
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CAPE SOUNION

*The Importance of the Cape for the Broader Region of Sounion and the
Athenian Polis*



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Cover Image:

Mariketi Graikioti, Cape Sounion from the west.

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Abbreviations

GHI Rhodes, P.J. and Osborne R. (2003) *Greek Historical Inscriptions 404-323 BC*, Oxford University Press.

IG Inscriptiones Graecae.

NM National Museum of Archeology, Athens.

INTRODUCTION

The voyage from the main port of Athens, Piraeus, to the Aegean islands, is always a pleasant experience. During the first hour of the journey the ship sails along the southeast side of the Attic peninsula. Before leaving the Saronic Gulf and finally entering the Aegean Sea, the ship passes in front of the southernmost point of Attica, the triangular promontory of Sounion. At that point the traveler has the chance to admire the outstanding Classical marble temple of Poseidon positioned on the edge of the high cliff, 60 meters above the sea. However, the sanctuary of the sea god is not the only one on the promontory. On a lower hill, just a little further north, lie the ruins of the Classical temple of Athena. The third eastern hill has –apart from two early Helladic graves– no archaeological interest. A pavilion has been set up there for the tourists who visit the two archaeological sites.¹ The cape is the last piece of Attic land which the traveler observes before entering the Aegean Sea, and the first when he returns to Athens. The situation was the same for a traveler in ancient times. Indeed, according to the primary literary sources, Cape Sounion was known as a landmark to ancient sailors and merchants.²

The uniqueness of the promontory is more than visible. It is located in the middle of various sea-routes and its huge steep cliff transformed it into a natural defensible fort. Thus, the location of the sanctuaries was not a random one. The cape was of major importance for the Athenians for many reasons which I would like to research.

According to the archeological finds, Cape Sounion was no exception to the expansion of the cult activity which took place in Attica from the early 8th until the late 7th century BC.³ At the beginning of the 7th century BC –if not earlier– the sanctuaries of Poseidon and Athena were established on the promontory. Possibly,

¹ Dinsmoor (1971): 1-2. The graves have been discovered by Theocharis. For more see Theocharis (1955): 287.

² The first reference to Sounion, can be found in *Odyssey* (3.276- 285), where it is mentioned as “*Σούνιον ἱρὸν, ἄκρον Ἀθηνέων*”. [“Holy Sounion, the cape of Athens”. Translation by Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 242.] From the 5th century B.C. onwards, the promontory appears frequently in the works of the ancient authors. Notably, Strabo examines its location. For more see Strabo 2.1.40, 9.1.1., 9.1.21.

³ Parker (1996): 18; Osborne (1994): 148.

two different hero cults were also housed in both sanctuaries.⁴ As I would like to focus more on the special location of the sanctuaries and their significance, I examined the works of François de Polignac, the scholar who has carried out extensive research into the rural sanctuaries of the Greek world.

In his book *Cults, Territory, and the Origins of the Greek City-State*, François de Polignac associated the emergence of extra-urban sanctuaries with the formation of the first Greek city-states (*poleis*).⁵ These extra-urban sanctuaries were located on territorial natural or political borders, and they were usually connected with the *poleis* by an axis of a processional route. Based on this, de Polignac proposed a model of a bipolar *polis* where the territory of the city-state was defined by two poles, the city and an extra-urban sanctuary. According to this theory, an extra-urban sanctuary served as a delimitation between a city-state and the outside world.⁶ However, this theory aroused criticism from other scholars. Jonathan Hall for example argued that the theory of de Polignac was structured from a Classical perspective and hence, its application to the Archaic period is problematic.⁷

In his article 'Mediation, Competition, and Sovereignty: The Evolution of Rural Sanctuaries in Geometric Greece', de Polignac modified his theory by introducing a three-part model to explain the development and the function of extra-urban sanctuaries.⁸ He stated that the rural sanctuaries served as centers of mediation either between multiple communities, or between residents and foreigners. Moreover, the sanctuaries were dedicated to deities "who presided over the crossing of thresholds in life and in society, and over the various stages of integration of inside and outside, of wild and rule-bound", such as Artemis, Apollo, Hera and Poseidon, the god who was worshipped at Sounion.⁹

Concerning the significant number of offerings which have been found at these sites –most of the time which were of great value– de Polignac suggested that the extra-urban sanctuaries also served as centers of social competition between elites.

⁴ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015):11. These were the cults of the oarsman of Menelaos, Phrontis, and of Herakles. For a discussion in both cults see chapter 1.

⁵ De Polignac (1995)a: 32-88. The original work of Polignac was written in French in 1984. For my research, I used the translation by Janet Lloyd (1995)a.

⁶ De Polignac (1995)a: 32-88.

⁷ Hall (1995): 579.

⁸ De Polignac (1994): 4-18.

⁹ De Polignac (1994): 8.

The latter were able to display their wealth and power by offering spectacular dedication items to the gods and participating in competitive festivals.¹⁰

Finally, the blending of mediation and competition transformed these sanctuaries into centers which expressed the territorial sovereignty of a city-state. By performing festivals, organizing the cult, dedicating valuable offerings and building magnificent temples, the wealthy men did not only manifest their individual power, but also the power of the city-state they controlled.¹¹

It is important to mention that de Polignac used the connection of the Argive Heraion with the city of Argos as his main example for the bipolar *polis* theory. The case of Athens is quite different and complex, and de Polignac described it as the only exception to his bipolar *polis* model. He explained that the major sanctuary was the one of Athena in the heart of the *polis*, and its major civic festival, the Panathenaia, began on the periphery of the city and moved inward towards the Acropolis, and not from the city-center to a rural sanctuary.¹² However, later de Polignac published another article where –based on his three-part model– he argued that Athens had actually a central bipolar axis, which connected the *polis* with Cape Sounion.¹³ This theory raises a lot of questions, as at the same time as Sounion, many other rural Attic sanctuaries gained prominence.

Due to their problematic nature, the de Polignac theories have been recently reconsidered by some scholars. In his book, *Cult and Society in Early Athens, 1000-600 BCE*, Floris van den Eijnde observed some gaps in the bi-polar *polis* theory concerning the Argive Heraion and the case of Athens, and argued that the emergence of the Athenian *polis* happened during the Late Protogeometric Period.¹⁴ Later, Erin Warford argued that de Polignac in his article ‘Sanctuaires et société en Attique Géométrique et Archaïque: réflexion sur les critères d’analyse’¹⁵, tried to fit all the cults of Archaic Attica “into a comprehensive model that has very little to do with the bipolar *polis*.”¹⁶ Furthermore, as the focus on a single axis, which connects the city of

¹⁰ De Polignac (1994): 10-12.

¹¹ De Polignac (1994): 13- 15.

¹² De Polignac (1995)a: 81-88.

¹³ De Polignac (1995)b: 75-101.

¹⁴ Van den Eijnde (2010): 35-41, 340-341.

¹⁵ De Polignac (1995)b: 75-101.

¹⁶ Warford (2015): 34.

Athens with the sanctuaries of Sounion, excludes the wider sacred landscape of Attica, Warford proposed a model of a multipolar *polis* for the case of Athens. She described this model as “a web of interconnections between the center at Athens and various peripheral locations which served as the ‘outside’ pole for several processions which either started or ended outside the city.”¹⁷

However, it should be mentioned, that it is not the intention of this thesis to re-examine the bipolar *polis* theory. This has already been done with success by the two aforementioned scholars, whose work will be an essential tool for my research. My main aim is to investigate specifically the case of Cape Sounion. Hence, my research question will be: What was the significance (in religious, political, economic and military terms) of Cape Sounion for the broader region of Sounion (Laureotike)¹⁸ and the city of Athens (*astu*), during the Archaic and the Classical period?

The archaeological finds, as well as the epigraphical and the literary sources, indicate that a strong bond existed between the cape and the city of Athens. I will argue that Cape Sounion manifested the Athenian sovereignty at the southernmost boundary of Attica. However, I will show that this happened gradually during the Archaic period and peaked during the Classical one.

In order to find out the importance of the cape, I will have to start with an extensive analysis of the two sanctuaries and the cults they housed. Hence, the aim of the first chapter is the investigation of the history of the promontory based on literary, archeological and epigraphical evidence. The votives, temples, fortifications walls, stoas and various other buildings of both sanctuaries will be examined. The archaeological reports of Valerios Stais who excavated the site, and the recent book of Zetta Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis are going to be my main guides concerning the archeological finds.

In the second chapter I will examine more closely the offerings and the people who dedicated them, the sculpture of both sanctuaries and the two major deities of the promontory, Poseidon and Athena, as well as their association with the Athenian *polis*. Research to establish if Cape Sounion was indeed a place of mediation, competition and sovereignty will be carried out.

¹⁷ Warford (2015): 169.

¹⁸ The whole southern-east extremity of Attica is called Laureotike. Today the region consists of two demes, Laurion and Saronikos. For more see Salliora-Oikonomakou (2004): 15.

The third chapter will be a research of the broader region in which the promontory is located: the so-called Laureotike.¹⁹ Its aim is to show the importance of the area and its connection with the city of Athens. I will investigate the history of the region both before and after the Kleisthenic reforms. I will argue that the whole region gradually gained major importance for the Athenian economy, due to its rich silver deposits.²⁰ In relation to all the aforementioned, the network of the roads in Laureotike, but also the roads from the centre of Athens to the region and to the cape, will be discussed. Moreover, in the same chapter I will focus on the people who lived in the Sounion area, their public buildings and *agorae*, their relationship with the sanctuaries of the promontory, as well as their relationship with people from other nearby communities, such as the settlement of Thorikos.²¹

The aim of the last chapter will be the investigation of Cape Sounion in association with other important rural sanctuaries, located on the borders of Attica, namely, the sanctuaries at Eleusis, Brauron, Rhamnous and Mounichia. I will make comparisons in order to show the similarities of and differences between the cape and the other coastal sanctuaries. This method will help me to discover the specific significance of Cape Sounion without falling into the same pitfalls as de Polignac.

By concluding this thesis, I hope to shed some new light on the importance of Cape Sounion. I would like to present the significance of the cape not only for the people of the specific area, but mainly for the Athenian *polis*. This would be achieved by examining first the promontory itself, then the broader region of Laureotike, and finally the other important rural Attic sanctuaries, which were also located on the borders of the Athenian territory. It is important to see the wider picture and examine the sanctuaries of Sounion, firstly as part of Laureotike –and of the Sounion *demos* after its formation– and secondly, as part of Attica and the Athenian territory. Now, it is time to move to my actual research, and most specifically, to the examination of the sanctuaries of the Cape.

¹⁹ The whole southern-east extremity of Attica is called Laureotike. Today the region consists of two demes, Laurion and Saronikos. For more see Salliora-Oikonomakou (2004): 15.

²⁰ Aperghis (2013): 10-12.

²¹ Thorikos is a settlement located 15 kilometers north of Cape Sounion. For more see Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 1

The History of Cape Sounion,

An Analysis

“ἡμεῖς μὲν γὰρ ἅμα πλέομεν Τροίηθεν ἰόντες,
Ἀτρεΐδης καὶ ἐγώ, φίλα εἰδότες ἀλλήλοισιν·
ἀλλ’ ὅτε Σούνιον ἰδὼν ἀφικόμεθ’, ἄκρον Ἀθηνέων,
ἔνθα κυβερνήτην Μενελάου Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων
οἷς ἀγανοῖς βελέεσσιν ἐποιχόμενος κατέπεφνε,
πηδάλιον μετὰ χερσὶ θεούσης νηὸς ἔχοντα,
Φρόντιν Ὀνητορίδην, ὃς ἐκαίνυτο φῦλ’ ἀνθρώπων
νηα κυβερνήσαι, ὅποτε σπέρχοιεν ἄελλαι.
ὥς ὁ μὲν ἔνθα κατέσχετ’, ἐπειγόμενός περ ὁδοῖο,
ὄφρ’ ἔταρον θάπτοι καὶ ἐπὶ κτέρεα κτερίσειεν.”²²

This passage from the Homeric epic *Odyssey*, is interesting for four reasons, all of which are significant for the discussion in this chapter. First, it is the earliest literary testimony referring to Sounion. Secondly, it is mentioned that Phrontis, the son of Onetor and helmsman of Menelaus, was killed by Apollo on this location, while the fleet was returning from Troy, and that afterwards, the body of the man was buried on the promontory. The burial of a Homeric character indicates the creation of a cult locus. Based on archeological finds from the north hill of the promontory, various scholars have claimed that apart from Athena, a hero cult was active on the site: that of Phrontis.²³ The third interesting fact which is derived from this passage

²² *Od.* 3.276-285. “For we were sailing together on our way from Troy, the son of Atreus and I, in all friendship; but when we came to holy Sunium, the cape of Athens, there Phoebus Apollo assailed with his gentle shafts and slew the helmsman of Menelaus, as he held in his hands the steering oar of the speeding ship—Phrontis, son of Onetor, who excelled the tribes of men in piloting a ship when the storm winds blew strong. So Menelaus tarried there though eager for his journey, so that he might bury his comrade and over him pay funeral rites.” Translation by Murray A.T., Loeb edition.

²³ Abramson (1979): 1-19; Papathanasopoulos (1983): 90-91. For more about a possible cult of Phrontis see 1.3.6.

and is connected with the previous one, is the adjective which is used to describe Sounion. As previous scholars have noted, the adjective “ἰρὸν” indicates that a cult was active in Sounion even before the burial of Phrontis.²⁴ Finally, perhaps the most extraordinary thing that catches the reader’s eye, is the political status of the promontory.²⁵ The cape is described as the “ἄκρον Ἀθηνέων”. This means that when the poem –or the specific passage, as changes had been made through the years–²⁶ was written, Sounion was considered as part of the Athenian territory.²⁷

This last piece of information highlights the connection of Sounion with Athens and its importance for the latter. In this early literary piece Sounion is presented as a landmark, a cult place and the major south border of Athens, hence an important place for the latter. Certainly, we cannot base our arguments concerning the significance of Sounion –which will be examined in this thesis– only on the *Odyssey*. As mentioned in the introduction, in order to do that, analytical investigation is needed on many levels. This chapter will examine the history of the promontory and its sanctuaries based on literary, archeological and epigraphical evidence. Initially, I will examine the promontory itself as a landmark, and its strategic and maritime importance. Subsequently, an extensive examination of the two sanctuaries, their temples, auxiliary buildings, fortifications, as well as the finds which were found there and how some of them could be associate with two hero cults (Herakles and Phrontis) will follow. Finally, I will discuss the data which testify the existence of other minor cults on the promontory. The examination of all the aforementioned is essential for the understanding of the history of the place and its gradual development through the time.

²⁴ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 9.

²⁵ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 9.

²⁶ As Van den Eijnde noted, some Homeric passages where Attica and Athens are mentioned, are later interpolations. For more see Van den Eijnde (2010): 254, 256.

²⁷ For a further investigation concerning *synoecism*, the deme of Sounion and the connection of the latter with the city of Athens, see chapter 3.

1.1 The Promontory (PLATE 1)

Although the main interest of this thesis is the Archaic and the Classical period, it is important to identify the outset of the cape's history, and hence realize when its development started. The finds from the region of Laureotike –in which Cape Sounion is located– indicate that the former was inhabited from the 6th millennium BC.²⁸ Notable is the case of Thorikos located right next to the modern town of Laurion, where settlements from the late Neolithic and early Bronze Age have been found.²⁹ Based on archeological finds and the writings of Strabo, human activity on the promontory can be traced from the 3rd millennium BC.³⁰ Indeed, two graves dated to that period have been discovered on the eastern hill of the cape by Theocharis.³¹ Moreover, during the main excavation at the beginning of the 20th century, two Early Cycladic marble figurines were found in the sanctuary of Athena, as well as one Late Minoan I lentoid seal in the sanctuary of Poseidon.³² Based on these finds, Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis proposed that cult may have been active on the promontory from much earlier than the 7th century, when most of the finds from both sanctuaries are dated.³³

Interesting is the examination of the ancient texts, where Sounion is described in geographical terms. Starting from the *Odyssey*, Sounion is mentioned as a landmark and important location of the Athenian territory by Sophocles, Pseudo-Scylax, Aristophanes, Demosthenes, Callimachus, Strabo, Pausanias, and finally Stephanus.³⁴ The significance of the promontory is derived from the texts of Herodotos who mentioned it as a place from which the Persian fleet had to pass in order to arrive in Athens, Thucydides who highlighted its importance for the safe transport of

²⁸ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 10.

²⁹ Ibid. For more about Thorikos see Chapter 3.

³⁰ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 10. See Strabo 9.2.3.

³¹ Theocharis (1955): 287; Dinsmoor (1971): 2.

³² Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 10.

³³ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 10-11. However, later in the same work she mentions that these artifacts are not themselves “sufficient evidence for early cult activity, since such types of artefacts circulated in later cult contexts.” For more see Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 104.

³⁴ *Od.* 3.276-285; *Soph. Ajax.* 1200; *Ar. Clouds.* 401-3; *Dem. On the Crown.* 38.8; *Pseudo-Scyl. Per.Scyl.* 51.5, 57.5; *Call. Hymns.* 4.47; *Strabo* 2.1.40, 9.1.1., 9.1.21; *Paus.* 2.8.6; *Steph. Ethn.* 582.13.

provisions from Euboea during the Dekelian siege, but also from other writers until the 6th century AD.³⁵

However, the ancient texts are not the only sources referring to Sounion. Inscriptions have survived where the promontory is mentioned. The oldest one, *IG I³ 8*, is dated to 460-450 BC., and it indicates the importance of the cape for the Athenians. Here, the existence of the harbour is mentioned for the first time. According to the inscription, taxes were imposed on the ships which entered the Sounion harbour. Moreover, every ship was charged seven *oboloi*, a fee for the maintenance of the Poseidon temple.³⁶ This information implies that during the mid-5th century BC, the promontory was under the auspices of the Athenian state.

The natural harbour of the promontory was located on its north-west bay. Also important were the two rock-cut shipsheds near the harbour, constructed during the Classical period to keep the triremes dry, but also to enable the latter to be launched quickly and easily into the water when needed.³⁷ One shipshed was equipped with two slipways and the other with a single one.³⁸ The high steep cliff, and the well-protected harbour along with the shipsheds, made the cape a perfect natural fort.

Certainly, the most important part of the promontory and the reason it became well-known, was the establishment of its two sanctuaries, that of Poseidon and Athena on the south and north hill respectively. Excavations at the site of Sounion were started in 1884 by Wilhelm Dörpfeld. However, it was only under the supervision of Valerios Stais that both sanctuaries were excavated and studied extensively. From 1897 to 1915, Stais along with the architect Anastasios Orlandos made far more discoveries than he was expecting at the beginning of the excavations.³⁹ Stais identified the temples thanks to inscriptions which he found on the site, but also based on literary sources. Furthermore, he discovered artificial landfills and *bothroi* full of various votives and sculpture in both sanctuaries. Additionally, he excavated the

³⁵ Hdt. 6.115.4, 6.116.1; Thuc. 7.28.1. For an account of other ancient authors who mentioned Sounion on their works, see Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 8-9.

³⁶ *IG I³ 8*; Peek (1934): 35-9. Cf. Salliora-Oikonomakou (2004): 116; Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 13.

³⁷ For more about the Sounion shipsheds, see Baika (2013): 525-534. Kenny (1947): 194, dated the shipsheds to the Hellenistic period.

³⁸ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 13.

³⁹ See Stais (1917): 168-226 and Stais (1920).

precinct walls of the sanctuary of Athena, and stoas, various buildings, the Propylaea and the fortification walls among others in the sanctuary of Poseidon.⁴⁰

However, when were the temples and the other buildings erected? When was the sanctuary of Poseidon fortified? These and other question are going to be answered in the following analysis of both sanctuaries.

1.2 The Sanctuary of Poseidon (PLATE 2)

During the excavation period of 1898 and 1900, Stais found two 3rd century BC inscriptions on the south hill, which proved that the temple which stands until today is of Poseidon.⁴¹ In the last lines of the first decree –which honored Kephisodotos from Acharnae and is dated to 298/7 BC– it is mentioned that the decree was to be set up in the sanctuary of Poseidon.⁴² The second honorary decree dated to ca. 230 BC, and honored Eurikleides from Kephisia, also states that the decree has to be erected “ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ τοῦ Ποσειδῶνος Σωτήρος ἐπὶ Σουνίου”.⁴³ Until the discovery of these decrees of Athenian troops stationed in Sounion, the temple of the south hill was attributed to Athena, as Pausanias at the very beginning of his work “description of Greece” writes:

“Τῆς ἠπειροῦ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς κατὰ νήσους τὰς Κυκλάδας καὶ πέλαγος τὸ Αἰγαῖον ἄκρα Σούνιον πρόκειται γῆς τῆς Ἀττικῆς καὶ λιμὴν τε παραπλεύσαντι τὴν ἄκραν ἐστὶ καὶ ναὸς Ἀθηνᾶς Σουνιάδος ἐπὶ κορυφῇ τῆς ἄκρας.”⁴⁴

For what reasons Pausanias mentioned only the temple of Athena in his work, will be discussed later during the examination of the sanctuary of Athena. The important issue is that after the discovery of the decrees, the riddle concerning the deity of the temple had been answered.⁴⁵ However, other earlier Athenian inscriptions inform us

⁴⁰ Ibid. Cf. Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 4-7,17, 21-22.

