# ATHENIAN SYNOECISM

Cults, Myths, and the Elite in Sixth-Century Attica

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# INTRODUCTION

When we speak about Ancient Athens today, it is generally understood to mean the city of Athens and her countryside - the geographical area known as the Attic peninsula. However, this area is remarkably large for a unitary city-state in Ancient Greece. In fact, it could easily have supported several independent poleis, which would have remained relatively shielded from one another by natural borders in the Attic landscape. Moreover, archaeological excavations have revealed that Attica did, in fact, contain several independent settlements in the Bronze Age. The Athenians themselves also recognized this fact. Their *synoecism* myth told how the independent poleis of Attica were united by Theseus at some point in the legendary past. Many scholars have gone looking for the specific moment in time when Attica was incorporated into the Athenian city-state. However, though it is certainly clear that by the fifth century the inhabitants of Attica were all considered and called Athenians, all expected to fulfil the same civic duties and embodied with the same civic rights, the *synoecism* of Attica has been placed variously between the twelfth century and the sixth. In this thesis, I have followed in the footsteps of these scholars, and my research question asks when exactly the Attic peninsula became politically united and centred upon Athens, and how such a unification came about.[1]

To answer this question I have begun by exploring the previous scholarship on the topic, which will be presented in Chapter 1. In my study and analysis of the arguments that have been used to date the *synoecism* of Attica, I have come to the conclusion that the most commonly held view, that Attica was united at some point in the eight- or seventh century, does not rest upon solid foundations. Moreover, the whole idea that the *synoecism* took place hundreds of years before the fifth century, appears to be based on the aforementioned myth, which was, as I will argue, invented in the sixth century. In Chapter 1, I look at the archaeological evidence for a pre-sixth century unification of Attica, and I will argue that this evidence is indicative of a renaissance of settlements and cults across the peninsula in the seventh century, which is the opposite of what we would expect in terms of a *synoecism*.

Having found no evidence for a political *synoecism* of Attica down through the seventh century, but knowing that Attica was part of the Athenian city-state in the fifth century, the focus

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[1] All dates in the thesis are BCE unless explicitly stated otherwise.

of this thesis is the sixth century. In the second chapter, I explore the cohesive and divisive qualities of cults, and particularly how religion plays an important role in processes of unification. Since the Archaic Period did not have a clear cut line between religion and politics, it is important to keep in mind that cult places as such were also important arenas of social negotiation. As we shall come to see, at sanctuaries, images of the social hierarchy were reproduced in a festive context. The ability of cults to produce images that distinguish one community from another, as well as who were allowed to be a part of a community, means that they can also be seen as unifying devices. Seen in this light, the emergence of branch sanctuaries of Attic cults in the heart of Athens in the sixth century is striking. In Chapter 2, I study some particularly illuminating cases and how they relate to the research question laid out above.

Uniting communities under a single political centre rests largely on the ability to legitimize the unification. The ability to show that said communities shared a past and had a common heritage would go a long way to do just this. In this respect, it is important to realise that myth-histories could be used to construct and negotiate identities and notions of commonality. In Chapter 3, I investigate how myth-histories were shaped and constructed in the sixth century in order to spread the idea that Athens was the centre of the Attic peninsula, a kind of "motherland," to which all inhabitants of Attica originally belonged.

To discover how the unification came about, we must also examine who were the benefactors of the important sixth-century developments that will be covered in this paper. In this respect, the elites of Attica are essential. As such, Chapter 4 will study elite membership and competition for excellence in the Archaic Period. In this chapter, I will argue that elite competition became the driving force behind a process that came to unite the peninsula. I will also briefly discuss the Peisistratids, who have been associated with most building projects from the sixth century, and try to discover what role they played.

Finally, though Archaic Greek religion was political, and though cults must have played a large part in the process, the political unification of Attica must have required an official act at a specific time. I will argue that this act was the Kleisthenic reforms of 508/7. After this point, it is absolutely certain that the peninsula was politically united. In Chapter 5, I will examine said reforms and look at how they could be considered the culminating point of Athenian-Attic *synoecism*.

As has presumably become clear by now, my hypothesis is that Attica became politically united and centred upon Athens through a process that spanned large parts of the sixth century, culminating in the Kleisthenic reforms. I will further argue that this process involved a significant amount of identity negotiation, often shaped and displayed in Attic cults and myths. Moreover, I will argue that the competition for excellence between the elites of Attica was the driving force behind the process. Whether the unification of Attica was the intention all along, or simply the effects of a competitive elite atmosphere, cannot be determined, nor does it necessarily have to be. Should my hypotheses be correct, we find that the unification of Attica occurred much later than previously believed. It would also shape the way we study the Kleisthenic reforms, now as products of the official incorporation of the Attic peninsula into the political fabric of the Athenian state rather than as democratic precursors. Moreover, if Attica was not united politically until 508/7, we must ask what kind of relationship, or relationships, existed between the Attic communities up until this time.

The methods used for answering my research question vary according to particular aspects of the problem. Primarily, I have explored the archaeology of the Attic peninsula, notably through the scholarly literature on settlement patterns and case studies of Athenian cult places. I have also at times examined epigraphical evidence, though there is not much of it that directly relates to the period in question. Moreover, I have looked at vase-paintings and their depictions of mythological motifs, and of course consulted the literary sources relevant to the sixth century.

There are some striking limitations to our evidence from sixth-century Attica. In terms of archaeology, some parts of the peninsula are left unexcavated. Also, in the case of Brauron, the main excavator, Mr. John Papadimitrou, passed away during site excavation. Large parts of the data form the excavation therefore remain unpublished. In Athens, the evidence is more plentiful, though the exploration of the Athenian Acropolis brings its own particular set of issues, especially since anything that was built on the Acropolis in our period was destroyed by the Persians not long afterwards. Often the archaeological remains are sparse and open to interpretation, which yields many different views that are more or less equally plausible. With my relative archaeological inexperience, it has been difficult to navigate this scene, and I have often rested my arguments on the authority of others.

The literary sources are at times very informative of our period. The main authors I have consulted are Herodotos, Thucydides, the *Athenaion Politeia*, Aristotle, Plutarch, and Pausanias.

Herodotos' work describes a large number of events taking place from the beginning of the century to the very end; Aristotle discusses the political organization of the city-state; while Pausanias describes monuments in Athens that are now lost to us. However, we should be careful also in the use of these sources. Herodotos wrote about the sixth-century at a time when the Peisistratids were officially reviled, and he may have depended on pro-Alkmaeonid sources, which means we cannot take what he writes at face value. Paradoxically, the Peisistratid period still received favourable reports in spite of the fifth-century execration policy. Lavelle has explained this apparent contradiction by claiming that the good memories of the tyranny existed as a way for the Athenians to come to terms with the part they had played in allowing the tyranny to be established. After all, if the tyranny was generally favourable, and if Peisistratos was such a cunning individual, then certainly they must be excused for having allowed him to take power. Therefore, in reading these sources, we must navigate the different layers of execration and apology, in order to tease out an important, though general, image of elite politics in the sixth century. Likewise do Aristotle, Thucydides, and Plutarch help grant us a fuller picture. Pausanias and Plutarch must be approached with further caution, given that they are very late writers for our period of study.

Given the relative scantiness of evidence from the sixth-century, I have opted to approach much of it anthropologically. This has been an especially useful approach both in the study of myths; the study of political power; and in the study of the importance of cults. I describe my anthropological approach to a much fuller extent at the beginning of each chapter where relevant. Generally, though, I can say that the approach has been useful because it has allowed me to read the little evidence we have in a wider socio-cultural context.

Finally, I would like to note that the answer to my research question cannot be one that is easily defined or clear-cut. The process that took place, which united the Attic peninsula, was more than likely not a linear one. There is an inherent danger in this study of becoming teleological – seeing the unification of Attica as an intentional process that occurred in an evolutionary manner throughout the peninsula, rather than as an organic development. In fact, given the large geographical area and time frame of my study, it is clear that the relationship between the different settlements and Athens would all probably have responded to their specific individual circumstances. Likewise, the way each settlement was brought into the Athenian fold,

and the way this development was perceived and received, could have differed from place to place. Each situation, with its particular locale, could have had a distinct reaction.

In the sum then, the claim of my thesis is that Attica became politically united and centred upon Athens through a gradual process that spanned the sixth century, and that the unification was made official by the Kleisthenic reforms in 508/7. The process was driven by the effects of elite competition, and involved a great deal of identity negotiation through the shaping and reconfiguring of common cults and myths.

# BACKDROP

## 1.1    Introduction

"But Theseus, after establishing himself as an intelligent and powerful ruler, reorganized the territory, disbanding both the *bouleutêria* and magistracies of the other *poleis* and incorporating everyone in the *polis* that exists today, designating for them a single *bouleuterion* and *prytaneion* … In commemoration of that event, the Athenians even today celebrate the Synoikia, a public festival in honour of the goddess.[2]

Thucydides is amongst the ancient authors who records the *synoecism* of Attica, an event that supposedly occurred in the distant and mythical past, even before the Trojan War. Whereas the word usually implies a large-scale movement of population into the same *polis*, the Attic *synoecism* tradition concerned a political unification with centralization of government upon Athens.[3]

This chapter will examine previous scholarship on the *synoecism of Attica* and the arguments that have been used to date the unification. Because the *synoecism* has been dated variously between the twelfth- and the sixth century, it will also be necessary to have a brief look at the history of the Attic peninsula form the collapse of Mycenaean civilization and down through the seventh century.

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[2] Thuc. 2.15.2 from Hall 2007a, p. 219
[3] On the meaning of *synoecism*, see Andrewes 1982, p. 363; Cavanagh 1991, p. 106; Diamant 1982, p. 38; Hignett 1975, p. 34

## 1.2    Previous Scholarship

Though a consensus dating of the *synoecism* has not been reached, it is most frequently dated to the seventh century or slightly earlier. Those who date the *synoecism* to the seventh century usually consider the Kylonian affair in the 630s a definite *terminus ante quem* for the unification.[4] Both in relation to this event and in the Draconian homicide law from around the same time, the sources refer to 'the Athenians.'[5] In the latter case, there is a distinction between Athenians and non-Athenians.[6] In fact, Manville has argued that the invention of written law advanced the centralization process of state formation, and that it affected the lives of all Atticans. He therefore argues that the *synoecism* process began at the same time as the *polis* was taking shape in the eighth century.[7] Bury has suggested that the first stage of unification occurred as the small independent sovereignties of Attica fell under the loose 'overlordship' of Athens, and that after some time the feeling of unity resulting from this became so strong that all the smaller lordships surrendered their home governments and merged themselves in a single community with government upon Athens.[8]

Bury excludes the Eleusinian plain from this model, as have many others who have dated the *synoecism* to the seventh century. This is largely due to the content of the Homeric Hymn of Demeter. The Hymn describes an independent Eleusis with its own king, without a single reference or allusion to Athens or Athenians.[9] The composition of the Hymn has been dated to the seventh century, which has led scholars to believe that Eleusis must have been independent up until this point.[10] The independence of Eleusis, however, and the interpretation of the Hymn is still a controversial point. Mylonas, for instance, assumes that in the time after the Kylonian affair, Eleusis regained her independence by taking advantage of the internal strife of the Athenians. Athens then retrieved Eleusis around the turn of the century.[11] Andrewes, on the other hand, has argued that the Eleusinian independence of the Hymn is a memory from an earlier age,

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[4] The Kylonian affair: Hdt. 5.71; Thuc. 1.126
[5] Ath.Pol. 4; Aristotle *Politics* 1274b; Dem. 23.53; IG I³ 104
[6] On this see Jeffery 1976, p. 84
[7] Manville 1990, pp. 80-81
[8] Bury 1972, pp. 165-166
[9] Note that the Hymn does not explicitly state that Eleusis was independent.
[10] See f.ex. Hignett 1975, p. 37; Bury 1972, pp. 165-166
[11] Mylonas 1974, p. 63

saying that even though Eleusis had been independent in the past, she was not in the seventh century.[12] Finally, Walton has argued that the hymn was composed not *before* the incorporation of Eleusis as most have supposed, but *after*. As the age-old strife between Athens and Eleusis came to an end, Walton writes, not through armed conquest but through a treaty, the Hymn was composed as a piece of literary propaganda, which fell into complete oblivion after its time had passed, not to resurface until Hellenistic poets and scholars brought it back into the light.[13]

Other scholars have sought to place the *synoecism* in the ninth and eighth centuries.[14] Andrewes is amongst those who believe that if the *synoecism* had happened around the time of the Kylonian affair, it would have been remembered by the contemporary sources. After all, the story of Kylon is preserved; how could a unification of the entire peninsula have escaped the attentions of the ancient authors? Andrewes would rather place the unification in the Dark Age, somewhere around 900. He further argues that if this assumption is correct it is likely that the event would have been lost to exact memory and thus attributed to Theseus by later authors.[15] Hignett, on the other hand, argues that the *synoecism* should be dated to the eighth century, but agrees that it was a gradual process that ended with the inclusion of Eleusis and the Marathonian Tetrapolis. He cites the Homeric Hymn to Demeter, along with the fact that the Marathonian Tetrapolis sent their own representatives to Delphi even in the Classical Period, as reasons why Attica could not have been united in the Mycenaean age. He argues in particular that the disunion of Attica was still clear in the fifth century, which can be seen in that there was no intermarriage between the demes Pallene and Hagnon at this time. His conclusion is that if the *synoecism* had happened in the Mycenaean age, the disunion would not have been remembered in the fifth century.[16]

Padgug, who is amongst those who would date the *synoecism* to the Mycenaean age, has argued specifically against Hignett.[17] He points out that if a disunited Attica would not have been remembered eight hundred years after the *synoecism*, it would neither have been remembered

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[12] Andrewes 1982, pp. 362-363

[13] Walton 1952 argues that the Hymn was composed with haste after the union of the two polities when Athens wanted to transfer the celebration of the Mysteries, and move the Sacred Things, to Athens. The "literary propaganda" aimed at establishing Eleusinian primacy concerning the mysteries, and should be seen as part of a strong resistance on Eleusis' behalf in the transferring of the Mysteries to Athens. Pp. 110-114

[14] See f.ex. Snodgrass 1980, p. 34

[15] Andrewes 1982, pp. 362-363

[16] Hignett 1975, pp. 35-37

[17] See also Gomme 1956, p. 49; Cavanagh 1991, pp. 107-108

after three hundred years. He also remarks that Plutarch is the only ancient author who writes about the lack of intermarriage between Pallene and Hagnon, and he was presumably referring to his own age rather than the Classical Period.[18] Padgug further claims that there is no evidence that supports such a late date of union. The evidence that does exist, he remarks, is circular and based on assumptions. Similarly to Andrewes above, Padgug finally remarks that if Athens had conquered Eleusis as late as the seventh century, the Athenians should have some memory of it, as they did of the struggle with Megara for Salamis.[19]

Padgug has instead argued that the unification of Attica and the unification of Eleusis happened at the same time at some point in the thirteenth century, and that this is not incompatible with the archaeological evidence. His argument is based on four different aspects. Firstly, he notes that in the Iliad there is only mention of 'Athens' and the 'Demos of Erechtheus'.[20] No other Attic region is mentioned. The king of Athens, Menestheus brought fifty ships to Troy, which could only have been collected if he had been king over all of Attica. He also points out that in the Odyssey, Sounion is referred to as 'the headland of Athens'.[21]

Moreover, Padgug has a different take on the above-mentioned Homeric Hymn to Demeter, arguing that the independence of Eleusis certainly reflects a far earlier state of affairs. He remarks that the Hymn is 'Homeric' in the sense that it was part of an oral tradition, and thus that its plot does not have to be contemporary with its poet.[22] His third argument is that the tradition concerning wars between Athens and Eleusis belong to the remote mythical era and cannot be seen as evidence for the two being independent from each other after the Mycenaean age.[23] Padgug's final argument concerns the administration of the Eleusinian Mysteries. He points out that the *Archon Basileus* generally was in charge of 'ancestral rites', and since he was responsible for the general celebration of the Mysteries, they must have been somehow 'ancestral' already before the end of the Dark Age when he received his powers of supervision over the Mysteries.[24] Furthermore, Padgug admits that by the Classical period the cult of Eleusinian Demeter had been absorbed by Athens, the Eleusinion had been constructed, and the

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[18] Plutarch, *Life of Theseus,* 11; Padgug 1972, p. 142
[19] Padgug 1972, pp. 144-146
[20] Cf. Iliad. 2.546-556; Padgug 1972, pp. 47-148
[21] Iliad. 2.557; 3.360; Padgug 1972, p. 143; Gomme 1956, p. 49
[22] Padgug 1972, pp. 136-137
[23] Padgug 1972, pp. 138-149
[24] Padgug 1972, pp. 143-144; On the *Archon Basileus*, see Ath.pol. 57.1-2

Lesser Mysteries were exclusively held at Athens to prepare participants for the Greater Mysteries. He argues against scholars who have used this to argue for a late date of union, believing that there is no reason to connect the absorption of the Mysteries with the union. He believes that as that Athenian state grew in power it was only natural to bring all aspects of Attic civic life, including religion, under its control.[25] At this point, he also admits that local feeling did continue to exist as late as the sixth century, but claims that this basically consisted of a jockeying for power among the local nobility.[26]

Frost is amongst a minority of scholars who have argued that the process of Attic unification did not begin until the sixth century. He believes that Peisistratos promoted unity in Attica by cultivating cults and offering himself as their patron. He was a champion of the common people who brought countryside and city into religious accord. Frost concludes that the irony inherent in this is that the Athenians became most truly united in their hatred of the tyranny and in subsequent military triumphs.[27] Jonathan Hall has also argued for a *synoecism* in the sixth century, though his theory states that full political unification in Attica only occurred with the Kleisthenic reforms.[28] Peisistratos does not play any large part in this latter theory.

Evidently, then, the *synoecism* of Attica has been dated generally to the eighth and seventh centuries, though there are those who would date it much earlier and rather later as well. The remainder of this chapter shall examine the arguments of these theories further.

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[25] Padgug 1972, pp. 144-146
[26] Padgug 1972, pp. 149-150
[27] Frost 1990, p. 9
[28] Hall 2007a, pp. 222-233

## 1.3    Analysis of Arguments

### 1.3.1    Introduction

In this section, we will consider the arguments used to date the *synoecism* of Attica. Specifically, we shall examine the use of literary sources in this respect, as well as the supposed distinction made between Athenians and non-Athenians in some of the sources. We will also try to say something about why the *synoecism* of Attica would not necessarily have been recorded by the ancients, a topic which we shall also return to in later chapters.[29]

### 1.3.2    The Literary Sources

Several scholars have used the Homeric epics as evidence that Attica was united in the Bronze Age.[30] However, objections have been raised against using Homer as evidence for historical events that supposedly took place in the Bronze Age. In fact, there is no Mycenaean history in Homer apart from the odd place name or random artefact.[31] For a long time it has been demonstrably shown that the Homeric world is that of the Geometric Greek world.

We also encounter problems when we examine other literary sources on the *synoecism*.[32] The ancient tradition ascribes it to Theseus, but modern scholars have demonstrated that Theseus did not become an important mythological figure in Athens until the sixth century. Jeffery, for instance, has claimed that Theseus' transformation into the great national hero of the Athenians was a counter to the older Doric tradition concerning Herakles.[33] Moreover, Bury has remarked that before this, Theseus was only a local god, worshipped in the Marathonian district, and he had not yet attained the prominence and importance he would possess later on in Athenian myth and history.[34] Thus, Theseus' popularity and rise to prominence by far antedates his supposed unification of Attica.

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[29] See Ch. 1.3.3 and 3.2.1

[30] See for example, Padgug 1972, pp. 135-150

[31] Diamant 1982 (p. 44) raises four particular objections: The Linear B tablets describe a complex palatial bureaucracy that does not resemble simple Homeric monarchy. Neither are there any references to writing in Homer, though we know from the tablets that at least some levels of Mycenaean society were literate. Additionally, the burial customs in Homer do not correspond with Mycenaean customs, but rather those of the Protogeometric and Geometric periods in Greece. Finally, the place names known from the tablets do not correspond to those in the Catalogue of Ships (Iliad. 2.494-759).

[32] Primarily Thuc. 2.15 and Plutarch, *Life of Theseus*, 25-26

[33] Jeffery 1976, p. 84

[34] Bury 1972, pp. 166-168

The *synoecism* myth was, as such, not an age-old myth describing a long established state of affairs, but rather a sixth-century invention. The question one needs to ask, then, is how this myth has influenced modern views on the unification of Attica? Have we looked to the distant past because of it? Anthropologists have demonstrated that myths are less accurate memories of the past than symbolic phenomena that confirmed and negotiated the existing social order.[35] They were not fictitious, but living realities that were also highly flexible. If we follow this approach in the study of the *synoecism* myth, it becomes clear that we cannot view it as a genuine historical memory of something that happened hundreds of years before the introduction of the myth into society. In Chapter 3.2.2, we shall further investigate myths as 'symbolic phenomena' and see how this approach can be particularly beneficial and illuminating in the study of Greek society.

### 1.3.3   Recording History

A common argument for dating the *synoecism* to anytime between the tenth- and the seventh century is that if it occurred at a later date, it would have been remembered by the ancient authors. After all, Kylon's attempt at tyranny was recorded, as well as the laws of Draco and Reforms of Solon.[36] However, some have remarked that the ancients did not value the past as a means of finding out "how things really were" but for its usefulness in connecting the present with the heroic age, or for some other practical gain.[37] In this early period of Greek history, deeds were still reported orally and formulaically, thus placing restrictions on which categories of events could be selected to become part of the permanent record.[38] What we must determine, then, is what sort of matters were recorded and remembered, and why?

In relation to the *synoecism*, the Kylonian affair is mentioned rather frequently as an example of an event that proves that a late unification of Attica would have been recorded by the ancients. The story relates how Kylon attempted to seize the Acropolis at Athens and establish a tyranny along with some contemporaries.[39] When his attempt failed he was allowed to leave the Acropolis, but some of his co-conspirators were not. They were, however, promised fair treatment, and they clung to suppliant branches for Athena as they descended the Acropolis. The

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[35] Des Bouvrie 2002, pp. 11-62; Frost 1990, p. 8; Connor 1970, p. 44; Catherine Morgan 2003, p. 11; 46
[36] **Draco**: Ath. Pol. 4; Aristotle, *Politics* 2.1274b; Dem. 23.53; IG I³ 104; **Solon**: Plutarch, *Solon*, 15-25; Ath. Pol. 3-12
[37] Diamant 1982, p. 44; Frost 1990, p. 8
[38] Frost 1990, p. 8
[39] Hdt. 5.71; Thuc. 1.126

Alkmaeonidai, however, murdered them in spite of their promises, incurring a curse on themselves and their descendants. The curse was apparently so strong that it was remembered by the Athenians for generations. It appears then, that the Kylonian affair was not necessarily recorded because of Kylon's attempt at tyranny, but in order to explain the ancient stigma attached to the Alkmaeonid family. Additionally, we may note that the event was recorded by the officials of the cult of Athena Polias and only kept alive afterwards due to the continuing rivalry between the Alkmaeonidai and the Boutadai - the family who supplied the hereditary priestesses of the Athena Polias cult.[40]

Recording important historical events may, in fact, not have been a primary concern in the period we are discussing. It is striking, for instance, how little we know about the tiresome war with Megara in or around the same period. The information we have, in fact, appears to be connected to two very prominent Athenian figures, namely Solon and Peisistratos.[41] Thus, we cannot be sure that the Megarian war would have been recorded had it not been for the influence and importance of these two figures in the later history of Athens. Therefore, it is not clear that the *synoecism* of Attica would have been recorded even if it did happen at a late date. This is especially true if the unification was a gradual process that did not occur at any one specific time. In fact, in Chapter 3.2.1 it will become clear that only very specific events would become embedded in a society's 'cultural memory' and therefore be remembered for more than a few generations.

