial of one's formally allotted role might painfully reveal the decline of that position.[102] Once again, there is no question of manipulation: those employing such strategies respected the limitations of the system.

This centrality of the polis to the organization of religion is of course also essential to de Polignac's model. His extra-urban sanctuaries could only have expressed the integrity of the polis if they had been built by its governing body, and at the same time endorsed as a community sanctuary through the participation in its cults by all members of the polis. For both de Polignac and Sourvinou-Inwood, religion enhanced the identity of individuals as members of the community. However, for Sourvinou-Inwood, the community developed its religious discourse organically as a way of dealing with the external world. Moreover, all religious expressions had, as a side-effect, the result of integrating and organizing society. Conversely, de Polignac ascribed this role to specific gods, notably Artemis, Hera and Apollo, and he suggested that the mechanism of identity formation was especially at work in the extra-urban sanctuaries. Most importantly, he conceived of these religious practices as initialized and constructed with the express purpose of creating a common identity, tied to a marked territory, as if those supposedly doing the constructing had a preconception of the success this formula would have in the polis of the Classical period.

---

[100] Idem, 310-312.

[101] Idem, 305. F. van den Eijnde, *Cult and society in early Athens. 1000-600 BCE* (Dissertation University of Utrecht 2010), 13-14. This theory is grounded in Durkheim's work, which, for reasons of space, cannot be fully appreciated in this thesis.

[102] W. Connor, "Tribes, festivals and processions: civic ceremonial and political manipulation in Archaic Greece", *JHS* 107 (1987), 40-50.

2.3   Polis religion beyond the polis

Sourvinou-Inwood applied her model to the Greek world at large by incorporating Pan-Hellenic cults as a level of polis religion beyond the single polis. This might best be described as the adoption of religious beliefs and practices of a larger context into the polis discourse. As far as organization was concerned, this manifested itself on two levels. According to Sourvinou-Inwood, participation in both these cases was mediated by the polis, and therefore, the characterization of Greek religion as essentially polis religion might be maintained on this level as well. On the one hand, several poleis could form a worshipping community, either around a particular sanctuary, together taking care, as an *amphictiony*, of the protection and administration of the precinct, or as a religious league, on the observation that they held certain religious beliefs and practices in common. Both these associations were often regional and closed to outsiders.[103]

On the other hand, Pan-Hellenic sanctuaries developed, attracting worshippers from all over the Greek world and beyond. These sanctuaries had originally just been part of local polis religion, and had often developed as the centre around which an amphictiony formed. In response to growing popularity, new worshippers were admitted, their participation in the sanctuary's rituals mediated by their polis of origin. Sourvinou-Inwood saw this mediation articulated for example when a fee was requested for participation in a certain ritual; in such cases the polis would negotiate a fixed amount for the fee for all of its members. Those who were not perceived to be members of a proper polis apparently gained limited admission, perhaps proportionate to the extent to which they were judged to be culturally close to the Pan-Hellenic centre in terms of language, way of life and beliefs. At some point a mental line was presumably drawn between activities accessible to anyone, and activities that were exclusively intended for those that felt culturally most connected, a group that subsequently came to be defined as 'Greek'. If, as Sourvinou-Inwood maintained, one of the prerequisites for participation in Pan-Hellenic cults was indeed membership in a polis, it thus gradually may effectively have become one of the defining characteristics of 'Greekness'.[104]

For de Polignac, the Pan-Hellenic sanctuaries were very similar to extra-urban sanctuaries, as they too had first developed as meeting points between different nomadic peoples. In the regions where they became Pan-Hellenic however, the fact that no strong urban centre developed for him seems to have made the difference.[105] Otherwise, the virtual absence of the Pan-Hellenic sanctuaries, most notably Delphi, from de Polignac's account is remarkable. From the given premises of his theory, it seems difficult indeed to account for their development as rallying points for people from all over the Greek world. Taking into account his assertion that the extra-urban type of sanctuary was purposely built by a developing polis, it is unclear in the first place how the Pan-Hellenic sanctuaries could have emerged without the involvement of any specific community in the first place.

---

[103] Sourvinou-Inwood, "What is polis religion?", 297-299.

[104] J. Ober, "Culture , thin coherence and the persistence of politics", in: J. Ober (ed.), *Athenian legacies* (Princeton and Oxford 2005), 69-91, 73; J.M. Hall, *Hellenicity* (Chicago and London 2002) argues how a notion of shared culture, based on similarities in language, religious habits and everyday customs, developed in the late Archaic period among attendants to the sanctuary for Apollo at Delphi, coming from a limited geograpical around it. Gradually, more people visited the sanctuary and it became more organized. Moreover, limitations were set to the degree visitors were admitted to activities in the sanctuary, according to their cultural association to the core group of worshippers. Those who had unlimited access came to be called Hellenes, those who had very restricted access were characterized as barbarians, because their customs were so completely different. The dividing lines between these groups were never very strict however, and therefore the limits of Hellas, or the Greek world, fluctuated continuously.

[105] De Polignac, *The origins of the Greek city-state*, 23, 38.

2.4   Conclusion

In the model of polis religion, Sourvinou-Inwood stressed the strong relationship between the identity of the polis and its religious discourse. Rituals were needed to keep the polis as a community safe. The institutional polis organized this religion in order to maintain that safety. If the polis changed religious discourse on any level, this was not a matter of manipulation, but a necessary adaptation, because previous ritual turned out to be inadequate, or insufficient due to changes in other fields or circumstances. Compared to de Polignac's theory, Sourvinou-Inwood's model of the development of polis religion was much more nuanced. Still, even the polis religion model, with its postulate of the polis as the organizing principle of Greek religion, implied that Greek religion as we know it only developed with the development of the polis itself. However, as no sharp discontinuity is suggested in that development, it accords much more with a gradual emergence of the polis itself, as it is maintained in contemporary scholarship.

Additionally, in polis religion, nobody could invent religious discourse simply to suit his own political purposes, for it had to be fitted into the existing system of symbolic meanings, and it had to be acceptable to the gods themselves. This implies that, in contrast to de Polignac, Sourvinou-Inwood assumed that everybody within the polis respected the religious discourse as a set of rules that was corroborated by the gods, that is, everybody believed in the gods and their powers. Indeed, this was even more explicitly expressed in her description of the embeddedness of religion in the entire polis. The use of religious discourse to legitimate political action should therefore be characterized as a natural way of accounting for its motivations, rather than as manipulation. Indeed, the term manipulation from this point of view should be qualified as anachronistic, as political interference in religious affairs was only perceived as a perverse practice from the Middle Ages onwards.[106]

Both de Polignac and Sourvinou-Inwood perceived of Greek religion as a system by which meaning or worldview is expressed. This may indeed be adequate to describe the role of religion as a way of dealing with life and the world as they present themselves. The respective theoretical backgrounds from which this perception developed however, imply that such as system is valid and consistent throughout large social constructs. For Sourvinou-Inwood, an entire polis shared the same system; to de Polignac, the same cultural meaning was even conveyed by the same cultural expressions throughout the entire Greek world. This, and other characteristics ascribed to such a system suggest that, once in place, it assumed a rather steady state. In reality however, we may observe that Greek religion is highly subject to change. Moreover, many of these changes indeed seem to be informed more by personal considerations than by a collective interest. Neither of these models can account for these observations, as it is. In the next chapter, the extent to which they do or do not explain the dynamics of religion is assessed, and an alternative approach is presented that may supplement for the deficiency.

---

[106] W. Burkert, "Greek *poleis* and civic cults: some further thoughts", in: M.H. Hansen and K. Raaflaub (eds.), *Studies in the Ancient Greek Polis*, *Papers of the Copenhagen Polis Centre* 2 (Stuttgart 1995), 201-210, 202.

3   Dynamics of Greek religion

3.1   'Greek' religion: between the local and the general

One of the problems of both models is that they, both in different ways, inadequately characterize the cohesion of Greek religion throughout the Greek world as it may be perceived. On the one hand, de Polignac posited his theory as a model for the entire Greek world. He made an exception for Athens, which he considered to be not a bi-polar city like other poleis, because Athena's cult on the akropolis was by far the most important cult of the city, whereas no notable early extra-urban sanctuaries had existed. He ascribed this to the exceptional historical circumstance that the Athenian akropolis had been continuously inhabited throughout the Dark Ages, whereas other Mycenaean strongholds had all been deserted. However, de Polignac does not seem to suppose that this might result in remarkable differences in the religious discourse that eventually developed in Athens like in other poleis. He explained the alternative hierarchical order of Athenian cults in the very same terms he used to describe a 'normal' polis in his model, by suggesting that the sanctuary of Athena, who as a warrior was protectress of the land, represented the territory in the centre of the polis, as it did in other poleis.[107]

Structuralist theory in general proposes a system that is valid throughout an entire culture. Indeed, throughout the Greek world, religion was very similar, and it was even strongly believed that all Greeks had a common past or origin, articulated particularly in religious beliefs and practices. Religion therefore formed a strong bond between poleis that saw themselves as Greek. This suggests that a general framework can be given, within which the local variations can be easily fitted in terms of their minor deviations from and additions to that framework. However, so many traditions existed that were strong and mutually exclusive at the same time that we can hardly choose one instead of another as the paradigm within Greek religion. Scholars like Walter Burkert and Simon Price, who explicitly tried to distinguish general, Pan-Hellenic from local traditions, omitted an explanation of their method to distil the former from the plethora of the latter.[108] For that matter, Structuralists did offer an explanation that was to cover all forms of Greek religion, by suggesting that all local differences in the religious discourse about a god were ultimately variations on a theme, that was the god's 'mode of activity'.

Parker concedes that this concept of 'mode of activity' is useful to some extent as a heuristic device in analyzing the gods, as some general similarity must have been perceived between local gods to warrant the widespread use of their names. Determining a 'mode of activity' did involve a detailed study of huge amounts of material available about a particular god. In practice however, assessing these modes of activity as the Structuralists did must also have been rather subjective, as the result was very much dependent upon the perceptions of the scholar at work. It depended in the first place on the conviction that 'modes of activity' had actually existed as an organizing category of Greek religion. They are not attested however by the sources, neither as a concept, nor in terms of their content.[109]

Parker also warns that we should always keep in mind that we as historians benefit from the possibility to overview all instances of Greek religion, encompassing all periods and all geographical locations. Contemporary Greek society however was locally based, and Greeks,

---

[107] De Polignac, *The origins of the Greek city state*, 81-88.
[108] W. Burkert, *Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche* (Stuttgart 1977), translated to English: *Greek religion* (Oxford 1985); S. Price, *Religions of the ancient Greeks* (Cambridge 1999).
[109] Parker, *On Greek religion*, 90-91.

say, from the west cannot be supposed to have known the intricacies of the religious practices of those in the east or even of their neighbours. In the absence of revelation, what Structuralists find as unifying elements of a god, based on all the available evidence, cannot possibly have been common knowledge even for the most cosmopolitan Greek. A parallel development of Greek religion in all corners of the Greek world is therefore inconceivable, and it would also preclude any diversions from the model, which we know for a fact did exist.[110]

De Polignac's thesis suffers from these methodological issues of Structuralism. The selection of sanctuaries that he considered to be the prime markers of polis integrity is exemplary in this respect. As they are presented, it indeed appears that they were located at significant points in the territory, but that significance loses force when these sanctuaries are seen in the context of the abundance of cult sites all over any polis territory. Moreover, if these sanctuaries were to mark the frontier of a polis as such, one would expect that frontier to be regularly dotted with sanctuaries. De Polignac failed to explain why some extra-urban sanctuaries were placed on some point on the border of a polis and not on another, and why some extra-urban sanctuaries were not located on a border at all. Indeed, he seems to have had some trouble himself, maintaining the assumption that sanctuaries were placed according to a deliberate and systematic pattern. Whereas in the first, French edition of his thesis, the proposed distribution of the sanctuaries was postulated rather confidently, in the revised English edition it turned out to be not very clear-cut and rather uneasy, and finally de Polignac dismissed it as perhaps not too significant altogether.[111] Consequently, if we cannot be sure that the designated sanctuaries were located on borders or in border areas, their symbolic meaning as border markers according to the mode of activity of the residing deity cannot be maintained.

De Polignac's case demonstrates that in any set of information about anything, a unifying element may be discerned, if one presumes there should be one. The unifying element that is found may become ever vaguer and more general as the amount of evidence grows. The only limiting factor is the presumption that any mode of activity should be differentiated from the others, in other words, the mode of activity found should fit into the system as a whole.[112] However, the absolute functional differentiation of divine powers was not always corroborated by even the largest amount of evidence, allowing for more or less overlap even in modes of activity. Detienne, himself a Structuralist, critically remarked that the presumption of a very strict unity of the mode of activity of a god was too simplistic with regard to the evidence. He allowed for a limited range of several modes of activity within a single god, which however were still exclusive to that god in opposition to the others and were bound together by a 'profound coherence'.[113] This actually makes matters worse, as this 'profound coherence' is ill defined and suffers from the same bias as a single mode of activity. The allowance for the underlying variety of modes of activity therefore negates the basic Structuralist tenet of unity within a god. They need this unity however to conceive of Greek religion as a closed system, where a god is the same at any time and in any place.

On the other hand, Sourvinou-Inwood assumed, as the Structuralists did, that religion as part of culture, conveyed meaning about the society as if it were a language. She similarly maintained that it had to be a closed system in which these meanings were dependent on eachother. As such, it might appear as static as was the Structuralist system. However,

---

[110] Idem, 96.

[111] De Polignac, *The origins of the Greek city state*, 79-80.

[112] Parker, *On Greek religion*, 88.

[113] M. Detienne, "Experimenting in the field of polytheisms", *Arion* 7.1 (1999), 127-149; Parker, *On Greek religion*, 92.

different from the Structuralists, she did allow for interaction between different systems of meaning, for example the economical or the political spheres, within the same community. Through this allowance, she opened up the possibility of local variety in religious discourse, due to the local and historical circumstances of individual poleis. In turn, these poleis were religiously connected with each other on a Pan-Hellenic level, and specifically through the popularity of epic poetry, which fed shared assumptions of religious discourse. The model of polis religion thus can account for both the diversity of Greek religion, and for the shared elements between poleis.[114]

The fact that Greeks themselves perceived their religious practices to be similar in some way led Julia Kindt to the conclusion that there must be some more complex connection between varying local traditions than just a minimal set of common practices and traditions. The polis religion model, in her opinion does offer this connection, through its focus on the units within which religion was locally organized. She imagines how, on occasions of interaction, people of different poleis exchanged their ideas, spreading their worldviews beyond their own polis. This seems to be a good way to explain how local practices were informed by traditions on interactive levels and vice versa. The model thus shows how Greek religion is formed horizontally by interconnected local practices, rather than vertically through variations on a common theme.[115]

Still, it only allows such exchange of ideas on the level of the institutional polis, which after all according to the model mediated all religious activities, including adaptations to the discourse. The polis religion model has thus neglected alternative communities beside the polis. The communities concerned here are generally not overlapping with the polis, but constitute alternative social and political configurations, of which the most well-known is the ethnos, which has been wrongly assessed as a primitive community from which the polis developed.[116] Religious practices in these communities were seen as imperfect forerunners of polis religion at best, but they were presumed to have been mostly superseded by polis religion and therefore irrelevant. Conversely, Morgan argues that *ethnè*, as well as other political constellations, from the early Archaic period onwards always existed alongside the polis. These had their own religious organizations and still were regarded as belonging to a Pan-Hellenic framework, despite not being poleis.[117] Therefore, we should adjust the argument: through interaction among poleis and with other communities, the organization of the polis affected Greek religious practice, but essentially Greek religion was prior to the polis.[118] With the polis now seen as one of several types of community within which religion was articulated, and its development assessed as a gradual process, polis religion is only one form in which Greek religion manifested itself, but an important one for that matter.

3.2   The polis in control?

Additionally, as we have noted in the discussion of de Polignac's theory already, it seems hardly likely that the people of a polis would always accept such directions from above. Effectively, it is clear from an abundance of examples that they did not, and polis religion was subject to many more influences than the institutional polis alone. It is conceded that Greeks thought about religion, even beyond the sphere of the philosophers, in everyday life. Still, these individual convictions are mostly not deemed to have been important for those in power

---

[114] Kindt, "Polis religion", 11.
[115] Idem, 22.
[116] C.A. Morgan, *Early Greek states beyond the polis* (London and New York 2003), 6.
[117] Morgan, *Early Greek states*, 4-10.
[118] Burkert, "Greek *poleis* and civic cults", 203; Kindt, "Polis religion", 15.

in the polis, as long as everybody participated in the polis' cults.[119] Conversely this would mean that all religious activity, being mediated by the polis, stood in service of the polis' well-being.[120] This characterization inadequately explains why for example an individual consulting an oracle on private matters would be an instance of polis religion. This was neither an act of self-representation, let alone in terms of the social or political structures of the polis, nor prescribed by the polis or its institutionalised practices. Even if the fee he had to pay for it was determined by agreements between the oracle's administrators and the consultant's polis, the individual had in mind nothing but his own concerns when asking the oracle's advice. There would be no reason for him to do so if he were not personally convinced that the oracle would actually give valid information.[121]

The same kind of personal belief is required for the polis to be able to use religion as an instrument of power to any degree. As Walter Burkert noted, the polis might change religious discourse to its own political advantages, as reflected in the institution of new gods, perhaps to please an allied power, the building of sanctuaries and sacrifices, or the change of existing sacrifices.[122] There is no way, however, of knowing the considerations underlying them. Leaving out 'belief' as a category of consideration here poses a problem in terms of acceptance: a polis cannot simply change a religious practice without consent of its practitioners. Kindt points out that individuals need to subscribe to collective beliefs for them to be successfully articulated in practices. Citizens of the polis did not participate in religious practices to please the elite; they did believe the symbolic order that inspired it.[123] Conversely, the elite, while in control of the organization of those practices, cannot be expected to have been acting simply on pragmatic grounds, deploying religion as an instrument.[124]

Herodotos' story of the return of Peisistratos, referred to in the introduction, was discussed, along with other accounts, by Connor, as an example of a powerful individual in the polis, who used religious images and discourse to mediate the acceptance by the public of his policies and acts. Connor convincingly argued that this could only be done by politicians who not only had an accurate sense of what was 'true' to the people, but to some degree subscribed to that truth themselves.[125] Moreover, as Parker underlines, in a democratic polis such as Athens, the people's assembly made final decisions on religious changes, as a counterweight to those in power. They could and did object to too overt use of religious discourse for a politician's own benefit.[126] Parker refers to a passage of Ploutarchos, where the Athenians chafed at Themistokles for founding a shrine for Artemis *Aristoboulè*. 'Aristoboulè' means 'best counsel', and they found that the epithet referred too ostentatiously and pretentiously to Themistokles' recent role in dealing with the Persian invasion.[127]

These examples show that even if we may note that ritual activity was omnipresent, and was carried out collectively rather than individually, it does not tell us with what convictions, intents or purposes people personally performed these practices. Even if the acts performed were identical, the motivations and subsequent experiences might be very different for each individual. Indeed, individual belief is a difficult category of life to investigate in the absence of an explicit recognition of such a category in ancient literature. Scholars who have

---

[119] C. Sourvinou-Inwood, "Further aspects of polis religion", *Annali; Sezione di archeologia e storia antica* 10 (1988), 259-274, re-printed in: R. Buxton (ed.), *Greek religion* (Oxford 2000), 38-55, 44; Parker, *On Greek religion*, 31-34.
[120] Sourvinou-Inwood, "What is polis religion?", 302.
[121] Kindt, "Polis religion", 13.
[122] Burkert, "Greek poleis and civic cults", 202.
[123] Kindt, "Polis religion", 26.
[124] Connor, "Tribes, festivals and processions", 46, 50.
[125] Idem, 46.
[126] Parker, *On Greek religion*, 47.
[127] Plutarch, *Themistokles* 22.2.

attempted to reconstruct underlying beliefs before were scorned for their misguided associative methods.[128] Gradually, historians have come to deny any significance to the term 'belief', in relation to polis religion all together, and described it as essentially consisting of 'practice'.[129] Alternatively, its meanings might be described on a higher collective level, as the models discussed here did. However, personal belief is just as instrumental in the mechanisms of polis religion as is its practice.[130]

Therefore, religion in the polis cannot simply have been a matter of top down control, as is commonly perceived, but rather is the product of a carefully negotiated consensus between the institutional polis level and its members. However, within a community of the size of a polis, this consensus can hardly have been reached with all subdivisions and individual citizens. Both de Polignac's and Sourvinou-Inwood's models as they are, are unable to provide an explanation for those dynamics, indeed because they perceived of polis culture as internally coherent.

3.3   Coherence

In an article devoted to the concepts of culture, William Sewell notes that the word is often used indiscriminately for different concepts, as well in everyday language as within a score of disciplines within the social sciences, including his own discipline of cultural anthropology.[131] He relates how 'culture' is used on the one hand to designate a community sharing the same customs.[132] On the other hand, the word 'culture' as used by de Polignac and Sourvinou-Inwood pointed to what Sewell calls a 'theoretically defined category or aspect of social life … that is concerned with meaning'.[133] As such it is distinct from other categories that inform human activity, such as politics or economy, while religion is a part of it. Meaning should be understood here as a set of convictions and beliefs about life and the world, perhaps best summarized as 'worldview', as the French Structuralists and anthropologists such as Clifford Geertz did.