⁴¹ Stais (1920): 11-12; Paga and Milies (2016): 661.

⁴² *IG II²* 1270, lines 18-19.

⁴³ *IG II²* 1300, line 9. “In the sanctuary of Poseidon Soter at Sounion.” Translation by the author.

⁴⁴ Paus. 1.1.1. “On the Greek mainland facing the Cyclades Islands and the Aegean Sea the Sunium promontory stands out from the Attic land. When you have rounded the promontory you see a harbour and a temple to Athena of Sunium on the peak of the promontory.” Translation by Jones W. H. S.

⁴⁵ Stais (1920): 11-12; Paga and Milies (2016): 661

of a temple of Poseidon on the promontory of Sounion. *IG I³ 8* has already been discussed.⁴⁶ Two more inscriptions from the 5th century, *IG I³ 383* and *IG I³ 369*, mention the sanctuary of the sea god. *IG I³ 383* is an inventory of treasures to ‘the Other Gods’, drawn up by the Tamiai of the Other Gods.⁴⁷ Poseidon from Sounion is mentioned three times in the text and most specifically in lines 59, 106-107 and 330. The sanctuary of Athena is either missing, or as Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis suggested, maybe it was not included at all, and hence was not of major importance.⁴⁸ Inscription *IG I³ 369* presents the amount of money which was loaned to the city of Athens from the sacred treasuries from 426/5 to 423/2. The sanctuary of Poseidon appears here twice, in lines 62 and 82-83. The sums of money from the sanctuary of Poseidon indicate that the latter had important wealth. In particular, the payment of interest for the first year’s loan, which is recorded to have reached the amount of 32.000 *drachmae*, was 370 *drachmae*, while the payment of interest for the second year’s loan, which exceeded the amount of 25.527 *drachmae*, was 14 drachmas and three-quarter *oboloi*.⁴⁹

It is interesting that while the sanctuary of Poseidon is mentioned in three 5th century BC Athenian inscriptions, it appears for the first time in a literary source in the mid-4th century BC, in the *Periplus Scylacis*.⁵⁰ Indeed, even though the promontory was mentioned by various authors throughout the years,⁵¹ there were no clear references to the sanctuary of the sea god until this text.

⁴⁶ See 1.1.

⁴⁷ Cf. Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 13.

⁴⁸ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 13.

⁴⁹ *IG I³ 369*, lines 62 and 82-83. Cf. Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 13.

⁵⁰ Pseudo-Scyl. *Per.Scyl.* 57.6; Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 13. However, Aristophanes had previously referred to the Poseidon of Sounion and called him *Souniaratos* and *Sounierax*. See Aristophanes *Eq.* 560; *Birds* 868. However, the playwright made no clear reference to the sanctuary itself and its temple.

⁵¹ Among others see Thuc. 8.4.1, 8.95.1; Ar. *Eq.* 560; Ar. *Birds* 865.

1.2.1 The Archaic Temple

Although Sounion is more famous for the Classical temple of Poseidon, this is not the earliest temple on the hill. The most significant discovery of Dörpfeld were the remains of an Archaic temple.⁵² The Classical temple had actually been built on the stylobate of the Archaic one. Nowadays, the blocks of the Archaic temple are visible, but this was not the case when the Classical temple was intact.⁵³ The blocks were reused for practical reasons, as they were already on the hill and could serve as a raw material for the foundations of the new temple.⁵⁴ However, a few blocks were reused outside the temple. For example, some column drums were reused as part of the walls located at the south of the temple, while some column capitals were transferred into the sanctuary of Athena and reused there.⁵⁵ The latter indicates that the blocks were not entirely reused “in accord with the usual principle of making use of the deity’s property and keeping it within the sanctuary,” as Jessica Paga and Margaret Miles stated in their recent work.⁵⁶

The “first monumental peripteral temple in Attica”,⁵⁷ was made of limestone and as its successor it was Doric with thirteen and six columns on the long and short sides respectively. However, its dimensions were slightly smaller than the Classical one (30.34 x 13.12 m).⁵⁸ Concerning the sculpture from this temple, Stais found only a fragmentary relief of a headless female figure, and another one from which only half is preserved, presenting the lower part of the body and legs of two naked male figures carrying an animal to sacrifice.⁵⁹

The large size of the temple imply that it was probably built –at least partially– with Athenian funds.⁶⁰ Until recently, the date of the beginning of the construction was attributed to ca. 500 BC, as “an effort under the new democracy, and perhaps still

⁵² Dörpfeld (1884): 325-327 as cited by Paga and Miles (2016): 658.

⁵³ Paga and Miles (2016): 664.

⁵⁴ Paga and Miles (2016): 664.

⁵⁵ Dinsmoor (1971): 16; Paga and Miles (2016): 667-8.

⁵⁶ Paga and Miles (2016): 664.

⁵⁷ As described by Paga and Miles (2016): 657.

⁵⁸ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 20.

⁵⁹ Stais (1917): 194.

⁶⁰ Boersma (1970): 37.

under the influence of the Alkmaionidai.”⁶¹ During that period many rural temples were erected around Attica, but none of them was similar in size, to that of Poseidon’s.⁶² However, in their extensive study Paga and Miles argued that the Archaic temple was built between 490 and 480 BC, as “an offering set up” after the battle of Marathon.⁶³ They based their argument on the design of the temple which fits better to that date, and on the contrast between this large peripteral temple with the small *naiskos* of Athena which was probably built around 500 BC.⁶⁴ Moreover, they made an analogy between the Archaic temple of Poseidon, and the Older Parthenon, claiming that both of them shared same engineering challenges and stylistic elements, and hence it is more likely for the former to have been built at the same date as the latter.⁶⁵

Certainly, a date of construction after the battle of Marathon is more likely than 500 BC. It is also possible that the Persian threat was the one which triggered the erection of the temple. As Athens had to deal with the existence of a powerful enemy for the following years, the erection of temples on the borders of its territory could have been used as a manifestation of the sovereignty of the *polis*. If the Persians wanted to attack Athens, first they would have to “round” the cape, where the large Archaic temple expressed the power of the Athenians and their aversion for anyone who wanted to invade their lands.

Although there are still doubts about the exact date of construction, the date of the destruction of the first Poseidon temple is known. During their Attic invasion, the Persians destroyed the sanctuaries of Poseidon and Athena. Although Herodotos did not refer to the Sounion incident, he mentioned the sacking of various Attic sanctuaries by the army of Mardonios.⁶⁶ The destruction is also confirmed by the

⁶¹Paga and Miles (2016): 687. Stais and Dinsmoor assigned the date of construction to 500 BC. The Alkimonidai were an Attic genos with political power during the 7th century BC. For more see Camp (1994): 7-12.

⁶² Paga and Miles (2016): 687. I mention only the rural temples, as a large temple already existed on the Acropolis from the late 6th century; the Old Temple of Athena. For more about the temple see Hurwit (1999): 109-113.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Paga and Miles (2016): 687-8.

⁶⁶ See Hdt. 8.50, 9.13.

smashed *kouroi* that were found in the artificial landfill of the sanctuary.⁶⁷ As no remains have been found of any kind of roof, it is believed that the temple was still unfinished when it was destroyed.⁶⁸

1.2.2 The Classical Temple (PLATES 3-4)

The classical temple of Poseidon made of Agrileza marble, stands on the edge of the south hill and it is visible both from land and sea. The temple shares some common characteristics with the Hephaisteion in Athens and the temple of Nemesis at Rhamnous. That is why sometimes these three temples are attributed to one single architect, although this is not certain.⁶⁹

The temple was probably built between 444 and 440 BC. It was made in Doric style and had thirteen columns on the long sides and six on the short. Its dimensions are 31.15 x 13.18 m on the stylobate.⁷⁰ The temple also had a cella, “with porches at either end within its colonnade”,⁷¹ where according to Dinsmoor, a statue of Poseidon was located.⁷²

Few pieces of architectural sculpture have survived, but enough to understand the decoration of the temple. The metopes around the building were left blank,⁷³ while the frieze running around the interior of the pronaos is of great interest as according to Leventi it “is the earliest extant Classical Ionic frieze in Attica which can be securely assigned to a standing temple.”⁷⁴ The few slabs which are made of Parian marble, indicate that the frieze presented three different scenes: the Gigantomachy, the Thessalian Centauromachy (the Lapith and the centaur battle) and the Deeds of Theseus.⁷⁵ According to Leventi, the Gigantomachy was probably located at the entrance of the pronaos, while the Centauromachy on the opposite side. Finally, the

⁶⁷ Some of the sculptures also carry traces of fire damage. For an analysis on the Sounion *kouroi* see 2.3.

⁶⁸ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 20.

⁶⁹ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 21.

⁷⁰ Dinsmoor (1971): 19-20.

⁷¹ Dinsmoor (1971): 20.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Dinsmoor (1971): 22.

⁷⁴ Leventi (2009): 152.

⁷⁵ Ibid. For an analysis of the frieze see 2.4.

deeds of Theseus were probably placed on the north and south sides of the pronaos.⁷⁶ Similar to the frieze, few pieces of the pediment have survived. The pediment sculpture consists of a headless female seated sculpture, representing probably a nymph (NM 3410), a head and the upper torso of Athena, two fragments of horses, two fragmentary limbs, a male upper left thigh, and a foot on a plinth.⁷⁷

1.2.3 The Sanctuary's Walls and other Structures

An Archaic perimeter wall ran around the sanctuary.⁷⁸ Access to the sanctuary was possible through the Propylaea, located on the north side of the wall. The building was made of limestone, decorated with thin marble slabs and probably erected at the same time as the Classical temple.⁷⁹ Its design was similar to the Athenian treasury at Delphi, with “two Doric columns in antis supporting the pedimental roof.”⁸⁰ The main entrance of the Propylaea was 2.20 wide and ramped, hence chariots and animals for sacrifice were able to pass easily from there.⁸¹

Stais also excavated two stoas. The first (25 x 9 m) was made of limestone and was attached to the north side of the sanctuary's wall. It had nine or eight Doric columns and according to Stais initially belonged to the Archaic temple.⁸² The second smaller stoa (20.8 m long) was located on the west side of the sanctuary's wall. Moreover, a building –probably a guardhouse– was found between the Propylaea and the large stoa.⁸³ South of the Poseidon temple, lie the remains of a structure made of poros and marble members. This small structure was interpreted as a temporary shrine built after the destruction of the Archaic temple and remained there until the construction of the Classical one. However, Dinsmoor considered the possibility that it may be dated to the Byzantine or the Ottoman period.⁸⁴

⁷⁶ Leventi (2009): 163.

⁷⁷ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 21, based on the report of Stais. See Stais (1917): 178.

⁷⁸ Stais (1920): 15-16; Dinsmoor (1971):24-5.

⁷⁹ Dinsmoor (1971): 25; See also Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 20.

⁸⁰ Ibid. For more about the Athenian treasury at Delphi see Neer (2004): 63-98.

⁸¹ Dinsmoor (1971): 25. See also Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 20.

⁸² Stais (1920): 16.

⁸³ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 19-20.

⁸⁴ Dinsmoor (1971): 16.

At the area of the sanctuary Stais also excavated an artificial fill and a *bothros*, where he found archaic sculpture and various votives which are going to be discussed later in this chapter. He also discovered a number of honorary decrees (*IG II² 1260, 1270, 1281, 1300, 1302, 1308*) east of the temple, erected there by the Athenian troops which were stationed there during the Hellenistic period.⁸⁵

1.2.4 The Fort and Settlement

The sanctuary of Poseidon lies on top of the south hill of the promontory. A wall covers the east and north sides of the whole hill and converts the latter into a fortress (PLATE 5). Due to the steep cliffs on the south and west sides of the hill, no kind of fortification was needed there.⁸⁶ The enclosure was 400m long and 3.50m thick. Stais also identified ten square towers, attached to the walls.⁸⁷ Concerning the fortification wall, Thucydides cites in his work:

“Παρεσκευάζοντο δὲ καὶ Ἀθηναῖοι, ὥσπερ διενοήθησαν, ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ χειμῶνι τούτῳ τὴν τε ναυπηγίαν, ξύλα ξυμπορισάμενοι, καὶ Σούνιον τειχίσαντες, ὅπως αὐτοῖς ἀσφάλεια ταῖς σιταγωγαῖς ναυσὶν εἴη τοῦ περίπλου.”⁸⁸

During the excavations Stais examined the walls –which are still well-maintained– and concluded that they were not built during the Peloponnesian War as Thucydides claimed, but probably during the end of the 6th century BC. At this time Athens was at war with Aegina, and hence the fortification of the promontory can be justified.⁸⁹ However, Stais declared that the fortification was reinforced during 413-412 BC, with new walls, which started from the bay located on the west side of the cape and continued towards the top of the south hill.⁹⁰

⁸⁵ Stanton (1996): 345-346. Cf. Whitehead (1986): 389-390, who believed that *IG II² 1260* maybe was a demos decree. See also Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 20-21.

⁸⁶ Stais (1917): 172-3.

⁸⁷ Stais (1917): 173. See also Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 17-20.

⁸⁸ Thuc. 8.4.1. “During this same winter the Athenians also were making their preparations to build ships, in accordance with their decision, and for this they had collected timber; and they fortified Sunium, in order that there might be protection for their grain-ships as they rounded the promontory.” Translation by Smith C. F., Loeb edition.

⁸⁹ Stais (1917): 172; See also Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 18. For more about the war between Athens and Aegina see Hdt. 6.87-90; Podlecki (1976): 396-413.

⁹⁰ Stais (1917): 172-3.

Inside the fort Stais found cisterns, wells but also shops and houses on both sides of the main road of the fort which leads up to the sanctuary of Poseidon. The structures are dated from the 5th century BC to Roman times (PLATE 6).⁹¹ As the inscriptions which were found on the site indicate, in the 4th and mainly 3rd century BC Athenian troops were stationed in the fort;⁹² however, civilians lived there too. Indeed, as Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis noted, the fort was the main settlement of the area as no other structures were found close to the promontory.⁹³ However, this does not mean that the fort was the centre (i.e. *agora*) of the Sounion *demos*. David Whitehead highlighted the difference between demes such as Eleusis and Rhamnous, whose *agora* was inside their fortifications, and Sounion.⁹⁴ As the decrees which have been discussed before, are not of the *demos*, it becomes clear that the centre of the latter was somewhere else. An examination concerning the possible centre of the Sounion *demos*, will follow in chapter 3.⁹⁵

1.2.5 The Landfill and the *Bothros*

Apart from the temples and the structures, Stais made another significant discovery in the sanctuary of Poseidon, revealing the pre-structure phase of the site. In front of the Eastern side of the temple, he excavated an artificial fill where he found mainly pottery and architectural fragments. In the same fill he discovered a “wide triangular natural fissure”, where he found two colossal *kouroi*, various fragments of others and four bases dated to the late 7th century BC.⁹⁶ Additionally, outside the wall on the eastern side of the sanctuary, Stais discovered a *bothros* full of small votives.⁹⁷

Concerning these votives, it should be mentioned that Stais did not examine them thoroughly, and for the most of them he did not provide any kind of information

⁹¹ Dinsmore (1971): 37; Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 19.

⁹² See *IG II²* 1270; *IG II²* 1281; *IG II²* 1300; *IG II²* 1302; *IG II²* 1308.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ Whitehead (1986): 406-407.

⁹⁵ See 3.2.1.

⁹⁶ Stais (1917): 189. For an extensive analysis on the Sounion *kouroi* and their meaning see 2.3.

⁹⁷ Stais (1917): 194.

concerning their precise provenance.⁹⁸ As Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis pointed out, from 274 in total objects from both sanctuaries, the exact location of only 120 of them has been recorded.⁹⁹ The finds that are attributed to the *bothros* and the landfill of the Poseidon's sanctuary are thirty-nine according to the study of Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis and they are dated from the late 8th to the early 5th centuries. Most of them are made of bronze. This group consist of twenty-four weapons “such as arrowheads, votive spearheads, two miniature double axes, one figurine of a bull and a Reshef figurine, together with nine finger rings, a bead from necklace and, most interestingly, a punch.”¹⁰⁰

Moreover, seven faience figurines, as well as one terracotta figurine were found inside the *bothros*.¹⁰¹ Concerning the relief plaques, only seven have been assigned to the same *bothros* by Stais.¹⁰² Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis suggested that four more plaques can probably be assigned to the same group, although she still has some doubts.¹⁰³ One of the seven plaques dated to the early 6th century BC, depicts the naked feet of a dressed figure (PLATE 7). It is not known who this figure represents, but it could be a deity. Certainly, the figure could also be interpreted as a depiction of Poseidon, but this is just a guess based on the location where the plaque was found.¹⁰⁴ Another plaque dated also to the early 6th century, depicts a wing.¹⁰⁵ The rest of the plaques, dated to the early 7th century BC, portray a very interesting theme: that of Herakles and the Nemean lion (PLATE 8).¹⁰⁶

⁹⁸ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 5. See the archeological report of Stais (1917): 168-226.

⁹⁹ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 7. For a list with all the 120 objects see Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 6-7. For an extensive analysis of all the finds (including those for which no specific location has been assigned) see Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 29-103.

¹⁰⁰ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 6, 123.

¹⁰¹ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 6, 125.

¹⁰² Stais (1917): 197-8. Numbers 137, 139-143, 145 in Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis' study.

¹⁰³ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 124. Numbers 136, 138, 144, 146.

¹⁰⁴ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 125. For an extensive analysis of the plaque see Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 61.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 124. For an extensive analysis of this group of plaques see Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 58-60.

To all the aforementioned finds from the sanctuary of Poseidon can be added – according to the reports of Stais– fifty scarabs, and a number of stone seals.¹⁰⁷ As Stais was enthusiastic about the discovery of the “Egyptian” scarabs, beads, rings and faience figurines, he asked for the assistance of the German Professor von Bissing to understand their context better. After their examination von Bissing concluded that with the exception of a blue paste seal from Naucratis dated around 650 B.C, the rest of the objects are not of Egyptian origin, as their materials do not have the quality of the authentic Egyptian pieces. He suggested that the imitations were manufactured in a Greek workshop, probably on the island of Rhodes.¹⁰⁸

1.2.6 A Cult of Herakles?

In her book Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis elaborated on earlier studies by Young and Osborne and suggested that a hero cult was housed in the sanctuary of Poseidon.¹⁰⁹ As five relief plaques found in the *bothros* of the Poseidon sanctuary depict Herakles with the Nemean lion,¹¹⁰ she claimed that Herakles was worshiped in the sanctuary from the late 7th century BC. The plaques were probably hanging on the walls of a shrine. However, there is no evidence of any kind of structure before the construction of the Archaic temple.¹¹¹

To make her argument, Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis examined first the association of Herakles with the Athenians, and secondly the connection of the former with the cape. Apart from literary sources which highlighted the importance of Herakles for the Athenians, two Attic sanctuaries of the hero dated to the 6th century

¹⁰⁷ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 24, 125.

¹⁰⁸ Stais (1917): 195-196. Cf. Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 24-25.

¹⁰⁹ Osborne (1994): 156, 159; Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 122. Van den Eijnde highlighted the importance of the hero cult for both the elite and the community: “Hero cult not only strengthened their (the elite) claim of ownership of the land, but also provided a religious focus for the local community as a whole; the elite legitimized its claim to power by displaying expensive votaries and staging ritual banquets.” Van den Eijnde (2010): 32. For more about the hero cult see van den Eijnde (2010): 395-400.

¹¹⁰ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis, attributes one more plaque in this group; the plaque with the number 144 in her work.