### 1.3.4   The Athenians

The final argument we will deal with here, concerns the distinction that was made between Athenian and non-Athenian in the law of Draco, as well as the reference to 'Athenians' in the literature of the Kylonian affair.[42]  The argument is that this terminology proves that by the time of Draco and Kylon, Athens and Attica must have been united, or else there would not have been a need to such terminology. Supporters of this theory have particularly remarked that the text itself suggests that those whom the law affected would have understood the limits of Attic territory.[43]

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[40] Frost 1990, p. 8
[41] See f.ex. Hdt. 1.59.4; Plutarch, *Solon*, 8-9
[42] **Draco**: Ath.Pol. 4; Aristotle *Politics* 2.1274b; Dem. 23.53; IG I$^3$ 104; **Kylon**: Hdt. 5.71; Thuc. 1.126
[43] See f.ex. Jeffery 1976, p. 84; Manville 1990, pp. 78-80

However, it is not perfectly clear that Athenian/non-Athenian was synonymous with Attican/non-Attican. In fact, it is more likely that the Drakonian law is suggestive of the limits of *Athenian* rather than Attic territory. This theory has several facets that supports it. Firstly, it has been observed that before the sixth century, a peasant demesman did not think of himself as 'Athenian' but rather as 'Attic' and, for example, 'Rhamnousian'.[44] When Solon promised to remedy agrarian distress, he supposedly also rescued Athenians who had been sold or had fled abroad.[45] This makes much more sense if one imagines the territory of the Athenians as less than the entire Attic peninsula. The laws seem rather to have been meant for that part of the Attic population that lived in the vicinity of the city.[46]

In the Classical Period, the term *polis* had simultaneously three different meanings. It could be used synonymously with *astu*, meaning the urban centre, or with *ge* or *khora* meaning both the urban centre and its hinterland, and finally it also signified a political community.[47] It is then not so far-fetched to imagine 'the Athenians' in these sources as meaning the population of the city and its hinterlands rather than the population of the whole of Attica. Hall has written about further indications that are highly suggestive. He mentions, for example, a gravestone found at Sepolia, to the northwest of the city from around 560. It begs the passer-by to mourn the deceased, 'be you *astos* or a *xenos*.'[48] In this instance, an *astos* can only be a resident of the city of Athens, implying that all non-urban residents could be addressed as *xenoi*. Hall has also remarked that from c.590-530 freestanding funerary sculpture is generally absent from the city cemeteries, whereas ten *kouroi* and *kourai* have been found in the southern part of the peninsula at places associated with rural cemeteries. The proposed explanation for this is that that part of Attica may have been considered outside the jurisdiction of Solon who supposedly passed a sumptuary legislation prohibiting elaborate funerary monuments.[49]

All of this is not to say that Athens did not have any anything to do with the rest of the peninsula. Rather it is likely that Athens was a valuable market for the rural communities, and the rural communities in turn offered valuable resources for Athens in addition to manpower.[50]

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[44] Frost 1985, p. 62
[45] Solon, fr. 34; Ath. Pol. 12.4; Andrewes 1982, p. 377
[46] Frost 1990, p. 4
[47] Hall 2007a, p. 69
[48] IG I³ 976
[49] Plutarch, *Solon*, 21; Hall 2007a, p. 222
[50] 22 Hall 2007a, p. 232

Nevertheless, it appears that the Kylonian affair and Drakonian law do not have to serve as the *terminus ante quem* for the *synoecism.* A quick look at Attic geography will help explain this further. A unitary state the size of Attica was, in fact, not at all normal in the pattern of Greek settlements.[51] A normal-scale city-state of any period was very small. A normal example would be Aigina with 33 square miles of territory. A larger example would be Corinth with 340 square miles of territory. Athens on the other hand, had 1000 square miles of territory.[52]

### 1.3.5    Summary

This section has tried to demonstrate that many of the arguments concerning the dating of the unification of Attica are not as strong as they first appear. Firstly, we noted that Homer should not be used as evidence for historical events from the Mycenaean Age. We further remarked that the very myth that is the basis of our belief in a historical *synoecism* of Attica was a sixth-century invention. Furthermore, approaching this myth as a so-called 'symbolic phenomenon' also warns us from seeing the myth as a genuine historical memory. We have also argued that the early Greeks recorded history for different reasons and in a different manner than we do, an argument which we shall return to later on.[53] It is possible, then, that a *synoecism* occurred without it being explicitly recorded. Finally, we have noted the distinction between Athenian and Attic territory, arguing that Athens' influence was limited to the urban centre and her hinterlands, the area known as the *pedion*.

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[51] Jeffery 1976, p. 83; Diamant 1982, p. 45; Andrewes 1982, p. 362
[52] Diamant 1982, p. 45
[53] Ch. 3.2.1

## 1.4    Evidence for *Synoecism*

### 1.4.1    Introduction

To shed more light on the matter of the *synoecism* of Attica, we should briefly examine the archaeology of the peninsula from the Mycenaean period and down through the seventh century. This section will study the developments on the Attic peninsula in the period just mentioned and see if we cannot explain these developments by considering Floris van den Eijnde's work on the emergence of the Attic *ethnos* in the tenth century.

### 1.4.2    The Archaeology of Attica

Mycenaean states began to form in the beginning of the fourteenth century and lasted for about two hundred years before they collapsed.[54] In the fourteenth century, there was not a lot of activity at Athens, while other localities in Attica, like Eleusis and Brauron, show signs of activity very early on. In the thirteenth century, however, Athens started looking like a major Mycenaean centre with the completion of the Acropolis circuit wall. Around the same time, large parts of the Attic peninsula were depopulated due to the general instability and fear of conflict that followed the collapse of Mycenaean civilization. The entire west coast of Attica and most of the interior peninsula were abandoned. Salamis, Athens, and Perati appear to have been the only remaining settlements.[55] By the end of the twelfth century, Mycenaean civilization had completely broken down and what followed was a true Dark Age. Literacy completely disappeared from the Aegean basin for over three hundred years, indicating that the cultural collapse was complete.

By the eleventh century, Salamis and Perati had disappeared as well, leaving Athens the sole surviving settlement on the peninsula. There is no evidence of cult continuity from the Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age.[56] After the middle of the tenth century, there is no definitive evidence for settlement on the Acropolis, nor any convincing evidence in favour of burials there from the tenth and down through the ninth century.[57] The Athenian settlement seems to have

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[54] Diamant 1982, pp. 39-41
[55] Van den Eijnde  2010, p. 311
[56] Van den Eijnde 2010, pp. 311-314; Cavanagh 1991, p. 108
[57] Van den Eijnde 2010, pp. 319-321

shifted to the southern slopes where presumably palatial bureaucracy was replaced by a less stable single-ruler government led by a *Basileus*-type ruler. He in turn depended largely on the support of other powerful leaders.[58]

A change occurred in the tenth century, the starting point of a gradual expansion into the Attic countryside.[59] In the subsequent two centuries, rural areas, including Eleusis, Brauron and Marathon, were repopulated *from* Athens, presumably as a response to a diminishing of external threats.[60] That the resettled areas were populated from Athens is seen both from the absence of cult activity at the sites and in the nature of the preserved material culture. One cannot know exactly how relations to Athens were maintained, but it is reasonable to presume that they were to a certain degree dependent on Athens.[61] Note, however, that there is no evidence of a shared political centre at Athens, and the dependence that existed cannot be fully determined.

In the seventh century, further new settlements appeared throughout the Attic peninsula, this time including new cult sites. It is likely that the population numbers had been rising steadily throughout the eighth century, though not becoming visible in the burial record until the middle of the seventh century.[62]

### 1.4.3   Archaeological Evidence for *Synoecism*

From the archaeological data above it appears that it actually is possible to speak of a twelfth-century *synoecism*, albeit one of a rather different kind than is usually imagined when we talk about the unification of Attica. The evidence points to a centralization upon Athens involving the physical movement of the Attic population into the security of the fortified Mycenaean Acropolis, which could, according to the technical meaning of the word laid out in the introduction to this chapter, be termed a *synoecism*. However, it is extremely unlikely that it is this event that was remembered in the sixth-century. As we shall come to see in Chapter 3.2.1, memory has a fixed horizon of about eighty years, which is far from the five-six hundred years that spanned between this population movement and the *invention* of the tradition. Note also that

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[58] Van den Eijnde 2010, p. 326
[59] Cavanagh 1991, p. 108
[60] Hall 2007a, p. 221; Van den Eijnde 2010, pp. 326-328
[61] Van den Eijnde 2010, pp. 328-329
[62] Van den Eijnde 2010, pp. 358-360: Visibility in the burial record may depend on groups obtaining and losing the right to a formal burial according to a change in funeral ideology.

the *synoecism* myth records the *political synoecism* of Attica, not the physical movement of population to Athens and abandonment of all other Attic settlements.

To account for the *synoecism* myth we must look to much later dates. In the periods that many have wanted to place the *synoecism,* we rather find the opposite happening. Instead of a centralization upon Athens, there occurred a repopulation of Attica, an internal colonization of the peninsula. One could perhaps argue that this is a form of *synoecism*, since apparently the new settlements shared some sort of relative dependence upon Athens. However, this has never been the argument, which has rather seen pre-existing settlements coming into the Athenian realm of influence between the ninth- and seventh century.

The seventh century saw even more new settlements appearing across the peninsula, this time with cult activity. This is not at all indicative of a centralization upon Athens, but rather a renaissance of cultic sties and settlements all over Attica. We must conclude, therefore, that in the specific period we have just covered, we have not found evidence for the political unification of Attica.

### 1.4.4   Tiers of Identity

In order to explain what happened in Attica in this period, a brief discussion of tiers of identity and ethnicity is warranted. Writing in 1990, Philip Manville argued that even though the *Eupatrid* elite may have shared a sense of group solidarity, it would be wrong to project upon the entire Attic population a shared sense of common identity or purpose in the seventh century.[63] A similar, though differently worded argument is put forth by others. Frank Frost, for instance, writes that the inhabitants of the rural communities of Attica undoubtedly felt a deeper loyalty to their own community rather than to the distant *astu*. Many of the Attic communities had their own identities, cults, legends and even public buildings.[64] The work by Morgan and others, perhaps surprisingly, both supports and contradicts these statements.

Previous scholarship has often treated *ethne* as the negative images, the primitive precursors, of the *polis*. However, mounting evidence for the nature of their physical development and political engagement are granting a very different and more complex picture.[65] Hall has defined *ethne* as a group of people whose common identity resides in the bonds of

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[63] Manville 1990, p. 77
[64] Frost 1994, p. 50
[65] Catherine Morgan 2003, p. 9

kinship, however fictive, that were recognised by its members and no doubt bolstered by shared rituals and customs.[66] It has further been demonstrated that *poleis* and *ethne* were similar in material development, for example in relation to settlement patterns, monumental public building, and writing. An *ethnos* could in fact do most of the things that a *polis* could, from waging war or raising taxes and concluding treaties.[67]

The distinction, then, between *ethnos* and *polis* is not as distinct and alternative forms of state. They were rather both tiers of identity that the communities could identify with, with varying enthusiasm and motivation, at different times. Their identification with one or the other did not have to be fixed, and in fact was often subject to change depending on the communities' perceived advantage of identifying with the one or the other.[68] Identity could be based on other things than belonging to a *polis* or an *ethne*, like kinship, or adherence to a cult.[69] Within a geographical area, different tiers of identity probably acquired political salience at different times.[70] We find then that ideas about ethnicity and identity in the Early Iron Age and Archaic Period were fluid and highly adaptive, and that ideas of common ancestry were often manipulated to that effect.[71]

Thus, in the period we have just covered, there existed a complex and multi-tiered system of identity, where a person could identify himself with different tiers at different times. The importance of cult as a tier of identity has rightly been pointed out, as tiered identities often relied on a notion of shared ancestry that could be expressed through mythological interconnections.[72] Through the cohesive and divisive qualities of cult, a distinction could be made between insider and outsider, where membership was formed at a micro-level through participation in festivities.[73] In practice, this happened at the sanctuaries scattered across the Greek world, which were major centres of consumption, production and supply beyond the strictly sacral.[74] They demarcated the cultic communities, which in term could be coterminous with the citizen body or

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[66] Hall 2007a, p. 89
[67] Catherine Morgan 2003, p. 9
[68] Catherine Morgan 2003, p. 1
[69] Van den Eijnde 2010, p. 25
[70] Catherine Morgan 2003, p. 9
[71] Van den Eijnde 2010, p. 25; see also Ch. 3.1 and 3.2
[72] Catherine Morgan 2003, p. 187
[73] Van den Eijnde 2010, p. 2; We will return to this in Ch. 2.2
[74] Catherine Morgan 2003, p. 108

cross-cut and intersect with other citizen communities.[75] Sanctuaries were also very important arenas for the elite. There they could express and underpin political authority, and compete for power.[76] One should also note the use of sanctuaries in demarcating boundaries and in marking routes. They could also knit together different communities and serve a purpose of mediation between them.[77]

### 1.4.5  Athenian *polis* and Attic *ethnos*

Earlier we remarked that Athens was unusually large for a polis. However, when we look at the size of Greek *ethne* we find that Attica is average in size, smaller than Thessaly, Euboea and Arcadia, but about the same size as Messenia, Phocis, Laconia and others.[78] Moreover, Frost has remarked that Attica contained enough resources to support a growing population, though not enough to attract outsiders as immigrants or invaders.[79] To the north, the peninsula was relatively shielded from the mainland, and to the northwest the neighbour Megara was hidden by the Pateras range, meaning that Attica was relatively shielded from external threats. This in addition to the relative weakness of her neighbouring states, allowed Attica to progress to a large degree according to internal dynamics and local circumstances. The rural population, then, did not have to gather in large, fortified settlements.[80] Andrewes has further remarked that the even though the three plains of Attica were separated by easily surmounted barriers, they were more marked than similar plains in the Boeotian plain or the plain of eastern Arcadia. These could have supported three independent states.[81]

Yet the Attic population is well-known for their autochthony myth – the belief that they "sprang from the earth", that they did not immigrate to Attica, but were fully, wholly and truly all Atticans.[82] This strong notion of shared ancestry is exactly what we expect when we talk about *ethne*. In fact, Floris van den Eijnde has argued convincingly that the Athenian *polis* and the Attic *ethnos* were two interdependent but subtly differentiated tiers of identity, both arising in the tenth

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[75] Hall 2007a, p. 87
[76] Catherine Morgan 2003, p. 10; More on elite competition, Ch. 4.2
[77] Catherine Morgan 2003, p. 113; Van den Eijnde 2010, p. 33
[78] Van den Eijnde 2010, p.302
[79] Frost 1985, pp. 59-60
[80] Van den Eijnde 2010, pp. 303-305
[81] Andrewes 1982, p. 362
[82] Hdt. 7.161.3; Isoc. 4.24; Plat. Menex. 245d

century.[83] At this time, Athenian ethnicity and *polis* ideology ran parallel as separate issues that only came to be aligned gradually during the sixth century, culminating in the reforms of Kleisthenes in 508/7, which made the territory of the Attic peninsula identical to the territory of the Athenian *polis*.[84]

We may have another look at the developments on the peninsula in the Early Iron Age. Athens continued to dominate Attica, with the Mycenaean fortress on the Acropolis remaining considerably important. Additionally, the new settlements in the countryside were small in comparison to the urban area at Athens. The city also enjoyed stability, establishing it as the natural political nexus of the plain.[85] Next, we find that sanctuaries were placed on the edges of the Athenian plain, more specifically at Hymettos, Parnes, Mounichia and Pallini. This illustrates an attempt at re-establishing some kind of centralized control over the countryside by the Athenians. It is also important to note that the material finds at these sanctuaries emphasize their festive character rather than their religious content. Thus, as a means for Athens to assert itself and extend its command and power across the *pedion*, the main constitutive mechanism of state, the 'royal' banquet, was transferred or repeated at these extra-urban sanctuaries.[86]

However, a number of the new settlements, though carrying with them the notion of a common identity and certainly and awareness of a shared linguistic dialect, fell outside the Athenian sphere of influence. Amongst them were Brauron and Eleusis. Since these settlements were relatively small and close to Athens, some sort of dependency probably still existed. However, we must still assume that they were not considered part of the political hierarchy of the Athenian *polis*.[87]

In the ninth century, we find increased burial visibility, which indicates that an increasingly large group of people could claim a position of political and religious prominence and influence – in other words, a widening of elite membership. This resulted in the gradual curtailment of the *Basileus* office. The office was later separated into three - a religious, political and military office. It was also limited in terms of duration. At some point in the seventh century,

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[83] Van den Eijnde 2010, p. 2¸p. 335
[84] Van den Eijnde 2010, p. 26; p. 301; see also, Ch. 5.3 and 5.4
[85] Van den Eijnde 2010, pp. 330-331
[86] Van den Eijnde 2010, pp. 337-340; Van den Eijnde has argued convincingly that in this way the Athenian state began to stake out its territorial aspirations by defining its borders through peripheral cults, and that this should be seen as the emergence of the Athenian *polis*, happening then in the tenth century rather than in the eighth as previously believed.
[87] Van den Eijnde 2010, p. 335; pp. 340-341

Athens was no longer governed by a single ruler with a small body of peers but by a larger body of kinship groups.[88] Soon a growing group of Athenians could claim citizenship, and rivalling kinship groups were vying for political power. There was a need for a new mechanism to keep the state under control and to unite the Athenians. This seems to have been achieved by the institution of the cult of Athena on the Acropolis.[89]

By this point in Attica, many new polities had arisen which remained closely related to Athens though intermarriage, xenia and a shared sense of ethnicity. The new elite sought to consolidate themselves on their country estates. They should not be seen as an opposition to the older Athenian political structure, but rather as a new emphasis on local authority.[90]

[88] Van den Eijnde 2010, p. 348
[89] Van den Eijnde 2010, p. 350
[90] Van den Eijnde 2010, p. 405

## 1.5 Conclusion

This chapter has aimed to provide a general overview of the previous scholarship on the *synoecism* of Attica as well as an analysis of the arguments. Many of them are not as strong as they first appear. Firstly, we noted that the Homeric epics should not be used as evidence for historical events from the Mycenaean Age as the world they describe is a much later one. We further remarked that the very myth that is the basis of our belief in a historical *synoecism* of Attica was a sixth-century invention. Furthermore, approaching this myth as a so-called 'symbolic phenomenon' warns us from seeing it as a genuine historical memory. I have also argued that the early Greeks did not record history for its own sake, but rather for instrumental purposes. It is possible, then, that a *synoecism* occurred without it being explicitly recorded. Finally, we have noted the distinction between Athenian and Attic territory, arguing that Athens' influence was limited to the *pedion*.

Additionally, we have studied the archaeology of the Attic peninsula from the collapse of Mycenaean civilization in the twelfth century and down through the seventh century. In the twelfth century, we found that there was a centralization upon Athens involving the physical movement of population into the city and the abandonment of Attic settlements. We have concluded that this cannot be termed a political *synoecism*. After the abandonment of Attic settlements, Athens was the only settlement left in Attica until the tenth century when a period of 'internal colonization' began. No evidence of cult activity has been found at this time. In the seventh century, there was an increase in settlements across the peninsula, this time with cult activity.

We have interpreted this evidence in light of *ethne* as tiers of identity. *Ethne* could be one of several tiers that the population of the Early Iron Age identified with, alongside, for example, *polis* identity, kinship identity, and cult identity. They were weighted according to a perceived advantage, and could acquire political salience at different times. What is important for our purposes is to note that the Attic *ethnos* was not the same as the Athenian *polis* in the period we have examined in this chapter.

Around the tenth century, Athens started expressing her territorial aspirations by reaching across the *pedion* and establishing sanctuaries there, thus taking control of the nearby countryside. However, there were also settlements in the peninsula that fell outside her influence.

They were still a part of the same Attic *ethnos* though they were probably not considered an integral part of the Athenian political hierarchy. However, with a widening of elite membership in the eighth century, more people were vying for political power. This was probably partly why the *Basileus*-office was separated into three distinct offices, with limited duration. As more and more people wanted political power, the cult of Athena was established on the Acropolis to unite the masses and to keep the situation under control. Further sanctuaries arose in Attica seemingly due to an increased need for mediation and negotiation between rivalling factions or polities.

We have defined *synoecism* as the centralization of government upon Athens. However, the image we are left with at the end of this chapter is that no such thing ever took place between the twelfth and the seventh centuries. There was no deliberate act at a specific point in time that united the peninsula. Neither was there a gradual process that took place in the Dark Age, or in the seventh century, where the many settlements of Attica fell under the complete influence of Athens.

Interestingly, the *synoecism* myth is much younger than the state of affairs it describes, and we have asked how the existence of the myth may have influenced the work of the scholars who have gone looking for it. It seems paradoxical to me to attempt to place the *synoecism* in a definite Athenian past that predates the myth itself. True, we know that by the fifth century, all inhabitants of Attica enjoyed the same civic rights and were expected to fulfil the same civic duties as those who lived inside the city. But the myth has given an impression that once Attica consisted of several independent states of some sort that, depending on whom you ask, slowly or rapidly grew together to form one state with their capital and political government centred upon Athens. This in turn has left even the most gradual and vague approaches and attempts at discovering when Attica was united inherently teleological. Much of the research cited in this paper has imagined a linear and evolutionary process where the many small settlements of Attica grew into the great big Athenian state, which does not appear to have been the case.

The question that remains to be asked is when and how the whole of Attica became properly synonymous with the Athenian state. I believe that this happened in the sixth century, which is what I will argue in the following chapters. Therefore, we shall now turn specifically to the sixth century and all the changes that occurred at this time. This discussion will focus on cults and myths, and their role in shaping and negotiating society, as well as the role of the elite, and the innovative and radical effect of the Kleisthenic reforms.

# CULT

## 2.1    Introduction

In the previous chapter, we remarked that Attica was evidently repopulated from Athens in the tenth century, a movement that has often been described as an "internal colonization" of the peninsula. It was noted, however, that the new settlements at, amongst other places, Brauron and Eleusis, did not show any evidence of cult activity at this time. The cult activity that *did* appear in Attica in the tenth century was rather established on the edges of the Athenian plain, illustrating that the Athenians were attempting to re-establish some kind of control of their immediate countryside. These cult sites have yielded archaeological evidence related to ritual banquet, which emphasizes the festive character, rather than the religious content, of the gatherings at these sites.[91] In the previous chapter we also touched upon the bourgeoning of cults in Attica in the eighth- and seventh century, and we concluded that by the late eighth century several polities had emerged alongside Athens. These were still closely related to each other and should be seen as representations of a new emphasis on local authority that has been connected with the rise of a new elite.[92]

In the same period, there was a faltering of cult activity on the Athenian Acropolis. However, around the sixth century we find some important changes occurring in Athens and elsewhere in Attica. The Acropolis grew from being a modest sanctuary to a magnificent and monumental scene, even housing branches of cults that were firmly connected with other settlements. Also in Attica, the sanctuaries appear to move from modest to monumental, with temples being built and sanctuaries being extended on several sites throughout the century. This chapter will have a look at some particularly illuminating cases across Attica and discuss the cohesive and divisive qualities of cult.

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[91] Van den Eijnde 2010, pp. 337-338
[92] Van den Eijnde 2010, p. 405

## 2.2　Qualities of Cult

### 2.2.1　Introduction

Before turning to the evidence itself, some things about Greek religion, and cults in particular, should be noted. It has long been recognized that there did not exist a clear distinction between politics and religion in the ancient world, and this is perhaps especially true for our period. Sanctuaries throughout the Greek world were major centres of consumption, production and supply beyond that which was strictly sacral.[93] Greek religion was a collective religion, inherently social, and it played a very important part in state politics. It had the ability to unite human and divine as well as members of a family, or inhabitants of a polis, a place, or a region. It also held an important role in those cases where the fusion of two cities or districts was the outcome. This could not simply be done by combining two assemblies; the gods also had to be incorporated in the new polity, as we shall see presently.[94]

### 2.2.2　Ritual and Sanctuaries

Ritual is an important facet of Greek religion, and anthropologists have recognized that rituals play an important role in creating, defining and transforming structures of power. Ritual consists of the repetition of meaningful acts, centred on performance, which transmits cultural messages about relationships within the community and between human and divine. As such, it can be seen as mirroring changes in the social order, and in fact, can be used to manipulate said order. Thus, in reading ritual we have the opportunity to study a general outline of early Greek social interaction and power relations.[95] There are some obvious limitations to this approach. The rituals took place in the past, and we have no way of witnessing them or experiencing them. Neither are we part of the culture for whom these rituals were significant. Nor are ritual remains useful for determining the exact content of the ritual. They are, however, able to tell us about where the rituals took place, and may help estimate how many people were involved in the ritual. We shall return to the importance of sacrificial hierarchy presently.[96]

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[93] Catherine Morgan 2003, p. 108
[94] Nilsson 1986, pp. 16-18
[95] Van den Eijnde 2010, pp. 14-16
[96] Ch. 2.2.3

Rituals usually took place at sanctuaries, and the importance of especially extra-urban sanctuaries has been noted by de Polignac.[97] By extra-urban he means sanctuaries that were established at the periphery, much like how the sanctuaries at Hymettos, Parnes, Mounichia, and Pallini were situated on the periphery of Athenian territory, though this, in fact, is not recognized by de Polignac himself.[98] De Polignac has connected the establishment of extra-urban sanctuaries to the rise of the polis. He has argued that they were established as a means of marking out the territory of the new *poleis*, both in terms of establishing a distinction between the civilized urban space and the wild that lay beyond, and in terms of establishing a political distinction between the polis and her neighbouring communities.[99] He has also highlighted the fact that rural sanctuaries could be shared by two adjacent cities, or serve as rallying points for the populations in regions where habitations remained dispersed.[100] Sometimes, as we shall see examples of below, one community could grow strong enough to eclipse the other(s), and this was also reflected in the previously shared rural sanctuaries.