The concept of culture as a system of meaning, as they maintained it, implied far-reaching coherence within that system. The signifiers in the system were not only functionally differentiated, forming a bounded system; it was inherently also assumed to have a consistent logic by which contradictions were ruled out. By implication, the relationships within a fully coherent system are fixed, because if one would change, all would have to change to avoid contradictions. Additionally, because meanings are assumed to be deeply felt, they are not contested. Within the system, meanings transcend spheres of activity, such as work or family, and are valid throughout.[134]

The system of meaning itself is thus conceived as a separate category of human existence, that may be studied independently from the context within which it is valid. However, due to the inadequacy of such an approach to explain the complexity of cultural phenomena as they were encountered in field studies, opponents rejected this concept in the 80's and 90's. Instead, a conception of culture as practice was advocated. In this approach, the fragmentary and contradictory character of meanings is stressed. Moreover, it acknowledges that these meanings change constantly, through social interaction. Here, the element of practice is

---

[128] Kindt, "Polis religion", 26.
[129] Burkert, "Greek poleis and civic cults", 205.
[130] Parker, *On Greek religion*, 2.
[131] W.H. Sewell, "The concept(s) of culture", in: V.E. Bonnell and L. Hunt (eds.), *Beyond the cultural turn* (Berkeley 1999), 35-61.
[132] Sewell, "The concept(s) of culture", 39.
[133] Idem, 39-41.
[134] Kindt, "Polis religion", 15-16.

important: meaning is expressed through practice, it has no existence independent from that. This practice is informed by individual meanings, supplemented by a variety of contextual influences, that is, practice by others, and thus extremely variable. Hence, the existence of a systematic coherence of these meanings is denied, limiting the study of culture to the description of practice informed by meaning.[135]

However, Sewell notes that practice cannot possibly be meaningful if its meaning would be determined entirely randomly and individually. The advocates of culture as practice are right that no meaning can exist independent from the practice that expresses it, but the practice needs to be informed by shared assumptions to be understandable as an expression of meaning in the first place. As a matter of fact, the use by the adherents of the culture-as-practice-approach, of the word 'culture' in its alternative meaning to designate a community that is characterized by a certain unity in its cultural expressions, indeed presupposes that shared assumptions exist to a certain extent.[136]

Sewell therefore pleads for a combination of the two approaches. He advocates a return to a 'thin' notion of coherence, in contrast to the 'thick' coherence as the Structuralists, among others, assumed was implied by de Saussure. Alternatively, as deconstructionists argue, the Saussurean definition of semiotic systems does leave room for the observed instability of meaning. For because every meaning is dependent on other meanings within the system, it has no objective point of reference that is not dependent on the interrelations of the system itself. This means that contradictions and varying interpretations of a seemingly fixed meaning may and do occur, influenced by local contexts, events, and social interaction. As Sewell puts it for culture, the meaning of a cultural expression is not exact, it has a certain bandwidth, allowing for personal interpretation.[137]

Given this bandwidth of meaning, 'practice' is instrumental in the dynamic of culture which we observe in the study of concrete cases. In 'practice', the conceptual meaning is given expression for others to see. Therefore, in 'practice' the exact position of the 'practitioner' within the bandwidth of a particular meaning is expressed. Conversely, the position within that bandwidth of the spectator, with whom the practitioner interacts, in turn influences his interpretation of what this 'practice' actually means. If differences occur between 'practitioner' and spectator in this respect, the interaction may result in a change, consciously or unconsciously, of that position for either of them or both. Subsequent expressions of either in cultural 'practice' are inevitably influenced by that moment of interaction, and effectively by all previous and subsequent interactions with anybody. As such, cultural meanings for individuals, but also for groups are in constant flux. Moreover, because all cultural meanings are thus in flux, even the bandwidth of single meanings may shift in the longer term if strong or particularly appealing emphasis is laid within that bandwidth. We may expect that within a community, the meaning of cultural expressions has a smaller bandwidth, as compared to interaction between communities, or between individuals from within and from outside. Members of a community would have a sense of belonging to it, leading them to largely accept a position that is commonly held.

Moreover, within communities, powerful centres, such as the state, but also important economic actors, media, or religious institutions, try to influence cultural meaning to make it converge as much as possible with their own, in order to generate support for their position and actions. On the one hand, they use their powerful position as a platform to express their cultural values, in the same way individuals express theirs. On the other hand, because of their

---

[135] Sewell, "The concept(s) of culture", 47.
[136] Ibidem.
[137] Idem, 50.

powerful position in the community, they are able to create a hierarchy of groups maintaining different values, putting those groups with the most diverging and thus threatening values in the least powerful and prominent positions.[138] Such a dominant centre may therefore shape the culture of a community in general, but this culture will always be contested by subgroups. As Sewell puts it, the centre, by classifying these subgroups hierarchically, 'turns the babble of cultural voices into a semiotically and politically ordered field of differences'[139], thereby creating 'thin' coherence.[140] Any subgroup however may eventually become successful in promoting its own culture at the cost of the central culture, to the extent that it in turn may shape the cultural values of the community at large, and thus assumes a position at the centre itself. 'Thin' coherence thus leaves ample room for a dynamic development of culture. We may therefore very well understand culture as a semiotic system, but this system does not by implication have to be rigidly coherent, fixed or bounded.

3.4   Contestation: Unity and diversity

In the study of Greek religion, this concept of 'thin' coherence may be added to the model of polis religion, in order to explain its dynamics. Poleis were internally divided in different, often overlapping ways. In their daily lives, citizens perceived of themselves as members of their subgroups as much as, or perhaps even more than, as members of the polis. Each grouping had its own concerns to attend to, and these were articulated in religion, as an apect of culture. Each grouping developed its own discourse, or meanings, and practices that might conflict with polis religion. This variety is revealed on several levels.

On the polis-level, consensus was partly and alternately, yet continuously challenged by these conflicting meanings. This caused the consensus to be a fluid set, subject to changes whenever one opinion gained enough ground and another slowly crumbled. Much of religious practices of subdivisions may have been incorporated in polis religion, especially where collective interests were concerned and where broad similarities existed, but some of it might not be acceptable to other groups or to those in power, and consequently left out of the collective discourse. Those in power could only maintain that discourse with the consent of the majority of the people. When that majority was lost, change was inherent, either in the composition of the group that was in power, or in its propositions of polis religion. In that way, the content of polis religion was continuously shifting, with those in power, but also with fluctuating sentiments among citizens. This is not to say that the complete religious discourse was pulled about every few years. Tradition and practice that had proven itself effective firmly established themselves at the core of polis religion.

On the individual level, each member of the polis subscribed to some collective polis values but rejected others, while also adopting collective values promoted by other social groups, as well as purely individual opinions. The imperfect consensus in the polis led people to attend to their specific concerns in their own religious ways, in addition to the beliefs and practices of polis religion. This personal set of values was also subject to change due to interaction in all kinds of contexts, be it in the polis, within a subgroup, or with foreigners. The subgroups of the polis may have been environments where alternative religious practices were performed, but choices were also made on the individual level. Moreover, whether as individuals or as groups, people from within the polis adopted religious beliefs and practices which were shared by groups that extended beyond the polis. In some cases, this was only a matter of adoption of the same practices, in others rituals were actually performed together, resulting in a real group identity of the practitioners.

---

[138] Idem, 56.

[139] Ibidem.

[140] Idem, 50.

These cults of a more personal choice were not necessarily compatible with polis religion, although practioners saw no problem in participating in both at the same time, as was predicted by the observation that culture is not necessarily logically consistent. Henk Versnel has thoroughly demonstrated this in three volumes focusing on peculiarities of Greek religion, perceived as inconsistencies by modern scholars.[141] He follows Paul Veyne in his assertion that consistency is rather the exception than the rule where human thought and hence human action is concerned.[142] Presupposing that there has to be consistency and coherence in thoughts and actions, or for that matter between thoughts and actions, creates problems, that is, inconsistencies, that subsequently have to be explained to fit into the system. However, if culture is perceived as intrinsically incoherent and inconsistent, as Veyne and Versnel do, inconsistencies no longer are problematic, indeed may not even stand out as such anymore, and thus do not need alternative explanations to make them fit into a model after all. Viewing the polis as a culturally coherent community leaves little room to explain cults independent from it, like Orphism, or even some more mainstream mystery-cults, while at the same time these are far too widespread and popular to explain them away as exceptions to the rule. Moreover, when compared to beliefs commonly held beyond the level of the polis, the ideologies of these 'inconsistent' strands of religion turn out to be not that divergent after all.[143]

The polis may be seen as one of a multitude of groups in which a certain measure of cultural consensus was continuously negotiated, thereby adding to, but certainly not exclusively determining, the system of meanings and symbols of the individuals that participated in its political framework. Citizens of the polis also participated in overlapping social groups below and beyond the polis-level. We have to concede however that the polis was one of the most, if not the most, significant social grouping to which an individual could belong.[144] To put it in Sewell's terms, the polis was the centre of power that was in a position to influence culture, and organize differences within its boundaries. This by no means however encompassed all religion, nor was all other religion dependent on corroboration by the polis.

We might say that polis religion is that part of religion that was practiced by the institutional polis to articulate its identity and to guarantee its well-being as such. Those in power in the polis appropriated religion as one way to justify their actions, out of the strong conviction that the polis at large shared or should share those beliefs. It is to this religious discourse that those in power made an appeal, to legitimate their actions and their position, and attempts to make minor changes to discourse or practice. As such, we can hardly characterize these attempts as 'manipulative', as was suggested in the introduction, because the ruling class of the polis did not invent cultural meaning that suited their political purposes.[145] They rather creatively used the semiotic room available to them within their own culture, in a way that was most profitable for their purposes.

---

[141] H.S. Versnel, *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman religion I. Ter Unus. Isis, Dionysos and Hermes: three studies in henotheism* (Leiden 1990); *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman religion II. Transition and reversal in myth and ritual* (Leiden 1993); *Coping with the gods: wayward readings in Greek theology* (Leiden 2011).

[142] P. Veyne, *Les grecs ont ils cru à leurs mythes?* (Paris 1983).

[143] Kindt, "Polis religion", 16-20.

[144] Ober, "Culture, thin coherence and the persistence of politics", 77; Kindt, "Polis religion", 17.

[145] Connor, "Tribes, festivals and processions", passim.

3.5   Conclusion

Although de Polignac seems to suggest that the religious system was deliberately re-invented to suit the political purposes of those individuals who strived for power in the developing poleis, the Structuralist background to his theory is awkward in this respect, as it does not allow for subtle changes in a system, a sine qua non for effective manipulation. For if the changes are too radical, it is difficult to understand how they could be acceptable to those manipulated. Additionally, the concept of a closed pantheon leaves no room for the introduction of foreign elements; indeed it leaves no room for any historical development at all.[146] It is therefore not suitable as a model to describe the interplay between religion and politics.

Conversely, we might agree with Sourvinou-Inwood that Greek religion was embedded in politics, in whatever form, and because of that, local practices showed a certain level of coherence. However, this coherence was subject to conflict and interaction, both inside the local community and with other communities, causing diachronic change on the one hand, and considerable synchronic variety on the other. Personal belief had a large part to play in this dynamic, and the success of the deployment of religion for political purposes depended largely on the extent to which the religious discourse that was appealed to found approval with the majority.

Adaptations of the religious discourse of a polis thus were not only due to adaptations to circumstances, but were also instigated through changes in culture. These changes in culture were brought about through the diversity of cultures that was present within and without the polis. Subsequent rulers in power used the room that was available in culture, to express their own values. It cannot be determined whether they never used this room creatively to fit their own purposes, but it seems likely that they did. Their moving space was however limited by the semiotic bandwidth available both to themselves with regard to their beliefs, and even more so to their audience. In practice this meant that religious discourse was appropriated to suit political purposes, but it was successful only in so far as the interpretation of its meaning was not stretched beyond what was acceptable to the majority of the people.

---

[146] Parker, *On Greek religion*, 96.

4   Perachora: a case study

To the northeast of the bay of Korinth, a cape stretches out from the Gerania mountain range as its eastern limit, towards the west into the Korinthian Gulf (Figs. 1 and 2). This promontory is commonly known as the Perachora peninsula, named after the modern village of Perachora, which lies more or less in its centre. On the tip of this promontory, a sanctuary is known to have been situated around a small harbour, and its ruins can be visited today (Figs. 3, 5-7). Livius and Strabo alluded to this sanctuary as that of Hera Akraia[147], and a few inscribed sherds, most notably a piece of a marble bowl confirm the worship of Hera with the epithet Akraia in this locality.[148] The material testifying to its character as a sacred precinct range from the early Archaic period to the middle Hellenistic. It has long been thought that the area of the peninsula in the early phase of the existence of the sanctuary belonged to Megara, although this is not explicitly attested by any ancient source. In later periods, it is known for certain that the territory and the sanctuary belonged to Korinth. De Polignac believed that the sanctuary, situated in an extra-urban position and on the border between Megara and Korinth, first symbolically demarcated the boundary of the Megarian territory. As such, the sanctuary would form one of the poles of his so-called bi-polar city, the emerging urban core of Megara itself being the other. According to the model, the monumentalization of the sanctuary, dated by the excavator, Humfry Payne, to the late 9th to early 8th century BC[149], marked out the point at which Megara conceived of itself as a polis. Subsequently, when Korinth took over, the sanctuary according to de Polignac performed that same function for the latter. However, the history and archaeology of the Perachora peninsula is rather complex and subject to varying interpretations of individual scholars. Therefore, the case of Hera Akraia on the Perachora peninsula is re-examined here, to demonstrate that de Polignac's model cannot be applicable.

4.1   The site

The temple complex at the tip of the Perachora promontory had probably been hidden from view for almost 20 centuries before Payne in 1930 took a chance at finding the elusive sanctuary of Hera Akraia as it was described by Xenophon.[150] The latter related how the people of the promontory fled into the Heraion, when they were attacked by the Spartan general Agesilaos at the beginning of the 4th century BC. Although the landscape did not seem a suitable location for a sacred precinct large enough to hold the ancient population of the entire peninsula, a more concentrated scatter of sherds on the surface betrayed some of its hidden contents underneath. Indeed, preliminary trial excavations revealed extensive remains of several buildings, along with large amounts of pottery, architectural elements and portable items belonging to a cultic setting.[151] Not before long, inscriptions were found which identified the sanctuary as Hera's, a few of which additionally bore the first letters of what might be reconstructed as the epithet Akraia.[152] Over the course of the '30 to '33 excavation seasons, Payne laid bare the remains of several buildings on a terrace around the small bay. He discovered a second and a third terrace of architectural remains above and to the west of the first, which he identified as belonging to the same temenos. Survey of the surrounding

---

[147] Livius 32.23.10; Strabo 8.6.22.
[148] H. Payne and T.J. Dunbabin (ed.), *Perachora, the sanctuaries of Hera Akraia and Limenia I: Architecture, bronzes, terracottas* (Oxford 1942), 98, and plate 27, no. 3.
[149] Payne, *Perachora I*, 28.
[150] Xenophon, *Hellenica* 4.5.5.
[151] H. Payne, Preliminary report on Perachora, *BSA* 30 (1928-1930), 285-287.
[152] T.J. Dunbabin (ed.), *Perachora, The sanctuaries of Hera Akraia and Limenia II: Pottery, ivories, scarabs and other objects* (Oxford 1962) 393-402.

area, extending as far as Lake Vouliagmeni, revealed traces of settlements and roads. The material found in the archaeological campaign ranged from Early Helladic to Roman.

Understandably, the focus of Payne's excavation project was on the area of the sanctuary itself. He even had a modern chapel moved from the principal site, and it was rebuilt only 100 metres to the west, where it still stands. The buildings he found are here presented in order of chronological appearance, according to the dates Payne assigned to them. The earliest building was found on the exact spot from where the chapel had been removed. One course of the stone foundation was preserved for part of its northern wall, and for part of an apse at its western end. The building had been built in a bed of Early Helladic pottery sherds.[153] Near the building however, an extensive deposit of Geometric sherds and other small items was found as well. There was no material datable between the Early Helladic and Geometric periods.[154] The Early Helladic pottery was of a domestic nature, whereas the Geometric material was clearly connected to cult practice. It contained mostly pottery for drinking and eating, associated with ritual dining, and votive gifts.

The deposit also produced several fragments of architectural models depicting apsidal buildings, comparable to a model found at Argos. That model was generally regarded as representing the architecture of the earliest monumental temples, first appearing around the Early Geometric period. Given the fact that the foundations of the actual building showed that it was apsidal, Payne linked the Geometric deposit to it and identified the building as the first temple of Hera Akraia.[155] The Geometric deposit appeared to be neatly cut off at some date in the last quarter of the 8th century, leading Payne to the conclusion that the temple had to have been abandoned around that date, probably because its brick walls had collapsed through rainwater washing down the hill.[156] Unfortunately, shortly after he had unearthed the building, those same summer rains in their course disrupted the exposed rubble foundations, now leaving only the northern wall.[157] Today, even this wall is no longer visible, as it is once again covered by earth, and a path leading down to the rest of the site.

On the eastern edge of the temenos, at the far end of the upper terraces, Payne excavated a building he ascribed to the second half of the 8th century. The building contained a hearth, built from reused dedicatory inscriptions to Hera, but here her epithet was specified as 'Leukolenos'. A number of pottery sherds, found around this building, were also inscribed as belonging to Hera, this time designated as 'Limenia'. These additional epithets have caused considerable confusion with regard to the function of the building. Payne thought it was another temple, as extensive votive deposits were found especially between its eastern wall and what was subsequently identified as the temenos-wall, running parallel to that eastern wall at a few metres' distance.[158] The earliest sherds in this area dated to the latter half of the 8th century and the beginning of the 7th, and Payne assessed that the Geometric deposit and this later one showed only the slightest of overlap in date.[159] Therefore he assumed that cult activity had suddenly ceased at the Geometric temple for Hera Akraia by the last quarter of the 8th century, and around the same time, probably slightly earlier, a new cult was installed for Hera Limenia on the upper terrace, where the temple was erected.[160] Additionally, he

---

[153] Payne, *Perachora I*, 28.
[154] Idem, 51.
[155] Idem, 28.
[156] Idem, 30.
[157] Idem, 28.
[158] Idem, 110.
[159] Idem, 118.
[160] Idem, 25

found decorated roof tiles which he linked to a refurbishing of the building around the middle of the 7th century.[161]

To the west of the Geometric temple, extensive ruins are visible. Within these ruins, Payne located foundations he labelled as *x* and *y*, and several reused building blocks. He judged these as not belonging to the rest of the building, according to their style and workmanship. He thought they might have belonged to an early Archaic temple, more specifically of the early 7th century, which would have been a successor to the Geometric temple of Hera Akraia.[162] However, this temple was evidently also destroyed, as elements of it had been reused in the temple of which the principal ruins were the remains. The latter was a Doric temple of unusual proportions, as it was rather long compared to its width. This was probably due to the space that was available on the terrace, assuming that the commissioner of the temple probably wanted it to be as large as possible.[163]

A thin layer of pottery and other items was spread over the area to the south-west of these temples, including the area of the 'Agora', to which we will return shortly. Payne connected this layer to the temples as their respective votive deposits, and termed it the Akraia-deposit.[164] He remarked that the pottery found in this deposit was of much poorer quality than that found around the Limenia-temple. He therefore assumed that the latter temple had taken precedence over the temple of Hera Akraia, exactly at the time when Corinth first emerged as a wealthy trading nation, around the last quarter of the 8th century. As Payne considered, this could happen only because the Geometric temple evidently fell out of use and gave way to the rise of the temple of Hera Limenia, before a new temple for Akraia could have been built. After that new temple had been finished, the focal point of the sanctuary never fully returned to the temple of Hera Akraia by the harbour.[165]

A long altar was built to the east of the 6th-century temple, which on the grounds of its alignment with the eastern wall of the temple and its style presumably belonged to the same building phase. It partly covered the Geometric temple and the Geometric deposit, and Payne had had to remove it to investigate those earlier remains. Only its foundations are now preserved on site. Related to the altar, on its northern end, was a flight of seven stone steps, forming a staircase from which any activity at the altar could be attended by a modest audience.[166]

Also contemporary with the 6th-century temple are the remains found to the southwest side of the bay, just beyond the temple complex. Payne removed parts of a Roman house built on this terrace, to reach the late Archaic foundations of a building he termed 'Agora'. He found the building had a colonnade on two sides, in which he imagined shops might have been located, or else an open marketplace in its courtyard, whence the name he gave it.[167] At the south-east side of this Agora, an isolated deposit of pottery was found, dating between 650-600 BC, but no further investigations were done yet.[168]

Because Payne died before he could proceed with his investigations, the 'Agora' remained largely unexplored, until J.J. Coulton in 1967 took up that task. He identified the now so-called South-East deposit as part of the foundation trench for the earliest building activity. He

---

[161] Idem, 113.
[162] Idem, 83.
[163] R.A. Tomlinson, "Perachora", in: A. Schachter (ed.), *Le sanctuaire grec* (Vandoeuvres-Genève 1990), 321-346, 337.
[164] Payne, *Perachora I*, 92.
[165] Idem, 25.
[166] Tomlinson, "Perachora", 338.
[167] Payne, *Perachora I*, 15.
[168] Idem, 93.

also re-examined the pottery, lowering its closing date to around 575. Given the location of the deposit beneath the architectural remains, the pottery thus provided that as a terminus post quem for the earliest building phase. Coulton denied that the function of the building could be identified conclusively by its architectural features, and consequently called it the 'West Court'.[169] Alternatively, in 1985, G. Kuhn reassessed the excavated building and identified it as a stoa, and assigned it a more central role in the cultic practices as a *pompeion*.[170] This interpretation is mostly regarded as speculative however, and Coulton's reference to it as the West Court is often maintained.