¹¹¹ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 122.

are known today: one at Marathon and one at Kynosarges.¹¹² She also mentioned the depiction of Herakles in 6th century Athenian pottery and his connection with the goddess Athena, an original Athenian theme.¹¹³ Concerning the case of the promontory, it is known from two inscriptions found in Kolonos Agoraios, that one branch of the genos of the Salaminioi owned land in the Sounion *demos* and maintained a temenos of Herakles in a location called Porthmos.¹¹⁴ Young identified the modern area of Pountazeza –located close to the cape– as the location of Porthmos.¹¹⁵

However, as the only sources for the genos are the inscriptions, dated to 363/2 and 242/1 BC respectively, it is difficult to guess when exactly this branch settled in the area of Sounion. It has been discussed by previous scholars that the distinction of the genos in the two branches (the Salaminioi from Sounion and the Salaminioi of the Seven Tribes) might have happened during or after the reforms of Kleisthenes, in ca. 507 BC or later.¹¹⁶ However, at what date did the Salaminioi become established in both Athens and Sounion? Moreover, their relationship with the island of Salamis is still a matter of debate. According to Ferguson, the Salaminioi were actually Athenians who had no relation with the island, but they were constituted as a genos in ca. 600 BC “to promote and justify the claims of Athens to possession, on the basis of rightful ownership, of Salamis.”¹¹⁷ Nilsson on the other hand, claimed that the genos consisted of native people from Salamis, who migrated to Attica in ca. 509 BC, when the Athenians took the island under their control.¹¹⁸ An alternative theory was made by Guarducci who suggested that the Salaminioi were actually Athenians who went to Salamis before 700 BC, and were later ejected by the Megarians, before Solon’s campaign in order to recover the island.¹¹⁹ Humphreys and Osborne both suggested that the Salaminioi were inhabitants of Salamis who migrated to Athens during the so-

¹¹² Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 120-1. Concerning the literary sources see Isocr. 5.3.3; Diod. 4.39.1; Paus. 1.15.3, 1.32.4.

¹¹³ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 121.

¹¹⁴ *SEG* 21.527, lines 16-17. The other inscription is *Agora* XIX L4b. For more about the Salaminioi see Ferguson (1938):1-74; Lambert (1997): 85-106. For a discussion concerning the Salaminioi of Sounion and their land see 3.2.1.

¹¹⁵ Young (1941): 163. For more about Pountazeza and the finds from this area see Salliora-Oikonomakou (2004): 63-72 and chapter 3.

¹¹⁶ Ferguson (1938): 13; Osborne (1994): 157.

¹¹⁷ Ferguson (1938): 42.

¹¹⁸ Nilsson (1938): 385-393.

¹¹⁹ Guarducci (1948): 223-243. Cf. Osborne (1994): 156.

called “Dark Age”, and spread out into Attica later.¹²⁰ Finally, Lambert provided another theory, explaining that the Salaminioi may have been Athenians who lived on the island of Salamis between the 6th century BC and the early Hellenistic period.¹²¹

It is visible that it is difficult to set a date regarding the establishment of the Salaminioi in the area of Sounion, and hence it is also difficult to connect them with the plaques of Herakles. However, relying on the chronology of these plaques, and the association of the Salaminioi from Sounion with the cult of Herakles at Porthmos, Osborne stated that the genos probably established cult activities in the area of Sounion in ca. 700 BC.¹²² It is visible that Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis is in favor of this explanation, but I personally prefer to keep some distance concerning the association of the genos with the plaques of Herakles.

Returning to the plaques and the possibility of a cult of Herakles on the promontory, it should be mentioned that the lack of architecture from this period leaves doubts about an actual cult. However, architecture was not always needed in order for a cult to be active on a site. A cult could exist in the open air without any kind of shrine. Moreover, Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis examined a late 5th century BC marble votive relief and identified the depicting figure as Herakles. Although the exact findspot of the relief is not known, the latter can indicate continuity of the cult in the 5th and 4th centuries.¹²³

Concerning the association of the hero with Poseidon, little is known. Herakles fought on the side of Poseidon and the other Olympians against the Giants.¹²⁴ However, as aforementioned, Herakles was associated with another Olympian: Athena. From the 560's BC onwards, Herakles and his patroness Athena were depicted in numerous Athenian black-figure vases, usually in a chariot.¹²⁵ The relationship between the goddess and the hero might have been advanced by Peisistratos.¹²⁶ Ferrari stated that the famous chariot scene is connected to the

¹²⁰ Humphreys (1990):247; Osborne (1994): 158-159.

¹²¹ Lambert (1997): 97-100.

¹²² Osborne (1994): 159.

¹²³ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 124. For an analysis of the relief see Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 83.

¹²⁴ The battle between the Giants and the Olympians for the supremacy of Mt. Olympus (known as the Gigantomachy). For more see Apollod. 1.6.1-3.

¹²⁵ Boardman (1972): 58-69.

¹²⁶ Boardman (1972): 57-72.

reorganization of the Panathenaia –traditionally dated to 566 BC– as the latter also celebrated the defeat of the Giants by the Olympians.¹²⁷ Whatever the case, it seems that the connection between Athena and Herakles was created in the 560's BC. However, the plaques of Herakles are dated to the beginning of the 7th century, many years before the first vases with the chariot scene. It seems that at the beginning of the 7th century BC, Herakles was not directly associated with Athena. Hence, although it is difficult to find any connection between the hero and Poseidon in whose sanctuary the plaques of the former are found, we should not exclude the case of a Herakles cult there.

Even though nothing can be said with certainty, the discovery of five relief plaques depicting Herakles indicate that the latter was worshiped in the sanctuary of Poseidon. However, as the case of the Salaminioi is complex and the evidence insufficient, nothing is certain concerning their role in the establishment of the hero cult on the promontory.

1.3 The Sanctuary of Athena (Plates 9-10)

The sanctuary of Athena is located to the north-east of the sanctuary of Poseidon on a lower hill. In contrast to the sanctuary of the sea god which is visible from afar, that of Athena can be seen only when sailing close to the promontory.¹²⁸ The first clear literary reference to the sanctuary can be found in Euripides' play *Cyclops*, where Athena is mentioned as Sounias.¹²⁹ A description of the temple of Athena was given by Vitruvius in the 1st century BC,¹³⁰ while it was mentioned again two centuries later by Pausanias.¹³¹

It is interesting that Pausanias mentioned only the sanctuary of Athena, which –according to him– is located on the peak of the promontory.¹³² This testimony led to the belief that the large temple on the south hill was of Athena, until the discovery of

¹²⁷ Ferrari (1994): 220-225. See also Kragset (2015): 64-65.

¹²⁸ Dinsmoor (1971):1.

¹²⁹ Eur. *Cycl.* 293-95.

¹³⁰ Vitr. 4.8.4.

¹³¹ Paus. 1.1.1.

¹³² Ibid.

the inscription by Stais which attributed the sanctuary to Poseidon.¹³³ However, the text of Pausanias still raises questions.

Over the years various scholars have tried to understand why Pausanias referred only to the temple of Athena. Stais suggested that Pausanias probably discussed both sanctuaries, but the reference to the Poseidon one had been omitted from his text later.¹³⁴ Ulrich Sinn on the other hand proposed an alternative version. According to him, the temple of Athena was located on the top of the promontory, near the temple of Poseidon, while the temple of the north hill, discussed by Vitruvius, was a *hestiatorion* in honour of the hero Phrontis.¹³⁵ However, the archeological evidence cannot support this hypothesis. Giorgos Despinis suggested that during the time of Pausanias the large Classical marble temple housed two cults: that of Poseidon and Athena. He dated the transfer of the cult somewhere during the Augustan period, based on the fact that the temple of Athena had been dismantled and transferred to the Athenian Agora during the same period.¹³⁶ However, as Barbara Barletta noted in her recent work, although the theory of Despinis is quite convincing, it implies that the cult of Athena Sounias was active until the Augustan period.¹³⁷ According to her, the temple of Athena was destroyed probably around 200 BC, and its transfer could have also happened much later than the Augustan period, during the 2nd century AD.¹³⁸ Moreover, the evidence indicates that the temple of Poseidon was not in use from the early 1st century AD.¹³⁹ Barletta concluded that the temple of Athena Sounias had already been transferred to the Athenian Agora when Pausanias arrived in Attica. Similar to nowadays, the few remains of the temple were not visible from the sea. Hence, he probably identified the remaining –non-functional at that time– temple of Poseidon as the temple of Athena, as the latter was the *Polyouchos* deity of Athens.¹⁴⁰ The theory of Barletta seems the most convincing one. Seeing only

¹³³ See 1.2.

¹³⁴ Barletta (2018): 9.

¹³⁵ Sinn (1992): 176-7. For more about this hero cult see 1.3.6.

¹³⁶ Despinis (1998): 181. The foundations of the temple remained on the hill and are still visible nowadays. About the transfer of the temple see Dinsmoor (1971): 52.

¹³⁷ Barletta (2018): 9.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Barletta (2018): 9-10. The temple was probably partly dismantled during the rebellion of the slaves in Laureotike in 104-100 BC. Moreover, fragments of the temple seem to have been reused on the roof of the temple of Ares in Athens. For more see Dinsmoor (1971): 52-53; Barletta (2018): 9-10.

¹⁴⁰ Barletta (2018): 10.

one temple when he passed from the promontory, Pausanias must have thought that this was dedicated to the patroness of Athens, Athena.

In contrast with the sanctuary of Poseidon, on the north hill there is no inscription to indicate that the sanctuary was of Athena. However, as Poseidon was worshipped with certainty on the top of the promontory and Vitruvius' description fits perfectly with the architectural remains of the north hill, it can be safely assumed that the former was the cult place of Athena Sounias. The only known inscription from the sanctuary of Athena consists of two fragments of the thigh of a life-size *kouros*, or maybe of two different *kouroi*.¹⁴¹ The interesting aspect of this inscription, dated to 550 BC, is that it appears to be the first collective dedication from the inhabitants of Sounion (ΟΥΝΙΕΣ) to Zeus (ΔΙΙ).¹⁴² Certainly, this inscription raises many questions as it is a dedication of a group of people from one area long before the formation of the Attic *demes*. For this reason, the inscription will be examined later in this thesis.¹⁴³

1.3.1 The Small Temple (PLATES 11-12)

On the north side of the sanctuary of Athena, is located a small Doric temple. The structure consists of a cella with dimensions 5 x 6.90 m., and two columns located 1.60 m. in front of the cella's wall.¹⁴⁴ It was built with irregular blocks of local stone, its walls were red, and its roof was wooden.¹⁴⁵ In the interior a grey-blue stone base was discovered, on which a cult statue probably stood.¹⁴⁶ Furthermore, he identified the architectural *spolia* which were found in the artificial fill of the sanctuary as *spolia* of this temple.¹⁴⁷ In front of the temple, the foundations of an altar survive (1.55 x 2.66 m.). As the altar is not on the same axis with the temple, it can be assumed that is older than the latter.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴¹ IG I³ 1024a (NMA 3450), IG I³ 1024b (NMA 3449).

¹⁴² Stanton (1996): 347-349; Goette (2000): 35; Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 9-10.

¹⁴³ See 2.3.

¹⁴⁴ Dinsmoor (1971): 50. See also Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 22-23.

¹⁴⁵ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 23.

¹⁴⁶ Stais (1917): 179; Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 23.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Dinsmoor (1971): 51; Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 109.

The small temple is attributed to Athena and it was built during the Archaic period, probably around 600 BC.¹⁴⁹ In 480/79 BC it was destroyed by the Persians along with the sculpture of the sanctuary.¹⁵⁰ As some votives discovered in the *bothros* and artificial fill of the sanctuary are dated between the destruction of the small temple and the erection of the large one, Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis suggested that the small temple “may have been hastily repaired” after the raids of the Persians.¹⁵¹ Indeed, the archaeological evidence indicates continuity of cult activity on the site.¹⁵² However, some may argue that the temple might had not been rebuilt, based on the so-called “Oath of Plataea”. It is assumed that the oath was given by the Greeks in the summer of 479 BC before the battle against the Persians at Plataea. Among other things, the Greeks swore that the temples and shrines destroyed by the Persians had to remain as they were, as memorials of the Persian’s impiety.¹⁵³ According to Plutarch, the oath was abrogated by Pericles in 449 BC in order to start his building program and rebuild the Parthenon and the other buildings on the Acropolis.¹⁵⁴

Certainly, the reconstruction of the events is difficult as the literary sources concerning this oath derive from the 4th century BC onwards, while there is only one epigraphic testimony, discovered in Acharnae and dated to the late 4th century BC.¹⁵⁵ The inscribed stele from Acharnae consists of two oaths: the one which has been identified as the “Oath of Plataea” and one for *ephebes*.¹⁵⁶ Dannielle Kellog tried to find the connection between the two oaths and argued that the “Oath of Plataea” was a late 4th century BC reconstruction of a document having to do with the Persian Wars,

¹⁴⁹Stais (1920): 41; Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 22-23. However, Dinsmoor declared that the temple is Classical, contemporary with the large one. Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis explained that he probably arrived at this conclusion due to the marble threshold of the temple. For more see Dinsmoor (1971): 50; Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 110.

¹⁵⁰Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 109. The kouroi of the sanctuary of Athena were mutilated and burned, similar to those of the sanctuary of Poseidon. For more see Goette (2000): 35.

¹⁵¹Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 110.

¹⁵²These are mainly terracotta animal figurines. For more see Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 110.

¹⁵³Lyc. 1.81; Diod. 11.29.3.

¹⁵⁴Plut. *Per.*32-33.

¹⁵⁵The literary sources are a speech of Lycurgus and the work of Diodorus. However, the earliest reference of the oath can be found on the *Panegyrikos* of Isocrates, written in 380 BC. For more see Isocr. 4.155-156. For the inscription see *GHI* 88.

¹⁵⁶*GHI* 88.

which was used for didactic purposes for the *ephebes*. The repetition of the oaths by *ephebes*, contributed to the creation of social memory concerning the Persian Wars.¹⁵⁷ Peter Krenz presented a different theory, arguing that the oath inscribed on the stele from Achanæ, was an oath sworn before the battle of Marathon.¹⁵⁸ In 2014 Margaret Miles examined the two aforementioned theories and concluded that an oath was possible sworn before Marathon, but also another one was sworn before Plataea. However, it is most likely that the non-rebuilding clause was not included in any oath, but was invented in the 4th century BC probably by Isocrates “as part of his campaign to shift contemporary warring parties to fight the Persians, and remembered by Lycurgus and subsequent authors”.¹⁵⁹

After the Persian raids, the basic priority of the Athenians was the defensive and domestic infrastructure.¹⁶⁰ Subsequently, during the mid-5th century –or slightly earlier– they started the reconstruction of the temples. However, a rough repair of the small temple of Athena after the destruction of 480/79 BC seems possible. Repairing a small temple such this would not need a lot of funds and most probably it was rebuilt by people of the Sounion *demos*.

1.3.2 The Large “Unusual” Temple (PLATES 13-14)

During the excavations in Sounion, Stais discovered the remaining foundations of the large temple of Athena which had become buried throughout the years. Due to its unusual plan it was identified as the temple of Athena, mentioned by Vitruvius.¹⁶¹ Indeed, the plan of the temple its quite bizarre as it basically “consists of a rectangular cella with a colonnade only its eastern front and southern flank.”¹⁶²

The exact date of this Ionic temple is not known, but its construction probably took place around the mid-5th century BC, and it is unknown if it was built with some Athenian funds or solely by local Sounies.¹⁶³ The cella, which was built of poor

¹⁵⁷ Kellogg (2008): 1-22.

¹⁵⁸ Krenz (2007): 731-742

¹⁵⁹ Miles (2014): 132.

¹⁶⁰ Miles (2014): 125.

¹⁶¹ Vitr. 4.8.4.

¹⁶² Dinsmoor (1971): 42.

¹⁶³ Dinsmoor dated the temple sometime in the second half of the 5th century.

Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis suggested the middle of the same century, as the day of

quality marble, was constructed first, and the peristyle was added ten or even twenty years later.¹⁶⁴ The temple had four interior columns. In the exterior, the east flank had ten columns, the south twelve, and one more existed at each of the northern and western sides.¹⁶⁵ Unfortunately, no sculpture from the frieze and the pediment has survived. Finally, as aforementioned, the temple was dismantled and transferred to the Athenian Agora sometime during the Roman period.¹⁶⁶

1.3.3 Other Structures

Very few are the remains of the other structures at Athena's sanctuary, however, there are enough to understand what might have stood there. Most of them can be traced to the large rectangular area (22 x 24 m.) in front of the south side of the large temple. Five meters in front of the south side, some stone blocks in an "L" shape were found. Although their precise use is not known, Stais and Dinsmoor suggested that maybe they were part of Athena's altar.¹⁶⁷ On the south and the west sides of the area, various stone blocks –including the reused capitals from the Archaic temple of Poseidon– have been found. Dinsmoor and Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis explained that they probably supported wooden posts for awnings.¹⁶⁸ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis also suggested that they may have been used as stands for offerings.¹⁶⁹ Other stone blocks were found further south, probably remains of another building with its long axis east-west.¹⁷⁰ The parallel blocks of some stones located on its west side can be interpreted as bases for stone tables.¹⁷¹ Based on this, Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis suggested that the structure may have been a *hestiatorion*.¹⁷²

Concluding, it seems that the whole area in front of the south side of the large temple was a place for festivities, with auxiliary buildings for the pilgrims and the

construction, while Paga and Miles placed it at ca. 460 BC. See Dinsmoor (1971): 42; Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 112; Paga and Miles (2016): 687.

¹⁶⁴ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 22.

¹⁶⁵ Dinsmoor (1971): 42-3; Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 22.

¹⁶⁶ Dinsmoor (1971): 42. See also Barletta (2018): 10.

¹⁶⁷ Dinsmoor (1971): 49-50.

¹⁶⁸ Dinsmoor (1971): 49; Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 111.

¹⁶⁹ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 111.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Dinsmoor (1971): 49.

¹⁷² Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 112.

participants. On the other side of the sanctuary, west of the small temple, remains of one more structure were found. According to Dinsmoor it could have been the house of one of the priests of Athena.¹⁷³

1.3.4 The Sanctuary's Wall and the Oval Enclosure

The sanctuary is surrounded by a wall. According to Stais, the north, south and west walls are polygonal, while the east is isodomic.¹⁷⁴ Stais did not provide a specific chronology for the wall, while Dinsmoor described it as Classical and claimed that the south side is also isodomic.¹⁷⁵ Stais explained that the entrance to the sanctuary was located on the east wall. However, Dinsmoor argued that similar to the sanctuary of Poseidon, the entrance was on the north.¹⁷⁶

However, this was not the only *peribolos* of the sanctuary. On the north-west corner of the sanctuary lies an Archaic oval enclosure which extends even further north. It is made of large stone blocks and as Stais noted, although its use is unknown, it might have served as a cult place (PLATE 15).¹⁷⁷

1.3.5 The landfill and the *Bothros*

In 1908 Stais discovered an artificial fill, located east of the large temple. Similar to the sanctuary of Poseidon, the artificial fill was full of debris buried there after the destruction by the Persians. Stais found various fragments of Archaic sculpture which according to Papathanasopoulos belonged to nine life-size to smaller than life-size *kouroi* as well as a small head of a *kore* (NM 3446).¹⁷⁸ Interesting is also the

¹⁷³ Dinsmoor (1971): 51.

¹⁷⁴ Stais (1920): 41.

¹⁷⁵ Dinsmoor (1971): 39.

¹⁷⁶ Stais (1920); 41; Dinsmoor (1971):39.

¹⁷⁷ Stais (1920): 41. According to some scholars, a cult hero was practiced at this place. For more see 1.3.6.

¹⁷⁸ Papathanasopoulos (1983): 20-21, 58-78. In these *kouroi* Papathanasopoluos included the torso of a life-sized one *kouros*, now lost. For more see Papathanasopoulos (1988): 20, 59-64.

discovery of an Early Classical relief depicting a self-crowned youth (NM 3344).¹⁷⁹ Apart from these Archaic architectural remains, Stais found some others dated from the Classical period. These are small marble fragments of human and animal parts, the most famous being the female head which had been assigned to Athena (PLATE 16).¹⁸⁰

During the excavations of the artificial fill, Stais discovered a pit cut into the rock (PLATE 17).¹⁸¹ The pit is fifteen meters long. Although its original use is unknown, it seems that it served as a *bothros* where worshipers deposited their offerings during the period when the small temple was in use.¹⁸² The *bothros* was full of small offerings such as vases and clay figurines.¹⁸³

As aforementioned in the discussion concerning the finds from the sanctuary of Poseidon, only the provenance of 120 objects is known with certainty.¹⁸⁴ In total, 81 finds are attributed to the sanctuary of Athena,¹⁸⁵ dated from the late 8th to the early 5th centuries BC.¹⁸⁶ The metalwork once more consisted of a large number of objects, but in contrast with the finds from the sanctuary of Poseidon is more diverse. This group consists of six rings, one ex-voto silver mask, four pieces of jewelry, three animal figurines, four tripods, two votive shields, two swords which were found in the deepest part of the *bothros*, and a miniature lead kouros (PLATE 18).¹⁸⁷

Furthermore, sixteen *protomai*, eight terracotta figurines, two animal figurines, one faience-like figurine, five plastic vases, and twenty-six terracotta painted plaques were found.¹⁸⁸ From the group of the plaques Stais distinguished one: the well-known

¹⁷⁹ Stais analyzed the relief in his latest report. For more see Stais (1920): 53-54. According to Goette, the relief depicts a *palaistra* scene. For more see Goette (2000): 41.