De Polignac has referred to the religious sites as an *agalma*, a sacred emblem of the extension of one people's power.[101] The appropriation of a sanctuary, or the building of a sanctuary marking out the frontier of the territory claimed by the group in face of its neighbours, is also revealing in terms of developing perceptions of space. The emergence of sanctuaries put an end to the relative indeterminacy of ritual and cult. They stabilized the cult by rooting it in the earth, consecrating land to the deity, and creating a place of mediation between the men and the gods, made even clearer by the erection of a temple.[102] When a particular community appropriated one sanctuary, it also had the effect of crystallizing notions of territory and frontiers and show how they were being applied.[103] At the same time, a *polis*-centred emphasis on centre and boundaries is simplistic, as shrines and sanctuaries could also be used sophistically to mark routes and boundaries between several distinct groups operating within a territory. Sanctuaries could be used to knit together groups and communities on a variety of different levels, which did not have to be synonymous with their *polis* identity. They were also prime movers for a variety of

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[97] De Polignac 1995
[98] On Athenian sanctuaries at the edges of the *pedion*, see van den Eijnde 2010, pp. 337-338
[99] De Polignac 1995, pp. 25 & 34-36
[100] De Polignac 1995, pp. 23 & 37-38
[101] De Polignac 1995, p. 60
[102] De Polignac 1995, p. 20
[103] De Polignac 1995, p. 51

economic activities, which again shows the futility of the distinction between sacral and secular economies.[104]

### 2.2.3 The Hierarchy of Sacrifice

Studying sacrifice has proven useful in terms of determining the social hierarchy of the communities who gathered at sanctuaries. The offerings to the gods show us the relation both between the deity and the dedicator; the dedicator and community; and between the deity and the community. The offerings could say something about the dedicator's identity, status and role in the community. [105] A typical sacrifice (*thusia*) involved the priests and magistrates dedicating specified and inedible parts of the offering animal to the gods. They then shared the roasted innards amongst themselves before they distributed the remaining meat to those in attendance.[106] The sacrifice united human and deity in a shared meal, at the same time separating them from one another by granting them different portions of the meat; the mortal ate the decaying part of the dead animal while the deity received the perfumed smoke of the burned bones.[107] The meat given to the human was selected and cut out, and even treated differently, depending on and expressing distinctions in status and function amongst those present, and depending on a person's privileges within the group.[108]

These sacrificial practices could also identify cultural otherness, and as such were useful tools in terms of distinguishing who was included or excluded from the practices of particular cults. As such, cult sites were also negotiation sites, where different groups from different communities could meet in times of conflict and otherwise. The sanctuaries served as demarcations of cult communities, which could be coterminous with a *polis's* citizen-body, but it could also cross-cut and intersect with one or several citizen communities.[109] Cult communities were not themselves fixed entities; their geographical extent, and social and political interests, could vary significantly over time. They could come to be drawn together in regional systems,

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[104] Catherine Morgan 2003, pp. 113 & 135; sanctuaries were arenas of consumption, production and supply. At these sites, goods and services were exchanged.
[105] De Polignac 2009, p. 441
[106] Evans 2002, pp. 246-247
[107] Thomassen 2004, p. 277
[108] For more on the selection of parts and treatment of sacrificial meat, see Ekroth 2008, pp. 259-290
[109] Hall 2007a, p. 87

operating in a complex fashion as arenas for the expression of different forms of group identity.[110]

In terms of *polis* identity this means that citizenship could not just entail access to and participation in political citizenship, but also involved the gathering of different groups into a single body by allowing them the access to the same cults and privilege to take part in the cults' rituals. De Polignac has termed this a "religious citizenship", arguing that it was in religious terms, by the growing importance of rituals and the commitment to build sanctuaries that society first manifested its new cohesion and took its first collective long-term decisions.[111]

### 2.2.4 Cult and *Synoecism*

The qualities of cult described above make it clear that in terms of a synoecism, it was not just the men who were united; the gods as well had to come together, and cult sites are in fact revealed as being paramount to this fusing process. A cult could be brought into the fold of a political community by physically moving it into the city, or into the territory of the city. Sometimes the cult could not be moved, and the unity was instead marked by instituting a branch in the ruling city, or a procession to it or from it.[112]

An example of this is found in the fourth century, when the Arcadians founded the Great City, Megalopolis, after Spartan supremacy broke down in the Peloponnese after the battle of Leuctra.[113] The Arcadians abolished a great number of townships in western Arcadia, and it was not only their populations that were moved. Both Pan Skoleitas and Pan Sioneis were transferred to Megalopolis.[114] Some of the gods were 'too rooted' in the soil to be moved.[115] A bronze statue of Apollo Epikourios, from the Apollo Bassae temple, was brought to Megalopolis and the place where it was set up was called Bassae. The cult of Zeus Lykaios on the summit of Mt Lykaion could not be moved either, but a precinct was dedicated to the cult in Megalopolis. On the eastern

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[110] Catherine Morgan 2003, pp. 109 & 135
[111] De Polignac 1995, p. 153
[112] Nilsson 1986, pp. 25-26
[113] Paus. 8.26
[114] Paus. 8.30; Nilsson 1986, pp. 18-19
[115] It is not completely clear why some cults could be moved while others were considered too rooted in the earth. In some instances, the reasons were probably purely pragmatic ones. If the temple, or temple statue, could not physically be removed from its original site, a precinct could be set up in the city instead. One imagines that another reason why a cult could not be moved would be because of its specific connections to its locale. Some cults were founded on top of older remains or ruins that were significant in and of themselves. The relative fame of a cult could conceivably also be a factor.

slope of Mt Lykaion lay a temple of Apollo Parrhasios, though he was also called Pythios. Every year at the festival in this god's name, a boar was sacrificed in Megalopolis and immediately carried to his temple on Mt Lykaion in a procession. The meat of the sacrificial boar was also consumed at the temple. Nilsson has remarked that procession is one of many examples of efforts to bring about a relation between the ruling city and an outlying cult. In our example, the connection between the two is emphasized by the sacrifice being slaughtered in the ruling city and the performance of the sacrifice in the outlying temple.[116] Moreover, de Polignac has recognized religious processions as parades during which the social body performed for itself, periodically reaffirming control over its territory.[117]

We noted earlier that the gods also had to be incorporated in the new political entity in processes of unification. In the examples above, this was done either by physically moving cult objects or idols into the new centre, or by establishing precincts of the peripheral god in the centre. We see in this some striking similarities to the situation in Attica in the sixth century, which shall be presented shortly.

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[116] Nilsson 1986, pp. 18-19
[117] De Polignac 1995, p. 40

## 2.3    Demeter and Eleusis

### 2.3.1    Introduction

The previous section has attempted to demonstrate the importance of cults in processes of unification. In this one, we shall examine how this relates to Attica. Here we will study the building of the City Eleusinion at Athens, as well as changes that occurred at Eleusis in the same period.

### 2.3.2    The City Eleusinion

The City Eleusinion was situated on the northwest slope of the Acropolis in the Classical Period, and in this section we will have a look at the archaeological evidence on the site.[118] The earliest positive evidence for a sanctuary within the later Eleusinion consists of two seventh-century deposits. These contained many terracotta votive offerings, the most frequent figure of which was a handmade plain columnar figure of a female with a flared skirt hiding her "feet", with rudimentary arms and a pinched face. These indicate that the shrine was intended for a cult with female characteristics. The location of the various deposits of the eighth- and seventh-centuries show that the upper terrace was left free of domestic use and used as an open-air shrine at least by the middle of the seventh century and possibly earlier. The middle terrace on the north side of the sanctuary and the plateaus to the west were used for housing at this time.

In the sixth century, the upper terrace was enclosed by a finely built peribolos wall of blue Acropolis limestone. The three areas of fill associated with this construction all provide a consistent date in the first half of the sixth century. According to Miles, the polygonal construction of the well-preserved section of the peribolos wall on the west side is appropriate to this date.

By the second quarter of the sixth century, there are archaeological indications that the use of land on this slope of the Acropolis was changing. Two wells nearby the sanctuary were used in the first half of the century but closed around 550. A third well just to the south of the peribolos wall was filled and abandoned c575. Miles suggests that this may have happened as the land was expropriated for public access to the Agora along the course of the Panathenaic Way.

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[118] I follow here the report published by Margaret Miles 1998, especially pp. 8-33

At the end of the sixth century, the sanctuary was expanded to the north, and a temple dedicated to Triptolemos was built on the Middle Terrace, which had been a settled residential area before it was appended to the sanctuary. Miles have dated these changes to c.500.

According to Miles, the area was probably a sanctuary associated with Demeter already before the peribolos wall was built. However, when it became a branch sanctuary of the Eleusinian cult cannot be precisely fixed. A "Solonian" law is mentioned by Andokides, which calls for a review of the Mysteries in the Eleusinion by the Boule. [119] If this is correct, it suggests that the City Eleusinion existed as a location for part of the Eleusinian festival at the beginning of the sixth century. The earliest epigraphical evidence for the City Eleusinion are two groups of fragmented blocks of Pentelic marble.[120] They record laws that concern the Eleusinian Mysteries, the prerequisites of priesthoods, and sacrifices at festivals. However, it has been remarked in the *editio princeps* that the laws appear to be a revision or collection of earlier texts, and that the use of *boustrophedon* for their incising was probably due to religious conservatism. If this is correct, the earliest epigraphical evidence for the use of the sanctuary as 'the City Eleusinion' is pushed further back into the sixth century.[121]

### 2.3.3    Eleusis

We also find changes happening in Eleusis during this period. The very first signs of cultic activity on the site of the later Telesterion (Hall of Mysteries) appear at the very end of the eighth century.[122] The first dedicated precinct on the site, however, has been dated variously between the end of the seventh century and the middle of the sixth.[123] This "Solonian Telesterion," as it is often referred to, was a large and roofed temple, built of Lesbian-polygonal masonry, similar to the sixth-century wall in the Athenian Eleusinion.

Later in the sixth century, the "Solonian Telesterion" was pulled down and replaced by the "Peisistratean Telesterion." This building was square, built of poros block with foundations in Kara limestone. The sanctuary was further enclosed by a strong peribolos wall, which also

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[119] De. Mys. 1.111

[120] IG I$^3$ 231 & 231: These are inscribed *boustrophedon* and are dated to c. 510-500 BCE

[121] Miles 1998, p. 8

[122] Camp 2001, p. 284; Evans 2002, pp. 233-237; Van den Eijnde 2010, pp. 138-163

[123] **Late 7$^{th}$ century**: Van den Eijnde 2010, p. 375; **Early 6th century**: Boersma 1970, p. 135; Camp 2001, p. 284; Evans 2002, pp. 233-237; Mylonas 1962, p. 64; **Middle of the 6$^{th}$ century**: Miles 1998, pp. 8-33

enclosed the city of Eleusis.[124] A Temple dedicated to Plouton was also built at this time.[125] Furthermore, in the second half of the sixth century the main entrance to the sanctuary, variously referred to as The Great Gate, the north gate, or the Asty Gate, was reoriented from the south side facing the sea to the northeast. This northern gate was turned towards Athens, and it marked the threshold between the goddess' sanctuary and the Sacred Way – the main road to Athens.[126]

Miles has argued for a considerably later date for both the "Solonian" Telesterion and the "Peisistratean" Telesterion. She holds that the curved polygonal masonry of the Eleusinian terrace walls and of the corner of the Telesterion resemble the masonry of the sixth-century peribolos wall of the sanctuary at Athens that we discussed in the previous section. The "Solonian" Telesterion should therefore be dated further into the first half of the sixth century. The "Peisistratean" Telesterion, on the other hand, Miles would date to the late sixth century. The style of the architectural pieces apparently are strikingly similar to those of the Old Temple of Athena Polias on the Acropolis, which has been dated to the last quarter of the century. The fortification wall that accompanied the construction of the "Peisistratean" Telesterion, Miles would rather see as having been built c506, after Cleomenes of Sparta sacked the sanctuary on his way to Athens.[127]

### 2.3.4    Analysis

Because of the Homeric Hymn to Demeter, scholars have often argued that Eleusis was at some point an independent state that came under Athens' control in the course of the seventh century.[128] The Hymn describes an independent Eleusis in the legendary past ruled by King Eumolpos.[129] The Hymn contains no references or allusions to neither Athens nor Athenians, which has been taken as a sign that Eleusis was independent at the time of the composition of the Hymn. The Hymn has been dated to the seventh century, or the early sixth.[130]. Others have encouraged caution in trying to determine the annexation of Eleusis based on the composition of

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[124] Boersma 1970, p. 135 & 155-159; Evans 2002, pp. 233-237; Mylonas 1974 pp. 64-103; Richardson 1974, p. 9
[125] Boersma 1970, p. 135; Mylonas 1974, p. 93
[126] Evans 2002, p. 237; Mylonas 1974, p9. 94-95; Richardson 1974, pp. 9-10
[127] Miles 1998, p. 28; Hdt. 5.74
[128] See for example Camp 2001, pp. 25-26; Richardson 1974, pp. 9-10
[129] Note that the Hymn does not explicitly state that Eleusis was independent.
[130] Foley 1997; Parker 1991; Richardson 1974

the Hymn. Miles writes that the Hymn can only be the *terminus ante quem* for the Mysteries at Eleusis.[131]

One wonders if perhaps the idea of an annexation is a too simplistic way of looking at it. Annexation or appropriation assumes a full incorporation of Eleusis into Athens politically as well as religiously. This may in fact not have been the case. It also seems to assume the superiority of Athens over her neighbour, which may well not have been the case until later in the sixth century. The Thriasian plain, where we find Eleusis, was very fertile. This is seen especially in the rich grave goods from the ninth-eighth centuries, which are richer than those at Athens. The cult of Demeter was one of the first major regional cults, and one of the main peripheral mediation sanctuaries for elite competition outside Athens. It did not take long for the cult of Demeter to develop a Panhellenic character. Van den Eijnde has remarked that there are several indications that the cult was actually established as a response to the foundation of its Athenian counterpart, namely Athena on the Acropolis. He has also argued that there is no reason to doubt that already at this early period a complicated network of interregional ties must have existed based on intermarriage and guest friendship.[132]

The changes we have discussed above seem to be the first signs of a cultic association between Eleusis and Athens through the cult of Demeter. We cannot determine exactly when the site on the northwest slope of the Acropolis became known as the City Eleusinion. It seems likely that the site was associated with Demeter quite early, but the Demeter worshipped at the seventh-century sanctuary does not have to be the Eleusinian Demeter. I believe that the first sign of a stronger interest in the site, and perhaps when the site first became known as the City Eleusinion, appears in the sixth century when the sanctuary was enclosed by the peribolos wall. Miles remarked that this was a finely built wall, and it thus seems likely that resources went into improving the site as well as enhancing the sanctuary. Note also that changes occurred in the Agora as well at this time, and that the Eleusinion-site had a prime location in its vicinity to the Panathenaic Way.[133]

It appears that the cultic association between the two polities was beneficial to Eleusis as well. The building of the "Peisistratean Telesterion" seems to have been completed out of necessity. The cult's popularity grew throughout the sixth century, causing a growing number of

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[131] Miles 1998, pp. 21-23
[132] Van den Eijnde 2010, pp. 374-376
[133] The changes in the Agora in the sixth century will be discussed in Ch. 5.2.2

visitors. It was probably also built in order to enhance the position of the sanctuary. The popularity and growing importance of the cult can probably also account for the enlargement of the City Eleusinion at the very end of the century along with the building of the Temple of Triptolemos.

We must also not forget how the main entrance was reoriented towards Athens in the middle of the sixth century. This along with the procession between Eleusis and Athens, whenever it was instituted, must have further strengthened the cultic tie between the two polities. It is also remarkable that the Sacred Things were brought from Eleusis to Athens.[134] These developments should be seen as examples of how Athens was bringing about a specific relation between the two polities through a procession, which at the same time attempted to affirm some sort of control over the territory. The branch sanctuary that was established in Athens is very similar to the examples from Megalopolis, and as such should be seen as an attempt at uniting Eleusis and Athens. This does not necessarily imply that Eleusis was incorporated into the *political* fabric of the Athenian state, which probably had to wait until the Kleisthenic reforms.[135] For now it is enough to note the signs that Athenian interest in the cult of Demeter at Eleusis grew considerably in the sixth century and that a strong cultic link was established between the two communities.

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[134] See for example Nilsson 1986, pp. 38-39, who argues that this was due to a specific attempt by the Athenians to transfer the Eleusinian Mysteries completely to Athens.
[135] See Ch. 5.3

## 2.4　　Artemis Brauronia

### 2.4.1　　Introduction

In this section, we will have a look at evidence relating to Artemis Brauronia. Firstly, we shall look at the Brauroneion, a branch sanctuary of Artemis Brauronia, which was located on the Athenian Acropolis. We shall also examine the evidence from Brauron, and see if we can say something about when the cult of Artemis Brauronia was instituted at Athens.

### 2.4.2　　The Brauroneion

We have hardly any archaeological evidence for the early stages of the Brauroneion. In its developed form it dates to the Classical Period, situated adjacent to the Classical Propylia on the Acropolis.[136] Boersma claims that at the end of the sixth century, a temple as well as a terrace retaining wall existed on the site.[137] The Brauroneion has always been dated to the sixth century, and most often to the very end of the sixth century. This has been based on two separate archaeological remains.[138] The first are two marble hounds that were dedicated on the Acropolis at the end of the sixth century. They are thought to have been dedicated to Artemis since she was the goddess of animals and the hunt. The other archaeological remains are a large amount of fragments from black-figure krateriskoi, dated to the late-sixth century. These vases are typical of those used in the rites of Artemis at Brauron, but have also been found at Artemis cult sites at Peiraieus, Eleusis and elsewhere in Attica.

A final reason why the sanctuary is usually dated to the sixth century appears to be because of Peisistratos. It has been argued that Brauron was Peisistratos' hometown, and thus it is usually assumed that the transfer of the Brauronia cult to Athens must have happened during his tyranny, or during the reign of his sons.[139]

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[136] Hurwit 1999, p. 117
[137] Boersma 1970, p. 131
[138] Boersma 1970, p. 15; Frost 1990, p. 6; Hurwit 1999, p. 117; Shapiro 1989, p. 65
[139] On this, see Hurwit 1999, p. 117

### 2.4.3 Brauron

Brauron is one of the sites in Attica, like Eleusis, where Bronze Age remains have been uncovered. There is, however, no cult continuity from the Bronze Age into the Early Iron Age. In the tenth century, settlers returned to Kipi, three kilometres east of Brauron and the centre of the later deme Philaidai, to which the Peisistratids supposedly belonged.

The first sure signs of cult activity appear at the end of the eighth century when it looks as though the main ritual areas were laid out. The earliest architectural remains come from the middle of the seventh century. An abundance of votives and pottery has also been found at the site dating to the seventh century.[140]

Much of the architecture of the Temple of Artemis at Brauron dates to the fifth century, but there has also been found some limestone fragments suggesting that a temple of the Doric order was built originally in the sixth century.[141] This temple was later destroyed during the Persian invasion. Fragments of krateriskoi first appear on the site in the late sixth century, though most of them date to the early fifth century.[142]


### 2.4.4 Analysis

As has presumably become clear from the sections above, our evidence for the cult of Artemis Brauronia is much scantier than that concerning Demeter at Eleusis. We shall still attempt to make a few inferences from what has been laid out above.

The sanctuary at Brauron does seem to have been an important sanctuary in the eighth and seventh centuries, even if Brauron was not an important settlement in its own right. The site appears instead to have been surrounded by a cluster of settlements. As mentioned previously, cult sites could be shared by neighbouring communities and functioned as negotiation sites. Another type of community thus formed around the cult, which included inhabitants from different settlements. Presumably, the inhabitants of all the settlements we mentioned above worshipped Artemis at the Brauron cult site. This may be an indication that the Brauron site came to be an important mediation sanctuary, much as we have seen happened at Eleusis in the eighth century. In fact, this may have been the reason why the cult was established in the first place.[143] It

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[140] Van den Eijnde 2010, pp. 130-137
[141] Boersma 1970, p. 175; Camp 2001, pp. 38-39; Osborne 1994, p. 151
[142] Osborne 1994, p. 151
[143] Van den Eijnde 2010, pp. 130-137 & p. 372

is harder to ascertain when the cult of Artemis Brauronia was brought to Athens. Dates towards the end of the sixth century seem reasonable based on the archaeological evidence.

In the fourth century, there was a festival associated with Artemis, called the *Brauronia*, at which girls from five to ten years of age did some service. A she-goat was sacrificed at the festival and a procession went every fourth year from Athens to Brauron.[144] No source records where this procession started from, but Parker has argued that just as the procession to Eleusis was formed at the Eleusinion, so must the procession to Brauron have started from the shrine on the Acropolis.[145] Neither do we have literary evidence for the antiquity of the festival. Presumably, there was a *Brauronia* festival at Brauron before it existed at Athens, and it would not be unreasonable to suppose that the festival accompanied the cult to Athens either at the same time, or sometime not too long afterwards. We may also assume that the procession going from the Brauroneion to Brauron began whenever the festival came to Athens.

Based on the evidence above, I would argue that these things occurred towards the end of the sixth century. This would be keeping with the trend of the century of knitting the Attic communities together through cultic ties. The developments may even be seen as an effort to strengthen the new Kleisthenic deme arrangements of 508/7 by creating a cultic link between the city and the periphery. One must not forget that Brauron on the east coast of Attica was a bit of a journey from Athens, and no doubt, local allegiances continued to exist even after the Kleisthenic reforms. A sanctuary to Artemis Brauronia and a festival including a procession between the centre and the periphery would certainly help bringing the two areas closer together.

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[144] Aristophanes, Lysistrata, v. 641-647
[145] Parker 2005, p. 52

## 2.5    Dionysos Eleuthereus

### 2.5.1    The Sanctuary of Dionysos Eleuthereus and Eleutherai

To the south of the Acropolis, there is a sanctuary of Dionysos Eleuthereus. Eleutherai, from where the god's epithet originates, seems to have been an independent polis in the eighth- and seventh centuries, and is strategically situated on the principal pass leading north between Mt Parnes and Mt Kithairon, on the border area between Attica and Boeotia. Anyone passing from northern Greece to the Peloponnese had to come through this pass, and the town was also the main route from Athens to Plataia.[146]

It is unclear what happened to Eleutherai in the later centuries. It seems likely that Athens had control of the town after they defeated the Boeotians in 506.[147] It has also been proposed that Eleutherai first belonged to Boeotia but was appropriated by Peisistratos or somewhat earlier.[148] However, even after the defeat of the Boeotians in 506, there is no known attempt to incorporate Eleutherai in the political structure of Athens and it never became a deme. Camp has argued that, based on the material culture of Eleutherai, the town was under Boeotian control, but it is possible that the town passed back and forth a few times.[149]

What we do know is that at some point a sanctuary was established for Dionysos Eleuthereus on the south slope of the Acropolis, which also included a small temple. Most have dated the temple to the time of Peisistratos, around 550, or a little later.[150] The temple was a modest rectangular one. The sculpture pediments attributed to the temple have been dated to 510-520, so it is also likely that the temple itself was constructed at this time or shortly before.[151] The remains of the temple itself cannot be precisely dated.