Coulton also took a closer look at the L-shaped stoa to the east of the 6th-century altar, the last of the series of buildings on the lower terrace. Payne had excavated part of it, but devoted little attention to it.[171] Coulton pointed out that it was special because it featured a second storey. He dated it to end of the 4th century.[172] Ulrich Sinn however thought it belonged to the early 4th century, according to its style. He also recognized that the 6th-century altar had been embellished with four ionic columns, probably belonging to the same building project as the stoa, and other finds from the upper terraces, indicating that investments had been made in the early 4th century to renovate the entire sanctuary.[173]

On the middle terrace, Payne found a deep deposit in a depression he called the 'Sacred Pool'. He was convinced this depression was manmade to collect rainwater, and had been used for ritual purposes. Among this very diverse and rich deposit, he found the impressive amount of 200 bronze *phialai* in the pool.[174] Thomas Dunbabin elaborated on the function of the pool, as he thought these phialai might be related to the oracular function of the sanctuary of Hera Akraia, that was briefly alluded to by Strabo. He imagined that a *phiale* was thrown in the pool, after which an interpreter would 'read' the way the vessel floated and subsequently sank, as a sign of things to come.[175] The fill of the Sacred Pool was dated between 750 and the late 5th century BC, therefore Payne suggested the pool had been dug out at the same time when the temple to Hera Limenia was built, and only finally closed in the late 5th century.[176]

Close to the Sacred Pool, foundations were found belonging to a building with two rooms and a portico. Payne referred to it as a Hellenistic house. Subsequent commentators have identified it as a *hestiatorion*, the ritual banqueting hall closely related to the cult. Richard Tomlinson connected its building date to that of a double apsidal cistern, not far away.[177] No finds are reported between Hellenistic and Roman periods. This indicates that the sanctuary was probably abandoned somewhere in the Hellenistic period. The Roman material all pertains to houses and other settlement architecture, suggesting that nothing was reminiscent of the former function of the locality as a sacred place.[178]

The excavations conducted by Payne were to be published in several volumes. During the preparations for publication however, Payne suddenly and unexpectedly died. He left much unfinished work, and moreover, he was the only one who had consistently been present at all

---

[169] J.J. Coulton, "The west court at Perachora", *BSA* 62 (1967), 353-371.
[170] G. Kuhn, "Untersuchungen zur Funktion der Säulenhalle in archaisher und klassischer Zeit", *JdI* 100 (1985), 169-307, 292-294.
[171] Payne, *Perachora I*, 14-15.
[172] J.J. Coulton, "The stoa by the harbour at Perachora", *BSA* 59 (1964), 100-131, 128.
[173] U. Sinn, "Das Heraion von Perachora: eine sakrale Schutzzone in der Korinthischen Peraia", *AM* 105 (1990), 53-116, 104.
[174] Payne, *Perachora I*, 121.
[175] T.J. Dunbabin, "The oracle of Hera Akraia at Perachora", *BSA* 46 (1951), 61-71, 64-65.
[176] Payne, *Perachora I*, 120.
[177] R.A. Tomlinson and K. Demakopoulou, "Excavations at the circular building, Perachora", *BSA* 80 (1985), 261-279, 276.
[178] Tomlinson, "Perachora", 322.

the excavating work. The task of finishing the work was taken up by Dunbabin, but he had not been present at all at the digging in Perachora, and Payne's notebooks were far from complete.[179] The resulting publication of *Perachora I*, discussing the main sacred architectural elements and the items from the Geometric deposit, which appeared in 1942 has often been criticized for inconsistencies and missing information. *Perachora II* discussed the items from the deposits of the upper terraces.[180] A third publication, which was to be specifically on the Agora and the L-shaped stoa and other remaining material, was never accomplished. Instead, in the 1960's, Tomlinson and Coulton initiated a number of new excavations, and reconsidered some of the conclusions from the original excavation reports. Some of these reconsiderations are important for the understanding of the history of the site, and therefore will be discussed later on. First, we must look into the account of that history as it developed over time.

4.2   Relations with early Megara

Although in later times the Heraion was very clearly a Korinthian sanctuary, de Polignac believed that it had a Megarian origin, and he was not the only one who did so. The occasion to assume that Megara originally controlled the area of the Perachora Heraion lies in a passage in Ploutarchos' *Quaestiones Graecae* 17:

> *What is the 'spear-friend'?*
>
> *In days of old the Megarid used to be settled in village communities with the citizens divided into five groups. They were called Heraeïs, Piraeïs, Megareis, Cynosureis, and Tripodiscioi. ...*[181]

According to many scholars, this passage referred to an early period of Megarian history, when the polis was in the making, and moreover they assume that it reveals that Megara in that early period included the promontory where modern Perachora is situated.[182] Neatly in accord with Aristotle's model, the passage evokes a group of scattered communities that gradually grew closer together. Eventually one urban core developed which became the polis of Megara, whereas the remaining villages became dependencies in the territory.

In reading this passage, scholars for convenience have conflated the two statements Plutarch made in the first line. As a result, they assume that originally, the Megarian territory consisted of five villages. The people would have been divided into five sections corresponding to their location in the area of one of those villages.[183] Megara, where the Megareis lived, turned out to be dominant and became the urban centre of the polis. The village of the Tripodiskioi, Tripodiskos, has occurred in several other contexts and since long has been identified to the north-west of Megara.[184] In a textual fragment the 6th-century BC poet Sousarion is indeed mentioned as a Megarian from Tripodiskos, indicating the dependent status of the village

---

[179] Payne, *Perachora* I, Preface by T.J. Dunbabin.

[180] T.J. Dunbabin (ed.), *Perachora, The sanctuaries of Hera Akraia and Limenia II: Pottery, ivories, scarabs and other objects* (Oxford 1962).

[181] Translation by F.C. Babbitt, *Plutarch's Moralia* (London 1936).

[182] Among others: W.R. Halliday, *The Greek questions of Plutarch* (Oxford 1928), 95-102; K. Hanell, *Megarische Studien* (Lund 1934), 76; N.G.L. Hammond, "The Heraeum at Perachora and Corinthian encroachment", *BSA* 49 (1954), 93-102, 95; J.B. Salmon, "The Heraeum at Perachora and the early history of Corinth and Megara", *BSA* 67 (1972), 159-204 and plate 38, 193-194; R.P. Legon, *Megara. The political history of a Greek city-state to 336 B.C.* (Ithaca and London 1981), 49-50; P.J. Smith, *The archaeology and epigraphy of Hellenistic and Roman Megaris* (Oxford 2008), 97.

[183] A. Robu, *La cité de Mégare et les établissements mégariens de Sicile, de la Propontide et du Pont-Euxin. Histoire et institutions* (unpublished dissertation, University of Neuchâtel 2008), 18.

[184] Legon, *Megara*, 33.

from Megara.[185] For the Heraeis, Piraeis and Kynosoureis however, no certifiable location can be determined. Of these three, the Heraeis for the present discussion are the most interesting. It is inferenced that the Heraeis lived in the village of Heraia. Its name would have been derived from the predominance of the worship of Hera in the area of that village.[186]

However, in the entire Megarid as we know it historically, no cult or sanctuary of Hera is attested, neither archeologically nor in literature. The abundance of theophoric personal names derived from Hera in funerary inscriptions from Megara[187], and the fact that Hera's worship was popular in Megara's colonies[188], on the other hand do suggest that an important cult for Hera existed in the metropolis, at least at the time when the colonies were founded. One solution to this problem is to look for important Hera-cults in the vicinity, and this is the point where the Heraion at Perachora enters the discussion. On the single mention of the Heraeis as a subdivision of the Megarian population by Plutarch, it has been argued that their village must have been situated in the Perachora peninsula, around the Heraion. Consequently the entire peninsula had to have been part of the Megarid before Megara became a polis through *synoikismos*.[189]

Several arguments have been subsequently adduced to support this rather speculative conclusion, and to prove that Plutarch was trustworthy as a source in this case. That the five villages were indeed the constituent elements of the polis is to be confirmed by the persistence of a fivefold division of the body of citizens, expressed in yearly colleges of five members for both *stratègoi* and *damiourgoi* attested in several inscriptions from Megara itself.[190] Additionally, a late inscription from Epidauros mentions a certain Megarian Dionysios who was a member of the *hekatostys* of Kynosoura[191], *hekatostyes* being widely attested as civic subdivisions of poleis in service of military recruitment.[192] Perhaps the original villages or *komai* had lost their sense of locality by the Hellenistic period and had developed into subdivisions of the polis along lines of civic membership. Nonetheless, these very few scraps of information might be the reminiscence of an original composition of the Megarid of five parts.[193]

Additionally, supposing that the promontory indeed belonged to Megara, the early ceramic that has been found at the Heraion might be taken to confirm Megarian control of it in the early Archaic period. First it must be conceded that no evidence exists of a typically Megarian style of pottery for the Geometric period.[194] Either the polis did not produce her own pottery, and used imported wares instead, or she meticulously imitated the style of another region, making it unrecognizable as typically Megarian. Both possibilities have been explored for a way to prove the dominance of Megara in the Heraion at an early stage of its existence. One possibility is that Megara used Korinthian ware, which has been found in abundance at the Heraion. This possibility is very much conceivable, as we know that Korinthian pottery was indeed popular in Megara in earlier and later periods.[195] The second possibility is that Megara imitated the pottery style of Argos. Some Argive ceramic has been found at the Heraion,

---

[185] Robu, *La cité de Mégare*, 20.
[186] Legon, *Megara*, 49.
[187] Hanell, *Megarische Studien*, 76.
[188] Idem, 207-218; Hammond, "The Heraeum at Perachora", 96 and n.12, 98 and n. 24; Salmon, "The Heraeum at Perachora", 194 n. 213.
[189] See n. 180 supra.
[190] 5 Strategoi: IG VII 8-14 and R.M Heath, "Proxeny decrees from Megara", *BSA* 19 (1912-1913), 82-88, no's 1 and 2. 5 Damiourgoi: IG VII 41.
[191] IG IV^2 42.
[192] Smith, *Hellenistic and Roman Megaris*, 115.
[193] Hammond, "The Heraeum at Perachora", 95.
[194] Idem, 99.
[195] Salmon, "The Heraeum at Perachora", 201.

including several temple models for which the model found at the Heraion in Argos is seen as archetypal.[196] Hanell already perceived a strong influence from Argos in Megara, judging from the similarity of several of their cults and myths, and this influence might as well have included pottery styles.[197] Finds from Syracuse, near the earliest Megarian colony on Sicily, Megara Hyblaia, which also looked rather Argive, might confirm this influence. Thus the Argive ware at the Heraion may actually be Megarian imitations, and as such it would attest to the early Megarian presence at the sanctuary.[198]

4.3 Korinthian encroachment

We know that at least from the late Archaic period onwards, the Perachora peninsula was under Korinthian rule. Therefore, if Megarians indeed were the original occupants of the area, at some point, Korinth must have taken over the territory, including the sanctuary. For the Heraeis to be lastingly incorporated in the polis of Megara however requires their village in the peninsula to have gone through the entire synoikismos before the region was lost.[199] W. Halliday dated the partition into five villages as a pre-Doric situation, thereby placing it at some point before the 10th century BC.[200] The existence of the Dorians as an ethnically distinguishable group and the reality of their invasion in Greece however nowadays are severely doubted, and any dating reconstructed around this 'invention of tradition' should be dismissed.[201] Effectively, Ronald Legon rejected Halliday's dating, but he left intact the assumption of a Dorian invasion, which according to him resulted in the foundation of Megara in five villages by those very Dorians, after the 10th century BC. The synoikismos subsequently took place between the 10th and the early 8th century.[202] If we assume that in general synoikismos of poleis is a phenomenon belonging to the 8th century, we might as well accept this date. As a consequence, we should be looking for a conflict between Korinth and Megara that could have been about the Perachora territory, and which occurred shortly after the synoikismos.

Indeed, in the next part of *Quaestiones Graecae* 17, Plutarch relates how Korinth tried to interfere between the communities of the Megarid, so that any of them might be easily annexed by Korinth instead:

> *… Although the Corinthians brought about a civil war among them, for the Corinthians were ever plotting to get Megara under their control, none the less, because of their fair-mindedness, they [the Megarians] conducted their wars in a civilized and a kinsmanly way. …*[203]

This passage suggests that conflicts with Korinth were already simmering during the synoikismos, and the actual takeover of the Perachora peninsula is supposed not to have taken place very long afterwards. Therefore, we might date that event to the second half of the 8th century at the latest. In support of that date, the reconstruction, as far as possible, of the history of the Heraion has been adduced. The first temple, dedicated to Hera Akraia, has been dated to the first quarter of the 8th century. Then, for some reason, a new temple was built on the upper terrace of the site, so in another location, and this time apparently dedicated to Hera

---

[196] Hammond, "The Heraeum at Perachora", 99-100.
[197] Hanell, *Megarische Studien*, 69-91, notably 79.
[198] Hammond, "The Heraeum at Perachora", 101.
[199] Legon, *Megara*, 69.
[200] Halliday, *The Greek questions of Plutarch*, 96-97.
[201] Hall, *Hellenicity*, passim.
[202] Legon, *Megara*, 47, following Hanell, *Megarische Studien*, 69-91, who postulated that the Dorians that founded Megara had been settled in Argos first.
[203] Translation by Babbitt, *Plutarch's Moralia*.

Limenia. According to Nicholas Hammond, this marks a discontinuity in the life of the sanctuary, possibly caused by the Korinthian takeover. In his view, the Korinthians abandoned the original cult on the lower terrace and started a new one to emphasize the imposition of their control in the area.[204]

There is one indication from Megara itself that refers to a territorial conflict in this period. Among the few inscriptions from Megara is an epigram for the hero Orsippos.[205] The text of this epigram was paraphrased by Pausanias when he stood over the hero's tomb on the Megarian agora.[206] According to the text, Orsippos was famed for two reasons. The most important reason (as it is stated first) was his role as a general in the recovery of land that had been taken by an unnamed neighbouring power. The second, which certainly chronologically comes before the first, was his victory in the Olympian footrace, which he won because he was the first ever to run naked. This event is actually datable, as Orsippos appears as victor during the 15th Olympiad, dated to 720 BC, in the list of Olympic champions. If Orsippos had been a young man at that time, his career as a general must have taken off afterwards, placing his most important military achievement between 720 and perhaps 680 at the latest.[207] This accords surprisingly well with the date at which we had assumed Korinthian takeover of Perachora.

In both the inscription and in Pausanias, the identity of the rivalling neighbours is not revealed. However, we have only few possibilities to choose from. For Boiotia, there is no evidence of any kind for conflicts with Megara in this period. For Attica on the other hand, two conflicts may be relevant. The first is the ongoing conflict with Athens over Salamis, which also originally belonged to Megara in the Archaic period. However, this conflict was at its height only about a century later, when Solon was in power. Another option is a conflict between the two about Eleusis, which is also attested in later periods. In this period, Athens consolidated her power over Eleusis, and it is to be expected from her geographic position that Megara had an interest in the region. The epigram for Orsippos seems to speak however of a considerable stretch of land, a qualification we hardly may give to Eleusis and its surrounding area. It is improbable therefore that Attica is the neighbour meant. That leaves us with only one option, which is Korinth.[208] And as we have seen before, this would also be the most likely candidate.

In this respect Pausanias refers to a conflict between Korinth and Megara that was resolved by Megarian victory at a time when in Athens the archonship was not yet instated as an annually rotating office. This means that it occurred either before 752, when the term of the archonship was limited to ten years instead of lifelong, or still before 682, when the term was shortened to one year. The Megarian treasury at Olympia according to Pausanias was built to display the spoils of this war, which could be the war we are looking for. The treasury however dates from the 5th century, and even though Pausanias concedes that the spoil were dedicated long after the victory, P. Bol discards the possibility that the treasury was connected to a war at such an early date.[209] Still, this does not mean that we should rule out the possibility that such a war took place in that period all together. Rather, as Legon proposes, we may presume that Pausanias confused two stories, but the fact that he mentioned the war to Legon means that at

---

[204] Hammond, "The Heraeum at Perachora", 101.

[205] IG VII 52. The inscription itself is a 4th century AD copy of a much older original epigram. Based on style and the possible composer of the epigram, the original may be dated to the 5th century BC. The epigram therefore is not a contemporary source for Orsippos' military exploits, and the time in between may have distorted the account it records.

[206] Pausanias 1.44.1.

[207] Legon, *Megara*, 63.

[208] Ibidem.

[209] P.C. Bol, "Die Giebelskulpturen des Schatzhauses von Megara", *AM* 89 (1974), 64-75.

least a tradition existed about it, which he used as a source.[210] The treasury however can unfortunately not be of any help in elucidating the mystery of that war.

Although there is not much evidence to draw on, it seems that the pieces of the puzzle fit together to form a picture of the early history of the Perachora peninsula. The sequence of events can be reconstructed as follows: in the early Archaic period, at least in the first half of the 8th century the Perachora peninsula belonged together with the Megarid. In this very period, the polis of Megara developed through synoikismos of five villages in the territory, of which the promontory held one. As presumed by de Polignac, the first temple for Hera Akraia was built, to emphasize and consolidate Megara's new identity as a polis. Korinth however continuously interfered in the process, trying to wrest some borderlands from Megarian control. In the last quarter of the 8th century, this resulted in an outbreak of hostilities between Megara and Korinth. Judging by the epigram for Orsippos, Korinth apparently initially was successful in capturing some territory, which subsequently was, probably partly, recovered by Orsippos and his troops. Whether this was the Perachora peninsula or some other tract of land to the west of Megara we may never know. We do know for a fact that Perachora later belonged to Korinth, and the most likely occasion for a takeover to have happened is indeed this war towards the end of the 8th century, for the existence of which significant indications seem to exist.

4.4   Puzzling evidence

However, this entire reconstruction is built on an assumption, that Perachora once belonged to Megara, based on a single implicit and late literary reference, for which no direct support can be adduced. First, we do not know what source Plutarch had for his account of early Megarian history, but it seems inconceivable that he reported a historically trustworthy tradition that came down unchanged all the way from the Archaic period to the 1st century AD, when he wrote it down. It is much more likely that he quoted a more recent or even a contemporary source whose account may have contained some truth, but was also influenced by all kinds of both personal and communal interests.[211] The evidence adduced to prove the reliability of Ploutarchos's account is the fact that several Megarian governmental bodies were composed of five members. These however were only attested in the Hellenistic period, when Megara entered the Achaean league, where this organization of the polis into five civic units was more or less standard. Significant in this respect is that the council of strategoi was according to the relevant inscriptions either composed of 5 annually rotating members, or 6 members whose term is not clear, but which was at least longer than one year. It has been generally assumed that the inscriptions referring to 6 strategoi post-dated those registering only 5 members of the council. However, the inscriptions are very hard to date[212], and according to present standards their order might as well be reversed, supporting the suggestion that the fivefold division of Megara was a consequence of a 3rd century BC reform upon entering the Achaean league.[213]

Second, even if it would be reliable as a historical account, Ploutarchos' passage does not explicitly state that Perachora belonged to Megara. It is through association and speculation that this conclusion is reached, whereas none of the arguments used renders it inevitable. Plutarch does not state that Megara had five villages of which that of the Heraeis was one. He states that the Heraeis were one of the five civic subdivisions, but these were not necessarily connected to a locality.[214] Moreover, the name Heraeis may or may not refer to a group of

---

[210] Legon, *Megara*, 64.
[211] Robu, *La cité de Mégare*, 31.
[212] Smith, *Hellenistic and Roman Megaris*, 109-110.
[213] Robu, *La cité de Mégare*, 36.
[214] Idem, 18.

worshippers of Hera, but even if it does, it does not mean that this group controlled the Heraion on the peninsula, or even that they attended this specific sanctuary for Hera. For the absence of attestations of a Hera-cult in the historically known Megarid does not prove absence of such a cult all together. There is even a possibility that the name of the Heraeis did not have anything to do with the worship of Hera, for the presumed importance of Hera in Megara is not necessarily supported by the proliferation of personal names derived from Hera.

Thus, in the absence of any explicit and decisive indication that the Perachora peninsula belonged to Megara, we should reject it as an assumption. For the arguments that point in the direction of a war between Megara and Korinth over that territory have all been wrested from the source material because that very assumption necessitated to assume such a conflict in that period. In some cases such circular arguing may produce a valid point, when the material used as confirmation is indeed best explained with the initial conjecture as a starting point. In this case however, the confirming sources may be explained in several other ways, which are just as plausible. First of all, Ploutarchos' remark on the Korinthian intrigue in Megara is not surprising in the light of ongoing rivalry between the two. It might have occurred at any time, as the period to which Plutarch refers is not clear, and it might as well lie in some mythical past, partly made up at some point as an explanatory device for contemporary circumstances.[215]

Orsippos' exploits are another case in point. Some doubts have been raised against the authenticity of the story related in the inscription. As the original inscription was set up centuries after the event to which it supposedly refers, the story may have been conveniently manipulated or even entirely made up. Judging by his tomb being placed centrally on the Megarian agora, and the renewed setup of the inscription at such a late date, Orsippos was an important element in Megara's public appearance. His military achievements were clearly of major importance, perhaps to back up claims to some territory, of even generally to military prowess.[216] The Olympic victory may have conferred more credence upon Orsippos as a hero. Moreover, connecting this victory to the initiation of the henceforth traditional practice of competing naked, an invention for which several other heroes were credited by their different places of origin as well, situated Orsippos' career in a rather remote past, lending higher antiquity and thus greater weight to whatever claim was supported by it. For that matter, Orsippos' appearance in the list of Olympic victors may be part of that manipulative scheme as well, for we do not know how and at what point exactly that list was drawn.[217]

If the date of Orsippos' career cannot be known, we can certainly not exclude some of the possibilities that were rejected relating to the war his epigram refers to. The conflict with Athens over Salamis which according to the tradition was initiated by Solon was in fact, according to that same tradition a continuation of a quarrel in which Megara had initially gained the upper hand. We only know when the quarrel was decided in favour of Athens, but we cannot pinpoint when it started. Orsippos could have accomplished his victory both in the early stages, perhaps during the 7th century, or at a later point, in the final phase that took place in the early 6th century.[218] But the war designated in the inscription may as well have been over Eleusis, for no reference whatsoever is made in it that allows conclusions about the amount of land that is recovered. We do not have indications for such a war with Eleusis for that period, but effectively, such indications for an 8th-century war with Korinth prove to be just as elusive.[219]

---

[215] K.J. Rigsby, "Megara and Tripodiscus", *GRBS* 28 (1987), 93-102, 101.