¹⁸⁰ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 115. For an examination of the female head see Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 82.

¹⁸¹ Stais (1917): 189.

¹⁸² Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 26.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ See 1.2.5.

¹⁸⁵ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015):112.

¹⁸⁶ With the exception of three fragmentary terracotta figurines dated to the Late Helladic period. For an examination of these figurines see Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 29.

¹⁸⁷ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015):7. For an examination of the miniature kouros see Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 89-90.

¹⁸⁸ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 6-7.

“Analatos painter plaque”, portraying a warship with hoplites and a steersman.¹⁸⁹ The steersman has been identified by various scholars as the hero Phrontis.¹⁹⁰

Similar to the sanctuary of Poseidon, Stais found numerous seals, scarabs and pottery (Corinthian aryballoi) in the sanctuary of Athena. However, in contrast with the scarabs from the sanctuary of Poseidon, these have Egyptian characteristics and they imported were from Naucratis¹⁹¹. The seals discovered in the artificial fill appear to be imports from the Greek islands.¹⁹²

1.3.6 A Cult of Phrontis?

The northern oval enclosure of the sanctuary, the wealthy offerings found inside the *bothros*, the discovery of the painted plaque with the warship inside the *bothros*, and finally the Homeric passage where Sounion is mentioned for the first time,¹⁹³ led various scholars to assumed that Phrontis was worshipped in the sanctuary of Athena.

According to the passage, Menelaus decided to bury his helmsman, Phrontis in Sounion. But how is Phrontis connected with the sanctuary of Athena? As is visible, the offerings discovered in the sanctuary of Athena are more varied and valuable than those from the sanctuary of Poseidon. Based on that, Abramson argued that this rich deposit is associated with Phrontis. Furthermore, he declared that not only the oval *peribolos*, but also the small temple was associated with this hero cult.¹⁹⁴ He also identified the helmsman of the “Analatos painter plaque”, as Phrontis (NM 14934-PLATE 19).¹⁹⁵ Concerning the Homeric passage and the use of the word “ἰϥὸν”,

¹⁸⁹ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 26-27. For an examination of the plaque see Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 64-66.

¹⁹⁰ Abramson (1979): 4; Ppathanasopoulos (1983): 90-91; Parker (1996): 35. For more about Phrontis see 1.3.6.

¹⁹¹ Von Bissing examined the scarabs from the sanctuary of Athena and concluded that they were imports from Naucratis. For more see Stais (1917): 211-213. Cf. Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 27.

¹⁹² Stais (1917): 212-213.

¹⁹³ *Od.* 3.276-285.

¹⁹⁴ Abramson (1979): 8-13. For more about the small temple see 1.3.2.

¹⁹⁵ Abramson (1979): 4.

Abramson based on Picard, stated that “it seems possible to understand the narrative as an *aition* for a cult which the poet knew at the cape.”¹⁹⁶

As Abramson presented literary, dedicatory and architectural evidence for his hypothesis, he concluded that a hero cult was active in the sanctuary of Athena.¹⁹⁷ However, he did not examine thoroughly these sources. In contrast, in 2010 van den Eijnde examined the arguments of Abramson and provided a more distinct picture concerning the existence of a hero cult. He argued that the painted plaque seems to express maritime virtues, with which the promontory is directly connected.¹⁹⁸ Van den Eijnde added that “if this hero was ever worshipped at Sounion, his presence was derived from the virtues expressed by the plaque, rather than vice versa.”¹⁹⁹ Concerning the rich offerings, he stated that these as well as the northern *peribolos* can be assigned to the cult of Athena. Van den Eijnde explained that initially Athena might have been worshiped inside the *peribolos*,²⁰⁰ and that the sanctuary was dedicated to her, as all the major regional Attic sanctuaries were similarly dedicated to important Olympian deities.²⁰¹ Concluding his examination, he noted that if a cult of Phrontis really existed, it was either inspired by the Homeric passage, or the latter was a later interpolation which “indeed represents a reflection of an existing cult.”²⁰² Indeed, the case of an interpolation seems the most possible. This would also justify the political status of the promontory in the particular passage. The description of the cape as “ἄκρον Ἀθηνέων” indicates that this passage was probably added during or after the last decade of the 6th century BC. It was then, when Sounion become part of the Athenian territory, under the reforms of Kleisthenes.²⁰³

Similar to the case of the Heracles’ cult in the sanctuary of Poseidon, nothing is certain. The truth is that the oval *peribolos* still raises many questions concerning its use. It probably was a cult place, but to whom was attributed is still a mystery.

¹⁹⁶ Abramson (1979): 8.

¹⁹⁷ Abramson (1979): 14-15.

¹⁹⁸ Van den Eijnde (2010): 255.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Van den Eijnde (2010): 255.

²⁰² Van den Eijnde (2010): 256.

²⁰³ For a discussion concerning the reforms of Kleisthenes and the unification of Attica, see Kragset (2015): 97-101.

1.4 Other Deities of the Promontory

Poseidon and Athena were the main deities of the promontory. There are also some indications for two hero cults as previously discussed, but are there any signs of any additional cults? The honorary decree *IG II² 1302*, which was discovered by Stais inside the fort, is dated to 222/1 BC and it indicates the erection of a temple of Asklepios by the Athenian general Theomnistos.²⁰⁴ Although the structure was never found,²⁰⁵ the existence of Asklepios is also indicated by an inscribed marble base discovered in the fort.²⁰⁶ The cults of Apollo and Aphrodite are also attested. Stais found a marble statue base where the name of Aphrodite Pontias is inscribed²⁰⁷ and a fragment of a column dedicated to Apollo, both in the fort,²⁰⁸ while Oikonomos found a marble altar dedicated to Apollo, in the sanctuary of Poseidon.²⁰⁹ In the sanctuary of Athena a *kouros* was dedicated to Zeus, indicating a cult of Zeus during the Archaic phase of the cape.²¹⁰

In any case, the architectural remains, the offerings from the *bothroi* in both sanctuaries, as well as some inscriptions and literary sources indicate the main cults were those of Poseidon and Athena. However, it seems that some statues were dedicated to other gods, while the healer god, Asklepios gained prominence during the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC, and probably his cult was established by the garrison of the fort.

²⁰⁴ Cf. Salliora-Oikonomakou (2004): 118.

²⁰⁵ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 140.

²⁰⁶ Salliora-Oikonomakou (2004): 118, 169, nos 92.

²⁰⁷ Stais (1920): 10; Salliora-Oikonomakou (2004): 119, 166, nos 94.

²⁰⁸ Stais (1920): 10; Salliora-Oikonomakou (2004): 119, 166, nos 90.

²⁰⁹ Oikonomos (1923): 510, as cited by Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 140. See also Salliora-Oikonomakou (2004), 196, nos 91.

²¹⁰ *IG I3 1204a, b*. See 2.3.2.

1.5 Conclusion

This chapter has aimed to provide an analytical overview of Cape Sounion. Through the discussion of selective ancient literary sources referring to Sounion, and the examination of the archeological and epigraphical evidence from the site, as well as the excavation reports of Stais and the research of other scholars, the history of the promontory has been presented.

The finds from both sanctuaries indicate cultic activity from ca. 700 BC. The numerous and various small offerings either local or imported imply intense cult activity on the site. The possibility of an early cult of Herakles and one of Phrontis in the sanctuaries of Poseidon and of Athena respectively, has been discussed. However, neither of them can be confirmed with certainty. During the pre-building phase of the promontory, cult activities were probably taking place in the oval enclosure of the sanctuary of Athena. From the late 7th to the mid-6th century BC, *kouroi* were erected in both sanctuaries. It can be assumed that a small shrine existed in both sanctuaries during this period; however, there are no architectural remains to support this hypothesis.

The first structures can be traced to the beginning of the 5th century, with the erection of the small temple of Athena and the first temple of Poseidon, while the fortification of the promontory was built some years earlier. However, in 480/79 BC the Persians destroyed both temples as well as the standing *kouroi*. After that the cape experienced its most difficult phase. We cannot know for sure if a temporary shrine was built in the sanctuary of Poseidon or if the small temple of Athena was hastily rebuilt. In the mid-5th century two large temples were erected. The one of Poseidon is standing in the same position until today, while the one of Athena was dismantled and transferred to the Athenian Agora during the Roman period.

The various auxiliary buildings such as the stoas in the sanctuary of Poseidon and probably one *hestiatorion* in the sanctuary of Athena, indicate that a lot of people took part in the festivities organized in honour of the two deities. Moreover, the reinforcement of the fortification during the Peloponnesian War and the existence of the shipsheds imply the strategic importance of the promontory. A settlement also

grew inside the fort mainly during the Hellenistic period, while various inscriptions were erected during the same period by the Athenian troops who were stationed there.

It is visible that the promontory served as a cult center and a strategic point for centuries. But what was the relationship between the cape and Athens? Why was Sounion important for the religious, political, military and economic life of the polis? Was Cape Sounion a place of mediation, competition and sovereignty? These are the questions that I will be examined in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 2

A Place of Mediation, Competition and Sovereignty?

The previous chapter focused on the promontory and its sanctuaries. The temples, the auxiliary buildings as well as the offerings and architectural remains derived from the *bothroi* and landfills of both sanctuaries have been discussed. However, this overview does not provide enough information concerning the artistic influences from the Cyclades and the East, the competition between the elites of Attica and most importantly, the presence of Athens on the promontory. Is there any evidence which can support the assumption that Sounion was a place of mediation, competition and sovereignty? To answer this question, I will examine in particular the *bothroi* contents, the *kouroi* and the frieze of the Classical temple of Poseidon. However, initially, a discussion concerning the two deities of the promontory and their inner relationship is needed, in order to show who they were and what their significance for the people of Attica and the other Greeks.

2.1. The two Gods of the Promontory

As explained in the first chapter, the two cults of Cape Sounion were those of Poseidon and Athena. The sanctuary of Poseidon occupied the most prominent position on the top of the promontory, while the one of Athena was positioned on the smaller northern hill. But how did the seafarers who passed from the promontory and the inhabitants of Attica interpret these gods? Why were their sanctuaries established in this specific place, and why they were close to each other? To answer all these questions, separate examination of both deities is needed.

2.1.1 Poseidon

When someone –even if he/she is outside the history field– thinks of Poseidon, the first thing that comes to his/her mind, is his connection with the sea. Indeed, this god of the Greek Pantheon is more well-known as a sea-god.²¹¹ The Greek sailors often prayed to Poseidon in order to have a safe sea journey in the sea without storms. Robert Parker pointed out that other deities to whom sometimes the Athenians sailors sometimes prayed, such as Aphrodite Euploia, the Dioscouroi/Anakes and the Great Gods of Samothrace, were helpers only.²¹² The sailors invoked them for protection, but only the Poseidon was able to raise and tame storms.²¹³ Although he was the major sea deity, Poseidon had another important hypostasis. He was also the protector against earthquakes and was known as Asphaleios, Gaieochos and Themeliouchos.²¹⁴

Many sanctuaries of Poseidon are located on promontories as the god is associated with the sea. It should be mentioned that sometimes a promontory can be called *Poseidonion*.²¹⁵ However, this does not mean that every sanctuary which is located on a promontory is of Poseidon, nor that the latter was not worshipped elsewhere. Well-known are the sanctuaries of Poseidon at Onchestos in Boeotia and at Isthmia on the Isthmus of Corinth.²¹⁶ The former is located on the main road from eastern Boeotia and the south to western and northern Greece, while the latter is positioned at the southern end of the Isthmos, between the Peloponnese and the rest of Greece.²¹⁷ Other important sanctuaries of Poseidon are located at Kalaureia (modern island of Poros), Geraistos (the southern promontory of Euboia) and Tainaron (the southern promontory of Lakonia).²¹⁸

As A. Schachter observed, the sanctuaries of Poseidon were mainly rural, located most of the time on important passages both on land and sea.²¹⁹ Additionally,

²¹¹ Parker (2005): 410.

²¹² Parker (2005): 410-11,

²¹³ Ibid,

²¹⁴ For Asphaleios see Ar. *Acharnians* 682. For Gaieochos see *IG II²* 5058. For Themeliouchos see Clinton (1974): 51, line 17. In 20/19 BC a priesthood of Themeliouchos was held by a member of the Kerykes genos. Cf. Parker (2005): 411.

²¹⁵ Schumacher (1993): 82.

²¹⁶ Schachter (1992): 46.

²¹⁷ Schachter (1992): 46-7.

²¹⁸ For analysis on these three sanctuaries and their inner relationship, see Schumacher (1993): 62-87.

²¹⁹ Schachter (1992): 48.

he argued that the sanctuaries manifested the sovereignty or claims of the states in whose territory the former were located.²²⁰ Indeed, it is visible that the critical locations of all the aforementioned sanctuaries made the latter important for the political power of each state.

In Attica, the most important sanctuary of the sea-god is located on Cape Sounion, where the former was known with the epithet Soter.²²¹ According to Paga and Miles, this sanctuary along with the sanctuaries of Kalaureia, Geraistos and Tenos, created “a network of sanctuaries dedicated to the god of the sea in locations where ships were especially vulnerable to the vagaries of Aegean winds and other turbulence.”²²² In Kolonos, Poseidon Hippios was worshiped along with Athena Hippiia, while Poseidon Hippodromios was worshiped perhaps at Phaleron.²²³

It is interesting that although the sanctuaries of the sea-god were usually located outside the city, in Attica Poseidon also had a cult locus in the very centre of Athens, on the Acropolis. It appears that an Ionic temple, known today as the Erechtheion, was dedicated to Athena Polias.²²⁴ However, according to Pausanias, the altars of Poseidon-Erechtheus, Hephaistos and of the hero Boutes, as well as the tokens of the contest between Poseidon and Athena for the city of Athens, were also located inside the same structure.²²⁵ Pausanias is the only literary source concerning the plan of the building and the cults that were active there. However, it is not proper to take his account as a fact, as his descriptions are often vague, he omits to mention important sanctuaries²²⁶ (for example the sanctuary of Aphaia in Aegina), or he attributes temples to the wrong gods.²²⁷ Nowadays, the Ionic temple which is located “halfway the length of the Akropolis, on the north side, close to the rock’s defensive wall,” is identified as the Erechtheion.²²⁸ However, for some scholars this is not the case. Kristian Jeppesen argued that the Ionic temple was devoted to Athena Polias

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ See *IG II²* 1300; 1.2.

²²² Paga and Miles (2016): 689.

²²³ Parker (2005): 389. Poseidon was associated with the horse.

²²⁴ Paus. 26.6-7, 27.1. For an extensive research on the Erechtheion, its location, its chronology and its cults, see Poldervaart (2018): 33-62.

²²⁵ Paus. 26.5, 27.2. The mythical tokens were an olive tree and a salt-sea well. For more about the competition between the two gods, see 2.1.3.

²²⁶ Hurwit (1999): 305.

²²⁷ As he did with the temple of Poseidon in Sounion. See 1.3.

²²⁸ Poldervaart (2018): 35.

only, and that the Erechtheion was a separate structure located somewhere else on the Acropolis and it was probably the building known as the House of the *Arrhephoroi*.²²⁹ J.M. Mansfield on the other hand, suggested that the Erechtheion was located between the Parthenon and the Ionic temple (temple of Athena Polias).²³⁰

As is visible, we cannot tell with certainty where the Erechtheion and hence the altar of Poseidon-Erechtheus was located. But who was Erechtheus and why was he associated with Poseidon? Information about this mythical Athenian king is derived mainly from Euripides' tragedy, *Erechtheus*. Unfortunately, only fragments of this tragedy have survived, discovered on papyrus fragments.²³¹ According to the tragedy, the Thracian king Eumolpos, grandson of Poseidon, declared war on the Athenians. Erechtheus went to the Oracle of Delphi to ask how he could win the war. The answer that he received was that he had to sacrifice one of his daughters. Returning from Delphi, Erechtheus informed his wife Praxithea about the oracle. In a famous speech, she said that she would prefer to sacrifice their own daughter, rather than see the city destroyed. The one daughter was sacrificed, and her two sisters committed suicide. Subsequently, Erechtheus left for the war. A messenger informed Praxithea about the events of the war, but only some scanty fragments have been survived from that part of the tragedy. We are informed however, that Erechtheus was killed by Poseidon.²³² Athena appeared to Praxithea, after she had prevented Poseidon from destroying the city, and instructed her to bury her daughters and her husband together as well as to construct a *sekos* in the middle of the city (i.e. on the Acropolis) for the latter. Moreover, Athena instructed that Erechtheus should be called Poseidon-Erechtheus and that the citizens had to sacrifice oxen to him.²³³

There are still doubts about when exactly the tragedy was composed, but it can with certainty be placed during the Peloponnesian War.²³⁴ However, apart from the tragedy, the mythical king also appeared in earlier literature and pottery. In the *Iliad*'s catalogue of ships, the Athenians are described as people of Erechtheus "whom

²²⁹ Jeppesen (1988): 77-80. Cf. Poldervaart (2018): 59.

²³⁰ Mansfield (1985): 245. Cf. Poldervaart (2018): 60.

²³¹ Connelly (2014): 126-127.

²³² However, the writer of the 1st century BC, Hyginus, provides another version according to which Poseidon asked Zeus to kill Erechtheus. For more see Hyg. *Fab.* 46.

²³³ Eur. *Erechtheus*. For the demands of Athena concerning the cult of Poseidon-Erechtheus, see Eur. *Erechtheus*, fr. 65, 90-94.

²³⁴ Concerning the dating of *Erechtheus*, see Poldervaart (2018): 34.

Athene, daughter of Zeus, once nurtured, but the earth, the giver of grain, bore him; and she settled him in Athens, in her own rich shrine.”²³⁵ Erechtheus is also depicted in the late 6th century BC pottery. A well-known example is a black-figure oinochoe of ca. 510, where Erechtheus is shown on his chariot and Athena is running alongside him.²³⁶ Concerning the passage from the *Iliad*, it is plausible that it is a later addition to the Homeric epic, probably composed sometime during the 6th century BC. However, even if this is the case, the story of Erechtheus still remains one of the earliest Athenian legends.²³⁷ Moreover, as one of the ten tribes of Kleisthenes was named after Erechtheus (Erechtheis),²³⁸ it seems that the mythical king was already famous by the time of Kleisthenes’ reforms in 508/7 BC. Hence, Erechtheus probably gained prominence before the last decade of the 6th century, under the tyranny of the Peisistratids. All the aforementioned testify that Erechtheus had an important position in the Athenian *polis*, at least from the late 6th century, ca. 100 years before the composition of the Euripides’ tragedy. However, it is uncertain if Erechtheus was identified as Poseidon-Erechtheus before the composition of the tragedy.

Uncertain is also the day of construction of the Ionic temple, known today as the Erechtheion. Various scholars have examined the structure, all dated it after 426/7 BC, and hence close to the composition of the tragedy.²³⁹ In her recent RMA thesis, Leonore Poldervaart relying on the studies of previous scholars, suggested that although the construction of the temple might have started somewhat earlier, it was probably dedicated to Athena Polias during the Panathenaia of 406/5 BC, similar to the case of the Parthenon which was dedicated to Athena Parthenos during the Panathenaia of 438/7 BC.²⁴⁰

In any case, even if the Ionic temple was devoted solely to Athena Polias and if the Erechtheion was a different structure, an altar of Poseidon-Erechtheus seemed to have existed on the Acropolis at the end of the 5th century, and therefore some

²³⁵ *Iliad* 2.545–51. Translation by Murray A.T., Loeb edition.

²³⁶ Copenhagen, National Museum of Denmark inv. No. Chr. 340; Neils and Schultz (2012): 201-202.

²³⁷ Parker (1988): 193.

²³⁸ Neils and Schultz (2012): 201.

²³⁹ Concerning the dating of the Erechtheion, see Poldervaart (2018): 34-35.

²⁴⁰ Poldervaart (2018): 35. Cf. Shear (2001): 801.

years after the construction of the Classical temple of Poseidon at Sounion.²⁴¹ As will be shown in chapter 4, rural sanctuaries located on the borders of Attica, such as Eleusis and Brauron, also gained a place in the city-centre of Athens, on the Acropolis (City Eleusinion and Brauroneion respectively), probably during the 6th century BC.²⁴² The case of the sea-god seems to fit to this pattern, as his main temple was at Sounion, but he was also worshiped as Poseidon-Erechtheus on the Acropolis in the late 5th century BC. This religious connection of Sounion with the *astu*, could also imply the significance of the former for the political and economic power of the *polis*.²⁴³

2.1.2 Athena

Athena was daughter of Zeus and niece of Poseidon.²⁴⁴ The goddess was the *poliouchos* of many *poleis* and she often “took over the urban functions of the Mycenaen Pontia.”²⁴⁵ Due to her significant urban nature, her main sanctuaries were located in the city-centre of the *polis*, on or around the Acropolis.²⁴⁶

The prominent position of Athena in Athens is widely known. Athena was the major protector of the *polis* which has her own name. Many are the literary sources from the 5th and 4th centuries BC, in which Athena is praised as the protector and the mistress of the *polis*.²⁴⁷ On the Athenian Acropolis Athena was worshipped as Athena Polias together with her father, Zeus Polieus.²⁴⁸ Well-known is the late 6th century BC Old Temple of Athena, located between the Older Parthenon and the Erechtheion, which was discovered by Dörpfeld in 1885.²⁴⁹ The temple was devoted to Athena

²⁴¹ The classical temple of Poseidon at Sounion was probably built between 444 and 440 BC. For more about the temple see 1.2.1.