Just north of the temple, the first simple orchestra and seating of the theatre of Dionysos was laid out, probably at the end of the sixth century.[152]

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[146] Camp 2001, p. 320
[147] Hdt. 5.77; Camp 2001, p. 319
[148] Nilsson 1986, p. 26
[149] Camp 2001, pp. 319-320
[150] Camp 2001, p. 36; Hurwit 1999, p. 106; Nilsson 196, p. 26; Simon 1983, p. 104
[151] Boersma 1970, p. 26
[152] Hurwit 1999, p. 121

## 2.5.2 Analysis

Dionysos Eleuthereus was the god of Classical Attic Drama, and it was in his honour that the City Dionysia were held. The Rural Dionysia grew suddenly and massively throughout the countryside in the sixth century, and it was transplanted to Athens with the creation of the impressive Greater Dionysia. This promoted the once modest celebrations to the status of a major cult.[153]

According to Pausanias, sometime after Eleutherai "came over" to Athens, the wooden image of Dionysos Eleuthereus was carried off to Athens.[154] Furthermore, every year on fixed days the image was carried into the Academy, which was situated outside the city on the road to Boeotia.[155] Pausanias also says that the temple of Dionysos housed a statue of Dionysos Eleuthereus, and this was presumably the same image that was carried off from Eleutherai.[156] According to Simon, the image of the god was brought to the Academy before the commencement of the City Dionysia. At the beginning of the festival, the idol was then brought in procession to the temple at the south slope of the Acropolis. This was a ritual reiteration of the way the god had taken at his very first arrival in Athens and reminiscent of his introduction from Eleutherai.[157]

It is perhaps noteworthy that the procession bringing the idol of Dionysos went from the Academy to his temple, rather than from his place of origins to Athens as happened in the two other examples cited above; The Sacred Things were brought from Eleusis to Athens; and there was some sort of procession going between Brauron and Athens every fourth year, in spite of the distance. It is also interesting to note that Eleutherai was never incorporated into the political structure of Athens. In fact, this may be a reflection of how Athens never gained complete control over Eleutherai, thus making it difficult for the procession to journey between the two places.

It is still clear, however, that a cultic link was established also here. The cult of Dionysos Eleutherai was an important one, which can be seen especially in his association with the Rural Dionysia. Bringing the god to the Acropolis strengthened the association between Athens and the

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[153] Shapiro 1989, p. 84
[154] Paus. 1.38.8.
[155] Paus. 1.29.2.; Tyrrell and Brown 1991, pp. 59-60
[156] Paus. 1.20.3
[157] More on this, Simon 1983, p. 104; Nilsson 1986, p. 26

very border of Attica. This may also be an example of how religious incorporation was just as important as political integration.

## 2.6 Apollo and the Marathonian Tetrapolis

### 2.6.1 Apollo Pythios and Apollo Patroos

The Python was a sanctuary dedicated to Apollo Pythios that lay somewhere close to the Ilissos River and nearby the construction site of the colossal new temple for Olympian Zeus that the Peisistratids started but never had a chance to finish.[158] No remains of the temple have been found, but five fragments of Pentelic marble were uncovered at the right bank of the Ilissos. The fragments are of an altar dedicated by Peisistratos the Younger either during his archonship in 522/1 or as a commemoration of the same.[159] The inscription says the altar was set up in the precinct of Apollo Pythios, and is also recorded *verbatim* by Thucydides.[160] Because of this, scholars have argued that the sanctuary was set up during the sixth century.[161] The literary sources often refer to Apollo Pythios as Apollo Patroos, which may be an indication that Apollo Patroos was also worshipped in the Python.[162]

A temple dedicated to Apollo Patroos has been proposed in the Agora. There certainly was one in the mid-fourth century, between the Stoa of Zeus Eleutherios and the Metroon. A smaller temple was then constructed along with an L-shaped building. Homer Thompson has claimed that the earliest remains on the site are of a late sixth century apsidal building that must have been the Archaic Temple of Apollo.[163] However, only one block survives. The reconstruction of the plan of the temple, as well as its existence, is therefore uncertain, as this block may belong to later projects.[164]

### 2.6.2 Analysis

The cult of Apollo in general had its chief seat in north-eastern Attica, and in the Marathonian Tetrapolis in particular.[165] The Tetrapolis appears to have been a cultic league that existed long before the reforms of Kleisthenes. It comprised four settlements, which later became demes under

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[158] Aristotle, *Politics*, 1313b

[159] IG I³ 948; Hedrick 1988, pp. 187-109; Arnush 1995, pp. 137-152

[160] Thuc. 6.54.6-7

[161] See f.ex. Hurwit 1999, p. 120

[162] F.ex. Dem. De Cor. 18.141; Plut. Demetr. 40.8; See also, Hedrick 1988, p. 202

[163] On this, see Hedrick 1988, pp. 187-188

[164] Hedrick 1988, p. 190

[165] Nilsson 1986, pp. 39-40

the reforms, namely Marathon, Probalinthos, Oinoe and Trikorynthos. Even after they were separated into different tribes by Kleisthenes, they continued to send embassies distinct from the Athenian ones to Delphi and Delos.[166]

Hedrick has written about the association of the Marathonian Tetrapolis with Apollo Patroos and Apollo Pythios, and he has argued that Peisistratos played a large part in bringing these two cults to Athens.[167] He points to the fact that Apollo Patroos was the ancestral Ionian god (in fact, the father of Ion himself) with no apparent connection with Delphi. Therefore, the association between Apollo Patroos and Apollo Pythios seems odd. Hedrick resolves the problem by claiming that the association between the two in Athens was created by Peisistratos, whose political influence extended to the Marathonian Tetrapolis, a place where both Apollo Patroos and Apollo Pythios were worshipped along with Delian Apollo.

That the Peisistratids patronized cults of Apollo does seem indubitable. Peisistratos' purification of Delos is a good example.[168] In addition, the altar dedicated by Peisistratos the Younger described above, and Hipparchos' dedication to Apollo in Boeotia appear to support the story.[169] Therefore, I am inclined to support Hedrick's theory that the Peisistratids brought the Apollo cults to Athens.

I would also think the decision to bring these cults to Athens was a direct result of their position in the Marathonian Tetrapolis. Whenever the Tetrapolis sent their embassies to Delphi, sacrifices were offered in the shrine of the Pythion Apollo at Oinoe.[170] Ion, the eponymous ancestor of the Ionian race, is also associated with the Tetrapolis.[171] Before Apollo was inserted into the story of Ion,[172] it was Xuthus, legendary founder of the Marathonian Tetrapolis, who was his father.[173] Moreover, Apollo Patroos was the ancestral god of the Ionian race. The cult of Apollo Patroos, however, is attested only in Athens, and its creation has been assigned to political considerations; Athens perhaps wanted to use the god to press her claim of being the mother city of the Ionian race.[174]

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[166] Strabo 8.7.1; Diod. 12.45; Philochoros FGrH 328 F75; Camp 2001, p. 92
[167] Hedrick 1988, pp. 203-209
[168] Hdt. 1.64
[169] IG I$^3$ 1470
[170] Philochoros FGrH 328 F75
[171] Paus. 1.31.2; 7.1.12
[172] Euripides, *Ion*
[173] Hdt. 8.44.1; Strabo 8.7.1.
[174] Hedrick 1988, p. 206

If it is correct that Apollo Patroos and Apollo Pythios were intimately connected with the Marathonian Tetrapolis, it suggests that the institution of their cults at Athens, which included the building of at least one sanctuary, is another example of a cultic link being forged between Athens and other important polities in Attica.

## 2.7    Conclusion

De Polignac has written that "the consequence of the growing influence of cities as central places structuring the spatial and cultic organization around them cannot be reduced to a single process of gradual integration of local cults, which eventually produced *polis* religion as a global and neatly hierarchical system."[175] The examples we have seen in this section appear to support this idea.

There are similarities and differences to all our cases, and the way in which the communities we have investigated were related to Athens worked on a variety of different levels. Eleusis was a close neighbour of Athens and seems to have been an important settlement in its own right for a long time. The cult of Demeter acquired a Panhellenic character early on, and the settlement was rich. The association with Athens, therefore, does not have to imply Athenian superiority, nor that the cultic link that was forged was also forced. In fact, it appears that the association was mutually beneficial.

Brauron, on the other hand, does not appear to have been an important settlement, but rather an important sanctuary for mediation and for elite competition for the settlements in the vicinity. Bringing this cult into Athens created an association between Athens and the very eastern parts of Attic territory. Similarly did the creation of a cult of Apollo Patroos and the establishment of a sanctuary to Apollo Pythios bring the Marathonian Tetrapolis into the fold, which may be equally important in connecting Athens to the eastern parts of Attica.

Dionysos Eleuthereus is an interesting example because Eleutherai was never incorporated into the political structure at Athens. The motives behind bringing the cult, and the idol of Dionysos Eleuthereus, to Athens must have been the same in spite of this. This is another example of an important peripheral cult being fostered in the centre of Athens.

We have seen that sanctuaries were not just for religious worship, but were rather important rallying points for the communities who worshipped the gods at the sanctuaries. Here a social hierarchy was established and constantly negotiated, which was reflected in the hierarchy of sacrifice. Thus, it is clear that the sanctuaries we have discussed in this chapter were important to the communities that lived in the vicinity of the cult places. If one wanted to incorporate them

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[175] De Polignac 2009, p. 436

into a political structure centred on Athens, incorporating the cults had to be a part of the process. This is exactly what we see happening in the sixth century. Bringing the cults we have discussed in this section to Athens, appears to have been a deliberate effort to make Athens the centre of Attica. In seeing sanctuaries as sacred emblems of the extension of one people's power, we find that the developments we have just discussed extended Athenian power and influence to the very borders of the Attic peninsula. Athenian influence was embodied in the establishment of branch sanctuaries in the centre of the city, as well as through the processions that periodically went from centre to periphery, reaffirming some kind of control of the territory through which they journeyed.

In the first part of this chapter we spoke about how cults were capable of both bringing together and making a distinction between different groups, and also how cults could help inform and define territory and thus establish territorial solidarity. In the next chapter, we will have a closer look at how ideas about identity and ethnicity comes into play, focusing especially on how these ideas could be embedded in so-called myth histories.

Chapter 3

# MYTH

## 3.1    Introduction

In the previous chapter, we saw how sanctuaries and cults were important in including and/or excluding members of different communities. As has also become apparent, sanctuaries could serve different communities simultaneously. We will turn now to the discussion of how people could do something similar in terms of identity. As will shall see, a person could maintain different forms of identity simultaneously. *Polis* identity was but one of these. Other tiers of identity include family or kinship identity, cultic identity, and ethnic identity. Chapter 1.4.5 presented the theory by Floris van den Eijnde that the establishment of sanctuaries at the border of the *pedion* in the tenth century marked the emergence of the Athenian *polis* and the Attic *ethnos* as two interdependent but subtly differentiated tiers of identity.[176]

In Attica in the Early Iron Age, we thus find that different tiers of identity operated simultaneously. It is also important to note that the degree of enthusiasm with which a person could identify with a particular tier of identity probably varied over time. The tier that acquired the most importance was the tier that was perceived to be the most advantageous. This is especially true for the ethnic tier of identity. Jonathan Hall has remarked that ethnic self-identification could respond to – and fluctuate with – specific historical circumstances. The consequence of this is that specific tiers of identity could even disappear completely as a result of processes of social differentiation and assimilation.[177] *Ethne* are flexible forms of classification, elective and constantly open to reconfiguration due to the fact that they are the outcomes of ongoing processes of identity negotiation.[178] This is important because it shows that *ethne* were not fixed entities, but rather groups of people whose common identity resided in the bonds of kinship that were recognized by its members, and these could vary over time.

An important element in establishing and maintaining group identity is perceived communal tradition or 'ethnic heritage'. This could draw on whatever was seen, by insider and

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[176] Van den Eijnde 2010, p. 337
[177] Hall 2007b, p. 53
[178] Catherine Morgan 2003, p. 10

outsider alike, as that which best articulates the distinctive nature of the group.[179] Visible markers of these identities could be biological features, language, religion, ritual traits and so forth. They were constructed discursively through appeal to common founding fathers, primordial homelands, and shared history.[180] Here we see the importance of myth-histories. The Greeks granted historicity to their myths, and thus the authority of reality. Myth-histories could be created, adapted and forgotten, as part of identity discourse. A shared past was central to political consciousness and a fundamental means of social closure.[181] The way myths were told, and which myths were told, were markers of ethnic identity and could as such be used in both the inclusion and exclusion of groups of people. Group identity could thus be manipulated using myth.

In Chapter 1, we discovered that the entire population of Attica probably was not a proper part of the Athenian *polis*, though they still had some sort of relationship with Athens through their Attic *ethnos* identity. Houby-Nilsen has written that Attica was inhabited by people who lived mainly on the fringes of the territory and thus interacted closely with neighbours on the shores of Euboea, the Cyclades, and the islands on the other coasts of the Saronic Gulf. She argues that the cultural border of Attica was a grey zone.[182] The coastal regions of Attica communicated as much with their neighbours as with each other. The change in the sixth century then is remarkable. From the middle of the century, Athens became the centre that exerted influence on all sub-regions, and even struggled to extend her domination to the neighbouring regions. This chapter will have a look at how the manipulation of myths in the sixth century strived to present the notion of a shared past, leading to an overlap in the Attic *ethnos* and Athenian *polis* tiers of identity for the population of Attica.

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[179] Catherine Morgan 2003, p. 11 & 17
[180] Hall 2007b, p. 53
[181] Catherine Morgan 2003, p. 17 & 46 & 187
[182] Houby-Nielsen 2009, p. 190

## 3.2    Reading Myths

### 3.2.1   Cultural Memory and Myths as History

To understand how and why myths and notions of a shared past could be manipulated we must have a look at what Assmann has termed "cultural memory." Whereas everyday memory, or communicative memory, has a temporal horizon that shifts in direct relation to passing time, cultural memory has a fixed horizon. Communicative memory does not extend more than eighty to a hundred years into the past. The only way for this type of memory to find a fixed point is through cultural formation. This happens when the memory of fateful past events are maintained through cultural formation (texts, rites, monuments) and institutional communication (recitation, practice, observance).[183] Cultural memory thus comprises that body of texts, images and rituals specific to each society in each epoch. It reconstructs by always relating its knowledge to the actual and contemporary situation. This means that every contemporary context relates to the actualities of the past differently, through for example appropriation, criticism, preservation or transformation.[184]

Through cultural memory, a community can find a 'concretion of identity'; the cultivation of cultural memories serves to stabilize and convey that society's self-image. Through the preserved stores of knowledge, the group derives an awareness of its unity and peculiarity. "We are this" or "That is our opposite".[185]

For the Greeks, cultural memory was largely embodied in myths and rituals, and it is important right now that we abandon the idea that myths are fiction, and history fact; the Greeks did not have this distinction. They did not doubt that their myths were the early history of their people. The term they used for the great exploits of ancestors, heroes and demi-gods were *ta palaia* – the ancient things/events. The term did not refer to a particular kind of tale, but the certain events, which, according to widespread opinion, it was difficult to achieve firm knowledge.[186] Because of this difficulty in being certain, the stories about the past were open to criticism for poetic exaggerations, but they were still viewed as records of the ancient past.

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[183] Assmann 1995, pp. 127-129
[184] Assmann 1995, p. 130
[185] Assmann 1995, pp. 130-132
[186] Des Bouvrie 2002, p. 14

Scholars have often noted that the Greeks rarely connected the past to the present by a sequence of historical developments, and many have attempted to establish a chronology of different myths. This does not seem like a particularly fruitful exercise. Grethlein has recently shown that the Greeks used the past in an exemplary fashion, which directly juxtaposed past and present, regardless of temporal distance.[187] The mode of memory that was prevalent in ancient Greece was the one that remembered events without paying much attention to their temporal context. Similarly, the most prominent spatial view of the past was the one that regarded simultaneously past and present without considering the development from the former to the latter.[188] Because of the remoteness of the heroic world, it made it ideally suited to negotiate issues of identity. In fact, "traditions" which appeared or claimed to be old were often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented. They were particularly flexible instruments for creating culture. Des Bouvrie has remarked that it was especially in times when society was being rapidly transformed that a need was felt for inventing a tradition of a novel type for novel purposes. We shall see the applicability of this for our situation in Attica presently.

### 3.2.2 Myths as Symbolic Phenomena

A 'myth' is defined nowadays as a traditional story, especially one concerning the early history of a people, or as a widely held idea that is false. It is noteworthy, then, that a culture so known for its many myths do not have a term that carries this meaning. The word *muthos* in Greek referred to anything said by the mouth.[189] It is quite clear already then that the Greeks thought of their myths in a vastly different way than we do. Right away, we would do well in making a distinction between Greek mythology and 'myth' as will be treated in this section. Greek mythology defines myth as a group of identifiable tales, historically or otherwise untrue.[190] Des Bouvrie has argued that we should instead study Greek myths as a subspecies of symbolic phenomena, namely processes and entities that constitute a complex force in the creation and maintenance of culture.[191] Her methods draw on the study of myths in anthropology, where they study the tale in a particular place and time as well as its incorporation into rites where

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[187] Grethlein 2013, pp. 239-246
[188] Grehtlein 2013, p. 244, 246
[189] Tyrrell and Brown 1991, p. 4
[190] Des Bouvrie 2002, p. 20
[191] Des Bouvrie 2002, p. 11

applicable, without suggesting that the tale itself always have to work in the same way. The symbolic quality of the myths is not anything inherent in the tale, but is an aspect of narrative in performance activated in the audience at a particular moment.[192] Anthropology sees myth as able to present a wide range of themes, and it is recognized that they can be owned by different social groups and cannot be taken at face value. They are never a complete replica or reflection of a people's culture and may contain exaggerated and inverted features or real life. They do not necessarily refer to the past, as many point to the future. Not all myths were taken seriously by their audience, and the degree of belief in a myth may have varied. Anthropological study of myth also recognizes that the function of myth can be variously assessed, from a unifying device, explanation of natural phenomena, justification of authority, power, and status, to inversion and expression of conflict.[193] Myths are also only effective as long as they are not recognized as 'myth' in our sense of the word; then it ceases to be 'truth' and loses its effect. For those inside the culture, myths are truth. For those outside the culture, they are myth. Thus, these are complementary concepts.[194]

What becomes quite clear from this definition is that mythical reality is constantly reproduced and reinforced, often in the competitive atmosphere of the symposium. They are not static models, or snapshot representations of social hierarchies and orderings of society. They are highly flexible tools for strategically shaping conceptions of the present, as well as dynamic forces structuring the cultural sense of individuals and audiences.[195] Their real meaning is often disguised, and they can serve a very different aim than that which they profess to do. They possess a 'presentational' quality, in that they are concrete rather than abstract. This quality deflects questioning, and attempts to discourage people from doubting or rejecting the 'truth' of the myth. In order to achieve this, myths and the ceremonies wherein they are performed can become 'traditionalizing'; the tales are embedded in traditional practice that confer authority on the tale as well.[196] Because of this quality, one should not look for original master myths; even if they could be reconstructed, they would be irrelevant as the myths are able to infinitely adjust themselves depending on their social context. They developed in directions uniquely useful to its

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[192] Des Bouvrie 2002, p. 21
[193] Des Bouvrie 2002, pp. 25-26
[194] Des Bouvrie 2002, pp. 16-17
[195] Des Bouvrie 2002, pp. 28-29
[196] Des Bouvrie 2002, pp. 26-28

contemporary situation and was uniquely coloured by the discourse that conveyed it.[197] Myths, while possibly influenced or motivated by other famous myths, could be actualized in more than one medium and transmitted through more than one channel. Each narration was an independent agent, reflecting its own environment and its own conditions.[198]

Greek myths were also especially effective narratives because they could draw from a pool of actors that everybody in the Greek world knew. These characters had stable, long-established histories, identities and personalities. This meant that the tales we call myths could gesture toward a great deal more than they stated. They could invoke themes that were not, and sometimes should not, be made explicit. A comparison with other forms of narrative illustrates this especially well. Novels have to spend much time developing their characters, because the readers do not already know them, while folk tales rely on generic characters from whom one expects generic qualities. Myth, on the other hand, is built on an established body of knowledge about who the characters are, and can thus convey ideas more concisely. They can convey more ideas, or ideas of greater complexity, because of the individualized depth of their characters.[199] Myths were thus able of being told with manifold emphases and variations within the confines of their basic plot. It is also important to note that the survival of a myth depended on how well it fulfilled cultural needs and appealed to the concerns and interests of those telling and listening. Through myths the community communicated with one another *through* but not *about* their past. Rather, they talked about the present.[200]

### 3.2.3   Transmission and Performance of Myth

We have touched upon the transmission of myth, and we must have another look at the form they took in society. For even though writing came about around 800, oral performances were the primary means of disseminating poetry until around 400.[201] Likewise with myth. They were not written down, but rather transmitted orally in a manner referred to as multichannel transmission.[202] They could be transmitted by mothers, nurses, guides, and other occasional storytellers. They could be performed, or be transmitted through cult, storytelling, literature, and

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[197] Johnston 2013, p. 373; 396
[198] Johnston 2013, p. 373; Finkelberg 2014, p. 87; pp. 98-99
[199] Johnston 2013, pp. 392-395
[200] Tyrrell and Brown 1991, pp. 8-10
[201] Grethlein 2013, p. 235
[202] Finkelberg 2014, p. 99

visual arts. All of these interlocked and kept myths alive among the members of the community. The audience, or fractions of the audience, played a large part in determining which myths survived and in what way. They could resist narrative innovations, or likewise introduce their own through selective hearing and reinterpretation. Because of this form of transmission and reception, what became the standard, proper or hegemonic version of a particular myth was a collective product that had been negotiated between narrators and audiences over time.[203] The audience formed part of an interpretive community who could both produce and "read" the images presented to them. Only that portion of the tradition was preserved which still spoke to the present situation. It was constantly reshaped to conform to present realities. If it did not, it disappeared. [204]

It becomes clear at this point that there is an important aspect of myth that is completely lost to us. We cannot witness the tales in their living form. We cannot experience the vibrant telling situation, nor are we the recipients. We are unable to reproduce the feelings and thoughts of an ancient audience.[205] Because, as we observed in our discussion on rituals, cultural performance had the capacity to transform, not simply reflect, social life, symbolic phenomena mobilized the senses, imagination and emotions of the participants. In rituals, this was achieved by use of music, song, dance, visual attributes like special costumes and masques, as well as the use of alcohol, incense or other stimulants.[206]

### 3.2.4   Consequences

The properties of myth we have discussed so far have some important consequences for our study of them. The myths we possess today are probably not the same as those that were performed and told in the sixth century. In the century following the Persian Wars, the logographers began extracting early history from myths. They were systematized and rationalized. The form they took from then on became decisive, as they no longer depended on oral tradition.[207] The flexible and constructing aspects of myth thus makes it hard for us to observe them as they were in our

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[203] Lincoln 2002, p. 219
[204] Boedeker 1998, p. 194
[205] Des Bouvrie 2002, pp. 18-19 & Tyrrell and Brown 1991, pp. 10-11
[206] Des Bouvrie 2002, p. 33
[207] Nilsson 1986, p. 123

time period. Another difficulty is, of course, that even if we had exact written replicas of what was performed in the archaic period, we would still not be able to experience their performance.

Because of these properties inherent in myths, we must look at other kinds of evidence. There is not much that is available to us, but some things may still be helpful in teasing out some information on the popular myths and themes from our period. Vase painting can give us some clues. We will also have a look at the festivals and processions that were established in and around Athens in the sixth century. Finally, architectural reliefs with mythic motives may also be useful in our current quest. The following sections will take a closer look at developments that took place on the Acropolis in the sixth century, with special focus granted to the founding or re-founding of the Greater Panathenaia. We will also have a look at the depictions of two of Ancient Greek great heroes, namely Heracles and Theseus. The discussion will furthermore examine attempts at pointing to the shared ancestry of the entire population of Attica using mythical motifs and cults.