[216] Salmon, "The Heraeum at Perachora", 199.

[217] T.J. Figueira and G. Nagy (eds.), *Theognis of Megara, Poetry and the polis* (Baltimore and London 1985), 271-273.

[218] A. French, "Solon and the Megarian question", *JHS* 77 (1957), 238-246.

[219] Salmon, "The Heraeum at Perachora", 199.

Still, the discontinuity of cult at the Heraion needs further explanation. The original suggestion by Payne was that the temple for Hera Akraia was not immediately abandoned when the temple for Hera Limenia was built. He supposed that the two cults were briefly maintained side by side in the same temenos. There has been much debate over this suggestion. The pottery deposits connected to either building as described by Payne did not overlap in date, or only very little, suggesting that the Akraia temple was indeed abandoned when that for Limenia was taken into use, but the dating of the pottery too is a matter of dispute. Moreover, the respective epithets for the goddess seem to be rather misplaced. Akraia refers to a location on a promontory or a hilltop, which would be most appropriate for Hera's location in the older temple, on the promontory. Limenia refers to a position on the coast, which arguably can be said of the location of that temple in itself. It is odd however if one considers it in combination with the temple that was already there, which was much closer to the coast than the new one.[220] Finally, it would be strange for Korinth to abandon the cult of Hera Akraia as a statement in the 8th century, to revert back to it in the 6th, and possibly already in the 7th, when the temples in the harbour area were again dedicated to Hera Akraia.

A radical assumption was made by Tomlinson. He suggested that the Hera Limenia temple was not a temple at all. He argued that the architecture was not typical for a temple, and the presence of a centrally placed hearth also struck him as odd. He rather identified the building as a banqueting hall, connected to the existing cult of Hera Akraia. It was apparently also used to put up dedications and store sacred items. The distribution of functions over several buildings seems to be an answer to the growing popularity of the sanctuary, which may be gleaned from the steady increase in the number of votive gifts. The name Limenia, found on two inscriptions, may be explained as a reference to the cult to which the building belonged, namely 'the cult of Hera whose temple is on the coast'.[221] The supposed discontinuity of the cult is thus greatly reduced and consequently the necessity to explain it by a change of owner, from Megara to Korinth.

Finally, the arguments drawn from the pottery-types found at the Heraion against this background seem artificial and farfetched. The abundance of Korinthian pottery only leaves open the possibility that Megarians were among the visitors of the Heraion, and for that matter may have been the dominant group there, but it does not prove the latter point in any way. The 'Argive' pottery does not prove to be decisive either. This argument was first put forward by Hammond, drawing on the excavation report by Payne, which catalogued a considerable amount of Argive pottery from the Heraion. On second examination by Salmon however, much of the characteristics of the pottery turned out to be less prominently Argive, but instead rather general for the region around the isthmus. This would also explain the presence of this type of pottery on Sicily.[222]

Additionally, in other places, more temple models have been found, many of them much older than the model from Argos, including those from Perachora itself. Therefore, the Argive model is untenable as an archetype and it is now doubtful whether it should be considered as a typical Argive dedication at all.[223] Possibly the model originally did not depict a temple but rather a house. That in turn may render it appropriate as a dedication to Hera, who after all was the goddess who protected the homestead.[224] The model should then be explained as

---

[220] Legon, *Megara*, 67.
[221] R.A. Tomlinson, "The upper terraces at Perachora", *BSA* 72 (1977), 198-202.
[222] Salmon, "The Heraeum at Perachora", 185
[223] Ibidem.
[224] C.A. Morgan, "The evolution of a sacral 'landscape': Isthmia, Perachora, and the early Corinthian state", in: S.E. Alcock and R. Osborne (eds.), *Placing the gods* (Oxford 1994), 105-142, 133.

typical to Hera, and not indicative of Argive influence in the Perachora Heraion, directed there through Megarian control of it.

4.5   The Korinthian Heraion

Generally, scholars treating the Perachora peninsula or the Heraion in any detail have now adopted the view that the region had never been part of the Megarid.[225] Thus the role of the Heraion as an extra-urban sanctuary to the emerging polis of Megara cannot be maintained. Indeed, de Polignac recognized this in the reviewed and translated edition of his dissertation in 1995, and in his introductory article to *Placing the gods*, a collection of articles critically reviewing his theory, edited by Susan Alcock and Robin Osborne.[226] However, now he retained the second part of the argument. Now that the Heraion appeared to have belonged to Korinth from an early period onwards, he assigned it the role of extra-urban sanctuary to that polis.[227] Korinth even seems to meet de Polignac's criterion of the central pole, opposite to the outlying pole of the bi-polar city, for it seemed that a small sanctuary for Hera Akraia was situated within the walls of Korinth in the same manner as the small sanctuary for Artemis Brauronia, installed on the Akropolis in Athens, that mirrored the larger cult for Artemis at Brauron.[228]

The existence of this small sanctuary has been inferenced by several scholars from a combination of two literary references. In the first place, a passage in Euripides' Medea, situated in Korinth, relates how Medea, after killing her children takes their bodies with her on the chariot of her grandfather Helios, to bury them in the sanctuary of Hera Akraia.[229] No specification is given here for the location of that sanctuary. Next, Pausanias, in his description of the area around the road to Sikyon in Korinth, refers to the fountain of Glaukè, and next to it a *mnema* for Medea's children.[230] In this context, *mnema* may mean either monument or tomb, but it is often assumed that Pausanias here means a tomb.[231] Consequently, it must be inferenced that the sanctuary of Hera Akraia designated by Euripides should be located right there as well. No archaeological remains of this sanctuary have been found, but with regard to the destruction of the city in 146 BC, that does not necessarily negate its previous existence.[232]

Such departments in the centre according to de Polignac symbolized the belonging of the main cult and especially the locality of that cult, the boundary lands of polis-territory, to the polis at large. A procession from the central sanctuary to the main cult might have strengthened that symbolic connection. There is no indication that such a procession was held from Korinth to Perachora but that does not have to hamper de Polignac's conclusion: conceivably, a procession could have been conducted largely by sea, the obvious approach to Perachora from Korinth's point of view, in which case it will not have left any traces.[233]

---

[225] Notably: Tomlinson, "Perachora"; Morgan, "The evolution of a sacral 'landscape' ".
[226] F. de Polignac, "Mediation, competition and sovereignty: The evolution of rural sanctuaries in Geometric Greece", in: S.E. Alcock and R. Osborne (eds.), *Placing the gods* (Oxford 1994), 3-18.
[227] De Polignac, *The origins of the Greek city-state*, 22, 51.
[228] Tomlinson, "Perachora", 325.
[229] Euripides, *Medea* 1379-1380.
[230] Pausanias 2.3.6.
[231] F.M. Dunn, "Pausanias on the tomb of Medea's children", *Mnemosyne* 48 (1995), 348-351.
[232] C.K. Williams, *Pre-Roman cults in the area of the forum of ancient Corinth* (Ann Arbor 1978), 46-48.
[233] B. Menadier, *The sixth century BC temple and the sanctuary and cult of Hera Akraia, Perachora* (Ann Arbor 1995), 65.

4.6   Female fecundity and kourotropheia

As we have seen, de Polignac assigned specific functions to the deities worshipped in the *eschatia*, in relation to their role in integrating the community. Protection of women and adolescents, and their respective integration and initiation in the polis especially stand out. De Polignac asserted that both these functions were explicitly performed by Hera in Perachora.[234] An indication of her special role in women's lives is to be found in the story of Herodotos on the Korinthian tyrant Periandros. He called upon the women of Korinth to gather in the (unnamed) sanctuary of Hera outside the walls, where he stripped them bare and subsequently burnt all their belongings to appease the spirit of his wife Melissa, whom he had killed himself.[235] The story allegedly proves that the women were not suspicious of Periandros' bad intentions when they were convened, thus that the congregation at the sanctuary, identified as that of Hera Akraia, was a regular event, probably following a procession as part of a yearly festival.[236]

The kourotrophic character of the sanctuary and its role in initiatory practices is supposedly reflected in different strands of the myth around Medea's children and the ritual that appears to have emanated from it.[237] The fact that Medea buried her children in the sanctuary in Euripides' tragedy may or may not bear symbolic significance in this respect but other, perhaps older versions of the myth may give some additional clues. Pausanias reports two stories in relation to the mnema of Medea's children. For the first he paraphrases Eumelos, a Korinthian poet whose work has been variably dated between the 8th and 6th centuries BC.[238] From the few fragments that we have, this poet appears to have written a verse history of Korinth, probably commissioned by members of the Korinthian elite. This history circulated in several versions before being rewritten in prose form.

Pausanias almost certainly used this prose version as a source for Medea's history.[239] He relates how Helios owned the land of Korinth and Sikyon, when the combined land was still called Ephyraea. He gave the part that was to become Sikyon to his son Aloeus, and the Korinthian part to his son Aietes, who for some reason had to leave Korinth for Kolchis. Upon his departure he gave the land in custody to Bounos. When Bounos died, the land was ruled by Epopeus, son of Aloeus, and after him by Korinthos, who eventually gave the region its name. Korinthos died childless and the Korinthians decided to call in a descendant of Aietes as hegemon. They chose Medea, Aietes' daughter, and we may suppose that the Argonautic episode had already taken place, for she was together with Jason. She became queen, and Jason consequently became king of Korinth.[240]

This genealogy is an obvious invention by Eumelos, for the purpose of connecting Korinth to the great epic of the Argonauts, a conclusion to which we will return later.[241] The next passage in Pausanias story may not be Eumelos', for Pausanias does not explicitly refer to his source here. He relates how Medea, when in Korinth, begot several children, and each time on their birth brought them to the (unnamed) sanctuary of Hera, where she either concealed them or buried them, in order to make them immortal.[242] The scholia to Pindaros' *Olympic odes*

---

[234] De Polignac, *La naissance de la cité grecque*, 51, n.19.

[235] Herodotos, 5.92.G.

[236] D. Novaro-Lefèvre, "Le culte d'Héra a Pérachora", *RÉG* 113 (2000), 42-69, 59.

[237] S.I. Johnston, "Corinthian Medea and the cult of Hera Akraia", in: J.J. Clauss and S.I. Johnston (eds.), *Medea, Essays on Medea in myth, literature, philosophy and art* (New Jersey 1997), 44-70, 50-51.

[238] M.L. West, " 'Eumelos', a Corinthian epic cycle?", *JHS* 122 (2002), 109-133, 109.

[239] West, " 'Eumelos', a Corinthian epic cycle?", 118.

[240] Pausanias, 2.3.10.

[241] C. Harrauer, "Der korinthische Kindermord. Eumelos und die Folgen", *WS* 112 (1999), 5-28, 8.

[242] Pausanias, 2.3.11.

relate that she might have expected Hera to assist in this procedure out of gratitude because Medea had resisted Zeus' amorous advances.[243] We may conclude that the children died as a result of this action, for when Jason discovered what Medea had done to the children, he returned to Iolkos in anger, and Medea subsequently fled from Korinth.[244] Although no ritual was said to be derived, either from the act itself, or as a retribution for the dead children, the story has often been interpreted as an allegory of initiation.[245]

The figure of Medea in this respect may be conceived of as a primeval Mother-goddess of fertility, who can be compared to Hera, or even regarded as her predecessor, and who may or may not have been known under the name of Medea.[246] The act of concealing the children then would reflect the isolation of adolescents in a remote place as part of their initiation, which was probably part of the ritual for this goddess. Immortalization symbolizes the perpetuation of the community through continuous integration of the younger generations. The death of the infants in was inserted into the story only after the goddess Medea was gradually superseded by Hera in that function. As such it symbolized Medea's ultimate failure in her role as protectress of the young. The insertion of Medea's flight in the myth served as an *aition*, so to speak, for the resulting absence of her cult in Korinth.[247]

In the other version reported by Pausanias, the children were killed by the Korinthians, to avenge Medea's murder of the king's daughter, here called Glaukè. Subsequently all newborn babies in Korinth died of mysterious causes. The oracle in Delphi summoned the Korinthians to sacrifice to Medea's children yearly to ward off this disaster. Given that they were buried in Hera's sanctuary, it may be assumed that this sacrifice was to take place in that same sanctuary. Pausanias remarks that for the occasion of this sacrifice, the children of Korinth cut their hair and wore black clothes as if they were mourning.[248] More details about such a ritual are given by another source, the scholia to Euripides' Medea, citing Parmeniskos. According to his story, Medea's children had sought refuge in Akraia's sanctuary, fleeing for an angry mob of Korinthian women, dissatisfied with Medea's reign of the city. Despite the rule of inviolability of suppliants in sanctuaries, the children, seven boys and seven girls, were killed in the temple. Subsequently the city was struck by the plague as divine punishment for that sacrilegious act. Henceforth the Korinthians every year sent seven boys and seven girls to do service in the sanctuary as a propitiatory rite.[249]

Both the funerary character of the rite reported by Pausanias, and adolescents serving in a sanctuary, resemble initiatory rites in other sanctuaries. The staging of the initiation as a funeral may be symbolic for the abandonment of childhood conceived of as death, and the subsequent assumption of adulthood as (re-)birth. The service in the sanctuary physically isolates representatives of a generation of adolescents from their initial status as children, to enable them to shake off that status and return as adults. The rite is mythologically grounded as a means to protect the city, by securing either the health of the youngest generation of citizens, or that of the community as a whole, which again is symbolic for the integration of the young with the purpose of securing the preservation of the city as a community.[250] Against this background, this ritual, situated in the remote sanctuary of Hera Akraia fits into de

---

[243] Schol.Pind.*Ol.*13.74, A.B. Drachmann, *Scholia vetera in Pindari carmina*, *Vol. 1: Scholia in Olympionicas* (Leipzig 1903), Olymp. XIII 74g, 373.
[244] Pausanias, 2.3.11.
[245] M.P. Nilsson, *Griechische Feste von religiöser Bedeutung* (Leipzig 1906), 59.
[246] E. Will, *Korinthiaka* (Paris 1955), 113.
[247] Will, *Korinthiaka*, 90.
[248] Pausanias, 2.3.6-7.
[249] Schol.Eur.*Med.*264, E. Schwartz, *Scholia in Euripidem, volumen II: Scholia in Hippolytum, Medeam, Alcestin, Andromacham, Rhesum, Troades* (Berlin 1891), 159-160.
[250] Novaro-Lefèvre, "Le culte d'Hera à Pérachora", 61-62.

Polignac's model as an example next in excellence only to the complex of the Argive Heraion.[251] Today however, both new material and reinterpretation of the original sources threaten to shatter de Polignac's neat picture.

4.7   The urban Heraion

In the first place, the urban Heraion, allegedly located on the road to Sikyon, poses a problem, for it never existed. In the excavation report of the area, Robert Scranton made an attempt at identifying traces of a superstructure on the roof of the fountain of Glaukè as the sanctuary of Hera Akraia.[252] Additionally, C. Williams assumed that it had originally been located near the fountain, from where it was moved in the Roman period to the area known as Temple C.[253] The fountain itself however is now dated to the late Hellenistic or even to the Roman period, so no Archaic or Classical sanctuary could have been located on top.[254] No other archaeological remains have been found, despite careful and targeted research on the designated spot. This may not be decisive, because the area has been thoroughly destroyed in 146 BC by the Roman general Mummius, and intensively rebuilt afterwards.

In that case however, it seems odd that Pausanias encounters the mnema in that area, but not the temenos of Hera Akraia, when both supposedly predated the destruction by Mummius. Pausanias does not mention a sanctuary for Hera at all, suggesting that there was none. We may conclude that the mnema he reports did not predate the destruction, and therefore we have no reason to assume that it stood in the position where the burial of Medea's children according to Euripides took place. To the contrary, Euripides' text rather suggests that the burial took place outside Korinth, as Medea is ready to flee the city, taking the bodies of the children with her. Considering that she fled to Athens, the Perachoran Heraion was conveniently on the way, and it is more natural to assume that this was the sanctuary she envisioned for the burial, at safe distance from the children's enemies.[255]

Pausanias' account indicates that by his time, the plot of Medea's story had developed considerably since the performance of the tragedy in 431 BC. He reports that the fountain of Glaukè was named after Kreon's daughter, who upon receiving the poisoned gifts of Medea threw herself in the well to stop the burning of her flesh. In none of the literary sources Kreon's daughter is given a name, and Euripides does not have her die from drowning in a well. Additionally, Pausanias alludes to the ritual for Medea's children only in passing, and he does not give any details on its location, which he may not have known, as the performance of the ritual had ceased since the second century BC.[256] In turn, the scholiast to Euripides clearly was at a loss when trying to locate the cult of Hera Akraia, associated with the burial of the children, according to her epithet: he interpreted her name as 'Hera of the Heights', and therefore positioned her sanctuary on the Akrokorinth.[257]

Obviously, no actual reminiscence of the cult remained at the time he wrote his comments. On this account, the absence of the Perachoran Heraion from Pausanias' account, and the archaeological record from this sanctuary may confirm that it fell into disuse around the middle of the second century BC, and thus was probably included in Mummius' targeted

---

[251] De Polignac, *La naissance de la cité grecque*, 69.

[252] R.L. Scranton, "Temple C and the sanctuary of Hera Akraia", in: R. Stilwell et al., *Corinth I, part 2: Architecture* (Cambridge 1941), 131-165, 162.

[253] Williams, *Pre-Roman cults*, 47-48.

[254] C.K. Williams and O.H. Zervos, "Corinth, 1983: The route to Sikyon", *Hesperia* 53 (1984), 83-122, 100.

[255] B. Menadier, "The sanctuary of Hera Akraia and its religious connections with Corinth", in: R. Hägg (ed.), *Peloponnesian sanctuaries and cults* (Stockholm 2002), 85-92, 88.

[256] Pausanias, 2.3.7.

[257] Schol.Eur.*Med*.1379; Harrauer, "Kindermord", 5.

demolitions.[258] On this account, it is very well possible that the mnema of Pausanias' report had been built after the re-foundation of Korinth in the first century BC, as a result of a late interpretation of the variety of traditions on Medea and her children's death, at a time when the 'facts' about the myth, the ritual and its location had been forgotten.[259] There is no reason therefore to suppose that a Heraion existed in the centre of Korinth as an urban pendant to Hera's extra-urban sanctuary at Perachora.

4.8   The kourotrophic rituals

However, de Polignac did not assume that the rites for Medea's children as reported by several sources took place in Korinth at the urban Heraion. He could have supposed that the procession, which was clearly included in the rites, departed from this small sanctuary and headed for the Heraion on the Perachora promontory. But even if the urban Heraion did not exist, it may be remembered that one of the important reasons for de Polignac for adducing the rite of Medea's children in the context of the Heraion of Perachora, was in support of the kourotrophic character of this sanctuary.[260] From the outset however, there is one significant reason why this ritual can be no part of the formation of Korinth as a polis: if it existed at all, it was too late to have been of importance in that process.

For Eumelos was the very first to connect Medea to Korinth, and he does it in a very conspicuously artificial manner, indicating that he most probably made the whole story up himself. Eumelos' work traditionally was dated to the 8th century BC, which plausibly makes this story a convenient aition for a ritual that perhaps was in turn devised in order to promote the developing sense of community. Recently however, in new studies of the fragments attributed to Eumelos, West has suggested that Eumelos may have been perceived retrospectively in the Classical period as a single author, whereas his texts seem to be written by several different authors. Most importantly, West considers all fragments by contents and style to date from the middle of the 6th century BC at the earliest.[261] Any relation therefore between reports from these fragments and the 8th-century reality of rites for Medea's children must be seriously doubted.

For that matter, we might doubt the existence of a rite for Medea's children located in the Perachora Heraion all together. Traditions on Medea in the Korinthia diverge on several points, the most important being the death of her children. Besides Euripides' story that she deliberately killed the children herself, two other traditions exist. The first, recorded by Pausanias as one of two alternative stories, relates how Medea 'hid' the children in the sanctuary of Hera, hoping that they would become immortal.[262] According to the scholiast to Pindaros, she had good reason to suppose Hera would indeed grant the children immortality, for she had promised to do so out of gratitude, after Medea had resisted amorous advances from Zeus.[263] Now the scholiast does not explain how the children died, and Pausanias does not explicitly say they did, but after piecing the two stories together, the resulting account seems to fit together most plausibly. In both the scholiast and Pausanias, the pieces of the story are preceded by information that is said to derive from Eumelos, perhaps suggesting that this sequel was also part of Eumelos' account. This means at least that this tradition existed before Euripides wrote his tragedy. However, there is no way to know how popular or widespread it was.

---

[258] Menadier, "The sanctuary of Hera Akraia", 90.
[259] Ibidem; Harrauer, "Kindermord", 5.
[260] De Polignac, *La naissance de la cité grecque*, 51, n.19.
[261] West, " 'Eumelos', a Corinthian epic cycle?", 109.
[262] Pausanias, 2.3.11.
[263] Schol.Pind.*Ol.* 13.74.