²⁴² Schachter (1992): 33. For the City Eleusinion see Miles (1998): 1-23. For the Brauroneion see Hurwit (1999): 117.

²⁴³ For more about the importance of Sounion for the political and economic power of the *polis*, see 2.4 and chapter 3.

²⁴⁴ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadi (2015): 128.

²⁴⁵ Schachter (1992): 39.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ See Aesch. *Pers.*347; *Eum.*288; Lycurg. *Leoc.*26; Ar. *Thesm.*1140,1142; *Eq.*763. Cf. Parker (2005): 396.

²⁴⁸ Parker (2005): 397.

²⁴⁹ For more about the temple, see Hurwit (1999): 109-113.

Polias similar to the later Ionic temple, known as the Erechtheion.²⁵⁰ The Old Temple housed the wooden “statue” of the goddess, known as *xoanon*. The statue was later housed in the Ionic temple.²⁵¹

During the so-called Golden Age of Athens, Athena Parthenos was the official goddess of the *polis*, worshiped in the Parthenon which stands on the Acropolis until today.²⁵² However, apart from Polias and Parthenon, Athena also appeared with other names in Attica. As Ergane, Athena was associated with technology,²⁵³ while as Hygieia, she was not connected so much with healing (Asklepios was responsible for this), but mostly with the education of the young citizens and maybe also with weddings.²⁵⁴ As the goddess was associated with warfare, she was also known with the epithet Areia.²⁵⁵ Different however, seems to be the case of Athena Nike. She is interpreted as a deity of victory in war, but it seems that she was a separate goddess.²⁵⁶ As Josine Blok stated, “Athena Nike enjoyed a cult as a goddess in her own right with her typical epithet.”²⁵⁷

Moreover, as mentioned in 2.1.1, Athena was worshipped as Athena Hippiia along with Poseidon Hippios in Kolonos, and she had one more temple on her own at Acharnae.²⁵⁸ Finally, at Sounion, the goddess was worshiped as Athena Sounias in a smaller sanctuary than Poseidon, but of great importance according to the offerings derived from its *bothros*.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁰ For a theory arguing that the *opisthodomos* of the Old Temple of Athena served as a shrine of Athena Polias from the Persian sack, until the total destruction of the temple by fire in 406 BC, see Ferrari (2002): 15-17. Cf. Poldervaart (2018): 57-59.

²⁵¹ Papachatzis (1989): 177. According to Ferrari, the *xoanon* was housed in the *opisthodomos* of the Old Temple of Athena, which served as a shrine of the goddess until the burning of the former in 406 BC. Thus, the cult of Polias was never intended to move to the Ionic temple, but did so due to the destruction of the *opisthodomos*. For more see Ferrari (2002): 16-17. Cf. Poldervaart (2018): 57-59.

²⁵² Athena Parthenos gained prominence from the mid-6th century BC and after. For more see Papachatzis (1989): 176-177.

²⁵³ Parker (2005): 409.

²⁵⁴ Parker (2005): 443.

²⁵⁵ Parker (2005): 397-398.

²⁵⁶ For the cult of Athena Nike, see Parker (1996): 90; Parker (2005): 398-399; Bok (2014): 104-106.

²⁵⁷ Blok (2014): 104. The depiction of the goddess as a young woman with wings –and not with a helmet, spear and shield as the Athena was usually depicted– as well as the existence of her own rich treasury, indicate that she was a separate goddess.

²⁵⁸ Parker (2005): 389. See 2.1.1.

²⁵⁹ See also 1.3. About the offerings, see 1.3.5.

2.1.3 The Relationship Between the Two Gods

It is interesting that the *poliouchos* of Athens also had a sanctuary on the southern border of Attica, near the larger sanctuary of the sea-god. Automatically many questions arise concerning the relationship of the two gods and the case of Athens. As Athena was the major goddess of Athens, but Poseidon was also of great importance, what was their relationship according the Athenians?

The association of Athena with Poseidon-Erechtheus has already been discussed.²⁶⁰ This relationship is also attested in their worship. During the 4th century BC, the two major deities of the Eteoboutadai *genos*, were Athena Polias and Poseidon- Erechtheus.²⁶¹ Furthermore, it is possible that apart from Athena, a sacrifice was also made to Erechtheus during the little Panathenaia. It is known that during the festival cows were sacrificed on the Great Altar of Athena, and one was sacrificed to Athena Nike.²⁶² However, by examining a law and part of an attached decree concerning the Little Panathenaia and dated to ca. 335 BC, Rhodes and Osborne pointed out that apart from the main sacrifice to Athena, another one was probably held in honour of Erechtheus.²⁶³ Moreover, after examining a little Master band cup (Stavros S. Niarchos Collection) dated to the 550's BC, J. Rasmus Brandt, interpreted the depicting sacrificial procession as a *trittys* sacrifice (a three-animal sacrifice).²⁶⁴ As the goddess for whom the sacrifice was made is Athena –and the *trittyes* sacrifices were made only to female gods who accompanied male gods– Brandt suggested that Erechtheus was the companion of Athena.²⁶⁵ Hence, both Erechtheus and Athena received a *trittys* sacrifice during the Panathenaia. However, as only Athena is depicted in this cup, Brandt proposed that after one point –probably in 566 BC, when

²⁶⁰ See 2.1.1.

²⁶¹ However, eligibility for the two priesthoods was restricted to different branches of the *genos*. For more see Blok and Lambert (2009): 97, 113.

²⁶² *GHI* 81, lines 16-23.

²⁶³ In *GHI* 81, the beginning of line 10 is missing. It has been variously restored as “in the old temple”, “in the sanctuary of Archegetis”, and “in the Arrephoreion”. However, the phrase “old temple” was used in the 4th century to refer to what is known as the Erechtheion. For more see Rhodes and Osborne (2003): 402-403.

²⁶⁴ Brandt (2001): 107-108.

²⁶⁵ Brandt (2001): 109.

the Panathenaic festival was re-organized– the *trittys* sacrifice was made only to Athena and that Erechtheus probably received another sacrifice, of less importance.²⁶⁶

Apart from the myth of Erechtheus, the two deities are associated in another story. Many ancient authors described the mythical contest between Athena and Poseidon for the land of Attica. Although the legend varied from source to source, it mainly goes as follows: The contest took place on the Acropolis. There the gods provided two different gifts. Athena created an olive tree, while Poseidon stuck the rock with his tinder and revealed a salt spring. Subsequently, Zeus appeared and named Athena as winner because king Kekrops was witness to her gift.²⁶⁷ According to Apollodoros, after the judgment of Zeus Poseidon flooded the plains of Attica.²⁶⁸

The contest is also depicted in the west pediment of the Parthenon.²⁶⁹ Interesting is also the east frieze of the temple of Athena Nike. The frieze depicts an assembly of the Olympians. Athena is in the centre, while on her right, Poseidon is presented sitting on a rock which –according to Hurwit– may represent Sounion.²⁷⁰ The gods are looking at the shrines of the Acropolis summit, and of course the west pediment of Parthenon where their contest is presented. Thus, the two gods are once more associated, but in peaceful way.

As is visible, there was a connection between the two gods for the Athenians. They were both worshipped in Kolonos as Poseidon Hippios and Athena Hippiia, both were associated with the horse. However, each in what way? As Parker noted, the sea-

²⁶⁶ Brandt (2001): 109-111. With this theory Brandt actually suggests that Erechtheus was worshiped before the mid-6th century BC.

²⁶⁷ For the legend see Hdt. 8.55; Xen. *Mem.* 3.5.10; Ovid. *Met.* 6.70-82; Hyg. *Fab.* 164; Apollod. 3.14.1.

²⁶⁸ Apollod. 3.14.1. It is important to mention that until recently it was believed that the myth of the contest between the two gods was created during the 5th century for political purposes. However, Patricia A. Marx re-examined the fragments of a Panathenaic *amphora* dated to ca. 540 BC, known as NM Arc. 923, and interpreted the scene in side B as a depiction of the contest. Poseidon and Athena are presented, with Zeus being in the middle of the scene. According to Marx, the amphora represents the moment of Zeus' judgment, after the contest of the two gods. Furthermore, everything in the scene indicates that Zeus was in favor of Athena. Hence, this can be the proof that the myth was known in the second half of the 6th century BC, ca. 100 years before the first literary testimony by Herodotus. For more see Marx and Gisler (2011): 21-40.

²⁶⁹ Hurwit (1999): 174.

²⁷⁰ Hurwit (1999): 212.

god is associated with the power of the horse, while Athena, who is associated with technology, invented the rein, a necessary tool to tame the animal.²⁷¹

At Sounion the two deities seem to have similar attributes. Poseidon symbolizes the raw power of the sea. He is the master of the latter. Athena once more is associated with the technology which is needed for seafaring: the ship, the helm and other important tools for the sailors.²⁷² However, her contribution to seafaring stops there, at the technological innovation. Poseidon is the lord of the seas whom the sailors used to invoke in order to have a safe journey. But Athena, similar to Zeus, was invoked as a Savior by people who were in distress on any occasion, and hence she could also be invoked during a storm at the sea.²⁷³ However, all the aforementioned do not testify why the two deities were worshiped together on the promontory. My analysis provides just a suggestion of how their cohabitation can be explained. It is uncertain how and why the two sanctuaries were established the one close to the other, probably during the same period (in ca. 700 BC). However, throughout the years, the relationship of the two deities in the cape might have been interpreted as I have proposed.

Certainly, due to the legend of the contest for Attica, in Athens the two gods were associated more there than elsewhere. In Kolonos and at Sounion they were worshipped together. But, this does not mean that the two deities were a “divine couple” which was worshipped as one by the Athenians. Each of them had its own attributes and importance. Certainly, they were both important for the Athenian *polis*. Athena was the *poliouchos* and worshiped in many different places around Attica with different epithets, while Poseidon represented the interest of the *polis* in the sea. The depiction of Poseidon sitting on a rock, on the east frieze of the Athena Nike temple, could have indicated the importance of Sounion for the *polis*, and the interest of the latter in the sea.

²⁷¹ Parker (2005): 389.

²⁷² Schumacher (1993): 83; Parker (2005): 410.

²⁷³ Parker (2005): 410.

2.2 Discussing the Offerings from the *Bothroi*

As mentioned in the introduction, De Polignac formed a three-part model according to which the Archaic extra-urban sanctuaries expressed mediation, competition and sovereignty.²⁷⁴ Certainly, his theory seems too vague to be the case for every extra-urban sanctuary in Archaic Greece. However, as De Polignac had based his theory on the finds of these sanctuaries, it would be proper to examine the content of the Sounion *bothroi* and see by whom and why the votives were dedicated to the two sanctuaries.

In the first chapter I have presented analytically the offerings whose provenance is certain.²⁷⁵ The contents derived from both *bothroi* sanctuaries is largely rich and variant. It consists of metalwork, faience figurines, terracotta figurines, plastic vases, terracotta plaques, scarabs, stone seals and pottery (mainly Corinthian), dated to the 7th and 6th century BC.²⁷⁶ Although the large number of finds implies that the two sanctuaries were important and known to the seafarers who passed by the promontory, the majority of them have no specific characteristics that can associate them with a particular deity. However, that was common in the Archaic period.²⁷⁷ Exception could probably be the iron swords and the miniature shields derived from the Athena *bothros*. These items could be associated with the goddess and express her warlike nature.²⁷⁸ Athena was an armed divinity. Moreover, two terracotta painted plaques depict a female figure, probably Athena. In the first plaque, the figure is standing on a chariot holding the reins of a horse, while in the other she is seated, wearing a crown.²⁷⁹ In the case of Poseidon, it is hard to find an offering which is related directly to him. Maybe only the relief plaque which depicts a naked foot of a dressed figure, can be attributed to him. But as mentioned in the previous chapter, it is difficult to tell with certainty that this is a representation of the sea-god.²⁸⁰

But what is the origin of all these artifacts? It appears that most of the items were imported from the Cyclades, Egypt (Naucratis), Rhodes and the Levant in

²⁷⁴ De Polignac (1994): 4-7. See also the introduction of this thesis.

²⁷⁵ Only the exact location of 120 items has been recorded. See 1.2.5 and 1.3.5.

²⁷⁶ See 1.2.5 and 1.3.5.

²⁷⁷ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 113.

²⁷⁸ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 134.

²⁷⁹ For an analysis on both plaques, see Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 69-70.

²⁸⁰ See 1.2.5.

general. For example, faience scarabs and stone seals were imported both from Naucratis and Rhodes.²⁸¹ Interesting is also the case of the bronze Reshef figurine, depicting a god, from the sanctuary of Poseidon. This is an import, probably from Syria or Palestine.²⁸² As Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis pointed out, the existence of all these imported items “testify to the international character of the promontory.”²⁸³ Ships from the Levant, Cyprus, Egypt and the islands followed a sea road which led to Athens and naturally passed from Sounion, the southern point of Attica. There, some seafarers and traders probably left votives to the two sanctuaries before continuing their trip to Athens. It can be assumed that some of the imported items were actually votives of the people from Attica and not the foreign seafarers. It is possible that traders brought artifacts from their lands and sold them to the Athenians. Subsequently, the latter dedicated these items to the two gods. However, it is uncertain if this was indeed the case, since imported votives are rare in other Attic sanctuaries.

In any case, the large number of imported items indicates the trade relations between Athens and the East, especially with the island of Rhodes. It seems, that the seafarers dedicated votives to Poseidon and Athena before entering the Attic land. However, this act does not necessarily imply that it was made for mediation reasons. According to the three-type model of de Polignac, the extra-urban sanctuaries served as a place of mediation between multiple communities. The different communities met in the sanctuaries in order to arrange alliances and marriages, participate in common festivals and settle trade deals.²⁸⁴ This indeed may have been true for large sanctuaries which were located in the middle of two or more communities. It is possible that people from different communities made ties with each other there. However, what was the case for the sanctuaries located close to the sea? Concerning the deities of these sanctuaries, de Polignac suggested that they served as “intermediaries in contacts and exchanges between foreigners and the coastal residents.”²⁸⁵ However, this statement seems vague and does not give any sufficient explanation concerning the reason the foreign sailors dedicated votives to the gods of

²⁸¹ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 115.

²⁸² Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 125.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁴ De Polignac (1994): 5.

²⁸⁵ De Polignac (1994): 6.

these sanctuaries. Regarding the case of Sounion, it seems that the sailors after a long and difficult voyage made the dedications most probably to thank Poseidon and Athena for their safe travel, but also to honour them as prominent gods of the Attic land. Being traders mostly, they had as final destination the port of Piraeus, where they would be able to sell their goods and import others. There is no evidence to indicate that they had close ties with the local people from Laureotike nor that they met regularly with them for feasts or to settle other arrangements.

According to de Polignac, the Archaic extra urban sanctuaries also served as centers of competition between elites. Indeed, during the Archaic period, the elites were in a continuous struggle for social distinction. As rulers, they had to legitimize and ensure their prominent position by finding connections with heroes of the past, and by competing against each other in the display of *arête*.²⁸⁶ The latter took place at both Panhellenic and local sanctuaries.²⁸⁷ There, the elites were able not only to dedicate valuable offerings, visible to both their subjects and their rivals, but also to participate in competitive festivals. In the case of Sounion, many of the finds from both sanctuaries are of great value,²⁸⁸ while one specific type of dedication which is associated with the elites is the marble *kouroi* group.²⁸⁹

Concerning the festivals, the first testimony which indicates that one took place at Sounion derives from the early 5th century. Herodotus mentioned that in 489 BC the Aeginetans captured a *theoris* (i.e. sacred ship) with Athenian elites on their way to Sounion for a penteteric festival.²⁹⁰ As Warford pointed out, the fact that the Aeginetans knew in advance that the ship was heading to Sounion, implies that the sacred journey was a regular event.²⁹¹ Furthermore, she argued that other Athenians probably also attended the festival, but went to Sounion on foot.²⁹²

²⁸⁶ Kragset (2015): 74-76.

²⁸⁷ Kragset (2015): 76-77.

²⁸⁸ See for example the metalwork in 1.2.5 and 1.3.5.

²⁸⁹ For more about the *kouroi*, see 2.3.

²⁹⁰ Hdt. 6.87. According to Warford, as *theoria* also means “spectacle”, maybe Herodotus just wanted to describe a group of elites who were able to attend the festival by ship and avoid the long walk from Athens. For more see Warford (2015): 186.

²⁹¹ Warford (2015): 186.

²⁹² Ibid.

Apart from this penteteric festival, we are informed by Lysias that in the late 5th century a trireme-race event took place at Sounion.²⁹³ These races probably attracted many spectators from all over Attica. Moreover, the discovery of the Early Classical relief with the young athlete who is adjusting a crown on his head has been related by many to the trireme-races.²⁹⁴ Finally, the two stoas of Poseidon's sanctuary discovered by Stais were probably used to accommodate visitors during festivals.²⁹⁵

Certainly, due to the lack of evidence it is not clear if festivals were held at Sounion during the 6th century. The literary testimonies testify that at least one major festival as well as trireme-races were organized at Sounion during the 5th century, and the architectural remains from the Classical period (the stoas) can confirm this.

2.3 The Kouroi (PLATES 20-23)

Apart from the votives derived from both *bothroi*, there are also other finds which should be discussed. One of the most interesting finds of Sounion is the group of the Archaic marble *kouroi*, discovered in both sanctuaries.²⁹⁶ More specifically, in the artificial fill of the sanctuary of Poseidon, a nearly complete *kouros* with its base (NM 2720 & NM 2720a),²⁹⁷ the torso and the base of another one (NM 3645 & NM 3645a) and two more bases (NM 3939; 4th base lost) were found.²⁹⁸ Two of the four *kouroi* (NM 2720 & NM 3645) were colossal, over three meters tall. The other two were also over-life-sized, but smaller than the former.²⁹⁹ In the artificial fill of the sanctuary of Athena many small sculpture fragments were found. These belonged to nine *kouroi* from life-size to smaller than life-size. Along with these small fragments,³⁰⁰ the torso

²⁹³ Lys.21.5

²⁹⁴ Stais (1917): 176; Parker (1996): 35; Antonaccio (1995): 167. Cf. Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 13.

²⁹⁵ Stais (1920): 16. See also 1.2.3.

²⁹⁶ The Kouros is presented as a nude youth, standing in frontal pose with one leg (usually the left), slightly advanced. For more about its technical characteristics, anatomy and origin, see Richter (1970): 1-29.

²⁹⁷ According to Papathanasopoulos, the actual base of Kouros NM 2720, is the item NM 3645a. However, it was never changed and even today the kouros can be found in the National Museum of Athens, mounted on base NM 2720a. For more see Papathanasopoulos (1983): 48-49.

²⁹⁸ Stais (1917): 189; Papathanasopoulos (1988): 20-21. For the lost base, see Papathanasopoulos (1983): 57.

²⁹⁹ Richter (1970): 42-46; Papathanasopoulos (1988): 48-57.

³⁰⁰ Papathanasopoulos (1983): 20-21, 66-78.

of a tenth life-sized *kouros* was discovered.³⁰¹ All the Sounion *kouroi* are from the late to the early 6th century BC.³⁰² Those from the Poseidon sanctuary are older, erected at the beginning of the 6th century, while the others from the Athena one, were set up later during the same century.³⁰³

The Sounion *kouroi* still raise many questions. What did they represent or to whom were they dedicated? Who were the dedicators? Why were they erected on the promontory? These are the questions which will be examined in the following section. However, a discussion concerning the uses and the meaning of the *kouros* type is needed first, in order to answer the aforementioned questions.