## 3.3    Theseus and the Athenians


### 3.3.1    Theseus in the Sixth Century

Since we are trying to discover when Attica was united and politically centred upon Athens, it is pertinent that we have a look at the *synoecism*-myth itself and its main character, namely Theseus. This tale relates how Attica had consisted of a number of independent townships until the reign of Theseus. Theseus abolished the local seats of government and made Athens the political centre of Attica. The festival Synoikia was established in the honour of the event. We learn these things from Thucydides as well as Plutarch, who additionally credits Theseus with the institution of the Panathenaic festival.[208]

To figure out the origins of the myth, and when it was prevalent, we should have a look at evidence related to Theseus in the Archaic Period. The first representations of the Theseus and his encounter with the Cretan Minotaur were by Megarian artists in the seventh century. Attic representations of Theseus do not appear until a century later, though this may be due to chance survival of the evidence.[209] Note that Theseus is rarely depicted alongside Athena in these early representations.[210] The first depiction of Theseus and the Minotaur from Attica was painted by Kleitias on the François Vase, which has been dated to c.570. This vase also shows Theseus' landing on Crete with the dance of the fourteen Athenian victims, as well as the battle of the Lapiths and the Centaurs.[211]

Up until the middle of the sixth century, representations of Theseus were mostly static. The motifs just mentioned were the only ones represented on vases. This changed around 550, when new episodes appeared on vases. Between 550 and 540, the Bull of Marathon appeared for the first time. Between 540 and 530, vases were decorated with portraits of Theseus and his sons, Acamas and Demophon. Between 520 and 490, the rape of the Amazonian queen, Antilope, also appeared as a painting motif.[212]

In the second quarter of the sixth century, a precinct dedicated to Theseus was supposedly installed in Athens to the south of the Archaic Agora. Archaeologists have not been able to locate

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[208] Thuc. 2.15; Plut. Thes. 24
[209] Simon 1996, p. 11
[210] Boardman 1975, pp. 2-3
[211] Boardman 1972, p. 58; Walker 1995, pp. 45-46
[212] Walker 1995, pp. 45-46 & 24

the Theseion so we cannot determine when it was built. However, the author of the *Athenaion Politeia* (15.4) writes that it existed in the sixth century. Whether or not such a precinct existed has been a matter of debate. Walker argues that we should believe the author of the *Athenaion Politeia*, because surely he would have known whether or not such a place existed. He further believes it is likely that the precinct did not contain a temple until much later, and that this may be the explanation for conflicting reports in primary sources.[213] Connor and Boersma also agree that the Theseion existed in the middle of the sixth century, though they appear to believe that the precinct contained a small temple already from this time.[214]

In 515, the first depictions of Theseus' adventures on the Saronic Gulf appeared, and from 510 onwards there was a significant growth in the popularity of Theseus.[215] Before 510 Theseus was depicted on approximately five percent of vases from Attica. After 510, he was represented on twenty-three percent of vases from Attica. Theseus' life and acts, especially his exploits on the road from Troizen to Athens, became very popular in Athenian art and his great deeds were organized in a cycle at the end of the century.[216] In this period, an epic known as the Theseis was apparently composed by Simonides, of which only one line survives.[217] It is also worth noting that sometime between 510 and 490 an Athenian treasury was built at Delphi and Theseus was glorified on its metopes.[218]

### 3.3.2 Theseus' Origins

Based on the evidence laid out above, what can we say about the emergence of the *synoecism*-myth and Theseus' role in it? It appears that even though Theseus' popularity grew throughout the sixth century, it was not until after 510 that he became massively popular. Based on this it is tempting to argue that the *synoecism*-myth emerged in the last part of the sixth century, which would certainly be fitting with the reforms of Kleisthenes around this time. One problem with this theory concerns the festival commemorating the unification of Attica by Theseus, namely the Synoikia. At this festival, the sacrifice was made by the tribe Geleontes, one of the four Ionian phylai. Hall has argued that because of this, the festival must have been instituted before the

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[213] Walker 1995, pp. 21-22
[214] Boersma 1970, p. 15 & 242; Connor 1970, p. 145
[215] Walker 1995, pp. 45-46
[216] Boardman 1972, p. 58; Connor 1970, p. 151; Cook 1987, p. 167; Walker 1995, p. 24 & 50;
[217] Plut. Thes. 28; Connor 1970, p. 144; Tyrrell and Brown 1991, p. 163
[218] Walker 1995, p. 50

tribal reforms.[219] However, is it possible that this apparent contradiction is rather the result of the fact that there was (at least) two different phases of Theseus' encouragement in Athens? To answer this question, we must ask ourselves, where did Theseus come from?

The answer may not be as simple as it first appears. The myths about the hero relates that he was born in Troizen. However, many scholars have argued that Theseus came from north-eastern Attica, near Aphidna and Marathon.[220] It seems to me that some of the confusion about Theseus' origins derive from the fact that scholars rarely separate the question of where the myths claimed Theseus was from, and where he was actually venerated. From the late-sixth century onwards, it is clear that the myths about him claim that Theseus was born at Troizen.[221] However, it is true that Theseus was a hero whose myths were connected with the east coast of Attica throughout the sixth century. Simon has argued that the earliest tutelary deity for Theseus was Artemis, who we know was the main goddess of the east coast of Attica. As we have seen, Artemis was venerated at Brauron, but she was also venerated at Aulis in Boeotia, further up the east coast. The two harbours were connected by the figure of Iphigenia – hypostasis, victim, and/or priestess of Artemis. Artemis supposedly rescued Theseus from the dangers of his Cretan adventures. Theseus, in fact, built at temple for Artemis Soteira at Troizen.[222] Furthermore, Theseus embarked with the Athenian children for Crete on the sixth day of the spring month, Mounychion, and the sixth of each month was for the Greeks the holy day of Artemis. Simon has argued that the reason why Theseus was connected with the east coast was because he was a seafaring hero.[223]

It appears, then, that Theseus was a popular hero on the east coast of Attica before he became popular in Athens. Many scholars have argued that it was the Peisistratids who encouraged his popularity.[224] Peisistratos, being from the east coast, would certainly have been a fitting person to bring Theseus to Athens. In the middle of the sixth century, should we choose to believe the author of *Athenaion Politeia* (15.4) a precinct was set up for Theseus in the Archaic Agora. This was not just the first but also the only cult centre of Theseus in Attica. This was something that perplexed later Athenians, to the degree that they later invented the curious *aition*

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[219] Hall 2007a, pp. 225-226
[220] Connor 1970, p. 143; Nilsson 1986, p. 52; Simon 1996, p. 13; Tyrrell and Brown 1991, p. 161; Walker 1995, p. 4
[221] Walker 1995, p. 13
[222] Paus. 2.31.1
[223] Simon 1996, pp. 12-21
[224] See for example: Connor 1970, p. 145 and Tyrell and Brown 1991, p. 161

that Theseus had handed over all his cult places in Attica to Herakles.[225] In cult, therefore, Theseus is purely Athenian.

Something changed when the tribal reforms occurred. It was at this moment, and not before, that Theseus changed from a hero to a national ruler. His name was even forcibly entered into the Athenian list of kings.[226] Additionally, representations of him from this point on showed him more and more accompanied by Athena herself.[227] When we keep in mind the properties of myth we discussed earlier in this chapter, it seems reasonable to argue that it was around the time of the Kleisthenic reforms that the *synoecism*-myth appeared. The present was juxtaposed with the past; the innovative reforms were made appear as though they were reversions to past procedures. The fact that Theseus had done before what Kleisthenes was doing now helped make acceptable and legitimize the new practice and invested in them the venerable dignity of the past. That Theseus was the character chosen for this important past assignment, was probably due exactly to his existence in the mythological framework of the sixth century. He was, in fact, co-opted and re-invented.[228] The problem with the Synoikia festival is still not easily resolved, but it may have to do with another prominent Athenian mythological figure, namely Erechthonios. He was at times associated with many of the same deeds as Theseus, for instance the establishment of the Panathenaia.[229] For now, it is enough to say that possibly the Synoikia festival, and maybe a version of the *synoecism*-myth, was associated with Erechthonios until the last decade of the sixth century.

### 3.3.3 Theseus and the Ionians

It is difficult to ascertain what Theseus' role was before the reforms, but we may make some suggestions. I believe it may have to do with Theseus' Ionian appeal.

Whether or not the Ionian migrations were real have been a matter of scholarly debate.[230] The tradition concerning them, at least, was current in both Athens and Ionia by 500 at the very latest. A hundred year earlier, Solon supposedly said that Attica was the oldest land of the

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[225] Euripides, *Madness of Heracles*, 1328-1333
[226] Walker 1995, pp. 12-15
[227] Simon 1996, p. 17
[228] Hall 2007a, pp. 225-226
[229] On Erechthonios, see Sourvinou-Inwood 2011, pp. 51-108
[230] Migration as literary invention: Hall 2007b, pp. 57-58; Migration as historical fact, Andrewes 1982, pp. 360-388

Ionians.[231] There are many similarities between Attica and Ionia - both social, religious, and linguistic parallels.[232] Both Ionians and Athenians were organized into a system of phratries and four tribes named after a son of Ion. They both celebrated the Apatouria and had the same names for certain months of the year.[233] Apollo's sanctuaries and festivals also correspond to those in Ionia. Apollo Delphinos had a cult in Athens and Miletos, and the two oldest Apollo festivals, the Thargelia and the Pyanopsia, were celebrated in Athens as well as Ionia.[234]

Some have recognized Theseus as an ancient hero of all the Ionian people, rather as a specifically Attic hero. The Lapiths of the Iliad supposedly represent the ancient Ionians, and in the Book 1.265, Theseus is associated with them. Most scholars, however, believe that this particular line is a sixth-century interpolation. In addition, there are no myths or cults devoted to Theseus in the Ionian cities of Asia Minor.[235] However, here I must repeat that even if Theseus factually was not an important hero for the rest of Ionia, it does not mean he was not presented as if he were. In fact, the adventures of Theseus have been connected with both Apollo Pythios and Apollo Delphinos, and Apollo was the patron god of the Ionians.[236] Nilsson has even argued that it is likely that myths about the Ionian colonization were remodelled in Athens in the sixth century, but that the Athenian version only acquired real importance and became firmly established after their institution of the Delian League in 477.[237] It appears then that perhaps Theseus' role in his early days in Athens had more to do with his relation to Ionia than his relation to Attica.

Some of the connections between the eastern coast of Attica and Ion have already been mentioned in the previous chapter.[238] Ion was the eponymous hero of the Ionian race, and his father (until Euripides inserted Apollo into the story) was Xuthus, legendary founder of the Marathonian Tetrapolis.[239] Also, Ion's tomb was supposedly located at Potamoi, near Thorikos.[240] Apollo's importance for the Ionians has also been mentioned. He was an Ionian god

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[231] Solon fr. 4
[232] Hedrick 1988, p. 204
[233] Tyrell and Brown 1991, p. 143; Andrewes 1982, p. 361
[234] Simon 1983, pp. 74-75
[235] Walker 1995, pp. 9-12
[236] Shapiro 1989, p. 50
[237] Nilsson 1986, p. 64
[238] Ch. 2.6
[239] Hdt. 8.44.1
[240] Hedrick 1988, p. 204

*par excellence* and his main sanctuary was at Delos. The story of Peisistratos' purification of Delos is well known. It happened right after his victory at Pallene.[241] Delos was the old assembling place of the Ionians, and thus the purification strengthened ethnic ties between Athens and other Ionian states.[242] It was also in the sixth century that a temple was (re)built on the island by Athenian artisans. We have also already mentioned that in the first half of the century, vases were decorated with motifs depicting Theseus slaying the Minotaur in Crete whereupon a triumphal dance was performed. Afterwards, the dance was led by Theseus and transferred to Delos where it was identified with the crane dance – a part of the Delian cult.[243]

The evidence laid out here appears to support that the Peisistratids lavished resources upon things to do with Ionia, and we would therefore wish to know why they did so. Tentatively, I would suggest that the Peisistratids used references to a common Ionian heritage in order to emphasize that the people of Attica had a common past. We do not know much about the phratries before Kleisthenes, nor about the four Ionian *phylai*, but if these institutions contained members from all over Attica, as the phratries certainly did later on, and if they were recognised as being common to all Ionians, it could certainly be a fruitful venture to emphasize this in order to point to the fact that the entire population of Attica had this common Ionian heritage.

At the end of this section, we may summarize as follows: Theseus was a popular hero in the eastern parts of Attica, and he was introduced into Athens in the sixth century, upon which a cult for him was invented and a precinct was set up. At around the same time, Delos was purified and a temple (re)built there. These and other developments were in order to emphasize a common Ionian heritage shared by the entire population of Attica. However, Theseus did not become particularly popular until the last decade of the sixth century, when he was reinvented as the legendary king of Athens who had undertaken to unite the twelve cities of Attica and centre them politically upon Athens. This should be seen in relation to the Kleisthenic reforms, which we will discuss in chapter 5.

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[241] Hdt. 1.64
[242] Shapiro 1989, p. 49; Nilsson 1986, p. 59
[243] Nilsson 1986, p. 59

## 3.4     The Panathenaia

### 3.4.1.  Herakles

Theseus is not the only popular Greek hero who figured on vase paintings in the sixth century; Heracles was in fact vastly more popular. In the sixth century, on vases painted with mythological scenes, Heracles was present on forty-four percent of Athenian black-figure vases.[244] One particular motif has received a lot of attention. It is variously referred to as Herakles' Introduction to Olympus, or Herakles' Apotheosis. The earliest instances of this motif are dated to the 560s, but they also appear in large number between 510 and 480.[245] There are several variations on the motif, but central to them is the chariot. Athena and Herakles are often there together, though it is not always clear that they are travelling together. Sometimes Herakles seems to be leaving without the goddess, occasionally accompanied by Iolaus. Athena is sometimes in the chariot while Herakles is absent, and other times her place is taken by another divinity, such as Demeter. Herakles sometimes stand in the chariot beside her, other times on the ground.[246] Athena does not have a great deal to do with chariots until she appears alongside Herakles in the 560s.[247]

However, Herakles was a hero from the Peloponnese, and if anything, he was Dorian. So why was he so popular in Greek art? In fact, according to Boardman, Herakles was sixty percent more popular in Athens than he was in the Peloponnese where he was at home.[248] Moreover, why did he suddenly become so popular in the sixth century?

For one, it is clear that Herakles was associated with Athena early on. He was her protégé, and this was recognized also outside of Athenian art in the seventh century.[249] A prevailing explanation for the hero's rise in popularity, and particularly for the emergence of the chariot procession image, has been that Herakles was advanced by Peisistratos.[250] This theory was accepted for a long while, but has also been met with harsh criticism.[251] Other theories have also

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[244] Boardman 1975, pp. 2-5
[245] Boardman 1972, pp. 58-69; Ferrari 1994, pp. 220-225; Robert 1995
[246] Boardman 1972, p 60; Ferrari 1994, pp. 222
[247] Boardman 1972, pp. 60-61
[248] Boardman 1989, p. 158
[249] Boardman 1972, p. 59; Cook 1987, p. 167
[250] Boardman 1972, 1975, 1989; Cavalier 1995
[251] By, for example, Cook 1987, pp. 167-169

been presented. Robert, for example, has argued that the vase-paintings were inspired by the (no longer extant) tomb of Peisistratos, which may have been decorated with this particular scene.[252] Gloria Ferrari, however, has recognized that the Herakles scene is, in fact, connected to the reorganization of the Panathenaia, traditionally dated to 566.[253]

One of the *aitia* for the Panathenaia claims that the festival celebrated the defeat of the Giants by the Olympian gods, more specifically, Athena's victory over the giant Asterios.[254] Athena and Herakles were, in fact, both prominent characters in the saga of the Gigantomachy. Herakles is connected to Athena in the myth because Zeus summoned the hero by means of Athena.[255] After the victory over the giants, both the Olympians and Herakles took on the role of victors in a triumphal procession accompanied by song. Without Herakles, the gods would have lost the victory.[256] Episodes from the Gigantomachy also appear on Attic vases from the 560s. The subject was also embroidered on the *peplos* of Athena which was presented at the Great Panathenaia, and which may figure on the Parthenon metopes. On the Acropolis, at least one sixth century pediment was devoted to marble gigantomachies.[257]

Ferrari has therefore argued that the chariot scene on Attica vase-paintings beginning in the 560s should not be seen as Herakles' apotheosis. Rather, it should be seen as an episode of the Gigantomachy. The scenes may even depict two separate episodes, namely the recruitment of Herakles before the battle, and the victory procession that followed. When the Panathenaic festival was revamped and enlarged, one would certainly expect a spurred production of imagery related to the festival. Ferrari's theory thus sits very well. She has also suggested that this would seem to explain the many cults of Herakles in Attica, in spite of him being a Dorian hero whose connection with Athens seemed to be slight.[258]

### 3.4.2    The Transformation of the Acropolis

The establishment or enlargement of the Panathenaia in 566 has been connected with major changes also on the Acropolis and in the Agora. It was around this time that the Acropolis

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[252] Robert 1995
[253] Ferrari 1994, pp. 220-225
[254] Ferrari 1994, p. 223
[255] Apollodorus 1.6.1
[256] Ferrari 1994, p. 222
[257] Boardman 1972, p. 69; Ferrari 1994, p. 223; the pediment belongs to one of several small-scale but rich structures that were set up on the Acropolis in this period. We will talk more about these structures in section 3.4.2
[258] Ferrari, pp. 223-224

changed from being a modest sanctuary to a marvellous spectacle. In fact, very little can be securely dated to a period before the second quarter of the sixth century. The Acropolis became suddenly rich and bustling, and an arena at which the elite competed with one another for the gods' attention through the wealth of dedications.[259] The agora also shifted from the east of the citadel (Archaic Agora) to the flat area below the Acropolis to the west (New/Classical Agora), which had previously been a site of private homesteads and burial plots.[260]

The principal approach to the Acropolis was monumentalized on the west slope and a ramp was constructed. It was some eighty meters long and over ten meters wide, meant to accommodate the Panathenaic procession.[261] Around the same time, it appears that the old Mycenaean bastion/terrace to the right of the ramp was remodelled. Its crown was rebuilt with a poros-limestone altar set up on it. Only one block from the altar survives, inscribed "Altar of Athena Nike. Patrokle[d]es set it up." [262] The sanctuary of the Victory Goddess supposedly also contained a cult statue of Athena Nike.

Around the same time, another temple was built on the Acropolis, though its exact function and location has been a matter of controversy.[263] The temple was of the Doric order and approximately forty-one meters long. It was mostly built of limestone with engraved Hymettian marble gutters and carved metopes. Its limestone pediments are brightly painted and it is one of these that have given the temple its name, namely Bluebeard. The name belongs to the architectural remains of the temple, and is particularly handy since it does not assume where the temple was located nor what its function was. The Bluebeard pediment shows a figure brightly painted in blue, green, red and white. The figure has intertwining snaky tails, wings, three heads, and three bodies with little snakes originally sprouting from them, each holding a bird, a wave and a sheaf of wheat or a flame in its hands.[264] Another pediment features Herakles wrestling a fishtailed creature.[265] Both architecturally and stylistically, the Bluebeard temple has been dated

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[259] Hurwit 1999, pp. 104-105
[260] Hurwit 1999, p. 106
[261] Hurwit 1999, pp. 105-106
[262] Hurwit 1999, pp. 105-106
[263] Hurwit 1999, pp. 106-110
[264] He has been identified variously as: Typhon; Geryon; a composite of Okeanos, Ponto and Aither; as an allegory of Attic political union. See Hurwit 1999, p. 112
[265] Possibly Triton or Nereus. Hurwit 1999, p. 108

to the 560s. If it was inaugurated or completed at this time, it must literally have been a Panathenaic project.[266]

There has also been found a large amount of so-called "floating" material on the Acropolis - material that cannot be tied to definite spots or foundations. These are poros-limestone architecture and fragments of terracotta roofs that belong to more than six buildings that were originally set up on the Acropolis from the second quarter of the sixth century and into the fifth century. Some have argued that these must be treasuries, but they could also possibly be small shrines or *naiskoi*, or even ritual dining rooms. In any case, throughout the Archaic Period such small but richly decorated structures were added to the summit with some regularity.[267] A series of small painted-limestone pediments have been found, and these must have decorated at least some of the small buildings. One shows Herakles combatting Hydra; another Herakles wrestling Triton. One shows the Introduction scene that we know from vase-paintings, and another two also show Herakles, though their exact motifs are difficult to ascertain. Another pediment, known as the Olive Tree pediment, shows freestanding female figures along with a male figure striding in front of a precinct wall enclosing an olive tree. The pediment also features a large building at its centre. Some have seen this as an image of the Acropolis itself (the olive tree Athena's sacred tree, the building the legendary Temple of Athena), while it could also be a generalized image of the Panathenaic procession nearing its end at the temple of Athena.[268]

### 3.4.3    Established or Transformed?

It appears reasonable to connect the changes on the Acropolis and the Agora with the changes made to the Panathenaic festival in 566/5. However, whether the festival was established or simply reorganized at this time is not entirely clear. We have already mentioned the *aition* that claims the Panathenaia was celebrated as a celebration of the death of the giant Asterios at the hands of Athena.[269] There are, however, two other surviving *aitia* for the festival that concern its founding. The earliest says that the festival was dedicated by Erechthonios, the autochthonous ancestor of the Athenians, who invented the chariot and first drove it at the first Panathenaia.[270]

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[266] Hurwit 1999, p. 117
[267] Hurwit 1999, p. 112 & pp. 115-116
[268] Hurwit 1999, pp. 112-113
[269] For this, see Sourvinou-Inwood 2011, p. 271; Parker 2005, pp. 254-256
[270] Sourvinou-Inwood 2011, pp. 270-271; Parker 2005, pp. 254-256; Walker 1995, pp. 42-43

The second, which goes back to the Atthidographers, says that the festival was founded by Theseus at the time of the *synoecism*.[271] Pausanias (8.2.1) combines these two traditions, saying that before Theseus the festival was called simply the *Athenaia*, and that Theseus re-founded it as the Panathenaia. The simple *Athenaia*, on the other hand, had indeed been founded by Erechthonios.

There may be some truth to this second story. Most scholars would agree that the Greater Panathenaia was established in 566/5, as this is about the time when black-figure Panathenaic amphorae (which would have been filled with Attica's prized olive oil and awarded to victors) first appear in the archaeological record.[272] The archaeological evidence cited above, and the laying out of a new racetrack in the agora around this time,[273] further supports that big things were happening at this time. Additionally we should note that the day of the Panathenaic procession was 28 Hekatombaion, Athena's birthday - the day she sprung from the head of Zeus. Simon has argued that Athena's birthday must have been an old festival by the time the Panathenaia was reorganized.[274] Could it be that the Panathenaia had been a celebration of the civic goddess' birthday, perhaps under the name "*Athenaia*", until the changes that were made in 566? Was it to this festival that the Erechthonios-*aition* belonged to? There is no way this can be proven, of course, but I think it is an interesting hypothesis.

It is likewise difficult to say when the Theseus-*Aition* became connected to the Panathenaia. What is clear, however, is that the grandeur of the festival continued to expand throughout the century. Early representations of the Panathenaic procession suggests that it involved only sacrificial ministrants and the population under arms – fewer groups than were in the procession in the fifth century.[275] Moreover, although it appears that athletic and equestrian contests accompanied the festival already in 566, one is not sure when rhapsodic contests were added, though they are often attributed to Hipparchos. If this is true, they must have been instituted before his death in 514. Some have argued that the first official dramatic performances of the festival occurred in 534.[276] Based on the evidence on the popularity of Theseus, one might

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[271] Hellanikos FGrH323a F2; Androtion FGrH324 F2; Marmos Parium FGrH239 A10; Sourviou-Inwood 2011, p. 271; Parker 2005, pp. 254-256; Walker 1995, pp. 41-53
[272] Hall 2007a, p. 229
[273] Hurwit 1999, p. 104
[274] Simon 1983, p. 55
[275] Maurizio 1998, pp. 301-302
[276] Boersma 1970, p. 15

argue that he was not connected to the Panathenaic festival until around the same time as the *synoecism* myth about him surfaced.

In any case, the prefix –pan, by analogy with the term "Panhellenes", according to Jonathan Hall, emphasizes the diversity rather than the unity of the Athenians. According to him, the establishment of the Panathenaia was designed to foster a sense of affiliation to a state centred on Athens among all the communities of Attica. Though, he writes, the festival may have continued to be restricted to freeborn residents of the *pedion*.[277] Perhaps it is a possibility that before 566, the Panathenaia (or the Athenaia) was a festival celebrated mostly among the residents of the *pedion*. Nevertheless, it does seem reasonable to assume that the re-establishment of the festival in 566 was open to the rest of the community. This is especially true if this was the point in the time when the prefix –pan was added. If the festival was only open to the inhabitants of the city and the *pedion*, it would be odd to describe the festival by such a name. It makes more sense if the festival was open to all of Attica, and the name should instead be seen as an emphasis on Athens at the centre of the Attic community. The name of the festival may, in fact, emphasize that all Atticans were also Athenians.

Additionally, the competitions of the festival must have been attractive to many a man who wanted to compete for honour and to display his *arête* – his excellence, and his favour with the gods. The procession went up to the Acropolis, now a place that showed Athens' importance and magnificence. No more a modest sanctuary, but a place worthy of Athens' place at the centre.