The other account related by Pausanias has the Korinthians figure as the children's killers.[264] This story is also reported by other sources, but they differ on the motive attributed to the Korinthians for their deed, and the details of the murder. Parmeniskos, adduced in the scholia to Euripides, clearly drew on part of Eumelos' account, for in his version Medea was queen of Korinth, as she had become through Eumelos' genealogy. The Korinthian women in particular grew dissatisfied with her reign, and the Korinthians, without further specification of gender, went after her children. They chased them into the sanctuary of Hera Akraia, where they were slaughtered on the altar.[265] Aelianus does not give as much detail, but he seems to follow Parmeniskos in that Medea was queen of Korinth.[266] Pausanias represents the other motive, which probably derived partly from Euripides' account, for here Medea is not queen of Korinth, as Kreon is king. Medea's murder of Kreon and/or Kreon's daughter infuriates the Korinthians and they avenge their ruler by killing Medea's children. In Didymos, as in Parmeniskos, the killing takes place in the Heraion, but he speaks only of sons, without numbers.[267] Pausanias has the two children, both boys, stoned, but the location remains unspecified. Philostratos[268] and Aelianus give no details either on the method or the location of the murder. Number and gender of the children are also unknown.

Every one of these sources gives a sequel to the murder. Parmeniskos and Pausanias relate how the Korinthians were punished for their deed by divine intervention; according to Parmeniskos Korinth was struck by a plague, sent by the gods and causing numerous deaths among the entire population, whereas Pausanias believes it was a mysterious fatal infliction that affected all Korinthian newborns, and was caused by the spirits of Medea's children. In both cases, the evil is eventually averted by a propitiatory rite. In Parmeniskos' case seven boys and seven girls are sent yearly to the Heraion to do service in the sanctuary. Pausanias only alludes to the rite in passing, mentioning that Korinthian youths used to cut their hair and wear black clothing in honour of Medea's children. In Philostratos and Aelianus the rite is only named as of a propitiatory character. Didymos is the only source that gives a very different account of what happened: after the murder, the Korinthians spread the rumour that Medea had killed her children herself. No subsequent divine punishment and thus no propitiatory ritual are reported.

It is uncertain whether the version in which the Korinthians were the killers was earlier than the Euripidean. Eumelos is the only source predating Euripides, and we have to trust the sources that quote him that they did so accurately, or even that their sources did so. The other sources, including all those that name the Korinthians as the killers postdate Euripides' tragedy. Some scholars claim that it should be older, because it offers a more acceptable aition for the cult in the eyes of ancient Greeks. This conclusion depends on a number of assumptions. The first is that Euripides' plays usually included an aition for an existing cult, either taken at face value as an explanation of the cult, or as a means to provide the rest of the story with a connection to the real world, making it more credible.[269]

The second assumption, related to the first, is that a cult of Medea's children already existed in the Heraion before Euripides wrote the tragedy. Thirdly, it is assumed that Euripides himself invented the plot that Medea killed her own children. The story could not previously have been connected to a cult that was situated within Hera's temenos, as Scott Scullion argues that it would be a ritual perversion if a murderess of her own children would

---

[264] Pausanias, 2.3.6-7.
[265] Schol.Eur.*Med*.264.
[266] Aelianus, *Varia Historia* 5.21.
[267] Schol.Eur.*Med*.264.
[268] Philostratos, *Heroikos* 53.4.
[269] F.M. Dunn, "Euripides and the rites of Hera Akraia", *GRBS* 35 (1994), 103-115, 103-104.

commission a ritual in their honour in the sanctuary of the protectress of marriage and childrearing, while she herself remained unpunished for the deed.[270] Both Scullion and Francis Dunn characterize this lack of atonement as a typical Euripidean irony, created in this case by the invention of Medea as the murderess, thereby turning the cult into a perversity.[271]

Conversely, it would be much more plausible if the Korinthians usually adduced a 'violent and illegal death of the children', as they did according to Pausanias, to explain why they did penance in the ritual.[272] That the Korinthians were the children's killers before Medea became the murderess may be confirmed by a further quote from Parmeniskos, elsewhere in the scholia to Euripides' play, where he states that Euripides was paid five talents by the Korinthians to change the story in such a way that the blame for the murder no longer fell on them.[273] Aelianus' comments have a similar purport, although no explicit bribing is involved. Concerning this matter, Christine Harrauer considers the version of the Korinthians as the killers to be even older than Eumelos' story, on the premise that Eumelos introduced Medea in Korinth especially in order to shift responsibility for the children's death from the Korinthians to Medea. She maintains that Parmeniskos mistakenly took allegations of bribery to be directed to Euripides, whereas they most probably concerned the account of Eumelos instead. Aelianus simply copied the mistake.[274] However, Harrauer fails to explain why Eumelos would have chosen Medea for the task, and why he first made a considerable effort to turn her into a Korinthian before he infamously let her kill her children by accident. On that account, the reconstruction seems far-fetched and is a speculative possibility at the most.

Instead of being the earlier tradition, the story of the Korinthians as the killers may also have sprouted from Euripides' play itself. Judith Mossman explores this possibility, assuming that the murder of the children by Medea was indeed Euripides' invention, and that it did not go back on an earlier tradition.[275] To create a suspenseful preamble to the murder, he had Jason express his fear for his children's safety, presumably with regard to the vengeful rage of the Korinthians after Medea's murder of Kreon and his daughter. This would seem to be a most plausible course of action in the eyes of his audience, who would however soon find out that Jason's fear was justified, but in an unexpected and tragically ironic way. According to Mossman, vengeance by the Korinthians and subsequent rites of atonement in the Heraion could well have become a tradition of its own, only after they had been suggested for the first time by Euripides. Indeed, she implicitly concludes that no rites whatsoever existed for Medea's children in Korinth, either before or after the staging of the tragedy, and they only survived in literature as a consequence of the popularity of the play.[276]

Harrauer's reconstruction may seem unlikely, while Mossman's is tempting, but the possibility that the Korinthians were the killers before Euripides is not excluded. Perhaps a third alternative may be introduced here. It is possible that Eumelos' account of Medea's murder by accident, and that of the Korinthians as the culprits existed simultaneously. It seems that both traditions had their own particularities. The involvement of Hera and her sanctuary apparently belonged to Eumelos' account, although Parmeniskos and Didymos have the Korinthians kill the children in the Heraion. However, in Parmeniskos the children flee from the Korinthian mob to the sanctuary. It seems odd that they chose to flee to a sanctuary as far away as the Perachora Heraion, suggesting that the Heraion did not originally

---

[270] S. Scullion, "Tradition and invention in Euripidean aitiology", *Illinois Classical Studies* 24-25 (1999-2000), 217-233, 224.
[271] Ibidem; Dunn, "Euripides and the rites of Hera Akraia", 112-115.
[272] D.J. Mastronarde, *Euripides, Medea* (Cambridge 2002), 50-51.
[273] Schol.Eur.*Med*.9.
[274] Harrauer, "Kindermord", 17, 20.
[275] J. Mossman, *Euripides, Medea* (Oxford 2011), 8.
[276] Mossman, *Euripides, Medea*, 7-8.

belong to the story. A similar case can be made for Didymos, where the children are left behind in the Heraion by Medea, so that their father may look after them. It seems hardly likely that she left them so far away from the city and in the wild, if Jason was supposed to find them shortly afterwards to be able to protect them.

Conversely, the ritual atonement clearly belonged to the account of the murder by the Korinthians, as its consequence. Only the scholiast to Pindaros reports subsequent rites that were performed by the Korinthians, but it is not stated why they did so. It may be remembered that above we assumed that the information given there belongs together with Pausanias' account of the accidental murder by Medea, but that does not provide us with any explanation why the Korinthians and not Medea herself should honour the children. Both traditions thus separated, there is little reason to suppose that the rites of atonement were held in the Heraion. The two accounts only got mixed up when Euripides deliberately conflated them to serve his ironic plot. Subsequent authors took the resulting aition for a cult of Medea's children in the Heraion to be authentic, while in the case of Parmeniskos his physical distance, and in the case of Pausanias, Philostratos and Aelianus their distance in time to the subject, cast doubts on the possibilities they had to check its veracity.[277]

This is also true for the details they give about the ritual. Most of them appear to be not very precise in the first place. Aelianus refers to the rites as *enagizousi*, meaning that some chtonic sacrifice was performed in the children's honour. He adds that the character of the rites was penal, as if the Korinthians were paying a debt to them. No mention is made of the location of the rites, nor of any involvement of Hera. This sounds somewhat similar to Philostratos' comment. He specifies that laments were sung, but not by whom or where. The fact that he mentions revenge for the death of Glaukè as the occasion of the murder of Medea's children suggests however that Philostratos either used Pausanias as a source, or that they both had access to the same source for the story. Neither names the Heraion as the location of the rites. Perhaps, if Mossman is right to rule out the existence of any rites for the children, the ritual as reported by these three late sources was a literary fiction, upon which the restoration of the mnema in the re-founded city of Korinth was also initiated, in the manner explained above. The fact that these descriptions remain vague may indeed suggest that these authors merely guessed at the most probable nature of the ritual as it was adduced by Euripides and left it at that.

Parmeniskos however gives some specific details, suggesting that he may have had actual knowledge about the ritual. The number of 14 children Parmeniskos reports for Medea is nowhere else attested and he almost certainly made it up himself. It could be argued that he derived that number from the ritual itself, if he had assumed that some correspondence between the commemorated event and the rite would exist. On second inspection however, even this information may be modelled on familiar stories that had some similarities to the situation of Medea's children at Korinth. In Sikyon, according to an aetiological myth, seven boys and seven girls were sent as suppliants to the river Sythas, to persuade Apollo and Artemis to come back to the city. They had been refused admittance to Sikyon after they had slain the Python at Delphi. The twin gods consequently inflicted a plague on the city and left for Crete. The suppliants were successful and the plague was averted, and ever since, a ritual echoing these events in commemoration existed at Sikyon.[278]

The most well-known ritual involving seven boys and seven girls however is the mythical sacrifice of that number of young Athenians to the Minotauros of Crete, that had to be

---

[277] Idem, 7, n.23.
[278] Pausanias, 2.7.

repeated every nine years.[279] King Minos had confined that beast in a specially designed labyrinth, where it had to be fed. Around the same time, the king's son, Androgeos, died in Attika, the causes for his death varying in different sources.[280] To avenge his death, King Minos successfully besieged Athens and bid the gods to punish the city for him. The gods complied and inflicted a plague on the Athenians. These turned remorsefully to king Minos and asked him what they could do as a retribution. He required of them fourteen youths every nine years, who were fed to the Minotauros as a kind of sacrifice. Fortunately for the Athenians, the sacrifice soon came to an end, when Theseus joined the youths, and succeeded both in killing the Minotauros, and in finding his way out of the labyrinth, thanks to the help of Minos' daughter Ariadne.

In both myths, an entire city is punished by the gods for some wrong that had been done, the punishment being a plague. Parmeniskos may have known these stories, and possibly fashioned the ritual for Medea's children in a similar way. Admittedly, important differences also exist between the stories, such as the cause of the punishment, or the subsequent fate of the 14 children that had been chosen for the rite. However, the fact that Parmeniskos lived and worked in Alexandria, and in the late 2nd century BC, leaves room to doubt the existence of the ritual he describes, let alone whether this ritual had existed at all, and in a similar way, in the 8th century BC. Therefore, even if our sources could be interpreted to suggest a kourotrophic ritual, we should seriously doubt the existence of such a ritual at any time, and especially in the 8th century BC.

4.9 Votive deposits

The archaeological finds from the Heraion at Perachora may support the conclusion that the sanctuary did not have an especially kourotrophic character. Apart from a layer of pottery sherds scattered all over the temenos area on the promontory, two significant votive deposits were distinguished as belonging to cult buildings. The earliest of the two was found at the east end of the Hera temple of which the remains can today be seen. This temple dates to the 6th century BC by its architecture and had an altar extending over its full width. The deposit was found beneath the remains of this altar, which consequently have had to be temporarily moved for excavation.[281] The pottery in this deposit was dated by Payne from the early 8th century to around 700 BC. Additionally, beneath the northern wall of the 6th-century temple, parts of the foundation of a geometric apsidal building were found. This building was designated by the excavator, Payne, as the first temple of Hera, and he related the votive deposit to this building as the earliest phase of cult activity at this location visible in the archaeological record. This conclusion has been generally accepted, although Payne's initial dating of the votive deposit as far back as the 9th century, and the temple accordingly, have been considerably adjusted since.[282]

The majority of the deposit consisted of pottery fragments with Geometric decorations. Payne considered a considerable part to be of Argive origin, but Salmon demonstrated that the

---

[279] The story apparently was very popular from an early period onwards. Sappho is the earliest source for the story, with many more fragmentary occurences in other literary works, whereas a variety of artistic representations ranges back to the middle of the 7th century BC as well. (T. Gantz, *Early Greek myth* (Baltimore and London 1993), 262).

[280] Pausanias 1.27.10 reports that Androgeos was killed accidentally by a bull at Marathon, and that king Minos wrongly accused the Athenians of the murder. In Bakkhylides, *Dith*.17, Androgeos is actually killed by the Athenians because of his victory in the Panathenaean games, whereas in Diodoros, his death is ordered by Aigeus, because he feared that Androgeos would threaten the Athenian throne. Still more variants exist. A summary of all sources for the story and its divergent details is given by Gantz, *Early Greek myth*, 262-268.

[281] Payne, *Perachora I*, 28.

[282] Menadier, *The sixth century BC temple*, 94.

pottery concerned was Korinthian in origin.[283] The fragments mainly belonged to smaller pots, and accordingly were of simple decoration. Only a few fragments belonged to larger vases, which were undecorated as is considered usual for the fabric of which they were made. Only one terracotta figurine fragment was found in this deposit, the upper body of a naked female figure with prominent breasts. Two other remarkable types of figurative ceramic objects were however found: fragments of at least four model buildings, and a number of decorated flat clay rings, which through comparison appear to represent votive cakes.

These *koulouria*, as well as the model buildings are relatively rare in the Greek world and thus may be considered specific for this sanctuary. The deposit further contained a considerable amount of bronze objects, although Payne does not give exact numbers. Most of the bronze objects were either dress pins, or larger spits. The remainder were a few fibulae or pieces of fibulae and jewellery. There were some thirty pieces of gold, mostly thin bands folded together at the ends to form a small ring. It has been suggested that these rings held together locks of hair that were dedicated. There are also small thin gold disks, used to decorate clothing. Gold jewellery, silver and iron objects were found in minor amounts, as were stone beads, seals, and spindle whorls. Three scarabs and a small number of glass beads are almost certainly imports, and truly singular items were one amber pendant and an obsidian knife.[284]

The second deposit, known as the Limenia-deposit, actually extended over the entire area of the upper terraces. In the excavation report however, distinctions are made within this large collection of material along somewhat unclear lines. One subdivision is characterized as a purely Protocorinthian deposit. This part of the deposit was apparently located between the eastern wall of the Limenia-building and the temenos-wall. The position of the material indicates that both the building and the temenos-wall were in place before the deposit began to accumulate. According to Payne the oldest layer spanned from the late 8th century to the middle of the 7th century BC.[285] However, this does not provide a certain terminus ante quem for the building, as the stratification of this deposit is not at all clear from the report.[286] Sinn suggested that construction of the Limenia-building, now convincingly identified as a dining-building, was perhaps part of a reorganization of the sanctuary, intended to move some of the cult activity away from the harbour area.[287] In this process, all votive dedications standing about in this area may have been cleared out, but they had to be kept within the temenos, hence the deposit. At least part of it originally must have been in the harbour area, as fragments of the same pots have been found in both locations.[288] The construction of the Limenia-building, and the occasion for the reorganization can therefore not be precisely dated according to Sinn.[289]

The second deposit was much larger than the first, and in addition to pottery intended for use in banquets, it contained a much larger variety of objects. An important part of the deposit consists of votive terracotta's, mainly depicting women. Most of these may be identified as depictions of Hera herself, but some could also represent other goddesses, such as Aphrodite, Isis, Eleithyia, or perhaps also the women dedicating the terracotta's. A very small minority of the votive terracotta's depict animals, children or men, among these also a considerable

---

[283] Salmon, "The Heraeum at Perachora", 179-192.
[284] Payne, *Perachora I*, 34-75.
[285] Idem, 117.
[286] Menadier, *The sixth century BC temple*, 110.
[287] Sinn, "Das Heraion von Perachora", 103.
[288] Tomlinson, "The upper terraces at Perachora", 202.
[289] Sinn, "Das Heraion von Perachora", 103.

number of depictions of the Egyptian god Bes.[290] The votive koulouria are also represented, but no models of buildings can be identified in this deposit. The deposit contains large quantities of jewellery, dress-pins and spits, mostly female personal belongings, but also some pieces of armour, writing gear and flutes.[291]

According to Morgan, the types of pottery represented in the first deposit indicate that it was mainly used for drinking and dining.[292] Indeed Payne already remarked the preponderance of cups among the pottery fragments.[293] Other types found may as well have been used for either cooking, eating or drinking, whereas relatively few large vases were found that would have been exclusively brought to the sanctuary as dedications. Ceremonial banqueting seems to have been part of the cult for Hera Akraia from this early period onwards already. That it certainly was in later periods is confirmed by the identification of the building associated with the Limenia-inscriptions as a dining-room. No item in the early deposit however indicates a specifically kourotrophic character of the sanctuary. Some items do relate to Hera's character in general as protectress of women, in the case of the dress pins and perhaps the gold rings presumably used to dedicate women's hair.[294]

The models of buildings that were reported elsewhere in the Greek world also related to Hera-cults, suggesting that they were appropriate dedications for the goddess. They have long been thought to represent temples, but today are suggested to depict private houses, and as such are dedicated to ask Hera's protection over the household, one of her traditional concerns, closely related to the others.[295] The koulouria may have represented real votive cakes, which were perhaps cast into the sea. They are not uniquely related to Hera-cults, as other examples have been found in Korinth dedicated to Demeter and Korè.[296] The votive terracotta's in the later deposit seem to refer to Hera's role in women's lives. De Polignac also attached great importance to the integration of women in the community, especially through rituals in extra-urban sanctuaries, but the dedications at Perachora are mostly of a personal nature, indicating that they were offered at significant points in individual lives, and not as part of a communal festival.[297]

It may be argued that the kourotrophic character of the sanctuary was not revealed in the dedications themselves, nonetheless the ceremonial banquet may have been part of the annual initiatory festival designated by our sources. Indeed this would be just the kind of festival de Polignac envisaged to promote the integration of the community, and as such it would signify the birth of that community as a concept. However, for a festival to function as such, it needs first to be organized by some power central to that community, which perceives a benefit in further integration. Anachronistically, we may call this central power the state. As Morgan emphasizes, both the Geometric temple and the earliest pottery associated with the sanctuary were dated to the early 8th century, before even anything comparable to a rudimentary state was in existence yet at Korinth.[298]

Second, such a festival is supposed to be celebrated by the entire community, whereas the space available at the Perachora sanctuary for drinking and banqueting must always have been

---

[290] J.D. Baumbach, *The significance of votive offerings in selected Hera sanctuaries in the Peloponnese, Ionia and western Greece* (Oxford 2004), 29-30.

[291] Baumbach, *The significance of votive offerings*, 34.

[292] Morgan, "The evolution of a sacral 'landscape' ", 132.

[293] Payne, *Perachora I*, 55.

[294] Baumbach, *The significance of votive offerings*, 32.

[295] Morgan, "The evolution of a sacral landscape' ", 133.

[296] J.B. Salmon, *Wealthy Corinth, A history of the city to 338 BC* (Oxford 1984), 181.

[297] Morgan, "The evolution of a sacral landscape' ", 132, 133.

[298] C.A. Morgan, "Corinth, the Corinthian gulf and western Greece during the eighth century BC", *BSA* 83 (1988), 313-338, 337.

extremely limited. The harbour area, where the Geometric temple and the 6th-century temple were built, was cramped in itself. The Limenia-building, dating to the late 8th century was also rather small, giving room to only 11 diners, judging by the available space for couches, even though enough space seems to have been available to build a bigger hestiatorion.[299] This appears to indicate that no more room was needed, therefore that the cult attracted a small number of worshippers at the same time.

This audience presumably initially consisted of richer individuals or family groups, as the cost of building a temple was apparently met. Moreover, the more exotic dedications from the deposit are of relatively high value and again of more personal nature, as compared to dedications from other, more accessible sanctuaries. In its early years, the quantity of votive dedications and pottery at the sanctuary seems to be rather modest, but it rapidly increased by the end of the 8th century. As a conclusion, far from being a community sanctuary, the temple of Hera Akraia seems to have started out as rather exclusive instead. By the end of the 8th century, it gained in popularity, and Morgan indicates that during the 7th century the sanctuary received more, and more valuable gifts than contemporary Delphi.[300]

4.10   The window to the west

Therefore, Morgan suggests a different role for the sanctuary at Perachora, although she does not explicitly renounce the possibility of initiatory practices. In her article on the evolution of the Korinthian sacred landscape, her main focus is on the sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia, which in de Polignac's view also constituted an important extra-urban sanctuary that helped construct for the Korinthians the concept of Korinth as a polis.[301] Indeed, the archaeological record of the sanctuary indicates, contrary to Perachora, that Isthmia formed a regional meeting place. The early evidence of drinking and dining here indicates that larger groups of more diverse nature were involved. Both men and women attended, and they originated from a wider region. Dedications at Isthmia were relatively plain and low in value, suggesting that offering was a communal rather than a competitive practice.[302]

This would fit de Polignac's model nicely, only if Morgan would not have reconsidered the dating of the Isthmia sanctuary. She shows how its activities stretch much further back, into the Protogeometric period at the earliest.[303] The sanctuary seems to have been the central point of the region, with Korinth not yet developed beyond settlement status. Indeed, Korinth perhaps only emerged as the upcoming political centre of the region during the 8th century.[304] Thus, according to Morgan, the sanctuary at Isthmia did promote integration of a regional community, but the polis of Korinth as the urban centre of that community developed only after such a community had already been formed.[305] There is no question of the central polis installing a sanctuary on the borders of its territory to demarcate both physically and symbolically the limits of its extents.