2.3.1 Uses and Meaning of the *Kouros* Type

The *kouros* type was famous in almost all the ancient Greek world.³⁰⁴ But what was its function? *Kouroi* can be found both as votives in temples and as grave markers above men's tombs regardless of the age of the deceased.³⁰⁵ In addition, the two different functions of the type were more or less popular in different areas of Greece. For example, the Boeotians used it as a votive, the people of Attica as a grave marker (with the exception of the *kouroi* from Sounion and two from the Acropolis),³⁰⁶ while the Therans and the Samians employed equally its votive and funerary functions.³⁰⁷

However, what was the meaning of the *kouros* type? Throughout the years different interpretations have been given concerning the nature of the sculpture. During the nineteenth century it was called "Apollo", while Vassilis Leonardos was the one who gave the name "*kouros*" in 1895.³⁰⁸ The belief that the *kouros* type represents the god Apollo was strong as it can be found frequently in sanctuaries of the latter. However, it is also found in sanctuaries of other male and female deities, such as the Samian Heraion and the two sanctuaries of Athena and Poseidon in

³⁰¹ The torso is now lost. For more see Papathanasopoulos (1983): 59-65. For a full list of all the fragments, see Meyer and Brüggemann (2007): 167-169.

³⁰² Paga and Miles (2016): 686.

³⁰³ Papathanasopoulos (1983): 48-65.

³⁰⁴ Stewart (1997): 65.

³⁰⁵ Stewart (1990): 109.

³⁰⁶ Stewart (1997): 66.

³⁰⁷ Stewart (1990): 109.

³⁰⁸ Stewart (1997): 63.

Sounion.³⁰⁹ In 1978 John Boardman argued that *kouroi* were not representations of a deity, but rather “dedications offering more permanent and silent service to a god than could mortal flesh”.³¹⁰ However, he recognized that some *kouroi* served as representations of a god when they hold attributes in their hands.³¹¹

Of course, the connection with Apollo (or other gods) is not the only interpretation of the *kouros*. Another well-known assumption is that the statue represents a hero. In the works of Homer and Herodotus heroes are described as far taller than mortal men.³¹² Andrew Stewart noted that these heroic characteristics can be connected with the Sounion colossi.³¹³ He also referred to Brunilde Ridgway, who in 1977 noted that it was only the Attic sculptors who show “definite interest in musculature”.³¹⁴ This masculinity connects the *kouroi* more directly with the archaic ideas of heroes. Well-known is the inscription cut on the base of the Kroisos *kouros* (NM 3851- PLATE 24), a grave marker from Finikia, near Anavyssos:³¹⁵

“στέθι : καὶ οἴκτιρον Κροΐσο
παρὰ σέμα θανόντος | ἦόν
ποτ’ ἐνὶ προμάχοις : ὄλεσε
θόρος : Ἄρες.”³¹⁶

As the inscription indicates, the deceased died like a hero in battle. At the same time the tomb is marked with a masculine *kouros* and hence it strengthens the heroic attribute of Kroisos. Josephine Crawley Quinn also compared the inscription with the heroic ideal, which was mentioned in the *Iliad*, where Sarpedon and Glaucus are honored as if they were immortals.³¹⁷

Hence, the *kouros* type was used both as a votive and as a grave marker. But this double use causes confusion concerning its meaning. Is there more than one meaning? Andrew Stewart gave probably the best answer in 1990. He stated that the

³⁰⁹ Stewart (1990): 109.

³¹⁰ Boardman (1978): 22.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*

³¹² Hom. *Il.* 5.302-10; Hdt. 1.68, 2.91.

³¹³ Stewart (1990): 109.

³¹⁴ Ridgway (1977): 54.

³¹⁵ Quinn (2007): 96.

³¹⁶ *SEG* 10.461: “Stop and mourn at the monument of dead Croesus, whom Ares destroyed fighting in the front rank.” Translation by Quinn (2007): 96.

³¹⁷ Quinn (2007); 96-7. For the specific passage, see Hom. *Il.* 12.315-325.

kouros is basically meaningless: “As a man of all situations yet obligatory in none, the *kouros* could be called upon as the need arose, at the particular whim of the clientele, and for a variety of purposes.”³¹⁸ Indeed, the *kouros* type is a certain motif of sculpture which was used for various reasons. However, Stewart pointed out one main characteristic of all the *kouroi*: that they were all prestige pieces.³¹⁹ Only the elite members of a polis were able to finance their construction, transport and erection. The handsome nude youth *kouroi* –as well as the female statues, *korai*–expressed the nobility and the moral and physical beauty which were also known as “*kalokagathia*”.³²⁰ In her study, Quinn discussed “the role of representations of the male body in promoting and reinforcing different political ideas in archaic Greece”,³²¹ by comparing the “aristocratic” *kouros* with the “egalitarian” *herm*.³²² She pointed out that the *kouros* was used by the aristocrats as a symbol of the elite group solidarity.³²³ Hence, regardless of its use on every occasion, the *kouros* was an icon of the Greek elite throughout the Archaic period.

2.3.2 What did the Kouroi Represent and to Whom they were Dedicated?

Turning to the Sounion case and the *kouroi* from both sanctuaries, it is difficult to answer with certainty what the statues represented or to whom they were dedicated. Concerning the *kouroi* from the sanctuary of Poseidon, Stais argued that the two colossi might have represented the Dioskouroi/Anakes, the twin sons of Zeus and Leda, Kastor and Polydeukes. The Dioskouroi among other things were protectors of the sailors and hence were also connected to Poseidon. Stais based his theory on the stars which are engraved in the place of their nipples.³²⁴ However, what is the case of the other two *kouroi* from whom only the bases have been found? Who did those represent? Could they also be representations of the Dioskouroi? In that case we have to deal with four *kouroi*, all associated with the twins, something which I personally

³¹⁸ Stewart (1990): 109.

³¹⁹ Stewart (1990): 110.

³²⁰ Ibid.

³²¹ Quinn (2007): 83.

³²² Quinn (2007): 82-105.

³²³ Quinn (2007): 99-100.

³²⁴ Stais (1917): 191.

found doubtful. It seems most likely that the *kouroi* were associated with Poseidon, god of the sanctuary and master of the seas.

Another assumption again by Stais, is that the *kouroi* were associated with Apollo, as *kouroi* were usually found in sanctuaries of the god of light. But how is Apollo connected with Sounion, the place where Poseidon was worshiped? Stais assumed that the older, Archaic temple might have been dedicated to Apollo and that this god had been worshiped at the site, while the new Classical temple was dedicated to Poseidon after the naval battle of Salamis.³²⁵ However this theory seems unlikely and has already been rejected by other scholars.³²⁶ As has already been discussed, other sanctuaries which were located on promontories, were usually dedicated to the sea-god.³²⁷ Furthermore, in the case of Sounion, the Classical temple of Poseidon was built on the stylobate of the Archaic one, and hence it is more likely that both of them were dedicated to the same god.³²⁸

Taking all the aforementioned into consideration, it seems that the *kouroi* were associated with Poseidon and hence dedicated to him. However, what applies for the *kouroi* derived from the Athena's artificial fill? The examination of this group of *kouroi* is more difficult as only small fragments have survived. Interesting is the discovery of the inscription cut into the thigh of a *kouros* from the mid-6th century BC.³²⁹ The inscription consists of two fragments and according to Papathanasopoulos, both of them probably belong to one *kouros*,³³⁰ although that cannot be said with certainty.³³¹

IG I³ 1204a

— — —ρον Διὶ ἀ[ρ]χ[ε]γέτε[ι]
[— — Σ]ουνιῆς ἀ[νέθεσσαν].

IG I³ 1204b

[— — — ἀνέθ]εκε
— — —θεον.

³²⁵ Stais (1917): 192.

³²⁶ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 120.

³²⁷ See 2.1.1.

³²⁸ For more about the Archaic and the Classical temples of Poseidon see 1.2.1 and 1.2.2.

³²⁹ IG I³ 1204a (NM 3450), IG I³ 1204b (NM 3449).

³³⁰ Papathanasopoulos (1983): 68.

³³¹ It is also possible that the two fragments belong to two different *kouroi*. For more see Stanton (1996): 348.

The restoration of this inscription is quite difficult. Oikonomides restored the first line of the first fragment as “ρον Δὺ ἀ[ρ]χ[-]”.³³² Hence, the last word is an epithet for Zeus. This can be either “ἀρχικέραυνος” (ruler of the thunderbolt) or “ἀρχηγέτης”, which was suggested by Papayiannopoulos-Paleos in 1959 and remains until today as the most acceptable restoration.³³³ It has been accepted that the word “ΟΥΝΙΕΣ” is referring to inhabitants of Sounion.³³⁴ The last word starting with an “α”, still raises problems and the restoration “ἀ[ν]έθεσαν” is uncertain. However, it seems to fit both in the content and the grammar of the text.³³⁵

If the reading of the inscription is correct, it appears that at least one *kouros* was dedicated to Zeus. However, this does not help the identification of the others. We do not know if other *kouroi* were also inscribed, as the surviving fragments are scanty. David Ridgway proposed that they could be associated with Phrontis or even Apollo as the former was killed by the latter.³³⁶ However, as mentioned in the first chapter, the passage from the *Odyssey* which refers to the story of Phrontis, is probably a later interpolation, and hence if that is the case, the assumption of Ridgway is insufficient.³³⁷

Concluding, it seems that the *kouroi* from the sanctuary of Poseidon were associated with the sea-god, while questions still arise concerning the *kouroi* from the sanctuary of Athena. Personally, I believe that they were connected with Athena, as they were erected at her domain, while the one *kouros* dedicated to Zeus may imply that the latter was a “visiting god” at Athena’s sanctuary.³³⁸

³³² Oikonomides (1957): 42, as cited by Stanton (1996): 348.

³³³ Papayiannopoulos-Paleos (1959): 54, as cited by Stanton (1996): 349. For more about the epithet “ἀρχηγέτης”, see Stanton (1996): 349.

³³⁴ Stanton (1996): 349.

³³⁵ Stanton (1996): 348.

³³⁶ Ridgway (1977): 52-53.

³³⁷ For more about the specific passage of the *Odyssey* and the possibility that it is a later interpolation, see 1.3.6.

³³⁸ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 140, n. 17, suggested this by referring to Alroth, who noted that Zeus seemed to “paid a visit” to the sanctuary of Athena at Lindos. Hence, similar to that case, Zeus might have also been a “visiting god” at Sounion.

2.3.3 Who were the dedicators?

Akin to the previous question, it is difficult to answer with certainty who the dedicator of the Sounion *kouroi* was. As Stewart noted, the sculptures “are perhaps best explained either as idiosyncratic gestures by an immigrant community or as an imitation of a practice in the Cyclades, or perhaps even both.”³³⁹ Personally, I am in favor of the second, as the people from Attica borrowed the *kouros* type from the Cyclades, and subsequently manufactured their own sculptures and erected them around Attica.³⁴⁰ However, whatever the case was, who actually financed their manufacture, transport and erection? Certainly, an individual or a group of people with immense wealth. As has been previously discussed, only wealthy men had the necessary funds for the construction of these art pieces.³⁴¹ The dedicators could have been people with close ties with the sea (sailors, traders), or more possibly, wealthy people with political power from south Attica.³⁴² The inscribed *kouros* from Athena’s sanctuary was dedicated by a group of people from the Sounion area.³⁴³ This could also mean that one wealthy man made the dedication in the name of the entire community.³⁴⁴

2.3.4 Why were the *Kouroi* Erected on the Promontory?

It is uncertain where exactly the original location of the *kouroi* was. Probably, the large *kouroi* of the sanctuary of Poseidon were located on prominent positions visible from the land and sea.³⁴⁵ Possibly, they were set up on the south side of the sanctuary, looking to the East. Concerning the *kouroi* of the sanctuary of Athena, it is difficult to

³³⁹ Stewart (1997): 66. The kouros type has its origins in the Cyclades. For more see Richter (1970): 8-11.

³⁴⁰ The kouros type has its origins in the Cyclades. For more see Richter (1970): 8-11.

³⁴¹ See 2.3.1.

³⁴² Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 119.

³⁴³ Here, similar to other cases, it appears that the people from Sounion acted as social and cult community almost 50 years before the creation of the demes as political entities. Cf. Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 10. For more about the formation and the function of the Athenian demes, see Whitehead (1986).

³⁴⁴ The elites often made dedications in the name of their communities. For more see Kragset (2015): 77.

³⁴⁵ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 118-119.

estimate their positions. They could have been set up on the West side, looking at the Saronic gulf.

However, why were the sculptures set up in both sanctuaries in the first place? As aforementioned, they were probably erected under strong Cycladic influence.³⁴⁶ Indeed, the *kouroi* discovered in the sanctuary of Poseidon are made of Naxian marble, and they have many stylistic features which remind one of the *kouroi* from the island of Naxos. The style of the hair, the decoration, the double lines for the shoulder blades and the schema for the fist hand, all testify Naxian influence.³⁴⁷ Other early Attic *kouroi*, such as the so-called New York *kouros*, carry Attic elements, but the Sounion sculptures seem to imitate to a great degree the Naxian style.³⁴⁸ Additionally, they imitate the Naxian *kouroi* in context. Although the *kouros* type was used as a grave marker throughout Attica, in Sounion it had a votive function, similar to the Cyclades.³⁴⁹

As Sanne Houby-Nielsen noted, people who lived in the coastal regions of Attica interacted with people from the shores of Euboea, Cyclades and the islands of the Saronic Gulf.³⁵⁰ Hence, the people from the area of Sounion and the broader region of south Attica probably communicated with the Cycladians. It is not surprising then, that votive statues whose form was borrowed from the Cycladic tradition had been erected at Cape Sounion, the major boundary between Attica and the Aegean Sea. The *kouroi* might have served as mean of communication between the people of Attica and the Cycladians. The *kouros* was a medium that the Cycladians could understand and at the same time, the people of Attica showed the influence from the art tradition of the former.

Regardless of its function, the erection of a *kouros* was a manifestation of personal power. In the case of Sounion, elites might have dedicated the statues in order to display their power and wealth. With this action, apart from the manifestation of their wealth, they were demonstrating the power they had over the area of Laureotike, or even the whole south Attica.

³⁴⁶ See 2.3.3.

³⁴⁷ Ridgway (1977): 53, 72.

³⁴⁸ Ibid.

³⁴⁹ Stewart (1997): 66. Also one more example on the Acropolis.

³⁵⁰ Houby-Nielsen (2009): 190.

2.4 An Examination of the Frieze of the Classical Temple of Poseidon

The archaeological evidence testifies that the sanctuary of Poseidon was monumentalized –at least partially– by the Athenians in the early 5th century BC. The large Doric temple was probably built between 490 and 480 BC, as a response to the victorious battle of Marathon.³⁵¹ After Marathon, Athens had to protect its coastal borders as the enemy from the East was still active. The Athenians probably realized the strategic importance of the southern cape of Attica, and with the erection of the temple they manifested their power not only to the Aegean Sea, but also to the area around the cape, rich in silver deposits, thanks to which the Athenian economy was monetized.³⁵²

Years after the destruction of the temple by the Persians, the Classical Doric temple of Poseidon was erected at the exact same location as its predecessor.³⁵³ The sculpture of this newer temple is interesting as it has many parallels with the sculpture of the Parthenon, which was built during the same period. Although the examination of the pediment is difficult due to the few pieces which have survived,³⁵⁴ this is not the case for the Ionic frieze, located inside the east porch.³⁵⁵ The Parian slabs of the frieze, located today in the Archaeological Museum of Laurion, were decorated with additions in bronze, marble and lead.³⁵⁶ The three themes of the frieze are the Gigantomachy,³⁵⁷ the Thessalian Centauromachy³⁵⁸ and the Deeds of Theseus.³⁵⁹ In 2009 Iphigeneia Leventi examined closely the slabs in Laurion and by finding similarities between the scenes of the latter and the corresponding pottery of the 5th century BC, she gave some new interpretations concerning the identities of the depicted figures. According to her, slab A2 depicts Athena in the Gigantomachy, A7 Poseidon (now lost), A1 Ares and A4 Herakles and Eros, all in the same battle.

³⁵¹ Paga and Miles (2016): 687; See 1.2.2.

³⁵² For more about the Sounion demos and the mines, see chapter 3.

³⁵³ See 1.2.2.

³⁵⁴ For the pediment sculpture, see 1.2.1.

³⁵⁵ Leventi (2009): 152.

³⁵⁶ Leventi (2009): 153.

³⁵⁷ The battle between the Giants and the Olympians for the supremacy of Mt. Olympus. For more see Apollod. 1.6.1-3.

³⁵⁸ The battle between the Lapiths and the centaurs at the wedding feast of the Lapith king Perithoos in Thessaly. For more see Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 12.210-535.

³⁵⁹ The deeds of the mythological “hero-king” of Athens, Theseus. For more see Plut. *Theseus*; Neils (1987).

Moreover, slabs A3, A5, A6 and A7, presenting horses of a four-horse chariot, a Giant and a peplos figure respectively, are all part of the Gigantomachy theme.³⁶⁰ B1, B2, B4 and B5 are scenes from the Centauromachy.³⁶¹ More specifically, B1 presents the death of the Lapith Kaineus. Finally, slab C2 depicts Theseus and the bull of Marathon. According to the myth, Theseus bound the bull and dragged it to the Acropolis to sacrifice it and prove that he was the son of Aegeus.³⁶² The fragmentary slab C1 probably depicts Aigeus and was probably placed at the left side of C2, while another figure could have also existed on the other side of the central scene, that of Medea, who hoped that the bull would kill Theseus.³⁶³ Furthermore, Leventi identified a male torso (C4), as Theseus. The torso represents a nude warrior lunging to the left, and hence could be Theseus having just killed the Minotaur with his sword.³⁶⁴ Finally, a fragment of slab (C3, now lost), presents a bearded man in a falling position. According to Leventi, this could be Skiron whom Theseus pushed off a rock in West Attica.³⁶⁵

It appears that the Athenians, similar to the case of the Parthenon, decorated the temple of Poseidon at Sounion with a frieze depicting mythological scenes. Indeed, the Gigantomachy is presented on the East metopes of the Parthenon, and the Centauromachy on the South ones, while Theseus is presented in the Centauromachy scene (South Metope 27) and on the Amazonomachy, on the West Metopes.³⁶⁶ However, why did the frieze of the temple of Poseidon and the Metopes of the Parthenon consist of these mythological scenes and not of images related to the cults of Poseidon and Athena respectively? It seems that these themes served as a part for the construction of the Athenian “national” narrative. Both the frieze of the Poseidon temple and the metopes of the Parthenon are mythological allegories of the battles against the Persians. The Lapiths and the Gods can be interpreted as the Athenians, while the Giants and the Centaurs as the Persians.³⁶⁷ Similarly, the scene of Theseus

³⁶⁰ Leventi (2009):160-163.

³⁶¹ Leventi (2009): 144-155.

³⁶² Leventi (2009): 158.

³⁶³ Leventi relied this theory on a composition of the same scene on a 5th century BC red-figure bell-krater (now in Madrid), and on the tragedies of Sophokles and Euripides (*Oedipus Coloneus* and *Supplikes* respectively). For more see Leventi (2009): 158.

³⁶⁴ Leventi (2009): 160.

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

³⁶⁶ For more about the Metopes of Parthenon, see Schwab (2005): 159-199.

³⁶⁷ Leventi (2009): 164.

with the bull of Marathon could be interpreted as the victory of the Athenians at the battle of Marathon. If Medea was also part of the scene, she may have served as a representation of the Medes.³⁶⁸ This assumption reinforces the theory for a “battle of Marathon” allegory. At this point, it should be mentioned that even before the construction of the Classical temple, the cape was linked with the Persian Wars. Specifically, according to Herodotus, after the naval battle of Salamis one of the three captured Phoenician triremes was dedicated to Poseidon at Sounion.³⁶⁹

Returning to the frieze, Leventi pointed out that the presence of Eros, Herakles and Theseus, and the absence of women from the Centauromachy scene, might have hinted at the Athenian military institutions.³⁷⁰ As the promontory is located far from the *astu* and it had already been fortified from the end of the 6th century BC, the Athenians might have wanted to highlight its strategic position by creating a frieze where the military aspect of the *polis* would be dominant.

Concerning the presence of Theseus, more can be said about his symbolism and role. Apart from an allegory of the democratic Athenian *polis* against “barbarism”, the deeds of Theseus seem to be a significant theme also for the Athenian policy. The myth of Theseus gained more prominence in Athens during the last decade of the 6th century BC. It was then, at the same time as the reforms of Kleisthenes, when the *synoecism* myth emerged. According to the myth, Theseus was the Athenian king who united the twelve independent towns of Attica and made Athens the political centre of the latter.³⁷¹ Thus, the presence of Theseus in the frieze of the Classical temple of Poseidon, could also be interpreted as an allegory of the unification of Attica and the collective identity of the Athenians. It declared that the southern border of Attica was part of the Athenian *polis*. Moreover, Theseus had dual paternity, linked both to the god to whom the sanctuary was dedicated, Poseidon, and to the Athenian king Aegeus.³⁷² Hence, he was associated with seafaring and the Athenian sovereignty, factors which were both expressed in Cape Sounion.