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[277] Hall 2007a, p. 233

## 3.5    Conclusion

The beginning of this chapter established that the population of Attica was somehow interconnected through its Attic *ethnos* identity. We also uncovered how identity could be manipulated using myth-histories. In the sixth century, many Athenian myths made her the centre of Attica and attempted to draw the population of Attica together under her influence.

Myths, we have seen, were synonymous with 'truth'. They were perceived as the real and early history of the Greek people from a time it was difficult to be certain about. Myths were often used in an exemplary fashion in order to talk about the present. Especially in times of rapid societal transformation, a need was felt for a past precedent. Myths were also, however, tales whose symbolic quality was not inherent in the tale itself, but in the circumstances under which they were told or performed. They were highly flexible tools for the strategic shaping of the present situation.

Myths had a certain 'presentational' quality and were often 'traditionalized'. By this we mean that they were embedded in traditional practice to grant them further authority and legitimacy. Their presentational quality discouraged questioning. Because once a myth was recognized as what we know it as - that is, un-historical and false - it ceased to be 'truth' and lost its effectiveness. The many characters of myth, of which everybody in the Greek world were familiar, made the tales able to convey more ideas, or ideas of greater complexity, more subtly and efficiently than other forms of narrative. The reception of myth was important in that it could decide its survival. People could choose, consciously and unconsciously, to what degree they believed in a myth and how well it related to their present situation. If it did not, it would die out.

Our difficulty in the study of sixth-century myths is that we do not possess their form as they were back then. We also are unable to witness the performance and context of the myth. Therefore, we must look at other media in order to observe what the myths may have been like and what they may have related to their audience in the sixth century. In this chapter, we have mostly looked at art and architecture as well as myths connected to the Panathenaia.

Our study of Theseus saw him emerging in the sixth century, portrayed in the context of only a few standard episodes until the middle of the century. At this point new episodes were added and a sanctuary for the hero may have been built in the Archaic Agora. Theseus, however, did not become properly popular until the time around the Kleisthenic reforms. I have interpreted

the evidence in the following manner: the Peisistratids encouraged the veneration of Theseus in the first half of the century as an Ionian hero in order to emphasize that the population of Attica had a shared history and heritage. The myth of Theseus' *synoecism*, however, probably did not appear, or at least did not become popular, until the time around the tribal reforms. He was then co-opted and reinvented in order to juxtapose his past precedent with the innovate reforms that needed to be legitimized.

Herakles was another popular hero in Attica in the sixth century, at first much more popular than Theseus himself. The chariot motif, or the Introduction/apotheosis scene, on vases in our century has been connected here to the establishment of the Panathenaia in 566. It is, in fact, an episode from the Gigantomachy. This is also why Herakles is portrayed on many Acropolis pediments.

The transformation of the Acropolis have also been connected to the establishment of the Panathenaia. In the sixth century a ramp was constructed, a sanctuary for Athena Nike dedicated, as well as a monumental temple constructed. The so-called Bluebeard temple can be dated securely to c.560, but its precise location and function cannot be established. This period also saw many small-scale and richly decorated structures set up on the Acropolis. Changes were also made to the New/Classical Agora, where the Panathenaic Way led all the way up to the Acropolis.[278]

Because of these changes, and the appearance of Panathenaic prize amphorae, I have agreed that the Panathenaia must have been established in 566. I have also mentioned the possibility that before this, the Panathenaia (or perhaps just the *Athenaia*) was a festival celebrating Athena's birthday, and it may have been restricted to the inhabitants of the *pedion*. Perhaps, even, it is to this festival we should attach the Erechthonios-*aition*. The Theseus-*aition* probably originate from approximately the same time as the *synoecism*-myth, in the last quarter of the sixth century.

Whatever the Panathenaia was before, it is clear that it grew throughout the sixth century and became a huge spectacle, with competitions, sacrifices and processions. They were most likely open to the entire population of Attica who gladly participated in order to win honour and prove their excellence. Elite competitions will be a subject of the next chapter of this thesis,

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[278] More on the Agora will follow in Ch. 5.2.2

which will examine who would have been able to make the changes that have been mapped out in this and the previous chapter.

Chapter 4

# THE ELITE

## 4.1    Introduction

The previous two chapters have mapped out important developments in Attica in the realms of cult and myth but have not said much about who made them happen. In the following chapter, we will have a closer look at the Athenian and Attic elite and their competition for power.

There are a couple of important developments that happen right before and just within our period that we must make note of. Firstly, the lifetime archonship was supposedly abolished in 683 and replaced by an annual archonship.[279] Whether or not we can rely on such a specific date for the abolishment of the lifetime archonship is not very important. What is important, however, is what necessitated the curtailment of the office. Some have suggested that the abolishment of the lifetime archonship may have been an attempt to resolve conflict between aristocratic families.[280] It is also in this context that some would see the emergence of sanctuaries across Attica, where elites all over the peninsula competed for power and negotiated their position in the community. It appears that wealth also grew among a group of people who may not have been eligible for political office, which culminated in the reforms of Solon. The creation of property classes widened the qualifications for the archonship, which now depended on landed wealth rather than birth.[281]

Within this context, we will have a further look at how the elite competed with each other for political power, and also attempt to say something about what this power entailed. This discussion will inevitably have to include the Peisistratids. In this respect, we will also talk about tyranny in general as well as archaic political leadership.

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[279] Eusebius, *Chronicon*. I
[280] Camp 2001, p. 25; Jeffery 1976, pp. 85-86
[281] Ellis and Stanton 1968, pp. 103-104; 110

## 4.2     Competition for Excellence

### 4.2.1    Introduction

Although there does appear to have existed an elite whose membership into that class depended on birth (the *Eupatridai*), with Solon's reforms wealth became another standard for admission into political life at Athens. De Polignac, however, has noted that wealth, power and prestige did not guarantee elite membership; rather, only specific social and public use of wealth, prestige or authority, by whatever process they were gained and maintained, could create the collective recognition of elite membership.[282] Similarly, Duplouy has argued that elite status was provisional, contingent, and non-essentialized. It was not a static social category strictly defined by noble birth and hereditary wealth. Rather, elite identity was dynamic and fluid, potentially open to all manner of individuals taking part in a perpetual contest for prestige that revolved around all manner of styles and strategies of self-promotion.[283]

     This section will have a closer look at elite competition and, in particular, how they sought to maintain and negotiate their place in society through displaying their ruling qualities and attributes, and their abundance of the intrinsic quality, arête. We will also have a look at the role of the elite in what we would term the political sphere of the polis, and try to say something about what political power may have entailed in our period.

### 4.2.2    Modes of Social Recognition

In Chapter 3.2.1, we saw how important the past could be to the Greeks, particularly how they used it in an exemplary fashion, which directly juxtaposed past and present. This was often done in order to legitimize present procedures and innovations. The past was used in a similar fashion by the elites of Attica. For them, the past was an important resource in the fight for social distinction.[284] For legitimizing purposes, proving that one had heroic ancestry was especially important, as it essentially was a way for the elite to prove their ruling capabilities. Peisistratos, for instance, claimed descent from the Neleids of Pylos. Two legendary *basileis* of Athens, Kodros and Melanthos, shared the same descent.[285] By associating himself with these legendary

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[282] De Polignac 2009, p. 440
[283] Power 2006, BMCR review of Duplouy 2006.
[284] Anderson 2005, p 186; Grethlein 2013, p. 125; Higbie 1997, pp. 298-305; Mitchell 2013, pp. 27-58
[285] Hdt. 5.65.3

kings, Peisistratos attempted to demonstrate that he was fit to rule, just as they had been. Additionally, Herodotos writes that Kodros and Melanthos had come from foreign parts to become kings of Athens.[286] Peisistratos himself was supposedly from Philaidai on the east coast of Attica, and may as such not have been considered a true Athenian.[287] This adds another level of interpretation to Peisistratos' Neleid ancestry. Through this particular claim of descent, Peisistratos could demonstrate that also foreigners, which he might himself have been considered to be, could be great Athenian kings.

Such claims to heroic, noble, and even divine descent played a particularly important part in the contest for prestige. They were subjectively perceived and socially constructed, not only tolerated but also expected.[288] As new needs or desires arose, family trees could be extended, or entire genealogies could be recast. These forged a link to the heroic past and were, as such, inherently biased. Genealogies could also be changed depending on different contexts and for different purposes, chief amongst them to bolster a person's social standing. Manipulating genealogies in this way was possible to a certain extent because the memory of ancestors rested right at the edge of current memory. This, in turn, also meant that mortals who were venerated as heroic at their death could quickly become, or represent, foundational heroes with mythical significance.[289] It has also been recognized that heroes could be worshipped attached and unattached to material relics in tombs, and where material relics did exist, they did not have to actually belong to the hero who was venerated.[290] The belief that they did was enough. Hero cult created a fictitious kinship that could serve individuals as well as families. Worshipping them confirmed the position and prestige for those in power who claimed the hero as their ancestor.[291]

Heroic ancestry, however, was not enough to prove ruling capabilities. Actions had to follow which, if successful, confirmed the heroic descent of the ruler. Heroic status and fitness to rule depended on an intrinsic abundance of arête – excellence.[292] This was an excellence of a particular kind, namely excellence in performing a function. The arête of a knife, for instance, is measured by its sharpness; the arête of a ship by its swift response. The arête of a warrior was

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[286] *Ibid.*
[287] See Ch. 13 and 1.4 on the distinction between Athenian and Attic territory.
[288] Power 2006, BMCR review of Duplouy 2006
[289] Mitchell 2013, pp. 36-37
[290] De Polignac 1995, p. 136 and p. 148; Higbie 1997, p. 305
[291] Antonaccio 1998, pp. 61-64
[292] Mitchell 2013, pp. 58-59

first and foremost measured by his prowess in battle or capacity to kill an opponent. The warrior would seek combat amongst other great warriors in order to display his arête and prove that his exceeded all the others.[293]

The same was true for the elite, and in fact, their power was generated by their arête. As such, ruling power was generated by having more arête than any other member of the community.[294] But what did elite arête entail, and how was it displayed? Duplouy has recognised that there were several *modes de reconnaissance sociale* that were at work in the field of elite competition for and of arête. These modes of social recognition consist of all those practices that made evident the rank of the individual at the same time as they contributed to the acquisition of the prestige necessary for the ambitions of each elite.[295] Claims of heroic ancestry was one such mode. Wealth and personal charisma appears also to have been important factors, as well as the ability to maintain important friendships and cultivate allies.[296] Particularly elite inter-marriage could be an instrument of social promotion and means of emphasizing one's rank. Peisistratos, for instance, was at one point married to an Argive woman,[297] Timonassa, as well as the daughter of Megakles.[298] Whether he was married to both women simultaneously is uncertain. In any case, these marriages are examples of marriages made particularly for political gain. The former shows that marriages were arranged across poleis, and these were powerful instruments for demonstrating one's important friendships at home and abroad.  The latter marriage occurred as part of a new alliance between Peisistratos and Megakles against Lykourgos.

In fact, through social interactions at sanctuaries and symposia, and through guest-friendships and alliances, the elite families of Greece were brought closer to their counterparts in other poleis, which especially came to the fore at Panhellenic sanctuaries like those at Delphi and Olympia.[299] At these Panhellenic sanctuaries, the elites could compete in the display of arête, for instance by building treasuries or by making dedications and offering rich votives. At Olympia in particular, the elites competed in the Olympic Games where they aimed to demonstrate their physical prowess and excellence. These were thus arenas not only for elite competition, but also

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[293] Tyrrell and Brown 19991, p. 41; p. 54
[294] Mitchell 2013, p. 46: Mitchell notes that how power works and how it is achieved is culturally specific and that different cultures understand power in different ways. For the Greeks, as stated, power was generated by arête.
[295] Power 2006, BMCR review of Duplouy 2006
[296] Anderson 2005, p. 182
[297] Ath. Pol. 17.3; See also McGlew 1993, p. 177
[298] Hdt. 1.60-1.61
[299] Anderson 2005, p. 185;

for social interaction outside particular *poleis*. Importantly, votives and dedications placed at sanctuaries, both Panhellenic and local ones, could grant their dedicators remarkable visibility. In their dedications, the elites competed with each other to be the most original, in choice of material, where the work was commissioned, sculptural type and size. Even funeral monuments could be fashioned so that the prestige and social distinction of the bereaved was emphasized. Epigrams could make note of the virtue of the deceased, the name and expenditure of the commissioner of the monument, as well as the name of the famous artisan who completed the work.[300]

   As such, wealth was only important in the competition for elite status because possessing it allowed individuals access to the activities and the lifestyle through which arête could be displayed. For instance, another mode of social recognition was the acquisition of exotic, luxury objects that were circulated through privileged networks of exchange. Their otherness and rarity highlighted the elusive and exclusive access of the individual who possessed them.[301] Additionally, we noted the importance of ritual feasting in Chapter 2.2. Ritual feasting at sanctuaries functioned as an arena where the social order was displayed and negotiated. Exercising control over a cult was one way for the elites to maintain their leading position - a position which aspirants for power were always ready to challenge.[302] Other arenas for displaying arête were competitive games, founding cities, and command in war.[303] In fact, a ruler had a duty to expand or increase the territories of the city, and the ability to wage war successfully was linked to the ability to offer protection.[304]

   In our period, it was important for the elite to spend their resources on behalf of their communities, to display the power of their city as well as their own personal power. Dedications were often made at sanctuaries in the name of the entire community rather than in the name of the rulers only.[305] However, even though resources were spent for the benefit of the entire community, the display of wealth was still self-serving for members of the elite. By allocating resources and funds on behalf of the community, they were able to display their position, status,

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[300] Power 2006, BMCR review of Duplouy 2006
[301] *Ibid.*
[302] Mitchell 2013, p. 121
[303] Mitchell 2013, p. 47
[304] Mitchell 2013, pp. 67-68
[305] Mitchell 2013, pp. 44-70

and role within that same community. Their use of resources still went into modes of social recognition that aimed to emphasize and publicize their social ranking.

### 4.2.3   Archaic Political Power

What then about political power in the Archaic Period? Was elite power also political power, or was there a difference between the two? In the introduction to this chapter, we saw that the lifetime archonship was abolished at some point in the seventh century and replaced by an annual archonship. This development has been associated with a widening of elite membership that put the lifetime archonship under increased pressure, as more people could claim a position of political prominence and influence.[306] In spite of this, however, it is important to note that politics remained an essentially elite activity even if there were more elites vying for political power. Also, even though politics was an arena reserved for the elites, elite power was not solely embedded in political power. Nor was political power the goal of the competitions of arête that we have discussed so far. Rather, it would appear that political power could be another mode for social recognition.  In the instances above, we have not yet seen anything done specifically in relation to the constitutional fabric of the state, so we must investigate this further.

According to the author of the *Athenaion Politeia*, nine archons were elected annually by a public assembly, and after their tenure they were admitted into the council of the Areopagus.[307] Later on, the author also states that the archon must have had great power, since there was always fierce competition for this office.[308] However, what do we actually know about the power of this office? Anderson has remarked that the power of archaic officials seems to have been highly circumscribed.[309] Most frequently, the officials served and shared responsibilities with a number of other officials. One might also question how much an official could accomplish with such a short time in office. Instead, the council of the Areopagus was a chief organ of administration and

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[306] See especially van den Eijnde 2010. Van den Eijnde has interpreted the increased burial visibility from this period as more people acquiring the right to a formal burial, which would indicate that an increasingly large group of people could also claim a position of political and religious prominence and influence. At the same time, there was a gradual decrease in wealth invested in these graves, which van den Eijnde has interpreted as a gradual disruption of the equilibrium of power between a *Basileus*-type ruler and his peers. He would see the abolishment of the lifetime archonship as a gradual process, at the end of which Athens was governed by a larger body of kinship groups rather than by a single ruler with a small college of peers. P. 348
[307] Ath. Pol. 3; Sealey 1960, p. 167
[308] Ath. Pol. 13.2; Sealey 1960, p. 167
[309] Anderson 2005, p. 180

a place of public policy. It may have been that the archonship was valued precisely because it brought admission into the Areopagus and as such marked the initiation into a public career.[310] Nonetheless, admission to the Areopagus was perhaps not the most efficient way for archaic elites to express their power. The council authority was dispersed among a large amount of previous archons, and it may in fact be said that the rationale behind the apparatus was to minimize contention by strictly limiting the capacity of individuals to influence the direction of the state.[311]

The establishment of written law may also have done something to regulate the political authority of the elite.[312] They helped maintain a balance of power amongst a group of peers, so that no one individual could become more influential than any other in terms of making decisions on behalf of the polis. The internal balance of the social group was upheld by laws, which made the elites dependent on one another. They had to come to terms with other groups in the community in order to be successful and effective. In fact, at this early stage, the offices and councils of the Greek *polis* were vaguely defined and may as such not have been a particularly effective way for the elites to exert their influence. Even if a good deal of energy was invested by the elites in competing for office, there was no real opportunity for them to acquire significant leadership. This meant that power still lay elsewhere. The capacity to shape electoral and deliberative preferences would continue to be manifested at other arenas, like the sanctuaries, the symposia and even the battlefield.[313] As such, power was generated through public displays of arête at these arenas.

A couple of examples to demonstrate these points are warranted. We have already examined the events of the Kylonian affair.[314] After Kylon attempted a coup c.630, the Alkmaeonidai killed his co-conspirators in spite of their promise not to do so.[315] This sacrilege was remembered for a long time after the fact, which is surely indicative of the importance of the event.[316] However, the Alkmaeonidai were not punished until the time of Solon, about thirty

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[310] Sealey 1960, p. 167
[311] Anderson 2005, p. 180
[312] See f.ex. Lavelle 2005, p. 79; Mitchell 2013, pp. 127-130
[313] Anderson 2005, pp. 179-189
[314] See Ch. 1.3.4
[315] Hdt 5.71; Thuc. 1.126.12; Ath. Pol. 1; Plut. Sol. 12
[316] Hdt. 5.70-72 relates the event to explain why king Cleomenes of Sparta called for the banishment of Kleisthenes from Athens in the late sixth century, which apparently was because of the sacrilege committed by Kleisthenes' family in the Kylonian affair more than a hundred years earlier.

years after the attempted coup, when Myron of Phlya acted as prosecutor at their trial. The Alkmaeonidai were then convicted and thenceforth known as the Accursed. Their punishment was exile, and even their dead were exhumed and their remains cast out of the city.[317] It is important to note that it took so long for that Alkmaeonidai to be tried and punished for their crime. In fact, it shows that elite power was not solely a matter of politics bounded in law. If it had been, the family should have been punished in the wake of Kylon's attempted coup, not thirty years afterwards. Rather, at the time of the coup, the power and influence of the Alkmaeonid family must have been too strong for them to be held accountable for their actions.

   Another example can be found in Herodotos' story about the three Athenian factions of plain, shore, and hill.[318] Even though the eponymous archons of the years when Peisistratos first attempted tyranny were Komeas and Hegesias, it is Lykourgos and Megakles who are named as leaders of the opposing factions of Peisistratos.[319] In this instance, then, it appears that the influence and power of those who held the eponymous archonship did not exceed the influence and power of these two elite individuals, who were considered the leaders of distinct factions.

   In fact, Archaic political power might not have been considered to be as efficient as other kinds of elite power that were gained through public displays of arête at diverse arenas. Participating in the political affairs of the *polis* may simply have been another such arena. In fact, even under the tyrants at Athens the political institutions of the Athenian polis were left as they were.[320] The power of the tyrant may simply not have been considered to be a part of the constitutional fabric of the state. We shall return to this discussion in Ch. 4.3.

### 4.2.4   Factionalism and Exile

The three Herodotean factions are worthy of another look.[321] Herodotos writes that Attica was divided into three factions, one led by Peisistratos. The author of the Athenaion Politeia names this faction the Hillmen (*Diakrioi*). A second faction was led by Megakles son of Alkmeon and they are referred to as the Men of the Coast. The last faction were the Men of the Plain led by Lykourgos son of Aristolaides. The historical reality of these factions have been a matter of

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[317] Thuc. 1.126.12; Ath. Pol. 1; Plut. Sol. 12
[318] Hdt. 1.59
[319] Ath. Pol. 14.1; 14.3; Anderson 2005, pp. 180-181
[320] Thuc. 6.54.5; Cawkwell 1995, pp. 76-80
[321] Hdt. 1.59; Ath. Pol. 13.4

scholarly debate. Some, like Groušchin, have argued that the factions were political 'parties' of some sort and that Peisistratos was appointed leader of the *Diakrioi*. Groušchin has further argued that the *Diakrioi* were a non-aristocratic faction, and that Peisistratos wanted to become the leader of the people through a democratic or demagogic program.[322] Others, like Lavelle, have argued that the factions are fictions and are misleading as to Athenian history and politics of the time.[323] Lavelle has further claimed that Herodotos invented the factions specifically in order to distract attention from the nature of Athenian politics before the democracy, thus attempting to diminish the culpability of the Athenians in allowing Peisistratos his first tyranny.[324]

We should probably not think of these factions as "parties" in the modern sense, that is, as easily defined bodies of citizens which seek to achieve the goals common to its members, though distinct from those of other bodies, through the acquisition and exercise of political power. Nevertheless, some sorts of factions did probably exist, most likely with geographical foundations, as is implied by Herodotos. In fact, the competitive atmosphere of archaic politics no doubt resulted in alliances, though they were likely often temporary and weak. They could be made for longer or shorter periods of time depending on the willingness of the people involved.[325] The marriage between Peisistratos and Megakles' daughter we noted earlier, for instance, is an example of such an alliance that only lasted for a temporary period.[326] After Peisistratos had lost his first tyranny, Megakles supposedly made a deal with Peisistratos by offering his daughter to the would-be-tyrant as a bride. This appears to have enabled Peisistratos to take the second tyranny. The alliance was broken off shortly after and Peisistratos was again ousted from the city.

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[322] Groušchin 1999, p. 18; see also Eliot 1967 who argues that the leaders held land in the areas they were supposed to represent, but that their political bias was the result of the leader's influence and presence rather than geographic and economic factors peculiar to each region (p. 285).

[323] Lavelle 2005, p. 71; see also Hopper 1961

[324] Lavelle 2005, pp. 71-78; Lavelle argues that Peisistratos did not take the first tyranny by force, but rather that the demos consented to it. This reality was uncomfortable to the Athenians of the fifth-century, as it would mean that they were themselves responsible for the tyranny they now execrated. Lavelle would rather see that there only existed two groupings which could be referred to as parties; the powerful and wealthy *Eupatridai* led by Lykourgos, and a politically active *demos* who favoured Megakles because he plied them with *chremata*. According to Lavelle, Peisistratos was not the leader of his own party; he was rather supported by Megakles' 'faction.' This was because Megakles himself could not rise higher in the political ranks at Athens due to the curse that followed his family after the Kylonian affair.

[325] Blok 2000, p. 38; Hopper 1961, pp. 205-207

[326] Hdt. 1.60-1.61; Ch. 4.2.2

After the battle of Pallene, which allowed Peisistratos to "root" his final tyranny, Herodotos claims that the Alkmaeonidai were exiled.[327] However, the archon lists show that Kleisthenes was archon in 525/4.[328] Therefore, while it seems like a big part of archaic elite politics entailed the ability to exile one's opponent, the exiles themselves could be rather temporary. Forsdyke has termed this type of politics "aristocratic politics of exile."[329] The early *polis* did not have any kind of policing force, and weapons were carried openly in public by the elite, so competition for power in archaic Athens could become rather violent.[330] When one faction, or family, became powerful enough, they could exile their opponents from the city. This meant denying certain individuals access to at least some important arenas for elite competition, which would put them at a great disadvantage in the quest for prestige, influence, and power. However, the exiled family could make their way back into the fold once they had regained influence in their own time, or had acquired powerful friends at home or abroad who could help them.[331]

Nevertheless, it is difficult to ascertain exactly what archaic exile entailed. Would it have meant that the exiled parties were not physically allowed to enter the city of Athens, or were they excluded from the political Athenian community, or perhaps even from partaking in cults and festivals? Given that the exiles could be rather temporary, as appears to have been the case with several of the exiles of the Alkmaeonidai family, those afflicted must have been able to regain their influence and power somehow in order for them to return from exile.[332] This would presumably indicate that the exiles still had some kind of access to elite competitive arenas. In fact, it has been suggested that the exiled parties did not have to leave the territory of Attica as many have supposed.[333] It appears that many of the exiled families took up residence at localities a certain distance away from Athens. The Alkmaeonidai, for instance, The Alkmaeonidai, for instance, have ties to the very south of the peninsula, near Anavyssos.[334] The genos Gephyraioi

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[327] Hdt. 1.64; The Battle of Pallene is usually dated to 546/5
[328] SEG 10.352
[329] Forsdyke 2000, p. 232
[330] Anderson 2005, pp. 182-183
[331] Forsdyke 2000, pp. 232-236
[332] The Alkmaeonidai were exiled c.600 (Plut. Sol. 12), but had returned by the time of Peisistratos' first tyranny c.560 (Hdt. 1.59). They were exiled again after the Battle of Pallene c.546 (Hdt. 1.64), but must have returned at some point before c.524 when Kleisthenes was eponymous archon (SEG 10.352).
[333] See especially Anderson 2000, pp. 388-411
[334] Anderson 2000, pp. 388-411; Eliot 1967, pp. 279-285; The Alkmaeonid associations to the south of Attica have been argued based on several kouroi found in this area. The most important amongst them is the Kroisos statue

were registered in the deme Aphidna, but also controlled long-established cult practices in the city of Athens.[335] The Lykomidai had one branch registered in the far south near Anaphlystos, while another branch was registered near Athens at Phlya where they also had their cult centre.[336] These examples are illuminating in that they show that these localities cannot have been considered a part of the political community at Athens, or else the exiled families would presumably not have been allowed to settle there. Moreover, that the exiled families resided away from Athens for shorter or longer periods of time meant that the Athenian elites were connected to the Attic periphery and thus may have played a large part in bringing these other localities under the political influence of the Athenian *polis*.