Rather, Korinth's development was based in the relatively safe environment of regional coherence, established mainly through cultic community at Isthmia. Korinth's growing importance and expanding trade are probably reflected in an increase of activity at Isthmia by

---

[299] Tomlinson, "The upper terraces at Perachora", 197-198.
[300] Morgan, "The evolution of a sacral landscape' ", 131.
[301] De Polignac, *The origins of the Greek city-state*, 34, 51-52.
[302] Morgan, "The evolution of a sacral landscape' ", 121.
[303] Idem, 109.
[304] Idem, 122.
[305] Idem,124.

the end of the 8th century.[306] As we have seen, this same increase is visible at Perachora, which had only been founded shortly before, by Korinthians. Morgan asserts that this parallel development at both sanctuaries was in fact complementary. Isthmia had long been the location for communal cult, and Korinth, far from trying to dominate the region, participated in that cult as it saw fit.[307] On the other hand, as a centre of upcoming powers, a need was apparently felt by the elite of Korinth to express their individual achievements. It may have seemed inappropriate to do so at Isthmia, and therefore they chose the Perachora sanctuary.[308]

However, this is not how the sanctuary of Hera Akraia started out, for its activities had already started about half a century previously. In 1988, Morgan already argued that it must have been Korinth's window to the west.[309] She reviewed the evidence for Korinthian trade activity in the early 8th century, explicitly distinguishing colonial material from that originating from the north-western parts of Greece. She asserted that Korinthian trade with Phokis and Epiros were important in themselves, and were not preliminaries to colonial activity, as was generally assumed. Instead, Korinth exported pottery to selected points of exchange in those regions, from where the pottery was further distributed along local networks of trade reaching into the northern regions.[310] In return, Korinth most probably received metals, mostly copper, tin and iron, which were available at those points through the same local networks. Korinth's orientation towards the north may have been the result of a monopolisation of the access to southern trade routes for these metals, leading to the Middle East, by Argos and Attika.[311] Morgan admits that no archaeological remains prove that Korinth imported metals in quantity in this period, but this is what the north probably had to offer. It also seems plausible from parallel developments elsewhere, that in an atmosphere of developing competition between aristocratic families, objects of valuable metals could be used as display to underscore one's pedigree, and thus demands for raw material rose.[312]

In the second half of the 8th century, Korinth diverted her attention from northern trade towards colonial activity. There may be many reasons to establish colonies, but the fact that they were not founded in Epiros until a much later date in the 7th century shows that securing trade was not the main function of colonies.[313] Nonetheless, trade may have been a convenient by-product of their establishment, as we witness a shift of Korinthian trade from north-western Greece to the colonies. In both cases however, and therefore from a very early period onwards, the Korinthian gulf was extremely important as a passageway for Korinthian traders, with the island of Ithaka as a port of call.[314] Given this situation, the Perachora peninsula bent itself around the gulf as a protective arm. Around the tip, winds could and still can be unpredictable and tricky, making it a dangerous point to sail around. Morgan imagines sailors to have sought shelter from fierce weather in the small bay on the south side of the tip, awaiting better winds. She implicitly suggests that they would have been the ones who first pleaded to Hera to grant them a safe passage, and on their way back, offered her thanks for the safe return.[315] The Heraion on the tip op the promontory then, had started out as the last point on familiar ground, before the journey to the north or to the west really began.

---

[306] C.A. Morgan, "Ritual and society in the Early Iron Age Corinthia",in: R. Hägg (ed.), *Ancient Greek cult practice from the archaeological evidence* (Stockholm 1998) 73-90, 86-87.
[307] Morgan, "The evolution of a sacral 'landscape' ", 122.
[308] Idem ,129.
[309] Morgan, "Corinth, the Corinthian Gulf and western Greece", 335.
[310] Idem, 321.
[311] Idem, 330-331.
[312] Idem, 334.
[313] Idem, 323.
[314] Salmon, *Wealthy Corinth*, 143; Morgan, "Corinth, the Corinthian Gulf and western Greece", 315, 323.
[315] Morgan, "Corinth, the Corinthian Gulf and western Greece", 335.

The first traders must have been adventurous individuals of the lower classes, who had nothing to lose. The amount of Korinthian exchange goods indicates that no more than a few ships a year could have been involved in oversees trade in the first half of the 8th century.[316] As Morgan already showed, in the course of that century, competition among the elite increased, reflected in an increase in conspicuous offerings intended to display ones status.[317] This shift in ritual behaviour may have raised demands for precious metals, causing a higher frequency of ships passing the Perachora Heraion. At the same time, Morgan contends that the sanctuary at Perachora may have been considered more suitable as a place to display personal wealth, in contrast to the sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia, because the latter had such a long tradition in the expression of communality.[318] Those of the elite who wished to show off their possessions and power may have considered it perverse to perform such a polarizing act in a place where for centuries people had gathered as equals of sorts. The tradition of the Heraion was much shorter and thus could more easily be interpreted to ones own advantage. Thus it could happen that the sanctuary soon became very popular among Korinthians of all classes, exactly as a place for personal dedications.[319]

4.11   Chronology: the temples

In her 1988 article, Morgan stressed that the traces of Korinthian trade in north-western Greece indicated a rather early start of such expeditions.[320] She conceded that these expeditions were quite small, but nonetheless were significant as a starting point for the importance of Korinth as a trading polis in later periods. However, although we may accept that monumental temples do not need to have been built by 'states', it seems hardly likely that those few sailors actually built the Geometric temple to Hera Akraia, as it was identified by Payne. He claimed that it belonged to the Geometric period, and Morgan specifies that, assuming that the pottery of the Geometric deposit belonged to the building of the temple, the temple must have been built before 750 BC.[321] Moreover, the expansion of the sanctuary, which she attributes to elite competition, she dates to the second half of the 8th century, implying that the building of the temple preceded the elite involvement in the sanctuary.[322]

On the other hand, she seems to concur with Payne that the sheer calibre of the precinct suggests the involvement of Korinth as a polis in its establishment.[323] Still, she also asserts that before the colonizing enterprises, around the last quarter of the 8th century, we cannot 'realistically think in terms of organization and administration of external activity on anything like a 'state' or collective level.'[324] Such a perspective excludes polis involvement in the monumentalization of a sanctuary that was apparently important in early 8th-century Korinthian trade. So, although Morgan has offered an explanation for the origin of the sanctuary that is well worth considering, she leaves us at a loss with regard to her views about who actually built the first temple.

Alternatively, we may wonder whether the Geometric temple was ever a temple at all. Blanche Menadier re-examined the entire site of the Heraion for her dissertation which focused on the 6th-century temple. The subject presented her however with considerable difficulties. A lot of material uncovered and investigated by Payne was displaced on the site

---

[316] Salmon, *Wealthy Corinth*, 89.
[317] Morgan, "The evolution of a sacral 'landscape' ", 129.
[318] Idem, 133.
[319] Idem, 132.
[320] Morgan, "Corinth, the Corinthian Gulf and western Greece", 335.
[321] Morgan, "The evolution of a sacral 'landscape' ", 129.
[322] Ibidem.
[323] Idem, 131.
[324] Morgan, "Corinth, the Corinthian Gulf and western Greece", 337.

by erosion from the rain or by careless visitors. An even greater proportion had been either removed from the site to unknown and inaccessible museum depositories, or it had been looted by local people, in which case mostly building blocks of modest size were taken away to be reused. Moreover, Menadier assessed that a large part of *Perachora I* cannot be accurate with regard to the course of the excavation and subsequent finds. She also complained that Payne's notebooks on the excavation, to which she had full access, were sometimes vexatiously imprecise on key characteristics of specific finds, such as stratigraphy, number of items or even exact location of the discovery.[325] Therefore re-interpretation of the material was sometimes difficult but necessary at the same time.

The so-called Geometric temple is a case in point. Payne associated the apsidal building with the Geometric deposit, and therefore identified it as the first temple, dating to the Geometric period. The exact connection between the deposit and the building however is most unclear from both the report in *Perachora I*, and from Payne's notes, because he only gives exact locations for specific parts of the deposit, such as the sample beneath the 6th-century altar. For that matter, the deposit may not be connected to the building after all.[326] The excavation drawings of the sanctuary, made by Piet de Jong, show a cross-section of the area where the Geometric temple was found (fig.4). Payne asserted that the builders of the temple had cut through a layer of Early Helladic sherds, a more or less even layer deposited over a small area that had been used for habitation. The thickest and most undisturbed part of this deposit lay between the northern wall of the Geometric temple and the hill sloping upwards shortly behind it. However, the cross-section shows how the upper level of the layer of EH-sherds lay above the upper level of the foundation of the Geometric temple. If indeed the builders had cut through this layer, one would not have expected the result to be as neat and the layer as undisturbed as the drawing by de Jong and the description by Payne suggest. Indeed, the situation as presented could only have occurred if the building had been built before the deposit had started to accumulate.[327]

Although Menadier is cautious about the accuracy of the drawings as well, she does remark that based on this cross section the apsidal building may not date to the Geometric period, and therefore probably never was a temple.[328] She does not explicitly assume that the building then must date to the Early Helladic period, but as mentioned, no material datable between the EH and Geometric periods has been found on the site, so no other choice remains. Effectively, apsidal houses are known to have been built already in the Early Helladic period, such as for example those found at Lerna.[329] Moreover, close to the Heraion, on the shores of Lake Vouliagmeni, small Early Helladic settlements have been explored, which produced foundations of houses. These excavations were not very elaborate, and focused more on pottery than on house shapes.[330] Therefore, it cannot be said whether apsidal houses were featured in this location too, but at least the stone foundations show that more or less durable architecture from the Early Helladic period was not uncommon in the vicinity of the later Heraion. Therefore the apsidal building on the site may as well be an Early Helladic house.

The earliest temple on the site would then be the one built on the foundations labelled *x* and *y* by Payne. The scholars who published on the Perachora Heraion do not agree as to whether this temple has ever existed. Dunbabin, who prepared the publication of *Perachora I* from

---

[325] Menadier, *The sixth century BC temple*, 91.
[326] Idem , 78 and n. 42.
[327] Idem, 77.
[328] Ibidem.
[329] J.L. Caskey, "Lerna in the Early Bronze Age", *AJA* 72 (1968), 313-316.
[330] J.M. Fossey, "The prehistoric settlement by Lake Vouliagmeni, Perachora", *BSA* 64 (1969), 53-69; J.M. Fossey, "Excavation at the Early Helladic settlement by Lake Vouliagmeni", *ArchDelt* 28 B1 (1973), 149-151.

Payne's notebooks, mentioned Payne's view that an early 7th-century temple preceded the visible structure of the 6th-century one, but he added his own doubts about the earlier building.[331] He thought the *x* and *y* blocks perhaps belonged to a store room or something of the like, a purely functional building within the sanctuary. Hammond agreed with Dunbabin, because he himself posited that the harbour area was abandoned in the late 8th century, in favour of what he considered to be a temple for Hera Limenia, as we have seen.[332] Subsequently, John Salmon convincingly decomposed the latter argument, and he also argued against Dunbabin's views. Assuming that the Geometric temple was in fact the first temple, he asserted that it would be most improbable that there had been no temple between that one and the 6th-century temple, particularly because the deposition of votive offerings was continuous throughout this period.[333]

If we accept that the apsidal building was not a temple, this argument of continuity can no longer be adduced to suggest the existence of a 7th-century temple. However, it is hard to see why the foundations x and y should represent a subsidiary building, as Dunbabin argued, when no temple as a principal building was present in the harbour area. Moreover, the location of these foundations within the foundations of the later temple, strongly suggest its identification as a predecessor, as it was common practice to build a new temple close to or over the old one. In addition, Payne found roof tiles in the harbour area, that belonged to a 7th-century building.[334] Menadier is careful not to suggest any precise dating within the 7th century, but she agrees with the interpretation of the roof tiles as belonging to a monumental building, most probably a temple, that may be dated anywhere in the range from halfway the 7th century to its end.[335] Thus, this leaves us with a succession of two temples, one from the second half of the 7th century, the second built in the later 6th century. Any assumptions of other temples on the upper terraces have already been effectively eliminated.

4.12   Chronology: other buildings

To reconstruct the history of the sanctuary, not only the dating of the temples is important. The building phases of other architectural remains are illustrative as well. Tomlinson suggested that the building called the Limenia-temple by Payne, which he himself identified as a dining-room, was functionally connected to the so-called Sacred Pool.[336] Assuming that the dining-room and the pool were built at the same time, and the phialai were cast into the pool from the beginning of its existence, that would indicate that the building is slightly younger than Payne initially thought. However, Tomlinson did not take into account that the phialai were not the only material deposited in the pool.[337] Moreover, his connection between the dining-building, and the Sacred Pool as its water supply, does not appear to be inevitable.[338] Therefore, Tomlinson's argument cannot be used to date the construction of the dining-building.

Payne thought that the deposit around his alleged Limenia-temple had started only when the Geometric deposit had already been closed. This reinforced his interpretation of the building as a temple. However, Coldstream down-dated the beginning of the Geometric deposit to 800 BC, and he considered the later fragments in it not as a contamination, but as belonging to the

---

[331] Dunbabin, "The oracle of Hera Akraia at Perachora", 62.

[332] Hammond, "The Heraeum at Perachora", 101-102.

[333] Salmon, "The Heraeum at Perachora", 165.

[334] Menadier, *The sixth century BC temple*, 73.

[335] Idem, 74.

[336] R.A. Tomlinson, "Water supplies and ritual at the Heraion, Perachora", in: R. Hägg et al. (eds), *Early Greek cult practice* (Stockholm 1988), 167-171.

[337] Menadier, *The sixth century BC temple*, 104.

[338] Menadier, "The sanctuary of Hera Akraia", 89.

deposit, thereby lowering the closing date of the deposit to around 720 BC.[339] Menadier agrees with this date pertaining to the pottery, but she also remarks that other items in the Geometric deposit may date to the 7th century.[340] The closing date of the so-called Geometric deposit thus has become considerably lower than the end of the Geometric period, and consequently, an overlap with the Limenia-deposit now does occur.

Additionally, Payne noted how the oldest layer of the deposit of votive material around his Limenia-temple did not extend below the floor level of the building, and no sign of disturbance of the layer was visible. He concluded from this that the building had to predate the earliest sherds in the deposit, thus producing a date around 725. Instead, Menadier examined Payne's sketches of the deposit, and suggested that the oldest layer had been brought into the area from elsewhere to level the ground, but only after the building had been erected. She argues that the strange occurrence of early Korinthian pottery at much lower levels than a lot of the Protocorinthian sherds in this deposit, also noted by Payne, may thus be explained. Given that the latest pottery in this layer of the deposit then must predate the building, Menadier asserts that the dining room was built in the last quarter of the 6th century. Such a date also provides a better explanation for the 6th-century roof tiles, which Payne ascribed to a renovation phase, and the date of the dedicatory inscriptions that had been reused to line the stone hearth within the building.[341]

The oldest layer of the Protocorinthian subdivision of the Limenia-deposit does pose a problem though, as its provenance is unclear. In the absence of a temple, it seems odd that votive deposits as large as those found could have accumulated in this area. Tomlinson thought that most of the material on the upper terraces was either directly placed there, or periodically cleared out of the harbour area, as the space there was rather cramped. In the latter case, the votives had to stay within the sanctuary, and were thus moved to the higher terraces. He suggested that the deposit around the dining-room was such a dump that had originated from the area of the Geometric deposit, but represented mostly post-Geometric layers from that area, which are thus no longer discernible in that location now.[342] However, even if there is an overlap between the Geometric and the early Limenia-deposits, the starting date of the Limenia-deposit is later than Geometric. Moreover, the Geometric deposit has a clear closing date, earlier than the closing date of the Limenia-deposit. It seems very unlikely that those executing this procedure made such a clean cut in the material, that virtually no post-Geometric sherds remained on the spot, and conversely, that no pre-Protocorinthian sherds were moved to the upper terrace.

Therefore, it is assumed here that the oldest layer from the Limenia-deposit did not come from the harbour area directly. Rather, in the course of the early existence of the sanctuary, it was probably acknowledged that the harbour area was too small to accommodate the growing number of votive dedications from an equally increasing group of worshippers. Therefore, the area where votives could be put up was perhaps extended to some place higher up the Heraion valley. The area of the Hellenistic dining room, and that of Payne's Hellenistic houses may well have had that function, as they were close to the harbour area. When the dining-room was built, the material used for levelling the upper terrace could have come from this area. Given that the earliest material in this fill dated around 750, this must also be the date around which the area appropriate for votive dedications was extended. In this early period, the extension must have received dedications side by side with the Geometric deposit, but no material was moved up from the harbour yet. Subsequently, the Geometric deposit was

---

[339] N. Coldstream, *Greek Geometric pottery: a survey of ten local styles and their chronology* (London 1968), 98.
[340] Menadier, *The sixth century BC temple*, 96.
[341] Idem, 110-111.
[342] Tomlinson, "Perachora", 333.

apparently sealed around the time the 7th-century temple was built, as no later sherds are found in that sample. This suggests that the temple or its altar or some other related construction was built over most of the Geometric deposit. Dedications however continued to be put up in both the harbour area and the extension afterwards.

After some time, it seems to have become necessary indeed to clear out the excessive amount of dedications from the harbour area, for this may explain why Payne thought the Akraia-deposit so much poorer than the Limenia-deposit. Evidently, the most conspicuous, durable and large items had been transported to the higher areas, leaving mostly dull items and smaller pottery fragments behind. The Akraia-deposit however also contained late-Geometric ware, probably representing the remains of the Geometric deposit that were not covered by the 7th-century constructions in the temple area.[343] Such clearing out therefore cannot have occurred before the dining room-building had been built by the end of the 7th century. Effectively, the area designated earlier as the extension did produce sporadic Geometric finds, mixed up with Protocorinthian to 5th century pottery throughout the middle terraces.[344]

However, as Payne remarked, the area had been intensively quarried and levelled. He thought the buildings he excavated here were Hellenistic houses, but Menadier was right to question this identification, for houses are unlikely within a temenos.[345] They also may not be Hellenistic, as the latest pottery represented is from the 5th century BC.[346] However that may be, it is clear that intensive building activity, shortly after the 5th century, disturbed beyond recognition any possible successive layers of debris, perhaps originating from the harbour area, mixed with dedications made in situ. Therefore, the chronology and location of the depositions in the sanctuary presented here must remain tentative, but it should be borne in mind that any explanation for the pattern of the votive deposits as it can be reconstructed from Payne's confusing report inevitably rests on considerable conjecture.

4.13   The history of the sanctuary revisited

We will attempt to summarize a new outline for the history of the sanctuary. The worship of Hera Akraia at Perachora started out without a temple in the early 8th century BC. Votives and remains of ritual dining from this early stage accumulated in the centre of the harbour area. It remains a matter of conjecture whether the apsidal house was visible at the time. If it was, the building may have been important in the appropriation of the site as a sacred precinct, because of its antiquity, but this is by no means necessary as an explanation for the choice of the location. Such a type of worship corresponds well with Morgan's picture of a handful of sailors dedicating to Hera out of gratitude for her protection on their journeys. In the course of the 8th century, the number of worshippers increased, reflected in the amount and the value of offerings made at the Heraion. The increment apparently was large enough to warrant extension of the sacred area to the upper terraces around 750 BC, where initially no quarrying was needed to make room. Again, this neatly fits with the observed increase in trading activity and the social changes partly generating that trade, as observed by Morgan.

Around the middle of the 7th century, the first monumental temple appears. Constructions for this temple covered the Geometric deposit, which was subsequently sealed by the successive 6th-century altar and layers of earth washed in by the rain, until it was excavated by Payne. The construction of the first temple coincides with the rule of the Bacchiads at Korinth, and may indeed be commissioned by them, as the ultimately superior dedication. Significantly,

---

[343] The catalogue of the Akraia-deposit presented by Payne, *Perachora I*, 93-98, contains several items dated to the middle and late 8th century.
[344] Payne, *Perachora I*, 120.
[345] Menadier, *The sixth century BC temple*, 86-87.
[346] Tomlinson, "The upper terraces 198.

this temple is roughly contemporary with the first monumental temples at both Isthmia, and at Korinth itself[347], perhaps indicating that it was part of a broader attempt of the ruling class to establish a principal position for Korinth in the region. In the specific case of the Heraion, the appropriation of the sanctuary was important for the Korinthians to secure an open passage to the west. In the 7th century the Saronic gulf to the south of the isthmus was increasingly dominated by Athens, Argos and Aigina. Korinth thus would have had to consolidate her possession of the Perachora promontory, both as a way out for her own sailors, and to protect the polis from invaders on the way in.[348] Still, as the scale of the 7th-century temple cannot be assessed, it is also possible that the first temple was built by private worshippers whose personal business was dependent on the sanctuary's role in Korinthian trade.

The scale of the 6th-century temple however almost certainly was achieved only through polis involvement, particularly because several construction projects seem to have been initiated around the same time. According to its new dating, the dining-room was built around the first quarter of the century, presumably involving the development and levelling of the uppermost terrace, which may not have belonged to the sanctuary before that date. Additionally the first architectural remains in the West Court must date to this period, as there is no reason to doubt the terminus post quem which Coulton asserted, based on the contents of the South East deposit. The material from this deposit is almost exactly contemporaneous with the early fill around the dining-room, and therefore it possibly originated from the same intermediate depositions on the middle terraces. To top off this extensive reorganization, finally the harbour area was cleaned out, probably as a preliminary to the construction of the temple itself.

4.14   Conclusion

It has become clear that the Heraion on the Perachora promontory was not in any way what de Polignac imagined it to be. It was not initially an extra-urban sanctuary to Megara, as it never even belonged to Megara in the first place. Neither was it a border sanctuary to Korinth, as it was not located on a clear border with its neighbour, Megara. Moreover, Megara does not seem to have had a particular interest in the area: the mountain range of the Gerania was the most natural boundary to Megara's territory and conversely, the Perachora peninsula was much more accessible from Korinth's side. Even its ancient name as given by Xenophon, Peraia, implies a Korinthian perspective. Most importantly, if the function de Polignac assigned to such extra-urban sanctuaries were to be accepted, the sanctuary of Hera Akraia which he uses as an example, lacks significant features he ascribed to such sanctuaries to qualify for that function.