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

³⁶⁹ Her. 8.121. The second was dedicated at the Isthmus and the third at Salamis.

³⁷⁰ Ibid.

³⁷¹ Thuc. 2.15. For more about Theseus and the myth of *synoecism*, see Davie (1982): 25-34; Kragset (2015): 58-63.

³⁷² Leventi (2009): 159.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter a close examination of specific offerings, the sculpture of the sanctuary of Poseidon and the two deities who were worshipped on the promontory was given. This was done in order to see if de Polignac's three-type model concerning mediation, competition and sovereignty can be applied in the case of Sounion, with particular interest in the "sovereignty" part.

Although the model is useful to understand the possible uses of the extra-urban sanctuaries, it appears to be too generic and it is difficult for it to be applied as an inseparable unit in every case. Indeed, in the case of Sounion even though each part of the model existed somehow, the model as a whole does not seem as "perfect" as de Polignac described, but has some flaws. The two gods of the promontory were known to the whole Greek world. To them, merchants and other seafarers coming from the islands, Egypt and the Levant, dedicated votives which they had brought from their homelands, while at the same time local elites also offered valuable offerings in order to manifest their power and compete with their rivals. The offerings of the foreign sailors did not seem to constitute an act of mediation between the latter and the local population of Sounion, but were probably an act of thanking the two gods, both for the safe travel of the sailors and to honour the gods' prominent position in Attica. In contrast, as it seems that the Cycladians had ties with the people of south Attica, the *kouroi* of the sanctuary of Poseidon were probably erected under the influence of the former. These *kouroi* probably served as a medium of communication. The elites were probably once more responsible for the manufacture, transportation and erection of these aristocratic pieces on the promontory.

In the early 5th century, Cape Sounion was monumentalized by the Athenians and gained religious importance for the latter who traveled there for festivals. In Attica the two gods had a close relationship as the two main characters of the myth of the contest for the lands of the former. Apart from Sounion, Poseidon and Athena were worshipped together in Kolonos and on the Acropolis, the major domain of Athena in the whole of Attica, where Poseidon owned an altar. The promontory gained also political and economic significance due its strategic position and to the nearby mines.

The Archaic temple of Poseidon manifested the Athenian sovereignty at the southern tip of Attica. Years after the raids of the Persians and the destruction of the two sanctuaries, two new temples were built, dedicated to the two deities of the promontory. The scenes of the Ionic frieze of the temple of Poseidon hinted the Athenian “national narrative” and the collective identity of all the Athenians, expressing with this way once more the sovereignty of the *polis*.

However, the two sanctuaries were established in ca. 700 BC, almost two centuries before the reforms of Kleisthenes and the unification of Attica, and more than two centuries before the construction of the Archaic temple of Poseidon by the Athenians. Questions arise concerning the association of Athens with Sounion during these centuries and the changes which occurred at the beginning of the 5th century BC. Hence, in the next chapter the broader area of Sounion before and after the reforms of Kleisthenes, will be examined.

CHAPTER 3

The Laureotike Region and its Importance for the Athenian *Polis*

Chapter 2 was an attempt to show if and in which way Cape Sounion was a place of mediation, competition and sovereignty. As has been discussed, both of the sanctuaries firstly became known to the foreign seafarers due to their position at the most southern tip of Attica. Secondly, they became competitive arenas –similar to other sanctuaries– for the elites who wanted to display their wealth and power, and thirdly they became monumentalized during the 5th century BC. The erection of the temples, the establishment of a penteteric festival and of trireme races as well as the themes of the frieze of the Classical temple of Poseidon –which has many similarities with the metopes of the Parthenon– testify that at the dawn of the 5th century BC, the cape attracted the religious and political interest of the Athenians. Why did this happen at the beginning of the 5th century –as the architecture at the cape indicates– and not earlier? What was the relationship between Athens and Sounion during the previous centuries? Did the people from the Sounion area communicate with other neighboring settlements, and if yes, in what ways?

In order to shed some light on these questions, this chapter will deal with the broader region of Sounion, both before and after the reforms of 508/7 BC made by Kleisthenes. First, I will discuss the region and its relationship with Athens and other nearby areas before the reforms of 508/7 BC. Subsequently, I will examine the area of Sounion as a *demos*, its centers and its people. A discussion concerning the factor due to which the area of Sounion became very important for the Athenian *polis*, the existence of the mines, will follow. Finally, I will discuss the way in which all the mining area as well as the *astu* with the cape was connected. It should be mentioned that throughout the chapter I will try to show the relationship between Sounion and Thorikos –a settlement located some kilometers north of the promontory– throughout the Archaic and the Classical period,

3.1 The Pre-Kleisthenic Era

Cape Sounion is part of Laureotike, a metalliferous region which covers 200 square kilometers of the south-east tip of the Attic peninsula (PLATE 25).³⁷³ The remains which can indicate early human activity in the region are scant. Concerning Sounion, with the exception of the two early Helladic tombs on the eastern hill of the promontory,³⁷⁴ there is no other archeological evidence which can testify a large early settlement in the nearby area. The same case applies for the whole region of Laureotike with the significant exception of Thorikos. This settlement is located 15 kilometers north of the Sounion Cape, right next to the modern town of Laurion. The sea-side settlement included the Velatouri hill, on which house foundations dated to the Neolithic, Bronze, Geometric, Archaic and Classical period were found.³⁷⁵ Moreover, 150 graves dated from the Geometric to the Classical period, have been discovered by the Belgians archeologists.³⁷⁶

Thorikos was one of the earliest settlements in Attica.³⁷⁷ It seems that until the early Archaic period it was also the only main settlement of the whole Laureotike region. However, its remote location, on a small bay of south-eastern Attica, raises questions concerning its relationship with the *astu*. Indeed, how dependent on the *astu* was Thorikos? Was the latter part of the Athenian territory? In order to answer these questions, examination of the origins of the Athenian *polis* is needed. Van den Eijnde has argued that the emergence of the Athenian *polis* can be attributed to the 10th century BC, “when the Athenian state began to stake out its territorial aspirations by defending its borders through peripheral cults”, hence two centuries earlier than previously believed.³⁷⁸ In the Early Iron Age Athens was the dominant settlement of Attica.³⁷⁹ During the 10th century BC, sanctuaries on the edges of the Athenian plain –

³⁷³ Salliora-Oikonomakou (2004): 24; Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis (2015): 104.

³⁷⁴ See 1.3.5.

³⁷⁵ Important are also the tholos tombs, rich in votives, located on the slopes of the Velatouri hill. For more see Themelis (1973): 28. For more about Thorikos during the Archaic and Classical period, see Mussche (1975): 45-61; Mussche (1998).

³⁷⁶ Bingen (1963): 59-86; Bingen (1964): 25-46. Cf. Brüsewitz (2012): 66.

³⁷⁷ According to the myth, Thorikos was one of the twelve cities that were founded by Cecrops. Later, Theseus united these cities into one. For more see Strabo 1.20. For more about the *synoecism* myth and its use by the Athenians during the reforms of Kleisthenes, see Kragset (2015): 58-63.

³⁷⁸ Van den Eijnde (2010): 340.

³⁷⁹ Van den Eijnde (2010): 330.

namely at Hymettos, Parnes and Mounichia– were established, while in the second half of the 9th century BC another one appeared at Pallini.³⁸⁰ According to Van den Eijnde, the establishment of these sanctuaries can be seen as an attempt by the Athenians to control the so-called *pedion*, the plain which is surrounded by the mountains Aigaleo, Parnes, Penteli, Hymettos, and borders with the Saronic Gulf on the south.³⁸¹

Furthermore, Van den Eijnde argued that the Attic *ethnos* emerged simultaneously with the Athenian *polis*.³⁸² *Ethnos* and *polis* were two separate issues which were only aligned gradually during the 6th century BC.³⁸³ It seems that this procedure peaked with the reforms of Kleisthenes in 508/7 BC, when “the territory of the Attic peninsula came to be identical with that of the Athenian *polis*”.³⁸⁴ It appears that at the same time as the establishment of the peripheral sanctuaries on the borders of the Athenian *pedion*, some new settlements were founded around Attica, while others which had been probably abandoned in the 12th century –due to the instability and the fear of conflict after the collapse of Mycenaean Civilization– such as Brauron, Eleusis and Thorikos, were re-inhabited.³⁸⁵ These settlements fell outside the Athenian sphere of influence as they were not part of the territory of the latter. However, as they were small in size and not so far away from Athens, some form of dependency probably existed.³⁸⁶

In the 8th and 7th century BC, more settlements appeared around the Attic peninsula, this time including new cult sites.³⁸⁷ It was then, in ca. 700 BC, or a bit earlier, that the sanctuaries of Poseidon and Athena were established on Cape Sounion. Archaeological evidence from the Archaic period such as pottery, indicates that the area nearby the promontory was inhabited at that time.³⁸⁸ As Athens had only

³⁸⁰ Van den Eijnde (2010): 337.

³⁸¹ Van den Eijnde (2010): 340.

³⁸² Van den Eijnde (2010): 335, 340. It should be mentioned that from the 5th century BC onwards, the concept of Attic ethnicity was based on two myths: the belief that all the people of Attica “sprung from the ground” (Hdt. 7.161.3; Isoc. 4.24), and the notion of common ancestry from the king Kekrops (Hdt. 8.44.2; Thuc. 1.15.1; Strabo 9.1.19-20. For more about the Attic *ethnos*, see Van den Eijnde (2010): 335-336.

³⁸³ Van den Eijnde (2010): 26.

³⁸⁴ Van den Eijnde (2010): 301.

³⁸⁵ Van den Eijnde (2010): 311; 328-329.

³⁸⁶ Van den Eijnde (2010): 340-341.

³⁸⁷ Parker (1996): 18; Van den Eijnde (2010): 358-359.

³⁸⁸ Salliora-Oikonomakou (2004): 34.

the *pedion* under its total control, Sounion was probably more dependent on Thorikos, the settlement which was bigger in size and more densely populated than the area of Sounion located only some kilometers north of the latter (PLATE 26). Moreover, people from Thorikos probably traveled to Cape Sounion in order to offer votives and provide sacrifices. It should be mentioned that the only Archaic sanctuary which was discovered in Thorikos is a small one, dedicated to a healing deity.³⁸⁹ Although there is no direct evidence to testify that during the Archaic period people from Thorikos indeed visited Cape Sounion regularly, an epigraphical testimony from the second half of the 5th century attests so for the Classical period. In the sacrificial calendar of Thorikos, it is mentioned that a lamb had to be sacrificed for Poseidon at Sounion during the month of Boedromion (ca. September).³⁹⁰ Hence, not only were the people from the Sounion area dependent on the larger settlement of Thorikos, but also the sanctuary of Poseidon was important for the latter. Furthermore, apart from Thorikos, Sounion seems to have communicated with the Cyclades as well. Indeed, as mentioned in chapter 2, the Cycladian element is visible on the promontory. The marble kouroi of the sanctuary of Poseidon carried Naxian characteristics and were probably erected under Naxian influence.³⁹¹

It seems that the sanctuary of Poseidon attracted both the interest of Thorikos and the Cyclades. As it was located on the top of the promontory, visible from inland and sea, it probably served as a sanctuary of multiple communities. Furthermore, it is possible that the sanctuary was important for the whole of south Attica. As a main major sanctuary of south Attica, the sanctuary of Poseidon may have attracted people from other areas, all around the region. Thus, people from the areas which after 508/7 BC became the *demes* of Anaphlystos (modern Anavyssos), Phrearrhioi and Thorai, probably visited the sanctuary. Similarly, the nearby islanders also visited it, and as a result made ties with the people from the aforementioned areas.

In the early 5th century BC the sanctuary of Poseidon was monumentalized probably by the Athenians. However, this was not the first time that the *polis* showed interest in the peripheral cult places of Attica. Indeed, it seems that Athens was taking

³⁸⁹ Mussche (1975): 48.

³⁹⁰ *SEG* 33.147, line 19. Third month of the Athenian year.

³⁹¹ See 2.3.4.

an interest in the cult of Eleusis in the mid-6th century BC.³⁹² Moreover, a branch sanctuary of Eleusis (City Eleusinion) was established on the northwest slope of the Acropolis probably in the same century.³⁹³ Similarly, nearby the Acropolis' Propylaea a branch sanctuary of Artemis Brauronia (Brauronion) also established in the 6th century BC.³⁹⁴ As Linn Katrin Kragset has argued throughout her thesis, alongside with myth, religion played a significant role in the process of the unification of Attica, as the latter had a major role in *polis*' politics.³⁹⁵ Furthermore, she noted that the elites –whose membership in the political and the religious Athenian scene widened from the 9th century BC–³⁹⁶ and their inner competition, were the driving force behind the process that came to unite the peninsula.³⁹⁷ This process took place throughout the 6th century BC and culminated with the reforms of Kleisthenes in 508/7 BC.³⁹⁸ After these reforms, Attica became politically united and centered upon Athens. Sounion became an Athenian *demos*, and as I will argue, an important one.

3.2 The Post Kleisthenic Era – The Sounion *Demos*

Kleisthenes divided the population of Attica into ten tribes, each named after an Attic hero. He also divided the peninsula into thirty *trittyes*, ten from the coast, ten from the inland and ten from the city district. Three *trittyes* (one of each region) were assigned to each of the ten tribes by lot. Thus, every tribe had a share in the coast, the inland and the city district. Finally, the people from the whole of Attica were organized into *demes*, 140 of which are known.³⁹⁹ The Sounion *demos* was located on the southern part of the south-eastern Attica and belonged to the coastal *trittys* of Leontis.⁴⁰⁰ The territory of the *demos* was quite large expanding from the Kamariza in the north to the promontory in the south, and from the Legrena valley in the west to the modern town of Laurion in the East.⁴⁰¹ It should be mentioned that the Sounion *demos* was

³⁹² Clinton (1994): 162-3.

³⁹³ For the City Eleusinion see Miles (1998): 1-23.

³⁹⁴ For the Brauroneion see Hurwit (1999): 117.

³⁹⁵ Kragset (2015): 6; 28-49.

³⁹⁶ Van den Eijnde (2010): 348.

³⁹⁷ Kragset (2015): 6; 73-90.

³⁹⁸ Kragset (2015): 107.

³⁹⁹ Hdt. 5.66-69; *Ath. Pol.* 21-2; Lambert (1993): 1-3.

⁴⁰⁰ Salliora-Oikononakou (2004):14.

⁴⁰¹ Salliora-Oikononakou (2004): 27.

connected with the other two *demes* of the coastal *trittys* of Leontis. Hence, the people of Sounion made ties and communicated with the people of the Phrearrhoi and Deiradiotai *demes*.⁴⁰²

3.2.1 The Inhabited Areas and the Centres of the *Demos*

The Sounion *demos* did not only consist of people from south Attica. Herodotos mentioned that land was given to exiles from Aegina between 491 and 481 BC.⁴⁰³ Furthermore, as was been discussed in chapter 1, one branch of the Salaminioi *genos* settled at some point in the area of Sounion.⁴⁰⁴

The territory of the *demos* was large and sparsely populated. Sounion did not have one main settlement. It seems that due to the geography of the area (mountains, rocky hills, valleys and small bays), the people lived in scattered small villages or in isolated farms.⁴⁰⁵ Archaeological evidence which testifies the existence of inhabited areas, has been found in the locations Limani Pasa, Pountazeza (Porthmos) – Gaidouromantra (Panormos), Laurion (Ergasteria), Kamariza, Megala Peuka, Agrileza, Botsaris' valley- Noria and in the settlement inside the fort, at the cape (PLATE 27).⁴⁰⁶

In chapter 1, the fort which enclosed both the sanctuary of Poseidon and a small settlement on the slopes of the hill was mentioned.⁴⁰⁷ However, in contrast with the *demes* of Eleusis and Rhamnous, the *agora* of the *demos* was not located inside the walls of the fort.⁴⁰⁸ Afar from the other inhabited areas, the fort of Cape Sounion seems to have been associated more with the *astu*. Indeed, the Sounies apart from visiting the sanctuaries in order to make dedications and participating in festivals, did not have any reason to settle on the promontory. The cape is vulnerable to strong winds and located far from the land which can be cultivated. However, Athenian

⁴⁰² For the other *demes* belonging to the city and the inland *trittys* of the Leontis tribe, see Trail (1986): 130-131.

⁴⁰³ Hdt. 6.90.4.

⁴⁰⁴ See 1.2.6.

⁴⁰⁵ Salliora-Oikononakou (2004): 39.

⁴⁰⁶ For an analytical discussion concerning all these areas and their archaeological evidence, see Salliora-Oikononakou (2004): 41-110. See also the discussion of Goette (2000): 62-112.

⁴⁰⁷ See 1.2.4.

⁴⁰⁸ Whitehead (1986): 406-407. See also 1.2.4.

troops were stationed there, as it constituted a major strategic point of the Athenian territory.

The inhabitants of the *demos* preferred the valleys and the small bays of the area. Interesting is the case of the Limani Passa and the Porthmos (modern Pountazeza), two places which are associated with the Salaminioi genos (PLATE 28). The inscriptions *SEG* 21.527 and *Agora* XIX L4b, provide information concerning the priesthoods and the land which belonged to both branches of the genos. In both inscriptions the *agora* at Koile is mentioned.⁴⁰⁹ An *agora* has been discovered in the modern area of Limani Pasa, and it has been attributed to the *agora* of the Salaminioi at Koile.⁴¹⁰ Houses were discovered to the southwest and east of the *agora*,⁴¹¹ while on the northern side of the Pasa valley a large farm was found, probably belonging to a wealthy man of the Salaminioi *genos*.⁴¹² The area of Pountazeza was also associated with the Salaminioi. Young identified the area as the location of Porthmos, where according to the inscription *SEG* 21.527, the genos owned a temenos of Herakles.⁴¹³ Doric capitals, foundations and of a marble building have been found in the area.⁴¹⁴ Moreover, Young saw in a storeroom in Sounion a relief *stele* depicting an athlete on the front face and deeds of Herakles around the back and on both sides and associated it with Porthmos and the cult of Herakles.⁴¹⁵

Another interesting area is the valley of Agrileza with both agricultural and mining activity.⁴¹⁶ The remains of houses and large farms with towers indicate that wealthy Sounies inhabited this area.⁴¹⁷ In the same area, inscription *IG* II² 1180 (probably mid-4th century or slightly earlier),⁴¹⁸ concerning a new *agora* of the Sounion *demos* was found.⁴¹⁹ It was not found *in situ*, but it mentions the decree has to be erected in the new *agora*, which Leukios of Sounion had donated.⁴²⁰ Stanton

⁴⁰⁹ *SEG* 21.527, line 17; *Agora* XIX L4b, lines 36-37.

⁴¹⁰ Salliora-Oikonomakou (2004): 52-53.

⁴¹¹ Salliora-Oikonomakou (2004): 58-59.

⁴¹² Salliora-Oikonomakou (2004): 61.

⁴¹³ *SEG* 21.527, lines 10-11, 16; Young (1941): 163.

⁴¹⁴ Young (1941): 171-172; Salliora-Oikonomakou (2004): 64.

⁴¹⁵ Young (1941): 172-175.

⁴¹⁶ Salliora-Oikonomakou (2004): 94.

⁴¹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁸ For a discussion on the chronology of the decree, see Stanton (1996): 351.

⁴¹⁹ Stanton (1996): 342.

⁴²⁰ *IG* II² 1180, lines 24-25.

stated that the new agora was somewhere in the nearby area.⁴²¹ Indeed, as the archeological remains indicate that the valley was populated and wealthy Sounies had their farms there, it is highly possible this was the place of the new *agora*. The discovery of this inscription indicates one more important fact: that there was another, older *agora* somewhere else in the territory of the deme. Until today no area has been identified as the old *agora*. Stanton thought that it might have been somewhere in the Agrileza valley.⁴²²

3.2.2 Public Buildings

Certainly, Sounion is more known for its sanctuaries. Apart from the two well-known sanctuaries on the promontory, a shrine of Herakles existed in Porthmos, while in the inland, where the main population of the demos lived, other deities were worshiped. Although no kind of architectural remains have been found in the region, sculpture and inscriptions from the Agrileza valley, Kamariza and the area of modern Laurion, indicate that various cults such as those of Artemis, Zeus and Kybele were active.⁴²³ Hence, the *demos* had an important religious life. During the Archaic period, the sanctuary of Poseidon was probably a cult centre of the whole south Attica region and the nearby islands of the Cyclades. After the reforms of Kleisthenes and the unification of Attica, it became one of the major sanctuaries of whole Attica and associated more with the *astu*. This is indicated by the erection of the Archaic and later the Classical temple probably with state funds, the establishment of a penteteric festival and trireme races, the fortification of the promontory, the construction of the shipsheds and finally, the establishment of the small settlement with Athenian troops.