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base (Athens, NM 4754), which has been identified as an Alkmaeonid grave marker. Also, the Herodotean "party of the coast" (1.59), of which Megakles was named leader, has been identified as the southern coast of Attica. Admittedly, the evidence is circumstantial.

[335] Hdt. 5.61; Anderson 2000, p. 401

[336] Anderson 2000, pp. 401-402; for the cult center at Phlya, Plut. Them. 1.2

## 4.3    The Peisistratids

### 4.3.1    Introduction

In studying sixth-century Athens, one will inevitably have to say something about the Peisistratids. The Peisistratid family have been variously credited with a large amount of the projects and developments that we have outlined in the previous chapters. In this section, we will have a closer look at which projects and transformations that have been ascribed to the tyrant and his family, as well as have a look at the attitudes prevalent in the primary sources of the fifth century, and how these may affect our reading. Importantly, we shall also examine what being a tyrant in this early period actually entailed, and how this may not have been as much an unconstitutional power as it was extra-constitutional.

### 4.3.2    Peisistratid Cultural Policy

The chronology of Peisistratos' tyrannies is still a matter of scholarly debate.[337] However, it is generally agreed that Peisistratos' first attempt at tyranny happened sometime around 561/0, and that the battle of Pallene happened in the mid-540s. Peisistratos' death has been dated to 528/7, the murder of Hipparchos to 514, and the expulsion of Hippias to 510.[338] Peisistratid presence in Athens thus seem to span quite a large part of the sixth century, and presumably for this reason many of the building projects and innovations of the century have been ascribed to the tyrants.[339] Among those we have already encountered are the Apollo Temple on Delos, the Apollo Pythios Altar, the Temple of Dionysos Eleuthereus, the Temple of Apollo Patroos and the Artemis Brauronia Precinct on the Acropolis. Outside of Athens, he has also been associated with the Eleusis "Peisistratean" Telesterion and the walls of Eleusis, as well as a temple of Athena at Sounion. Other important building works associated with the Peisistratids are the Old Athena Temple, the Altar of the Twelve Gods, the Olympeion, and Building F in the Agora.

　　　The projects described above have been linked to a so-called Peisistratid cultural policy. Peisistratos has been credited by many with the re-establishment of the Panathenaia in the 560s,

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[337] For the Peisistratos' attempts at tyranny, and the duration of these, see Hdt. 1.59-1.64; Ath. Pol. 13-15; Aristotle, *politics*, 1315b

[338] See for example, Lavelle 2005, p. 210

[339] A list of all projects commonly ascribed to the tyrants can be found in Sancisi-Weerdenburg 2000b, p. 80, n. 3

and his sons supposedly introduced and sanctioned Homeric recitations as part of the festival.[340] Books have been written about the developments in arts and cult during the tyranny[341] and the popularity and prominence of Herakles and Theseus have on multiple occasions been ascribed to the tyrants.[342] These connections, however, have been challenged by Sancisi-Weerdenburg and the contributors to her edited volume.[343] Blok, for instance, has pointed out that the literary sources make no mention of such a 'cultural policy' and that this should give us some pause.[344] In fact, many of the projects we have looked at cannot have been initiated by the Peisistratids, as they were not in power when they were begun.[345] Upon closer inspection there are but a few projects that can certainly be connected to the Peisistratids. The Olympeion southeast of the Acropolis was most certainly a project started by the Peisistratids, as it was left incomplete after the expulsion of Hippias in 510.[346] The Altars of Apollo Pythios and the Twelve Gods are also securely linked to Peisistratos the Younger.[347]

Nevertheless, the Peisistratids have been credited with far more projects than the few just mentioned. One wonders why this has been the case, when the archaeological and historical evidence do not contain such indications. In the words of Boersma, "the main argument for ascribing a stimulating role in urban development to Peisistratos is still that, according to historiographical data, he was there and he was tyrant."[348] I agree completely with Boersma that this is a rather weak argument. In fact, we do not possess much evidence at all for what the tyrants actually did while in power, nor what this power entailed. In the next section, we shall have a closer look at what it meant to by a tyrant in Archaic Athens.

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[340] See for example, Johnston and Mulroy 2009, pp. 5-15; On the addition of Homeric recitals to the Panathenaia, Plat. Hipparch. 228b
[341] Shapiro 1989
[342] See particularly Boardman 1972, 1975 & 1989; Connor 1970, pp. 143-157
[343] Sancisi-Weerdenburg 2000
[344] Blok 2000, pp. 24-26
[345] The Panathenaia, for instance, was founded before Peisistratos attempted his first tyranny (ch. 3.4). The Mysteries were also presumably instituted before his first tyranny (2.3).
[346] Aristotle, politics, 1313b; Anderson 2005, p. 194; Camp 2001, p. 36: the earliest remains of the temple were built in the mid-sixth century at the site of an earlier open sanctuary for Olympian Zeus. C.520 this temple was torn down and the construction of a new temple begun. This was not finished by the time Hippias was expelled from Athens, but was left in its incomplete state, supposedly as a reminder of the *hubris* of the tyrants.
[347] Thuc. 6.54 writes that Peisistratos the Younger dedicated both of these Altars during his archonship, which has been dated to 522/1 based on the fragment of a large marble block inscribed with the list of archons of Athens in the 520s, which records Peisistratos' name in the last line (Athens, Agora Museum I 4120). Fragments of the Altar of Apollo Pythios have been found near the Ilissos River, and the fragmented inscription on one of these blocks matches the inscription recorded *verbatim* by Thucydides (5.64.7) (IG I³ 948).
[348] Boersma 2000, p. 55

### 4.3.3    Early Greek Tyranny

Blok writes that the literary sources, by labelling Peisistratos' rule a tyranny, imply that the power wielded was somehow irregular, though it is not clear what his power was or how he maintained his dominant position.[349] During his rule, the traditional constitution was left undisturbed and the tyranny in general had a favourable reputation until the murder of Hipparchos.[350] So if the constitution was not disturbed during the rule of the tyrants, and everything was done as it had been before, in what way was the power of the tyrant irregular, and what did their rule actually entail? Neither was tyranny a phenomenon isolated to Athens. Tyrannies were, in fact, extremely common in the Greek world between the mid-seventh century and the beginning of the fifth.[351]

Anderson has written an important article that goes a long way in explaining these apparent contradictions.[352] In his view, the word tyrant with its pejorative connotations probably did not acquire this meaning until sometime after 510 and is thus misrepresenting for the situation in early Greece. In our period, tyrants could not be properly distinguished from other archaic leaders, and the term referred rather to a dominant style of leadership that flourished in the Early Archaic Period. Anderson wants to do away with five common assumptions about tyrants.[353] Firstly, the tyrants did not distance themselves from the mainstream ruling-class circles, but aligned themselves indiscriminately with the other leaders. Secondly, tyrants were not alone in taking part in self-aggrandizing building projects; in the Archaic Period, the responsibility for maintaining and developing a community's infrastructure naturally fell upon wealthy families and individuals, and there was competition involved in these ventures. Thirdly, though it is true that the early tyrants founded or developed major state cults, they did not have monopoly on such activities. This was simply a central feature of orthodox politics at the time. Fourthly, tyrants have often been seen as somehow pre-democratic, as they broke the elite monopoly on political power and championed the people. However, there is no compelling accounts of this type of behaviour, and the evidence rather points to tyrants seeking to supplant rivals as leaders, not

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[349] Blok 2000, pp. 31; 39; 47-48
[350] Ath. Pol. 16
[351] Parker 2007, p. 32
[352] Anderson 2005, pp. 173-215
[353] Anderson 2005, pp. 190-201

attempting to subvert the entire political order. The final assumption that Anderson deals with is that tyrants ruled illegitimately as dictators. As we have already mentioned, tyrants usually came to power by conventional means and they did not make any constitutional changes. We instead get an impression of institutional continuity.

It appears, rather, that tyranny was simply a realignment of power relations within the existing regime. A tyrant at this early time was a man who had prevailed over his competitors, usually by overmatching them in displays of arête. He was the first among equals, holding an extra-constitutional authority, which was not of a specific character but largely hegemonic in form. He had eclipsed his peers among the elite and won recognition as the unchallenged leader of the community.[354]

However, if this is correct, why are the fifth-century sources so negative towards Peisistratos? Firstly, we should not let it pass us by that Herodotos' story of Peisistratos' rise to power bears the very obvious marks of oral tradition – structured through stories with all three coups performed either by a trick, a ruse, or through deceit.[355] Moreover, the fifth-century Athenians denied any connection with the Peisistratids, especially after the Persian Wars. They were angry due to the part the Peisistratid family had played in aiding the Persians. In fact, the Peisistratids were officially reviled throughout the fifth century, and any positive images of them that did exist were simply a way for the Athenians to come to terms with the establishment and long duration of the tyranny.[356]

It is therefore likely that Peisistratos was, in fact, a tyrant in the sense that Anderson describes. He took part in the same kind of politics as his peers, involving competing at a number of different arenas in displaying his abundance of arête. The true chronology of his tyranny is outside the scope of this thesis, and it does not necessarily make much of a difference for the present investigation. It may have taken Peisistratos a long while to become the "dominant" elite in Athens, and he may have lost his position multiple times. What has become clear is that even though Peisistratos, and his sons after him, were tyrants at Athens in the sixth century, they were not the patrons of all the building projects that took place in the same period. In fact, elite politics

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[354] Anderson 2005 discusses where the term *turannos* originally came from and meant. The term had powerful imaginative appeal, suggesting power, luxury and divine favor. It was first used to refer to the "dominant" or "preeminent" man in the state. (pp. 202-215). This meaning fits much better with what we know about archaic politics in Athens.

[355] Hdt. 1.59-1.64; Sancisi-Weerdenburg 2000b, pp. 102-102

[356] Lavelle 2005, pp. 5-7

in this time period meant that other individuals would be able to exert themselves even if one of them was the 'tyrant.' Competition for power and influence still took place at the same arenas as before, and beautifying the city with expensive and marvellous building projects was certainly a way for elites to take part in this competition. Therefore, instead of focusing on a Peisistratid 'cultural policy' we should recognize that there was a trend current among the elites of the sixth century in Athens of spending their resources on glorifying the city of Athens and an array of important cults. The Peisistratids may simply have capitalized on this trend.

## 4.4    Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to highlight that for a long while political power was not predominantly expressed through polis institutions. Politics was an elite affair, both the kind that took place within and outside the institutional fabric of the state. This was a highly competitive environment where the elites wanted to outdo each other in displays of arête. Elite status was not a social category, but a fluid and dynamic one open to all who were able to partake in the competition for excellence. Power was generated by arête, and in order to rule, one had to possess more arête than the rest.

Arête was displayed through so-called modes of social recognition – those practices that made evident the rank of the individual. Proving one's heroic ancestry was one of these modes, and an important legitimizing tool. Inter-marriage was another such instrument of social self-promotion. The competition was not restricted to particular poleis, but could take place across borders, especially at Panhellenic sanctuaries. Here the elites could build treasuries, make dedications, and offer rich votives as displays of the prestige and status of themselves and their communities. Monuments and dedications granted the dedicators remarkable visibility, and in style and form, the elites competed with each other in originality.[357] Even the death of close family and friends could be capitalized on. Funeral monuments often publicized the name and expenditure of the bereaved, as well as the name of the famous artisan who had completed the work. Wealth was only an important factor in this competitive environment because it granted access to arenas where the competitions took place. Additionally, wealth allowed individuals to attain luxury goods, whose otherness and rarity further publicized their prestige and influence.

This highly competitive atmosphere could also turn violent, and the ability to exile one's opponents from the city also played a large part in archaic elite politics. Though the exiles were predominantly temporary in duration, and though we cannot be sure exactly what the exile entailed, presumably it involved denying access to some important arenas where social recognition could be won. The exiles could return to Athens once they had regained some influence, and the importance of powerful friends at home or abroad were undoubtedly important in this respect. Alliances were formed for longer or shorter durations of time depending on the

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[357] The small-scale but rich structures mentioned in Ch. 3.4.2 should be seen as examples of this.

willingness, needs, and desires of those involved. The ability to keep and maintain important and powerful friends and allies was thus essential for the archaic elites. The frequent exiles from Athens may help explain why so many prominent Athenian families have connections both to the city district and localities at the periphery. In fact, that the exiles did not have to leave Attica shows that places a distance away from Athens could not have been part of the Athenian political structure at this early time. Additionally, the connections between the elites and periphery may have played an important part in the gradual process that saw all localities of Attica incorporated in the political structure at Athens.

In this chapter, I have also argued that the Peisistratids only held power occasionally, and as such cannot have been the patrons of all the building projects described in this and earlier chapters. That they were there and were tyrants in the sixth century is not a strong enough reason to ascribe so many of these developments to them. In fact, I have argued that a tyrant's power was extraconstitutional, meaning that his authority did not come from his position in the political structure of the polis. Rather, a tyrant was the 'dominant' elite, the winner of the competition for excellence. This explains why the political institutions and offices at Athens operated as before throughout Peisistratid tyranny. The power of the tyrant was his ability to influence the other members of the state and shape electoral votes.

However, though one individual was able to rise to the rank of tyrant, did not mean that the competition for excellence ceased. In fact, it still took place at the same arenas as before, and beautifying the city with expensive and marvellous building projects was certainly a way for elites to take part in this competition. Therefore, instead of focusing on a Peisistratid 'cultural policy' we should recognize that there was a trend current among the elites of the sixth century in Athens of spending their resources on glorifying the city of Athens and on enhancing an array of important cults. The Peisistratids may simply have capitalized on this trend. Outside the strictly political sphere, then, we see the centre and periphery being brought closer together through communal cults and the manipulation of myths and the establishment of festivals. In the next chapter, we shall have a closer look at some other sixth-century developments that have so far gone unmentioned. The chapter will focus on the ways the archaic population of Attica were grouped and how the Kleisthenic reforms changed some of these groupings while others were left intact.

Chapter 5

# REFORMS

## 5.1    Introduction

In the previous chapters, a lot has been said about the gradual transformation of Athenian space throughout the sixth century, as a result of elite competition for power, influence and position in society. This chapter, however, will take a closer look at what appears to be the culminating point of this gradual process right before the turn of the century.

Around the middle of the century, a new area was being prepared on the flat area below the Acropolis to the west, which had previously been a site of private homestead and burial plots. This area was to become the "Classical Agora". The Archaic Agora, which was still in use in the sixth century, lay to the east of the citadel. We shall have a closer look at how the "New Agora" began to take form in the sixth century, as well as examine the Herms traditionally attributed to Hipparchos, and the so-called Peisistratid deme-judges. The focus of the chapter, however, will be the Kleisthenic reforms and their effect on Attic society, along with a brief discussion on the importance of the phratries.

## 5.2 Athenian Political Space

### 5.2.1 Introduction

In particular, this section will focus on three sixth century developments that appear to have concrete political connotations. It was in the sixth century that a new Agora began to take shape, and we shall have a look at how this happened. We shall also discuss the herms that were supposedly invented or set up by Hipparchos throughout Attica, and the so-called Peisistratid deme-judges.

### 5.2.2 The "Classical Agora"

The area that was to become the "Classical Agora" had been a domestic quarter and burial ground before the sixth century. The last four graves in the area are dated between 700-650, and the number of wells decreased significantly after this. This has been seen as a sign that private residences were eliminated from the area. In the sixth century, burials were banned from the area and transferred to the periphery of the polis territory. In this period, the definition of the roughly triangular area of the "Classical Agora" was sharpened by three particular building projects, all of which have traditionally been associated with the Peisistratids. At the southeast corner, a small fountain-house was built. Pottery from beneath the floor and the Kara limestone set in a polygonal style indicate that the fountain-house was built around 530-520. The building of such a fountain-house is indicative of the new function the space was supposed to fulfil; here the many people who would frequent the public space would be supplied with water. At the southwest corner, a large building was built between 550-520.[358] This building has been named Building F and it was a large and irregular residential complex with groups of rooms and provisions for cooking. Though these things are indicative of a domestic function, the building is larger than any known Athenian house of the period. Because of the size of the building and the date of its construction, some have argued that this must have been the palace of the tyrants.[359] In the final

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[358] See in general Camp 2001, pp. 32-35; Hurwit 1991, pp. 120-121; On the dating of wells and graves, see also D'Onofrio 1997, p. 67; Johnston and Mulroy 2009, p. 48; On the fountain-house, see also Osborne 2007, p. 196; On Building F, see also Sancisi-Weerdenburg 2000b, p. 85

[359] See f.ex. Hurwit 1999, pp. 104-126

corner of the Agora, at the northern entrance, the Altar of the Twelve Gods was dedicated by Peisistratos the Younger, presumably during his archonship of 522/1.[360]

The triangular area formed by these three constructions was bounded on the east by the Panathenaic Way.[361] Osborne, however, has questioned whether the three constructions gave the area any special character, since the Altar of the Twelve Gods and the Fountain-House were more than two hundred metres apart.[362] In fact, exactly when the area became the new civic space and centre of the city as it definitely was in the Classical period, is a matter of debate. The Archaic Agora to the east still functioned as the civic centre during the tyranny. However, I think it is clear that the roughly triangular area was demarcated at this point, and that it was being prepared for civic life. This would certainly explain why private residences where moved away from the area and burials prohibited.

At the turn of the century, the area transformed further. Around 500, The Old Bouleuterion was built in the immediate vicinity of Building F, which was itself remodelled and may have served as a dining hall for the constitutionally elected nine archons.[363] At the same time stones were set along the edge of the Agora, thus defining the space further.[364]

### 5.2.3   Herms

The Altar of the Twelve Gods is related to another sixth-century innovation, namely the Herms. A herm is a bearded head of Hermes atop an ithyphallic pillar.[365] According to Shapiro, they

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[360] Thuc. 6.54 writes that Peisistratos the Younger dedicated both this and an Altar of Apollo Pythios during his archonship. His archonship has been dated based on the fragment of a large marble block inscribed with a list of archons of Athens in the 520s, which records Peisistratos' name in the last line (Athens, Agora Museum I 4120). Note also that fragments of Peisistratos the Younger's dedicatory inscription on the Altar of Apollo Pythios has been found, which matches the inscription recorded *verbatim* by Thucydides (cf. Thuc. 5.64.7 and IG I³ 948). Thucydides writes that the inscription of the Altar of the Twelve Gods had been obliterated by the Athenians, which would explain why it is not present on the remains of the Altar that can still be seen in the "Classical Agora" at Athens. Though there seems to be general agreement that Peisistratos the Younger dedicated these two altars, the dates of the dedications are disputed. See for example Arnush 1995, who argues that the Altar of Apollo Pythios was dedicated By Peisistratos the Younger in the early fifth century as a commemoration of his earlier archonship. This would explain why the letterforms and style of the inscription are consistent with dates from the early fifth century. On the Altar of the Twelve Gods, see also Camp 2001, pp. 32-35; Hurwit 1999, pp. 120-121; Johnston and Mulroy 2009, pp. 5-6; Osborne 2007, p. 196
[361] Hurwit 1999, pp. 120-121
[362] Osborne 2007, p. 196
[363] Hurwit 1999, pp. 120-121; Pottery with the letters ΔE were found on the site during excavations, which indicate that the building was public property in the fifth century.
[364] Mersch 1997, p. 50
[365] Hall 2007a, p. 227; Shapiro 1989, p. 125

were pre-Greek in origin, existing outside of Attica in primitive elements of the form.[366] A literary tradition, however, claims that Hipparchos was the one who invented the herms.[367] In this (Pseudo-) Platonic dialogue, Socrates tells his interlocutors that Hipparchos educated his citizens in order to have subjects of the highest excellence, and then wanted to do the same for the rural population of Attica. He therefore set up figures of Hermes for them along the roads incised with "the things that he considered the wisest" as testimonies of his wisdom. According to Herodotos, however, the herms served as central milestones of the city, marking the halfway point between towns and villages in the periphery of Attica and the Altar of the Twelve Gods – the new symbolic centre of the city.[368]

Unfortunately, while the herms were especially common in the Classical Period, only a few earlier examples have been uncovered.[369] There are a couple of badly damaged examples found at Sounion and Rhamnous, which may date to the first half of the sixth century, and a third from Rhamnous that might be dated to the second half of the sixth century.[370] In the eighteenth century, a particularly striking example was found at modern Koropi, though it was later lost again. Fortunately, photographic evidence remains.[371] This herm corroborates Herodotos' statement that the herms marked the halfway point between periphery and centre. This particular herm marked the halfway point between Kephale in the south of Attica and the Altar of the Twelve Gods.[372] We have remarked before the uncertainty concerning the reach, or jurisdiction if you will, of Athenian political power, as well as how it appears that many of the polis institutions apparently only concerned the population of Athens and the Pedion.[373] The interesting thing about this particular herm, then, is that it was found on the further side of Mount Hymettos. The herm could therefore be considered proof that this area was included (or beginning to be included) within the network of arterial roads radiating from the city of Athens. Given that the Altar of the Twelve Gods was (most likely) set up by the eponymous archon of that year, namely Peisistratos the Younger, in a space that for a good part of the century had been prepared for public use, it would be reasonable to assume that the herms were set up by some kind of central

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[366] Shapiro 1989, p. 127
[367] Plato. Hipparch. 228b-229d
[368] Hdt. 2.7; Anderson 2000, pp. 410-411; Camp 2001, pp. 32-35; Hall 2007a, p. 227
[369] See Quinn 2007, pp. 93-105
[370] Quinn 2007, p. 93, n. 36
[371] Anderson 2000, pp. 410-411; Hall 2007a, p. 227; Quinn 2007, p. 94
[372] IG I3 1023; Anderson 2000, pp. 410-411
[373] Ch. 1.3 and 1.4

authority at Athens. In fact, in the placement of herms outside the *pedion* we might find that steps were being taken to extend Athenian administrative reach across the peninsula.[374]

Due to the meagre state of the evidence we cannot ascertain when exactly the herms were set up, though it is perhaps significant that vase painters first begun to paint herms in the late sixth century in functions that are domestic, religious as well as civic.[375] This may indicate that the herms, even if they existed before, were not particularly significant until this period.

### 5.2.4   Deme-Judges

The author of the *Athenaion Politeia* writes that Peisistratos did a number of things in order to keep the rural population away from the city.[376] He advanced loans to the poor so that they might support themselves by farming, which would keep them scattered about in the country. It would also prevent them from gaining experience in public affairs, and thus also an interest in public life. For this reason, he also organized "deme-judges" who would go into the country on circuit to inspect and settle disputes so that the rural population would not neglect their crops by coming into the city.