In the first place, the first signs of worship at Perachora occurred some time before the polis of Korinth existed to any institutional extent. Additionally, the monumental temple de Polignac associated with an early rise of that Korinthian polis does not appear to have existed. When a monumental temple did arise, it may be assumed that the polis had developed in the meantime, as this temple was built at least half a century after the first colonizing expeditions. Finally, although cult characteristics are not easily made out, the patchy literary sources do not necessitate a concern with initiation, and the votive offerings do even less so. Effectively, female worshippers seem to have been increasingly dominant in the dedication of votives, but as Hera generally was concerned with the well-being of women, this does not indicate a particularly kourotrophic or initiatory nature. Rather, the material remains in the sanctuary in

---

[347] Menadier, *The sixth century BC temple*, 73.
[348] Morgan, "The evolution of a sacral 'landscape' ", 131.

general reveal more individual interests, as a contrast to the more communal nature of the sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia.

It may still be doubted whether the first temple was built in the 7th century BC by the Korinthian polis as an institution. The size of the building is a matter of conjecture, therefore it is possible that it was built by private investors. However, its simultaneous appearance with the monumental temple at Isthmia and the first recognizable place of cult in Korinth itself, the temple of Apollo, may suggest that more than personal concerns were involved. The building projects occurred together with the rule of the Bacchiads at Korinth, creating the impression that they could have financed these constructions. This could be interpreted as a personal investment, but its ultimate goal for the Bacchiads presumably was to consolidate their position of power, as rulers of Korinth, but also of Korinth as the political centre of the region. Lastly, construction of the 6th-century temple seems to have been part of a larger building programme, which was of a scale that could only have been initiated, as Payne observed, by an agent of the calibre of the polis of Korinth.

Conclusion

This thesis has attempted to assess two theoretical approaches to the interaction between religion and politics in ancient Greece. Both approaches in a similar way have taken the polis as the central political unit around which religious action was organized, a choice that may be considered only natural, given the primary position of the polis in Greek life from the Archaic period onwards. On the one hand, François de Polignac focused on religion as a device used by early communities to push their development towards the integrated polis of the Classical period. The symbolic connotations of particular deities in particular locations in his view were instrumental with regard to the integration of the civic body. As such, de Polignac in his theory seems to assume that these symbolic values were invented on purpose, and constitute massive manipulation on the side of the early elites of developing poleis. On the other hand, Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood described the internal structure and mechanisms of religion in the polis as polis religion. The polis in this model was central to the organization of religion, but at the same time it was bound to rules when it came to making changes to the religious discourse.

Both models are restricted in their explanatory force, because of their background in Structuralist theories. Especially the dynamics involved in subtle changes that may be identified as manipulation, in both approaches are difficult to explain: de Polignac can only adduce sharp discontinuities to explain developments, whereas Sourvinou-Inwood asserts that changes may occur in religious practice, but not in the underlying worldview. As a consequence of his inability to account for subtle changes, the symbolism of extra-urban sanctuaries claimed by de Polignac must be dismissed, as it is related to a complex of such discontinuities. Moreover, several of his examples, including his most poignant one, Argos, have, since the publication of the model, been demonstrated to function differently. The significance of the location of sanctuaries, in the specific case of de Polignac's model on borders, may indeed be retained, but instead on the more general assumption that a temple represented the appropriation of a certain area of land by the group that worshipped in the temple, which could be, and in practice often was, a polis.

Conversely, the model of polis religion offers a good starting point to approach the structural organization of Greek religion around political communities. To mitigate the implied static character of the polis, the strictly Structuralist background of the model has been nuanced, so as to allow for a considerable diversity of worldviews within a community, and a continuous change of the prevailing worldview in the community at large, due to interaction among its own members, but also with individuals and groups from outside. With the dynamics of religion envisioned as such, there is no need to adduce lying and downright manipulation as an explanation for changes, for these occur rather unnoticed. However, there is also ample room for individuals or groups to influence the dynamic to suit their own interests best. With these adaptations, the interaction between religion and politics may now be described without having to adduce either the political elite as a bunch of cynics, or the masses as naively faithful.

Finally, the case of Perachora shows how the function and importance of a sanctuary may have shifted over time. In its early stages the sanctuary was rather small and its few visitors were purely individually concerned with a safe and preferably profitable journey. Soon however it became a place where individuals could appropriately display their wealth and status, sometimes with imported products, but also entirely independent from the sanctuary's position within a trade route. With Korinth developing as a polis and a regional centre, it seems that its ruling elite took pride of place in the subsequent organization of the sanctuary,

to appropriate it as specifically Korinthian. This on the one hand confirmed Korinth's primacy in the region, and on the other secured the peninsula, which otherwise would have been an easy access point to the polis for any enemy of substantial power. Finally, in the 6th century, there can be no doubt that the rituals at the sanctuary had become part of the central polis cults, even though they were located at a far end of the territory.
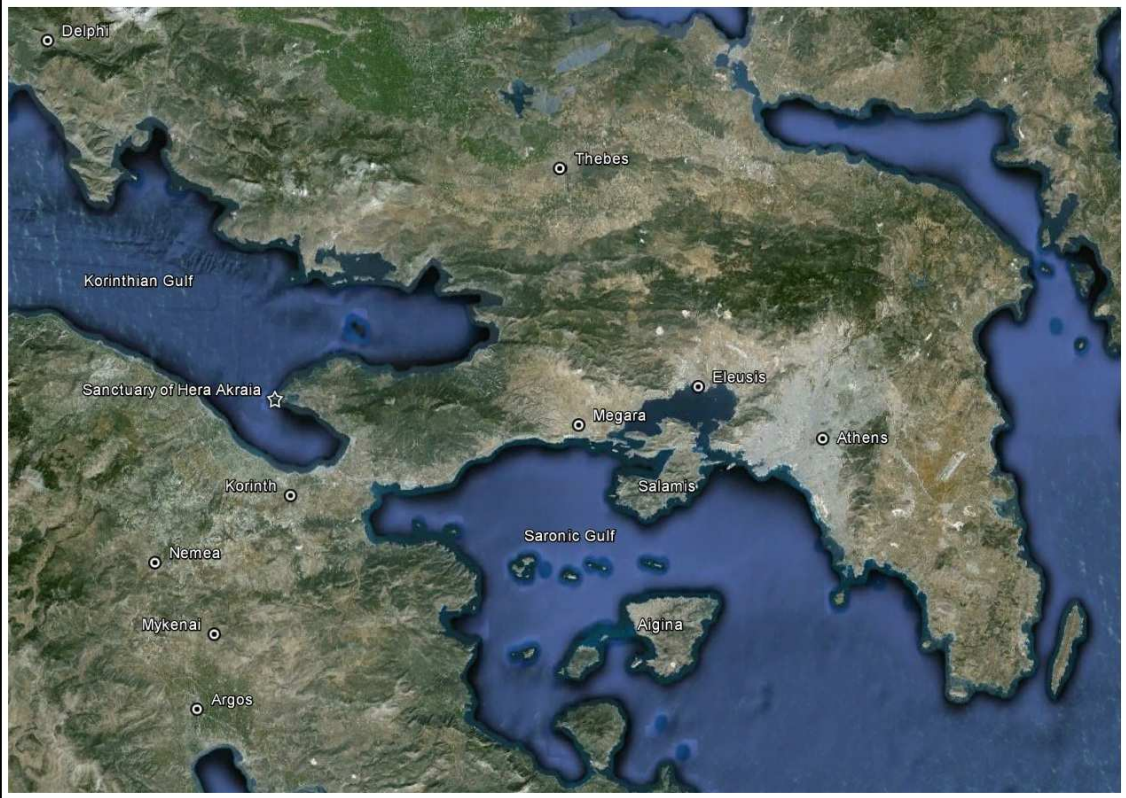
Figures

Fig. 2: The Perachora peninsula.
Source: Google earth 2012.

Fig. 1: The Perachora peninsula in context.
Source: Google earth 2012.
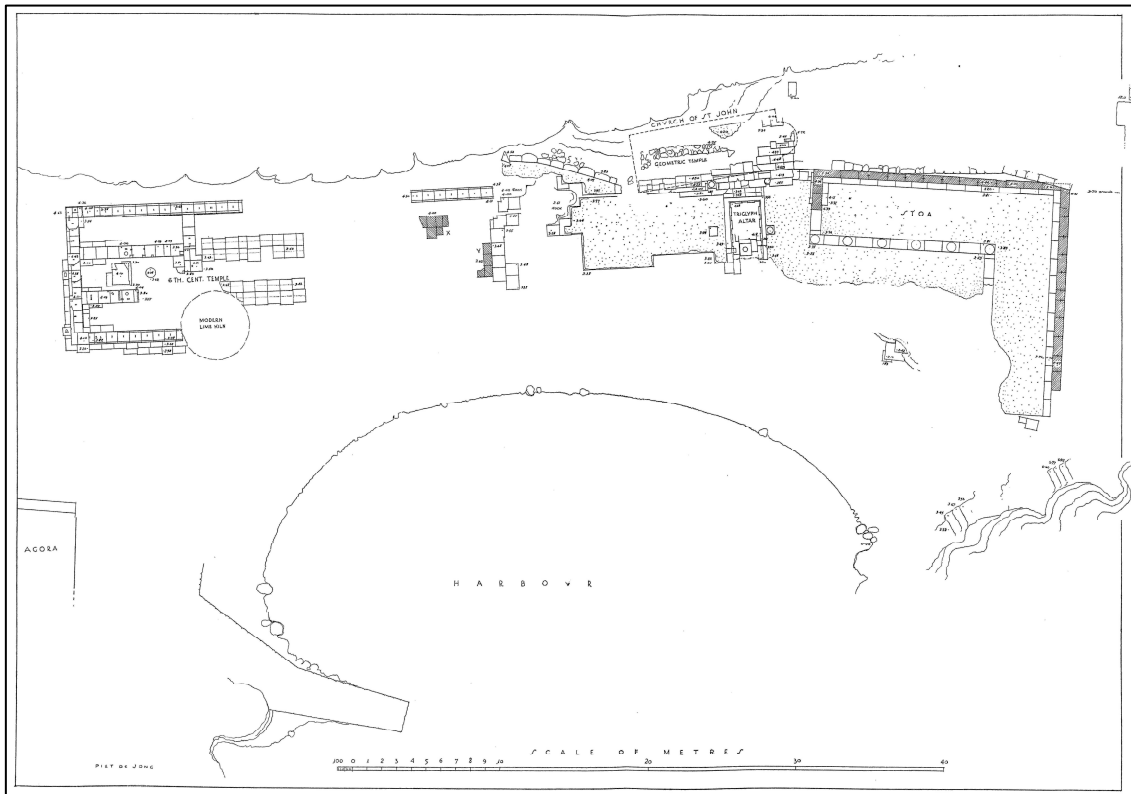
Fig. 3: The sanctuary of Hera Akraia: The sacred area by the harbour according to H. Payne
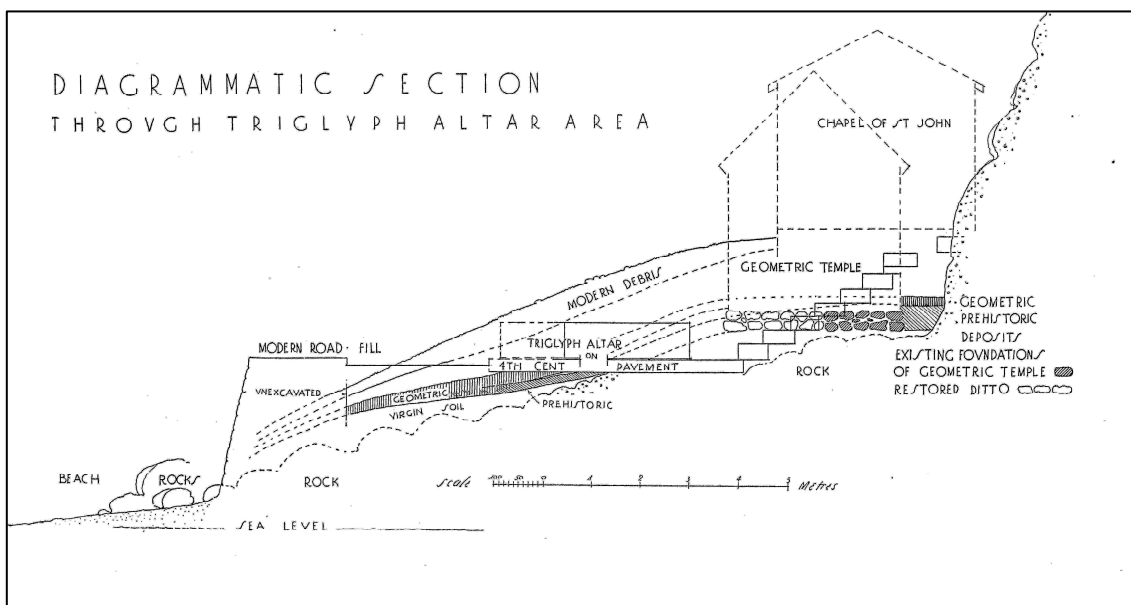Source: Payne, *Perachora I.*

Fig. 4: Cross-section of the area of the apsidal building, identified as a Geometric temple by Payne.
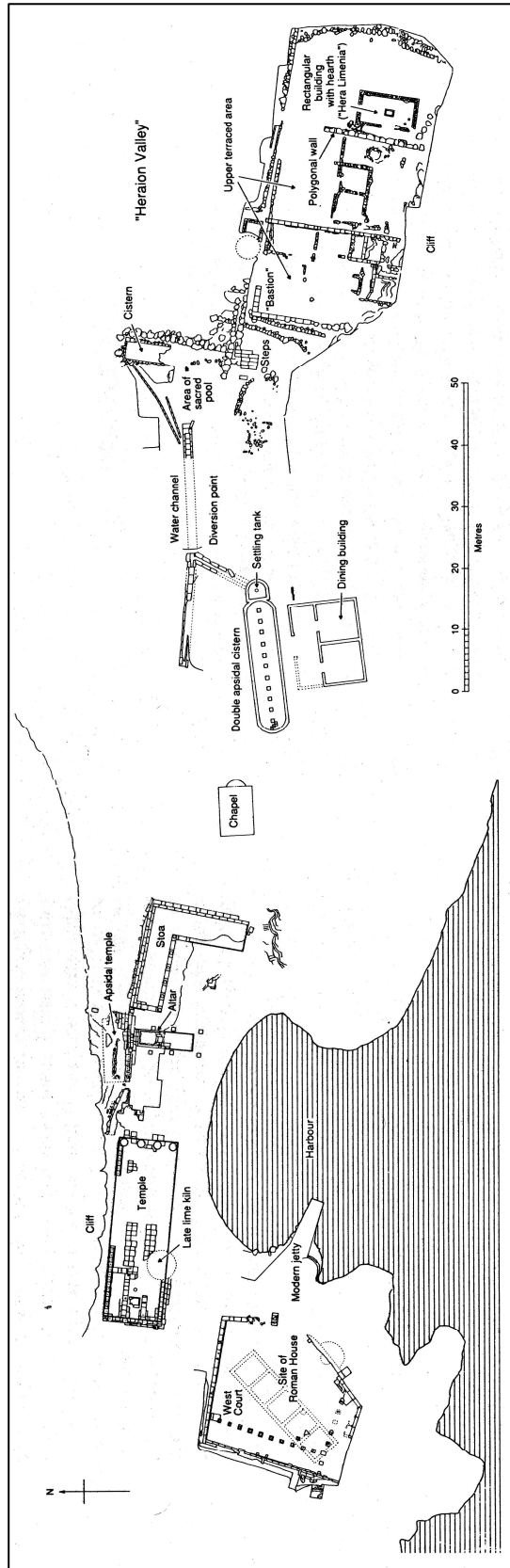Source: Payne, *Perachora I.*

Fig. 5: The sanctuary of Hera Akraia, based on the map by Payne, complemented with new finds and corrected by aerial photography.
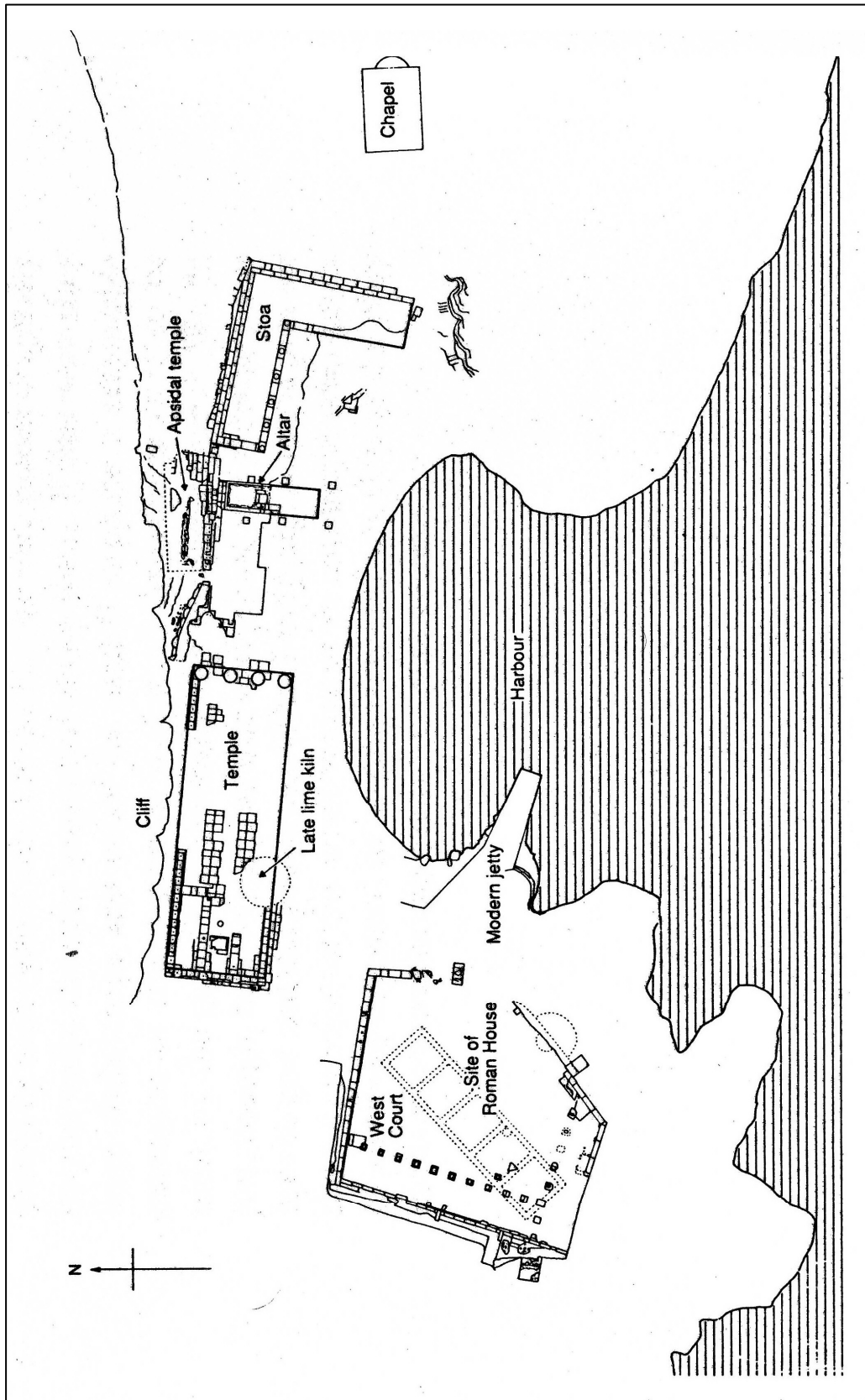Source: Tomlinson, "Perachora".