Unfortunately, we have no way of knowing how far into the countryside these travelling deme-judges ventured. Did they serve the entire peninsula of Attica, or just the *pedion*? Could they have served communities outside the *pedion* that were still in the relative vicinity of the city of Athens, but not the furthest reaches of the peninsula? After all, we have just seen evidence that Athens did take steps with the setting up of herms to extend some sort of reach outside the *pedion*. Admittedly, however, there is a big difference between setting up road markers for passers-by to see, and sending out jurors with authority to settle disputes and inspect the localities of Attica. Nevertheless, whatever territory these jurors covered in their travels, their existence must have promoted a kind of unity that enforced the idea of Athens as the central civic space of Attica, encouraging a sense of solidarity between centre and periphery.[377]

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[374] Anderson 2000, pp. 410-411; Hall 2007a, p. 227; Quinn 2007, p. 94

[375] Quinn 2007, p. 93; 100

[376] Ath. Pol. 16.2-7

[377] On the jurisdiction of the deme-judges: Anderson 2000, pp. 410-411; Hall 2007a, p. 227; Stahl and Walter 2009, p. 150; Generally about the deme-judges: McGlew 1993, p. 79; Mitchell 2013, p. 127; Quinn 2007, p. 95

### 5.2.5 Concluding Remarks

The sixth century thus appears to have been an important phase in the history of Athenian civic space. Though the Archaic Agora was still in use, a new Agora began to take form, with the construction of Building F, the Fountain-House and the Altar of the Twelve Gods. No private residence or burials were allowed on the site anymore. At the turn of the century, the area gained an even more civic character when Building F was remodelled and transformed into a public hall for the constitutionally elected nine archons, and stones were set along the edge of the Agora to further define the space.

Though herms did exist before the late sixth century, this was probably the time when they became truly popular. They marked the halfway point between localities at the periphery and the new symbolical centre of Athens, the Altar of the Twelve Gods. Deme-judges also travelled into the countryside at some point in the sixth century, though we cannot determine the extent of their jurisdiction.

Given that the most important of these changes appear to occur at the end of the sixth century, we may now have a look at what else occurred in Athens at this time. The next section will have a closer look at the Kleisthenic reforms, the division of the Attic peninsula into demes, and other units that the Attic population were part of in the Archaic Period.

## 5.3    The Culminating Point

### 5.3.1    Introduction

In Chapter 1.4.5, we saw how the Athenian *polis* and the Attic *ethnos* emerged as two parallel but subtly differentiated tiers of identity in the tenth century. With the resettlement of the population at the same time, communities appeared across the peninsula that existed in some sort of relative dependence upon Athens. It is difficult to ascertain exactly what this dependency entailed, especially after the seventh century when the settlements began practicing their own cults. We have seen that, in spite of whatever dependence that was in place, Athenian political jurisdiction did not reach much further than to the edges of the *pedion*.[378] However, the relationship that did exist between localities in Attica and Athens probably spurred a desire for the integration of said localities into the political structure at Athens. The elites must have been important in this respect, as they would have been closely connected through elite competition taking place at a variety of arenas. In the previous chapters, we have recognised steps that were taken to highlight that all Atticans shared a common past and heritage, as well as steps taken to bring important peripheral cults to Athens. The sixth century saw the emergence of a trend that wished to emphasize that every person in Attica was, in fact, Athenian.

In this section we will examine some social groupings that existed both before and after the Kleisthenic reforms, and try to discover the importance of these in the gradual process that would lead to the alignment of the Athenian *polis* and the Attic *ethnos* tiers of identity. We shall also have a look at the Kleisthenic reforms themselves. They have been viewed as the precursor of democracy, as they supposedly paved the way for later democratic reforms. However, in this chapter I will argue that it was not the content of the reforms, but rather their reach, that was radical.

### 5.3.2    The Phratries

The Phratries existed already before the Kleisthenic reforms. In fact, after the reforms, they became an essential aspect in determining who were entitled to Athenian citizenship. Almost all the evidence on them relates to the period between 450 and 250, which makes it difficult for

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[378] Ch. 1.3 and 1.5

us to establish their nature in our period.[379] The phratries were recognized as part of a shared Ionian heritage, though scholars are divided on whether or not they are a genuine element of common Ionian heritage predating the migrations, or if they are products of later developments in the Dark Age or later periods.[380] Draco's law on homicide might serve as a *terminus ante quem* for the phratries, as they appear to be mentioned in the law.[381] Draco's laws were first conceived in 622/21. Presumably the reason why we still know about them is firstly that even though Solon supposedly repealed all of Draco's laws, he kept the law on homicide.[382] Secondly, the law was republished in the fifth century.[383] The law is highly fragmentary, but the restoration seems to imply that every Athenian was a member of a phratry at the time of the law.[384] If the decree was republished without emendation, and if the restoration is correct, then we do indeed have a *terminus ante quem* for the phratries.

However, even if we can be rather certain that the phratries existed in our period, their nature at this point is harder to ascertain. In the fourth century, phratry membership was a fundamental aspect of citizenship and membership was hereditary in the male line. It does not appear that the members of the phratries were, or conceived of themselves as, descended from a common ancestor, though they do have some territorial connections. In the later periods, the phratries could have connections with city as well as periphery. Stephen Lambert has remarked that, in fact, a characteristic aspect of the phratries was their ability to split or fuse in response to different kinds of pressures.[385]

The phratries also had a religious aspect. The three major deities of the phratries were Zeus Phratrios, Athena Phratria and Apollo Patroos. Their main festival was the Apatouria, where young men who had come of age were introduced into the phratry by their fathers. At this festival

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[379]On the Phratries, see especially Lambert 1993

[380] See for example, Lambert 1993 (pp. 267-268) who believe they date back in some form to the later Mycenaean period; and Hall 2007a and 2007b who doubts the historicity of the Ionian migrations and thus would argue the latter view.

[381] Ath. Pol. 4; 7.1; Aristotle, *Politics*, 1274b; Plut. Sol. 17.1; Andoc. 1.83; IG I³ 104: the inscription dates to 409/8.

[382] Ath. Pol. 7.1; Plut. Sol. 17.1

[383] IG I³ 104: This inscription was inscribed on a marble stele in 409/8. The text states that it is a republication of Draco's law on homicide. Additionally, although the inscription is stone, it refers to laws written on *axones* – wooden tablets. Thus, it is even clearer that this is a republication on stone of an earlier inscription on wood.

[384] IG I³ 104, ll. 16-19 «If none of these exist but he killed unwillingly and the fifty-one appeal judges decide that he killed unwillingly, let ten members of the phratry allow him to enter if they are willing." (Trans. P. J. Rhodes, Attic Inscriptions Online); Lambert 1993, p. 249

[385] Lambert 1993, p. 11; 242; see also Hall 2007a, p. 231

communal celebration was in focus. The members ate and drank with each other, their children competed, and sacrifices were offered. The religious aspect of the phratries knitted the members together and confirmed and conferred their phratry identity.[386]

Given that the phratries were important for evaluating citizenship claims even after the Kleisthenic reforms, this suggests that they were a primary mode of socio-political organization not just in Athens but also in all of Attica. In fact, it is highly unlikely that they were a sixth-century invention created in order to unite the population since phratry membership tended to shift over time, splitting or fusing depending on circumstances.[387] So even though we do not know what the internal organization of the phratries was in our period, or how they would have differed from their form in the fourth century, we have here a concrete social group that encompassed the entire Attic population before the Athenian polis became the political centre of the peninsula. The phratries are, as such, examples of how the population of Attica did share a common heritage, one that would become essential in determining rights to Athenian citizenship after the Kleisthenic reforms.

### 5.3.3   The Kleisthenic Reforms

In the sixth century, and probably a little earlier, the phratries ran parallel to, but independent from, another system based on the four Ionian *phylai*. These are the ones that were replaced by ten new ones by Kleisthenes. The old tribes were subdivided into two further groups. Each of the four tribes were divided into three *trittyes*, and each *trittyes* was again divided into twelve *naukraries*.[388] What one believes about the origins of the four Ionian *phylai* depends on whether or not one believes in the historicity of the Ionian migration. Jonathan Hall has argued that they must have been the outcomes of a rational repartition of the citizen body and are thus unlikely to predate the late-eighth or seventh centuries.[389] These dates have also been suggested for the origins of the *trittyes* and the *naukraries*, which do not have any commonality with the Ionian world.[390] These social groups, particularly the latter two, seem to have had a predominantly civic character. Their exact role and function is outside the scope of this paper, but we should note that

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[386] Blok 2000, pp. 36-37; Frost 1994, p. 49; Lambert 1993, pp. 153-154; p. 207; pp. 239-241
[387] Hall 2007a, p. 231
[388] Ath.Pol. 21.3; Hall 2007a, p. 215; Lambert 1993, p. 3
[389] Hall 2007a, p. 223
[390] Lambert 1993, pp. 271-272

the *trittyes* and *naukraries*, and perhaps also the Ionian *phylai*, did not comprise the population outside the pedion.[391] The indications of this come from changes made by the Kleisthenic reforms, which we shall see presently.

The Kleisthenic reforms divided the whole population of Attica into ten tribes, each named after an Attic hero.[392] Attica was also divided into thirty *trittyes*, ten from the coast, ten from the plain, and ten from the city district. Three *trittyes* were assigned to each of the ten tribes by lot so that the tribe would have a share in all the districts. Finally, Kleisthenes created the demes, a hundred-and-forty of which are known.[393] After the reforms were implemented, membership of a deme was the requirement for access to the political institutions at Athens. The demespeople were now able to vote in the assembly or serve on juries. Men had to register in their deme at eighteen, or they would be deprived of their citizen rights. Equally important was belonging to a tribe. From the tribes, fifty members were chosen to sit on the new Council of 500, and the tribes also functioned as military rosters for mobilization. From this point on, Athens had a standing army.

Jonathan Hall has remarked that the reforms were not as radical as first supposed.[394] Many of the demes were probably based on the former *naukraries*, of which there were forty-eight. Interestingly, forty-eight is close to a third of a hundred-and-forty. This may indicate that only the *pedion* was divided into *naukraries* before the reforms. If this is correct, it is yet another indication that the Athenian *polis* did not have jurisdiction beyond the *pedion* until the Kleisthenic reforms. Therefore, the radicality of the reforms is exactly that, for the first time, the entire Attic peninsula was incorporated into the Athenian state apparatus.[395]

The author of the *Athenaion Politeia* says that Kleisthenes created the tribal repartition in order to mix up the whole population so that more might take part in the government.[396] This statement appears to support the argument above. By mixing up the population into tribes, incorporating the other localities of Attica, the entire Attic population was allowed to take part in the government of the Athenian *polis*. This had the added benefit of extending Athens' influence, which may have been the intention of the reforms. One may say that the Kleisthenic reforms were

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[391] Hall 2007a, pp. 215-223
[392] The reforms are described by the literary sources: Hdt. 5.66-9; Ath. Pol. 21-2
[393] Hall 2007a, p. 213
[394] Hall 2007a, pp. 213-223
[395] See also, Blok 2000, p. 37; Hall 2007a, pp. 218-222
[396] Ath. Pol. 21.2

the culmination of the long-current trend in the sixth century of knitting the communities together. Their "democratic" content should perhaps not be overstated.

### 5.3.4   The Purpose and Effect of the Reforms

In Chapter 3.3 I argued that the notion of a *synoecism* by Theseus stems from exactly this time, and that it was used specifically to create an ancient precedent for the innovative changes set in motion by the Kleisthenic reforms. This was also the first time Theseus was anything more than a local hero and that a cycle of his deeds was created in an attempt to compete with the popularity of Herakles. We have noted before that it was in times of radical change in society that myths were invented to traditionalize and legitimize these changes.[397] It is noteworthy then that the focus of the Theseus-myth is exactly the political *synoecism* of Attica. This is another indication that it was the reach and effect of the reforms that were radical, rather than their explicit political content in terms of institutional changes.

Additionally, the ten new tribes were given the names of mythological heroes from Attica.[398] It has been observed that some of them have stronger connections with other localities in Attica than Athens herself.[399] Hippothoon, for instance, is associated with Eleusis, while Ajax is Salaminian. It is significant that the members of each tribe came from several different parts of Attica. After the reforms, then, whenever the Athenian males partook in political decision-making, trained or fought in wars, they would find themselves next to citizens they probably had not encountered before from other localities in Attica. This promoted a new sense of unity. The tribes had their own cult places, shrines, treasuries, officials, meetings, and communal meals at festivals. They competed with each other for prestige, could pass honorary decrees, and award honorific crowns. At the City Dionysia and the Panathenaia, the tribe sponsored dinner for all its members.[400] More than one scholar has remarked that the tribal reforms and the allotment of demes into *trittyes* appear expressly designed to counterbalance local allegiances and identities in order to create a new pan-attic unity.[401] The localities of the Marathonian Tetrapolis, for instance, were placed in two different tribes.

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[397] Ch. 3.2
[398] Pausanias (1.5.2-4) names them: Hippothoon, Antiochus, Ajax, Leos, Erechtheus, Aegeus, Oeneus; Acamas, Cecrops, and Pandion. See also, Higbie 1997, p. 295
[399] Higbie 1997, p. 295
[400] Connor 1987, pp. 41-42; Hall 2007a, p. 217; Frost 1985, pp. 283-284 on military service of the tribes
[401] See especially Anderson 2000, pp. 404-405 and Lewis 1963, pp. 34-35

Soon after the reforms, in 506, the Athenians engaged in a war with the Boeotians and the Chalcidians.[402] Warfare has been referred to as a crystallizing agent and undoubtedly the new tribal regiments inspired a new kind of solidarity.[403] In this war, and especially in the Persian Wars that were to follow, the Athenians fought side by side with their fellow tribesmen from communities all over Attica. Wars, then, may have had a consolidating effect on the new pan-attic unity.

However, we must not exaggerate the effects of the reforms. There was still one social unit that appears to have been in some senses the more important political unit, namely the demes. Parker has referred to the religious life of a deme as a mini polis.[404] Public activity in the demes were in fact synonymous with cult; sacrifices were made on behalf of the deme, and an assembly debated questions of cult. Though the demes celebrated the major state cults, they also cultivated ancient and local heroes and minor deities. Even in the fourth century, there was a certain dichotomy between deme and state religious activity. The notable exceptions occurred during major state festivals, when it appears that the demespeople would indeed travel to Athens or Eleusis instead of observing these festivals locally.[405] When it came to local religious activities, these were not financed by the state, nor did the demes contribute to the financing of major state festivals. Their programs were rather financed locally. Thus the deme was by far the most personal and regular arena for religious activity in a person's life.[406]

In some senses, then, life in the localities of Attica appear to have gone on in much the same way as before, at least in the sense of daily life. The population still venerated the same heroes in the same places, with the addition of the major state cults that occasionally made them travel into the city. Nevertheless, with the incorporation of all settlements of Attica into the political structure at Athens, and with division of the population into new social units, the Attic population at large became officially Athenian. The Kleisthenic reforms were the culminating point of a process that had spanned large parts of the sixth century, which gradually aligned the Athenian *polis* and the Attic *ethnos* tiers of identity.

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[402] Hdt. 5.78
[403] De Polignac 1995, pp. 151-152
[404] Parker 2005, p. 64; see also Lambert 1993, p. 206
[405] Mikalson 1977, p. 428
[406] Mikalson 1977, pp. 431-435

## 5.4 Conclusion

To sum up, throughout the sixth century, the idea the population of Attica shared a common past and heritage was emphasized, with a goal of incorporating the entire peninsula under the political structure at Athens. The culminating point in this process was the Kleisthenic reforms. Through them, Attica was united politically with a centre at Athens. The radicality of the reforms are thus best seen through their jurisdiction rather than their explicit content, which created a new sense of unity based on a mixing up of the population into tribes named after Attic heroes. The tribes can also be seen as involved in an attempt at breaking up and weakening older local allegiances. However, even after the reforms, the local communities of Attica, now divided into demes, were still the most personal and relevant political unit for most of the population. Life in the demes appears to have gone on much like it had before, with the exception of the obvious occasional trips the demespeople made into Athens in order to fulfil their political duties as well as to celebrate major state festivals. The Kleisthenic reforms should thus be seen as the definite point of political *synoecism*, a process that had begun much earlier in the century.

This chapter started out by mentioning another few developments from the sixth century that may now be connected to these reforms. Although changes occurred in the Agora already in the mid-sixth century, it was not until after the reforms that the area acquired a definite civic character. This is seen in the remodelling of Building F into a public hall for the nine archons, as well as the stones that were laid down to give the space a sharpened definition. The herms can also be placed within this context. Their popularity in the late sixth-century may have been due to their placement all around Attica in this period. It would certainly be fitting if these herms became a kind of visual expression of the new unity, everywhere professing how far away you were from the new Attic-Athenian polis centre. We cannot establish when exactly the deme-judges were sent out, nor how far away from Athens they travelled, but I suppose that after the reforms they were sent to all the corners of the peninsula. If this is true, then their presence in the demes may also have helped emphasize the influence of the centre across Attica.

# Conclusion

The question I set out to answer in this thesis was, when did Attica become politically united and centred upon Athens, and how did the unification come about?

Firstly, it has become clear that there occurred in the twelfth century a physical movement of population from Attic settlements to Athens, which according to the technical definition of the word could be termed a *synoecism*. However, in this thesis we have rather aimed to discover when the settlements of Attica were made part of the political fabric of the Athenian city-state, namely a political *synoecism*. One could perhaps argue that when the Attic countryside was repopulated, the new settlements that sprung up were politically united with Athens. This, however, is not backed up by the evidence, which indicates an emphasis on local authority rather than a centralization process taking place.

Another argument could be that the Athenian *synoecism*-myth, which I have placed in the sixth-century, should be considered a memory of the historical twelfth-century movement of the Attic population into Athens. However, for an event to survive the temporal horizon of living memory and become part of cultural memory, it would have to be institutionalized in some way, through, for instance, commemoration or repetition of the event, being written down or by being ritualized. Nothing like this appears to have happened until hundreds of years after the twelfth-century population movement. Also, the Athenian *synoecism*-myth tells the tale of a political *syenocism* without mention of any kind of population movement, and it should therefore not be associated with what happened in the twelfth century.

Given that evidence has not been found for a political *synoecism* down through the seventh century, and knowing that the peninsula was politically united in the fifth century, the unification of Attica must have occurred in the sixth century. Therefore, we have looked at changes and developments that occurred at this time that could be related to a process of unification. In this respect, religion has been important. The nature of Greek religion entails that there was no strict distinction between the sacred and the civic. Sanctuaries were important rallying points for communities, as well as places where identities, roles, and positions in society were constantly negotiated and displayed. The importance of cult sites ensured that also the gods had to be incorporated into the state in processes of *synoecism* in order for it to be successful. Seen in this light, the establishment in the heart of Athens of the branch sanctuaries of Attic

peripheral cults in the sixth century is striking and illuminating. In fact, setting up these sanctuaries in the heart of the city, granted the Athenians a certain amount of control over these important peripheral cults. Additionally, the processions that went from a sanctuary to its deity's place of origin worked as a demarcation of the territory the Athenians wished, and perhaps now claimed, to control. The society visualized and performed for itself the link that now existed between centre and periphery. Moreover, that the deities were brought to the same place, "collected" on and around the Acropolis, emphasized that Athens was, in fact, the centre of Attica and favoured by the gods. The sanctuaries were sacred emblems of the extension of Athenian power, showing that Athens now exerted power and influence that extended to the very borders of the Attic peninsula.

Whether the sanctuaries were brought to Athens by the Athenian state or by powerful Athenian individuals is difficult to determine, though the nature of Archaic Politics is indicative of individuals having the opportunity to partake in such activities, that is, the building and establishment of sanctuaries, outside their official capacity as magistrates of Athens. In fact, Attic-Athenian politics was a highly competitive elite environment, where prominent individuals competed to exceed each other in the abundance of the intrinsic quality *arête.* Political power could be expressed by having more *arête* than one's peers, which meant that politics took place both within and outside the institutional fabric of the state. *Arête*, on the other hand, could be won and displayed at various arenas, for instance by building treasuries, making dedications, and offering rich votives. Monuments and dedications granted the dedicators remarkable visibility, and in style and form, the elites competed with each other in originality. Thus it is possible to view the establishment of branch sanctuaries and their enhancement, and especially the sixth-century transformation of the Acropolis, as a visible result of this competitive atmosphere.

Moreover, that an important part of Archaic elite politics was the ability to exile one's opponents from the city, and, as I have argued, that this exile did not entail being forced to leave Attica as a whole, lead to a considerable amount of prominent Athenian individuals taking up residence at various places in Attica situated some distance away from the city. While in exile, these families would presumably have built up a powerbase at their homes-in-exile, while attempting to regain enough influence to be granted renewed access to Athens (whatever this would have entailed). Whenever the exiles were able to return to Athens, they may, in turn, have done so with a new desire to bring their peripheral power-base with them, or at least to keep

patronizing cults that had become important to them while in exile. In any case, elite competition did entail beautifying the city with marvellous building projects and the enhancement of important cults, in order for the elite to prove their position within the community and the favour they received from the gods. This, in turn, led to the centre and the periphery being brought closer together through communal cults, processions, and festivals.

Attempts at exerting Athenian influence across Attica was also being made by shaping myth-histories. In the sixth century, many Athenian myths made the city of Athens the centre of Attica and attempted to draw the population of Attica together under her influence. Myths, we have seen, were synonymous with 'truth'. They were perceived as the real and early history of the people from a time it was difficult to be certain about, and were often used in an exemplary fashion in order to talk about the present. They were highly flexible tools for the strategic shaping of the present situation. Their 'presentational' and 'traditionalizing' qualities deflected questioning and granted them further authority and legitimacy. Especially in times of rapid societal transformation, a need was felt for a past precedent. It is within this context we should view the emergence of the aforementioned *synoecism*-myth. With the Kleisthenic tribal reforms of 508/7, the entire population of Attica was mixed up and divided into new social units. Through the reforms, the settlements of Attica were effectively incorporated into the Athenian city-state. In this context, a need must have been felt to legitimize the innovations by referring to a past precedent. The *synoecism*-myth concerning Theseus became this past precedent. According to the myth, they were all simply reverting to a past state of affairs, when Theseus united the independent *poleis* of the peninsula, establishing a single *bouleuterion* and *prytaneion* for all the inhabitants of the state. Through the *synoecism*-myth, the past precedent was juxtaposed with the innovations of the present in order to legitimize them. The evidence we have looked at confirms that Theseus became a popular figure in the last decade of the sixth century, which lends support to the hypothesis that the *synoecism*-myth also emerged in this period. However, we cannot say whether the myth emerged before the reforms to promote and prepare for the new unity, or at the same time or right after the reforms in order to explain and justify them. This question is outside the scope of this thesis, and its answer would not affect the main argument of this thesis.

The answer to the research question of this thesis can therefore be summed up in the following manner. Throughout the sixth century, beginning perhaps properly in the 560s, the idea that the population of Attica shared a common past and heritage was emphasized through the

shaping and negotiation of common cults and myths, leading to an incorporation of the entire peninsula into the political structure at Athens. The culminating point of this process was the Kleisthenic reforms. Through them, Attica was united politically with a centre at Athens, with the population mixed up into tribes named after Attic heroes. The tribes should also be seen as involved in an attempt at breaking up and weakening older local allegiances. However, even after the reforms, the local communities of Attica, now divided into demes, were still the most personal and relevant political unit for most of the population. However, from the reforms onwards, all inhabitants of Attica were officially considered to be Athenian citizens.

Should my conclusions be correct, it appears that Attica was officially and politically united rather later than what the generally accepted view maintains, even though, we must not forget, some sort of relationship and dependence probably did exist between Athens and her neighbouring settlements also before this time. However, if the settlements were not part of the Athenian political structure, or were not an integral part of said structure, until the sixth century, it affects the way we study the emergence of the Athenian *polis* (as the community centred upon the city territory and its immediate hinterlands in the *pedion*), and thus also the extent of Athenian citizenship. Certainly, in this case, the extent of the influence of the Athenian *polis* must be questioned, and it would be interesting to discover what sort of relationships existed between this undoubtedly important and prominent city and her neighbouring settlements. Moreover, one wonders about the nature and the internal dynamics of the Attic settlements before they were incorporated into the Athenian state. Were, perhaps, cultic leagues, like the Marathonian Tetrapolis and the League of Athena Pallenis, a type of "government" in Attica before the Kleisthenic reforms? No doubt, there were many different types of settlements in Attica, and they could all have their own sort of relationship with Athens, as well as with their neighbouring settlements. It would be interesting to explore more of these and see whether they show similar signs towards unification in the sixth century, and what these entailed, as the settlements explored in this thesis. It would, for instance, be desirable to examine Sounion and Thorikos and their internal dynamics and relationship to Athens. In fact, that the peninsula was not politically united before the end of the sixth century, alters the way we should study Attica in the Archaic Age. Instead of studying the Attic peninsula as a political unity, we should look for the particularities of each settlement and place it in the wider context of the Greek world.

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