Fig. 6: Detail of the sanctuary of Hera Akraia: the area by the harbour.
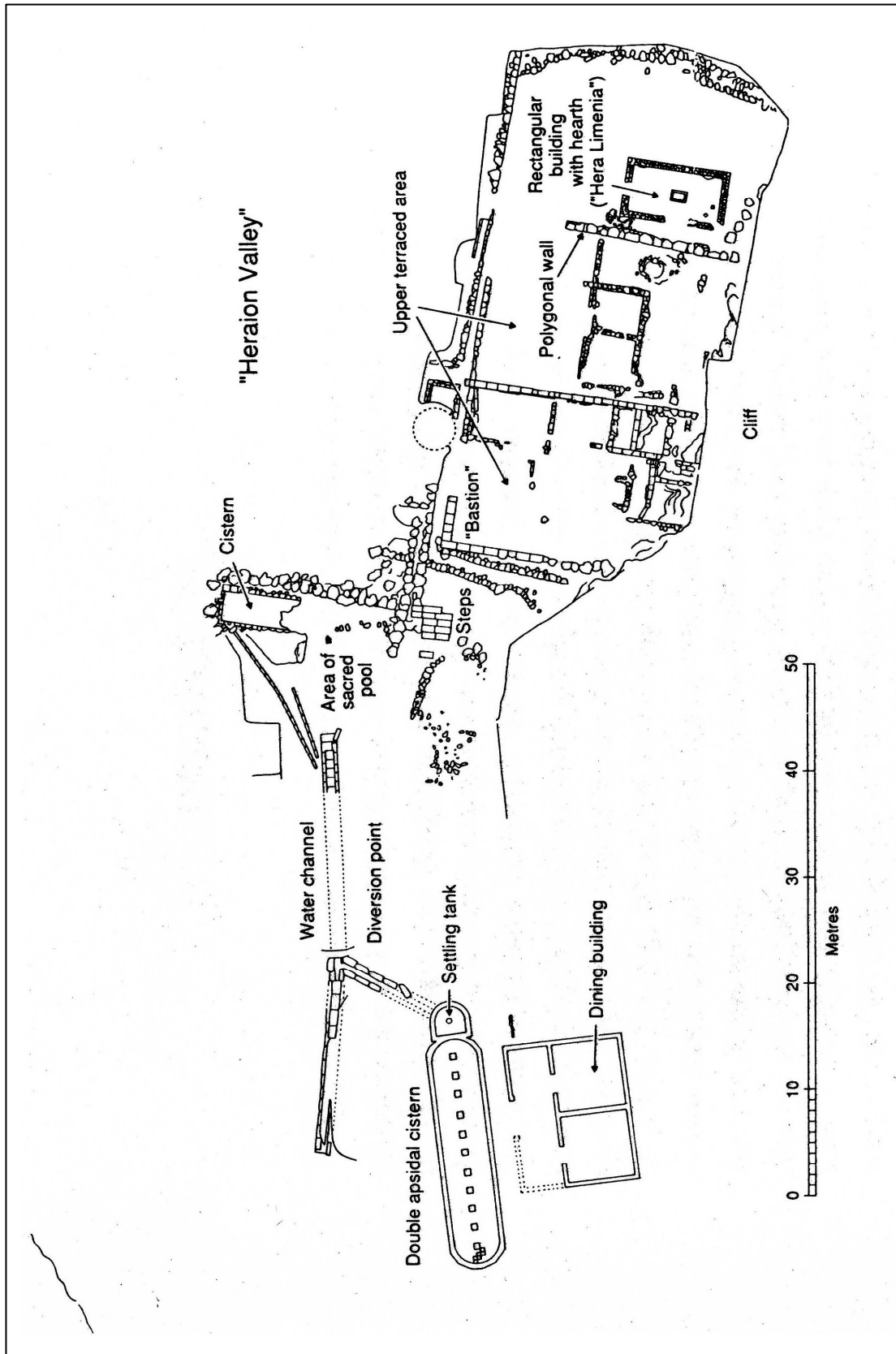*Source: Tomlinson, "Perachora".*

Fig 7: Detail of the sanctuary of Hera Akraia: the upper terraces.
Source: Tomlinson, "Perachora".

List of abbreviations

AJA   *American Journal of Archaeology*

AM   *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilung*

ArchDelt   *Archaiologicon Deltion*

BSA   *Annual of the British School at Athens*

GRBS   *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*

HZ   *Historsiche Zeitschrift*

JdI   *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologische Instituts*

JHS   *Journal of Hellenic Studies*

RA   *Revue Archéologique*

RÉG   *Revue des Études Grecques*

WS   *Wiener Studien*

Bibliography

- Alcock, S.E., and R. Osborne (eds.), *Placing the gods* (Oxford 1994).

- Babbitt, F.C. (transl.), *Plutarch's* Moralia (London 1936).

- Baumbach, J.D. *The significance of votive offerings in selected Hera sanctuaries in the Peloponnese, Ionia and western Greece* (Oxford 2004).

- Berenson Maclean, J.K., and E.B. Aitken, *Flavius Philostratus:* Heroikos (Atlanta 2001).

- Blackman, D.J., "The harbour at Perachora", *BSA* 61 (1966), 192-194.

- Blok, J.H., "Recht und Ritus der Polis. Zu Bürgerstatus und Geschlechtsverhältnissen im klassischen Athen", *HZ* 278 (2004), 1-26.

- Bol, P.C., "Die Giebelsculpturen des Schatzhauses von Megara", *AM* 89 (1974), 64-75.

- Brownson, C.L. (transl.), *Xenophon,* Hellenica, *books I-V* (London 1918).

- Burkert, W., *Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche* (Stuttgart 1977), translated to English: *Greek religion* (Oxford 1985).

- Burkert, W., "Greek *poleis* and civic cults: some further thoughts", in: M.H. Hansen and K. Raaflaub (eds.), *Studies in the Ancient Greek Polis*, *Papers of the Copenhagen Polis Centre* 2 (Stuttgart 1995), 201-210.

- Buxton, R.G.A., "Introduction", in: R.L. Gordon (ed.), *Myth, religion and society, Structuralist essays by M. Detienne, L. Gernet, J.-P Vernant and P. Vidal-Naquet* (Cambridge 1981), ix-xvii.

- Caskey, J.L., "Lerna in the Early Bronze Age", *AJA* 72 (1968), 313-316.

- Coldstream, N., *Greek Geometric pottery: a survey of ten local styles and their chronology* (London 1968).

- Coldstream, N., *Geometric Greece* (London 1977).

- Cole, S.G., "Civic cult and civic identity", in: M.H. Hansen (ed.), *Sources for the ancient Greek city-state, Acts of the Copenhagen Polis Centre, vol. 2* (Copenhagen 1995), 292-325.

- Connor, W.R., "Tribes, festivals and processions; civic ceremonial and political manipulation in Archaic Greece", *JHS* 107 (1987), 40-50.

- Coulton, J.J., "The stoa by the harbour at Perachora", *BSA* 59 (1964), 100-131.

- Coulton, J.J., "The west court at Perachora", *BSA* 62 (1967), 353-371.

- Coulton, J.J., "A tympanum fragment at Perachora", *BSA* 62 (1967), 207-210.

- Davidson, J., "History and Anthropology", in: P. Lambert and P. Schofield (eds.), *Making history: An introduction to the history and practices of a discipline* (London and New York 2004), 150-161.

- Davies, J.K., "The 'Origins of the Greek polis'. Where should we be looking?", in: L.G. Mitchell and P.J. Rhodes (eds.), *The development of the polis in Archaic Greece* (London and New York 1997), 24-38.

- Detienne, M., and J.-P Vernant, *Cunning intelligence in Greek culture and society* (Chicago 1991, transl. J. Lloyd).

- Detienne, M., *Apollon le couteau à la main* (Paris 1998).

- Detienne, M., "Experimenting in the field of polytheisms", *Arion* 7.1 (1999), 127-149.

- Dickey, E., *Ancient Greek scholarship* (Oxford 2007).

- Drachmann, A.B. (ed.), *Scholia vetera in Pindari carmina, Vol. 1: Scholia in Olympionicas* (Leipzig 1903).

- Dunbabin, T.J., "The oracle of Hera Akraia at Perachora", *BSA* 46 (1951), 61-71.

- Dunbabin, T.J., (ed.), *The sanctuaries of Hera Akraia and Limenia II: Pottery, ivories, scarabs and other objects* (Oxford 1962).

- Dunn, F.M., "Euripides and the rites of Hera Akraia", *GRBS* 35 (1994), 103-115.

- Dunn, F.M., "Pausanias on the tomb of Medea's children", *Mnemosyne* 48 (1995), 348-351.

- Effenterre, H. van, *La cité grecque. Des origines à la défaite de Marathon* (Paris 1985).

- Ehrenberg, V., "When did the *polis* rise?", *JHS* 57 (1937), 147-159.

- Eijnde, F. van den, *Cult and society in early Athens. 1000-600 BCE* (Unpublished dissertation University of Utrecht 2010).

- Figueira, T.J., and G. Nagy (eds.), *Theognis of Megara, Poetry and the polis* (Baltimore and London 1985).

- Fossey, J.M., "The prehistoric settlement by Lake Vouliagmeni, Perachora", *BSA* 64 (1969), 53-69.

- Fossey, J.M., "Excavation at the Early Helladic settlement by Lake Vouliagmeni", *ArchDelt* 28 B1 (1973), 149-151.

- French, A., "Solon and the Megarian question", *JHS* 77 (1957), 238-246.

- Gantz, T., *Early Greek myth* (Baltimore and London 1993).

- Gerber, D.E. (transl.), *Greek iambic poetry* (London 1999).

- Hall, J.M., "How Argive was the 'Argive' Heraion? The political and cultic geography of the Argive plain, 900-400 B.C.", *AJA* 99 (1995), 577-613.

- Hall, J.M., *Hellenicity* (Chicago and London 2002).

- Hall, J.M., "Polis, community and ethnic identity", in: H. A. Shapiro (ed.), *A Cambridge companion to Archaic Greece* (Cambridge 2007), 40-61.

- Hall, J.M., *A history of the Archaic Greek world. Ca. 1200-479 BCE* (Oxford 2007).

- Halliday, W.R., *The Greek questions of Plutarch* (Oxford 1928).

- Hammond, N.G.L., "The Heraeum at Perachora and Corinthian encroachment", *BSA* 49 (1954), 93-102.

- Hanell, K., *Megarische Studien* (Lund 1934).

- Hansen, M.H., "The 'autonomous city-state'. Ancient fact or modern fiction?", in: M.H. Hansen and K. Raaflaub (eds.), *Studies in the Ancient Greek Polis*, *Papers of the Copenhagen Polis Centre* 2 (Stuttgart 1995), 21-43.

- Hansen, M.H., and K. Raaflaub (eds.), *Studies in the Ancient Greek Polis*, *Papers of the Copenhagen Polis Centre* 2 (Stuttgart 1995).

- Hansen, M.H., *Polis and city-state. An ancient concept and its modern equivalent* (Copenhagen 1998).

- Hansen, M.H., "Introduction", in: M.H. Hansen and T.H. Nielsen (eds.), *An inventory of Archaic and Classical poleis* (Oxford 2004), 3-153.

- Hansen, M.H., and T.H. Nielsen (eds.), *An inventory of Archaic and Classical poleis* (Oxford 2004).

- Harrauer, C., "Der korinthische Kindermord. Eumelos und die Folgen", *WS* 112 (1999), 5-28.

- Heath, R.M "Proxeny decrees from Megara", *BSA* 19 (1912-1913), 82-88.

- Hicks, E.L., and G.F. Hill, *A manual of Greek historical* inscriptions (Oxford 1901).

- Johnston, S.I., "Corinthian Medea and the cult of Hera Akraia", in: J.J. Clauss and S.I. Johnston (eds.), *Medea, Essays on Medea in myth, literature, philosophy and art* (New Jersey 1997), 44-70.

- Jones, H.L. (transl.), The geography *of Strabo* (London 1927).

- Jones, W.H.S. (transl.), *Pausanias,* Description of Greece (London 1969-1977).

- Kearns, E., "Order, interaction, authority", in: A. Powell (ed.), *The Greek world* (London 1995), 511-529.

- Kindt, J., "Polis religion – A critical appreciation", *Kernos* 22 (2009), 9-34.

- Kuhn, G., "Untersuchungen zur Funktion der Säulenhalle in archaisher und klassischer Zeit", *JdI* 100 (1985), 169-307.

- Lambert, P., and P. Schofield (eds.), *Making history: An introduction to the history and practices of a discipline* (London and New York 2004).

- Legon, R.P., *Megara. The political history of a Greek city-state to 336 B.C.* (Ithaca and London 1981).

- Mastronarde, D.J., *Euripides, Medea* (Cambridge 2002).

- Matthews, P., *A short history of Structural linguistics* (Cambridge 2001)

- Meiggs, R., and D.M. Lewis (eds.), *A selection of Greek historical inscriptions to the end of the fifth century B.C.* (Oxford 1996).

- Menadier, B., *The sixth century BC temple and the sanctuary and cult of Hera Akraia, Perachora* (Ann Arbor 1995).

- Menadier, B., "The sanctuary of Hera Akraia and its religious connections with Corinth", in: R. Hägg (ed.), *Peloponnesian sanctuaries and cults* (Stockholm 2002), 85-92.

- Morgan, C.A., "Corinth, the Corinthian gulf and western Greece during the eighth century BC", *BSA* 83 (1988), 313-338

- Morgan, C.A., "The evolution of a sacral 'landscape': Isthmia, Perachora, and the early Corinthian state", in: S.E. Alcock and R. Osborne (eds.), *Placing the gods* (Oxford 1994), 105-142.

- Morgan, C.A., "Ritual and society in the Early Iron Age Corinthia",in: R. Hägg (ed.), *Ancient Greek cult practice from the archaeological evidence* (Stockholm 1998) 73-90.

- Morgan, C.A., "The Corinthian aristocracy and Corinthian cult during the eighth century BC", in: R. Hägg (ed), *Peloponnesian sanctuaries and cults* (Stockholm 2002), 45-51.

- Morgan, C.A., *Early Greek states beyond the polis* (London and New York 2003).

- Morgan, C.A., "The Early Iron Age", in: K. Raaflaub and H. van Wees (eds.), *A companion to Archaic Greece* (Malden and Oxford 2009), 43-63

- Morris, I., "The eighth century revolution", in: K. Raaflaub and H. van Wees (eds.), *A companion to Archaic Greece* (Malden and Oxford 2009), 65-80.

- Mossman, J., *Euripides, Medea* (Oxford 2011).

- Nilsson, M.P., *Griechische Feste von religiöser Bedeutung* (Leipzig 1906).

- Novaro-Lefèvre, D., "Le culte d'Héra a Pérachora", *RÉG* 113 (2000), 42-69.

- Ober, J., "Culture , thin coherence and the persistence of politics", in: J. Ober (ed.), *Athenian legacies* (Princeton and Oxford 2005), 69-91.

- Page, D.L., *Euripides, Medea* (Oxford 1938).

- Parker, R., *On Greek religion* (Ithaca and London 2011).

- Payne, H., Preliminary reports on Perachora

    o *BSA* 30 (1928-1930), 285-287.

    o *JHS* 50 (1930), 238-240.

    o *BSA* 31 (1930-1931), 185-187.

    o *JHS* 51 (1931), 191-194.

    o *BSA* 32 (1931-1932), 258-263.

    o *JHS* 52 (1932), 240-244.

    o *BSA* 33 (1932-1933), 212-215.

    o *JHS* 53 (1933), 277-280.

    o *JHS* 54 (1934), 190.

- Payne, H., and T.J. Dunbabin (ed.), *Perachora , the sanctuaries of Hera Akraia and Limenia I: Architecture, bronzes, terracottas* (Oxford 1942).

- Picard, C., "L'Héraion de Pérachora et les enfants de Médée", *RA* 35 (1932), 218-229.

- Plommer, H., and F. Salviat, "The altar of Hera Akraia at Perachora", *BSA* 61 (1966), 207-215.

- Polignac, F. de, *La naissance de la cité grecque* (Paris 1984).

- Polignac, F. de, "Mediation, competition and sovereignty: The evolution of rural sanctuaries in Geometric Greece", in: S.E. Alcock and R. Osborne (eds.), *Placing the gods* (Oxford 1994), 3-18.

- Polignac, F. de, *Cults, territory and the origins of the Greek city-state* (Chicago and London 1995).

- Polignac, F. de "Héra, le navire et la demeure", in: J. de La Genière (ed.), *Héra: Images, espèces, cultes* (Naples 1997) 113-122.

- Price, S., *Religions of the ancient Greeks* (Cambridge 1999).

- Raaflaub, K., and H. van Wees (eds.), *A companion to Archaic Greece* (Malden and Oxford 2009).

- Rigsby, K.J., "Megara and Tripodiscus", *GRBS* 28 (1987), 93-102.

- Roberts, M., "Postmodernism and the linguistic turn", in: P. Lambert and P. Schofield (eds.), *Making history: An introduction to the history and practices of a discipline* (London and New York 2004), 227-240.

- Robu, A., *La cité de Mégare et les établissements mégariens de Sicile, de la Propontide et du Pont-Euxin. Histoire et institutions* (unpublished dissertation, University of Neuchâtel 2008).

- Roebuck, C., "Some aspects of urbanization in Corinth", *Hesperia* 41 (1972), 96-127.

- Sage, E.T. (transl.), *Livy* (London 1935).

- Salmon, J.B., "The Heraeum at Perachora and the early history of Corinth and Megara", *BSA* 67 (1972), 159-204.

- Salmon, J.B., *Wealthy Corinth, A history of the city to 338 BC* (Oxford 1984).

- Schwartz, E. (ed.), *Scholia in Euripidem, volumen II: Scholia in Hippolytum, Medeam, Alcestin, Andromacham, Rhesum, Troades* (Berlin 1891).

- Scranton, R.L., "Temple C and the sanctuary of Hera Akraia", in: R. Stilwell et al., *Corinth I, part 2: Architecture* (Cambridge 1941), 131-165.

- Scullion, S., "Tradition and invention in Euripidean aitiology", *Illinois Classical Studies* 24-25 (1999-2000), 217-233.

- Sewell, W.H., "The concept(s) of culture", in: V.E. Bonnell and L. Hunt (eds.), *Beyond the cultural turn* (Berkeley 1999), 35-61.

- Sinn, U., "Das Heraion von Perachora: eine sakrale Schutzzone in der Korinthischen Peraia", *AM* 105 (1990), 53-116.

- Smith, P.J., *The archaeology and epigraphy of Hellenistic and Roman Megaris* (Oxford 2008).

- Snodgrass, A.M., *Early Greek armour and weapons from the end of the Bronze Age to 600 B.C.* (Edinburgh 1964).

- Snodgrass, A.M., "Interaction by design: the Greek city state", in: C. Renfrew and J.F. Cherry (eds.), *Peer polity interaction and socio-political change* (Cambridge 1986), 47-58, reprinted in: A.M. Snodgrass, *Archaeology and the emergence of Greece* (Ithaca NY 2006), 234-257.

- Snodgrass, A.M., "Archaeology and the study of the Greek city", in: J. Rich and A. Wallace-Hadrill (eds.), *City and country in the Ancient* world (London and New York 1991), 1-23, reprinted in: A.M. Snodgrass, *Archaeology and the emergence of Greece* (Ithaca NY 2006), 269-289.

- Sourvinou-Inwood, C., "Further aspects of polis religion", *Annali; Sezione di archeologia e storia antica* 10 (1988), 259-274, re-printed in: R. Buxton (ed.), *Greek religion* (Oxford 2000), 38-55.

- Sourvinou-Inwood, C., "What is polis religion?", in: O. Murray and S. Price (eds), *The Greek city. From Homer to Alexander* (Oxford 1991), 295-322.

- Sourvinou-Inwood, C., *'Reading' Greek culture. Text and images, rituals and myth* (Oxford 1991).

- Sourvinou-Inwood, C., "Early sanctuaries, the eighth century and ritual space, Fragments of a discource", in: N. Marinatos and R. Hägg (eds.), *Greek sanctuaries, New approaches* (London and New York 1993), 1-17.

- Stilwell, R., et al., *Corinth I, part 2: Architecture* (Cambridge 1941).

- Thomas, C.G., "The Greek polis", in: C.G. Thomas and R. Griffeth (eds.), *The city-state in five cultures* (Santa Barbara and Oxford 1981), 31-69.

- Tomlinson, R.A., "Perachora: the remains outside of the two sanctuaries", *BSA* 64 (1969), 155-258.

- Tomlinson, R.A., "The upper terraces at Perachora", *BSA* 72 (1977), 198-202.

- Tomlinson, R.A., and K. Demakopoulou, "Excavations at the circular building, Perachora", *BSA* 80 (1985), 261-279.

- Tomlinson, R.A.,"Water supplies and ritual at the Heraion, Perachora", in: R. Hägg et al. (eds), *Early Greek cult practice* (Stockholm 1988), 167-171.

- Tomlinson, R.A., "The chronology of the Perachora hestiatorion and its significance", in: O. Murray (ed.), *Sympotica, A symposium on the symposion* (Oxford 1990), 95-101.

- Tomlinson, R.A., "Perachora", in: A. Schachter (ed.), *Le sanctuaire grec* (Vandoeuvres-Genève 1990), 321-346.

- Vernant, J.-P., *Mythe et pensée chez les Grecs : études de psychologie historique* (Paris 1965).

- Vernant, J.-P., "The figure and functions of Artemis in myth and cult" in: J.-P. Vernant and F.I. Zeitlin (ed.), *Mortals and immortals* (Princeton 1992), 195-206.

- Versnel, H.S., *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman religion I. Ter Unus. Isis, Dionysos and Hermes: three studies in henotheism* (Leiden 1990).

- Versnel, H.S., *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman religion II. Transition and reversal in myth and ritual* (Leiden 1993).

- Versnel, H.S., *Coping with the gods: wayward readings in Greek theology* (Leiden 2011).

- Veyne, P., *Les grecs ont ils cru à leurs mythes?* (Paris 1983).

- Way, A.S. (transl.), *Euripides: Ion; Hippolytus; Medea; Alcestis* (London 1912).

- Wees, H. van, "The Homeric way of war: The *Iliad* and the hoplite phalanx (II)", *Greece & Rome* 41-2 (1994) 131-155.

- Welwei, K.-W., "de Polignac, La naissance de la cité grecque", *Gnomon* 59 (1987), 456-458.

- West, M.L., (ed.), *Iambi et elegi Graeci ante Alexandrum cantati, Volumen I: Archilochos, Hipponax, Theognidea* (2nd edition, Oxford 1989).

- West, M.L., (ed.) *Iambi et elegi Graeci ante Alexandrum cantati, Volumen II: Callinus, Mimnermus, Semonides, Solon, Tyrtaeus, Minora adespota* (2nd edition, Oxford 1989).

- West, M.L., " 'Eumelos', a Corinthian epic cycle?", *JHS* 122 (2002), 109-133.

- West, M.L., *Greek epic Fragments* (London 2003).

- Will, E., *Korinthiaka* (Paris 1955).

- Williams, C.K., *Pre-Roman cults in the area of the forum of ancient Corinth* (Ann Arbor 1978).

- Williams, C.K., and O.H. Zervos, "Corinth, 1983: The route to Sikyon", *Hesperia* 53 (1984), 83-122.

- Wilson, N.G. (transl.), *Aelian,* Historical miscellany (London 1997).