However, what was the main sanctuary for the local population? It seems that this role was filled mostly by the sanctuary of Athena. The location of the sanctuary (on the small hill, north of the sanctuary of Poseidon, and hence closer to the inhabited areas), as well as the architecture and the *kouros*-dedication to Zeus from the Sounies,⁴²⁴ imply the local character of this sanctuary. The poorer architecture of

⁴²¹ Stanton (1996): 351-352.

⁴²² Ibid.

⁴²³ For a full account of cults and evidence, see Salliora-Oikonomakou (2004): 120-122.

⁴²⁴ For a discussion on this inscription see 2.3.2.

the small Doric temple of Athena compared to the large Doric temple of Poseidon, indicates that it was built by locals. Concerning the large Classical Ionic temple, it is uncertain if it was built with Athenian funds, or if local wealthy men were responsible for its erection. But, as the state showed more interest in the sanctuary of Poseidon due its strategic position and its visibility from afar, it can be assumed that the sanctuary of Athena had indeed a more local character, where the people from the area of Sounion made their dedications and sacrifices from ca. 700 BC.

Apart from the sanctuaries, what were the other buildings which were used by the public? It appears that despite the large size of the *demos*, Sounion did not have any place for the entertainment of the inhabitants. Indeed, apart from the *agorae* which served as places of public meetings, no theatre and *gymnasia* have been found.⁴²⁵ This seems rather unusual, as –according to the until today excavations– the people of Sounion had no place to entertain or train themselves. However, the relationship with Thorikos can probably offer a solution to this matter. A theatre dated to the late 6th-beginning of the 5th century BC, was found in Thorikos.⁴²⁶ As Thorikos was the closest settlement to Sounion, it is possible that the inhabitants of Sounion visited the former for theatrical performances and for religious activities, as theatres were also associated with the cult of Dionysos and the celebration of the Rural Dionysia.⁴²⁷ In fact, a small temple dedicated to Dionysos was built to the west of the theatre of Thorikos, and an altar was placed on the east side of the orchestra.⁴²⁸ Similarly, the people from Thorikos probably visited the sanctuary of Poseidon for religious activities.

At this point, a flaw in de Polignac' three-type model should be mentioned. As noted in chapter 2, de Polignac argued that the extra-urban sanctuaries served as places of mediation between multiple communities.⁴²⁹ Indeed, it seems that the sanctuary of Poseidon at Sounion served as such a place for the people of south Attica and probably the Cycladians.⁴³⁰ However, as it is very possible that the People from

⁴²⁵ Salliora-Oikonomakou (2004): 122.

⁴²⁶ For more about the theatre see Mussche (1975): 46-47; Mussche (1998): 22-45; Paga (2010): 355-356.

⁴²⁷ For more about the celebration of the Rural Dionysia in the Attic *demes*, see Paga (2010): 372-373.

⁴²⁸ Paga (2010): 356.

⁴²⁹ For more see 2.2; de Polignac (1994): 5-6.

⁴³⁰ See 3.1.

Sounion traveled to Thorikos for its the theatre, we can conclude that the sanctuary of Poseidon was not the only major meeting point of south Attica. It seems that the people of the region moved from one place to the other for various needs. Hence, the people from Sounion communicated with the people from Thorikos both when the former visited the theatre in Thorikos and the latter (the people from Thorikos) visited the temple of Poseidon at Sounion.

3.3 The Mines and their Importance for the *Polis* and the Sounion *Demos*

Sounion was not only important to the Athenian *polis* for the strategic position and the sacred nature of the promontory. Some kilometers north of Cape Sounion, in the area around the modern town Laurion, the well-known silver mines were located.⁴³¹ These mines gave the Athenians another reason to care about the Sounion *demos* and manifest their power at the cape. The resources of the mines were described by Aischylos as “a fountain of silver, a treasure in the soil of the Athenians.”⁴³² However, when did this “fountain” started to flow? Who was the owner of the mines? What were the revenues for the Athenian state? How did the mines affect the economy and the political life of Athens? Did the people from the Sounion *demos* benefit from the mines? These are questions which often arise concerning the Athenian mines, due to the limited number of literary sources and the complex nature of the latter.

3.3.1 The Beginning of the Mining Activity

The Athenians found a rich silver strike in 483/2 BC at Maroneia.⁴³³ However, this does not mean that Maroneia was the first area to be exploited, but it was the first one which turned out to be so rich in silver. We should bear in mind that in order to find such a rich vein of silver the Athenians had to dig deep in the rock probably for some

⁴³¹ Davis (2014): 260.

⁴³² Aischyl. *Persians* 238.

⁴³³ *Ath. Pol.* 22.7. An area close to Laurion.

years before they reached the so-called “third contact”, the richest layer of a rock.⁴³⁴ Hence, when were did the mines first exploited? The “first contact” did not need any special procedure. The deposits of minerals through weathering were exposed on the side of the hills. These small deposits had been probably exploited since the Middle Helladic Period.⁴³⁵ Hence, the people from Attica knew that under the soil of the Laureotike region lay silver deposits. The deposits from the first contact were probably depleted by the 6th century BC, as only a few Attic silver finds dating to this period have been found.⁴³⁶ As other areas such as south Italy, Near East and the Thracomacedonian regions showed mining activity during the 6th century, it is quite strange that Attica did not exploit its own resources. In his recent article, Gil Davis argued that the third contact was probably found in the late 6th century BC, many years before the rich strike at Maroneia, and associated it with the Peisistratids.⁴³⁷ As he noted, Peisistratos and his sons were the first to understand the importance of money in Athens, as they used it in order to defeat their enemies and take power, maintain it and carry out overseas campaigns.⁴³⁸ The so-called “Wappenmünzen” coin appeared towards the end of the last tyranny of Peisistartos. Under the rule of his sons, Athens begun to mint larger coins, at first featuring a Gorgon device and later the well-known Athenian “owls”.⁴³⁹ With the latter coin, the Athenian coinage succeeded in becoming the dominant coinage in the eastern Mediterranean.⁴⁴⁰

As the main source for coinage, the Peisistratids initially used the mines of the region of the river Strymon in Thrace, and later the mines in Laurion.⁴⁴¹ Davis argued that before the Peisistratids the lack of funds and technology made exploitation of the mines impossible. The tyrants brought resources, technology and skilled labour from abroad, and hence succeeded in extracting the silver from the Attic mines and to expanding the production of Attic coinage.⁴⁴² The labour probably came from Thrace or the island of Siphnos. Davis noted that Thrace had a large number of slaves who

⁴³⁴ Aperghis (2013): 10-11.

⁴³⁵ Davis (2014): 260.

⁴³⁶ Treister (1996): 63.

⁴³⁷ Davis (2014): 258, 276.

⁴³⁸ Hdt. 1.62-63, 1.64, 1.64; Davis (2014): 258. The first coins to be spread widely were those of Thrace and Macedon. The Athenian coin soon followed. For me see Schaps (2004): 97.

⁴³⁹ Schaps (2004): 126.

⁴⁴⁰ Schaps (2004): 105.

⁴⁴¹ Hdt. 1.64.

⁴⁴² Davis (2014): 262-263, 265-266, 276.

worked in the mines, while Siphnos had a long tradition in mining with skilled mining families.⁴⁴³ The latter, can indicate another connection between the Cyclades and the region of Laureotike.

3.3.2 Ownership of the Mines and the Revenues of the *Polis*

After the fall of Peisistratids, the unification of Attica and the dawn of the Athenian democracy, the *polis* continued to exploit the mines.⁴⁴⁴ However, did the former own the mines? R. J. Hopper rejected the private ownership of the mines, as he claimed that the silver deposits were property of the *polis*. The latter leased the mines to individuals.⁴⁴⁵ In contrast, Davis noted that no written source indicates that the silver beneath the Attic soil was property of the *polis* and that some mines were actually owned by the *polis* while others not.⁴⁴⁶ He suggested that “it is more logical to envisage a contractual relationship between the land owner and the mining entrepreneur albeit within a regulatory framework imposed by the state.”⁴⁴⁷ The *polis* controlled the mining operation in order to receive taxation and registration fees.⁴⁴⁸ Similar to the mining, the taxation was probably instigated by the Pisistratids and subsequently the Athenian polis continued it and took possession of all the previous revenues.⁴⁴⁹

However, what were the *polis*' revenues from silver mining in the Laureotike region? Quantifying them is difficult, as the main evidence derives from the 4th century BC and it is uncertain if it can also be applied to the fifth century BC. Our sources are a passage in the encyclopedic lexicon known as the *Souda*,⁴⁵⁰ which mentioned that the *polis* collected a tax on silver production of 1/24th,⁴⁵¹ and the

⁴⁴³ Davis (2014): 262-263.

⁴⁴⁴ Davis (2004): 266.

⁴⁴⁵ Hopper (1953): 205-206. Hooper based his argument on the hypothesis which is known with the German word “Bergeral”, “meaning state entitlement to ‘mining rights’ without ownership of the land under which the minerals were found.” Davis (2014): 263-264.

⁴⁴⁶ Davis (2014): 264-265.

⁴⁴⁷ Davis (2014): 276.

⁴⁴⁸ Davis (2014): 265.

⁴⁴⁹ Davis (2014): 265-266.

⁴⁵⁰ A byzantine encyclopedia of the 10th century.

⁴⁵¹ Agraphou metallou dike a345. Cf. Davis (2014): 266.

poletai records.⁴⁵² Although these records have earlier been construed as mining leases, Davis gave a slightly different interpretation. He argued that through this system, “a nominal sum was paid for initial exploration of a mine for three years, followed by the granting of rights to a productive mine for either seven or ten years.”⁴⁵³ The majority of the sums of money were small, either 20 or 150 *drachmae*. Hence, they can be explained as a tax or –as Davis suggested– a mine registration fee.⁴⁵⁴ It seems that the individuals mining operators negotiated a price with the landowner, and subsequently, the *poletai* inscribed the mine’s details, the names of the two parties and the amount that should be paid to the *polis* on *stelai*, which were erected on the Athenian *agora*, where everyone could see them.⁴⁵⁵ All the *stelai* are dated to the 4th century BC, and hence is uncertain if this system was used also in the 5th century. Merle K. Langdon suggested that this was the case, and that the *poletai* probably kept unpublished records, written on wooden tablets.⁴⁵⁶ Davis, on the other hand, stated that it was introduced in the 4th century BC, probably after the Peloponnesian War.⁴⁵⁷

Concerning the tax of 1/24th (= 4.17 %), it is more difficult to estimate if that was the actual revenue which the *polis* collected from silver mining. The literary sources provide conflicting evidence. According to Herodotos, in 483/2 BC when the revenues from the mines brought wealth to Athens, the Athenians proposed distributing 10 *drachmae* a man to each citizen. However, Themistocles persuaded them not to do so, but instead, to have 200 ships built from these monies for the war against the Aeginetans.⁴⁵⁸ Describing the same incident, the author of the *Athenaion Politeia*, mentioned that Themistocles proposed that the state should lend 100 talents to the 100 wealthiest Athenians (one talent each), in order for the latter to build one ship each.⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵² The *Poletai* were a board of magistrates costing of ten men chosen by lot.

For more see Langdon (1991): 57-58.

⁴⁵³ Davis (2014): 267.

⁴⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵⁶ Langdon (1991): 61.

⁴⁵⁷ Davis (2014): 267.

⁴⁵⁸ *Hdt.* 7.144.

⁴⁵⁹ *Ath. Pol* 22.7.

According to the passages, the annual revenues of the state from mining were enough to support the construction of 100 or even 200 triremes. But, was this the case? Davis tried to give an answer to this and noted that Herodotos at 5.97 mentioned that the total number of the Athenian citizens at ca. 500 BC was 30.000. 10 *drachmae* per person gives 300.000 *drachmae*, hence 50 talents. Certainly, 50 talents would not be enough for the construction of 200 ships, but the distribution of 10 *drachmae* per person seems credible.⁴⁶⁰ Concerning the passage from the *Athenaion Politeia*, Davis argued that the author from the 4th century BC probably did not know how much the construction of a warship cost at the beginning of the 5th century BC, and hence the one talent for one ship statement was just an insufficient assumption.⁴⁶¹ In contrast, Gerasimos Aperghis argued that the story is probably correct and that the lending of a talent each to the 100 wealthiest citizens in order to build a ship was a form of *eisphora*.⁴⁶² But can the system of the *eisphora* be traced so far back in history? According to Hans van Wees, yes. Although for many scholars the system of *eisphora* is an invention of the Classical period, van Wees argued that the irregular *eisphora* levies on the wealthier citizens were the normal form of direct taxation in Archaic Greece, and in fact, were more common in Archaic than in mid-5th/late 5th century BC Athens.⁴⁶³

Hoping to calculate what was the actual annual state revenue from mining, Davis tried to examine the business of running a mine and found out that a 1/24th tax seems a realistic take by the *polis*. A heavier taxation would have made most mines unsustainable.⁴⁶⁴ He concluded that with the sum of the 4.17 % tax and 3 or 5 % minting fee⁴⁶⁵ –which was paid by the mining entrepreneur– the state earned ca. 50 talents per year. Concerning the ships issue, Davis argued that as the Peisistratids collected revenues from mining for years, the Athenians used them for the ship building program of 483/2 BC.⁴⁶⁶ Certainly, cumulative revenues would have

⁴⁶⁰ Davis (2014): 268.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid.

⁴⁶² Aperghis (2013):13.

⁴⁶³ Van Wees (2013): 83-84. For more about the evolution of *eisphora* throughout the time, see Van Wees (2013): 84-97. For a different view, claiming that the first time the wealthiest Athenians paid an *eisphora* was probably in 428 BC, see Christ (2007).

⁴⁶⁴ For the numbers, tables and the whole procedure of calculating the revenue, see Davis (2014): 269-272.

⁴⁶⁵ Davis mentioned that the polis received a revenue from the manufacture of coinage.

⁴⁶⁶ Davis (2014): 372.

supported the construction of the fleet and its maintenance. However, this argument is not so convincing as the revenues from mining might have been spent by the *polis* during the previous years. Finally, the revenues of the following years until the naval battle of Salamis in 480 BC, were probably also used for the ship building program.⁴⁶⁷

Van Wess, who argued that *eisphora* existed in the Archaic period, expressed a different view. He argued that Athens had probably 200 triremes in 480 BC. The 100 were built in 483/2 BC under Themistokles. Concerning the other 100 triremes, van Wess examined the work of Herodotos and found out that the latter mentioned that Athens had 70 ships for their expeditions against Paros and Aegina in ca. 491 and 489 BC.⁴⁶⁸ 20 of these ships were bought from Corinth.⁴⁶⁹ Van Wess concluded that Athens had 50 ships by 500 BC, 70 by 490 BC and 100 by 483/2 BC. 30 more were probably built in 480 BC, just before the Persian invasion.⁴⁷⁰ As for the type of the vessels he argued that they were triremes, and that the first 50 were built either under Hippias or Cleisthenes.⁴⁷¹

Indeed, this view explains both the accounts of Herodotos and the author of the *Athenaion Politeia*. The calculations of Davis concerning the revenues from silver mining are probably correct. However, van Wess tried to explain the number of the ships based on other facts such as the existence of the *eisphora* system in the Archaic period and the earlier references to Athenian ships in Herodotos' account, than only on the *polis* revenues from silver mining.

3.3.3 Benefits from the Silver Mining

As it has been showed, the annual revenues of the *polis* from silver mining were not as large as one would have expected. However, the indirect benefits of mining were striking. As Davis stated, to mine silver during this period, actually meant to mine money.⁴⁷² Thus, mining monetized the economy. Money boosted the trade and allowed the Athenians to build the fleet which made them the rulers of the Aegean

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁸ Hdt 6.89, 92, 132.

⁴⁶⁹ Van Wess (2013): 63-65.

⁴⁷⁰ Van Wess (2013): 66.

⁴⁷¹ Van Wess (2013): 66-68.

⁴⁷² Davis (2014): 257.

Sea. As money was invested in mining, naval activity and building, the *polis* flourished and was transformed.⁴⁷³ Another benefit was the development of management and organizational skills. Running a mine was not an easy task and many people were responsible for its proper function. Different groups of people dealt with the calculation or the shipping of food, equipment, supplies, etc.⁴⁷⁴

All the aforementioned factors helped the polis to develop. The exploitation of the mines in Attica can be seen as something similar to the industrial revolution of the 18th century AD. Thanks to the silver and the investments from a mainly agricultural city, Athens became a powerful state. Certainly, the Sounion *demos* also benefited from the changes. Due to the mines, the *demos* attracted the interest of the *astu*. Probably, with the erection of the Archaic temple of Poseidon and later with the Classical one as well as the fortification of the whole south hill (first in the late 6th century BC, following by its reinforcement in ca. 413/2 BC),⁴⁷⁵ the Athenians also wanted to highlight the importance of the area for its mines. As the metalliferous region was located in south Attica, and the cape was the last piece of land of the Athenian territory, the *polis* had to protect not only the mines, but also the people who had invested in the latter and worked and lived there. Moreover, the people from the Sounion *demos* were probably involved in the mining business as the latter took place in their territory. By lending their land to individual mining operators and with other ways, the Sounies succeeded in becoming richer.

3.4 Roads

A rich metalliferous area such as Sounion must have had an extensive road network. Equipment, supplies, silver and various goods had to be transferred throughout the region, to the ports (Laurion, Porthmos) and to the *astu*. Indeed, roads were spread throughout the whole Laureotike region. In the region different types of roads have been traced both in the valleys and on the hills.⁴⁷⁶ In fact, most of the Laureotike's

⁴⁷³ Davis (2014): 264-275.

⁴⁷⁴ Davis (2014): 275.

⁴⁷⁵ For more about the fortification wall of the cape, see 1.2.4.

⁴⁷⁶ A study for the roads of the Laureotike region has been done by Young (1956): 94-97.

roads were made in such a way as to accommodate the wheels of a wagon.⁴⁷⁷ As the silver had to be transferred, roads suitable for wagons were needed.

Certainly, a larger road was needed for the connection of the Sounion *demos* with its neighboring *demes* as well as with the *astu*. Such a long road was needed for the commerce and economic exchanges, for the traveling of the Sounies to the *astu* in order to go to the assembly or for other business, and for the sacred travelling of the Athenians to the promontory.⁴⁷⁸ We know that the road which connected the *astu* with the cape was the so-called “Astike Hodos”.⁴⁷⁹ However, the exact route from the heart of Athens to the promontory is not certain. Mapping the ancient road system in Attica is difficult. The only ancient route which we can reconstruct almost entirely thanks to the archeological remains of the road, the work of Pausanias and the existence of temples and tombs along the road, is the well-known “Hiera Hodos”, connecting Athens with Eleusis.⁴⁸⁰

However, in the case of the route to Cape Sounion, there is not enough evidence. Moreover, the position of the mountain Hymmetos between the Athenian and the Mesogeian plain, raises more questions concerning the actual route of the Astike Hodos. Rising at ca. 1000 meters above the lower levels of the Athenian plain, Hymmetos is a natural barrier which separates the *astu* from the Mesogeia and the east coast. However, it seems that for the inhabitants of Attica during the ancient times, the steep mountain was not a problem as is for us today. They preferred to climb it in order to shorten their trip.⁴⁸¹ Christos J. Korres and Richard A. Tomlinson argued that the road from Athens to Sounion crossed Hymmetos.⁴⁸² According to them, the first part of the route was the road known from the account of Plutarch as “Sphettia Hodos”.⁴⁸³ This probably started from the altar of the Twelve Gods in the Athenian *agora*, and then followed the way from the modern area of Pankrati up to Kareas at the foothills of Hymmetos, and crossed the mountain in order to finish on

⁴⁷⁷ Young (1956): 94-96.

⁴⁷⁸ As mentioned in 2.2, a pententeric festival took place at Sounion during the 5th century BC. Warford argues that probably only the wealthy Athenians attended the festival by ships, while the others traveled to the cape on foot. For more see Warford (2015): 16.

⁴⁷⁹ *IG II²* 1582, line 116.

⁴⁸⁰ Warford (2015):191.

⁴⁸¹ Tomlinson (1998): 36-37.

⁴⁸² Korres and Tomlinson (1998): 44.

⁴⁸³ Plut. *Thes.* 13; Korres and Tomlinson (1998): 48.

the other side of the latter, in Sphettos.⁴⁸⁴ The discovery of two temples and one altar belonging probably to Apollo Proopsios and Zeus Ombrios close to the passage of Hymmetos, also indicates that this was the route of Sphettia Hodos.⁴⁸⁵ Subsequently, the road continued across the Mesogeia plain and then along the east coast of Attica, with Thorikos being the last large settlement before entering the Sounion *demos* (PLATE 29).⁴⁸⁶ As this road crossed the mountain, it was the shortest way to Sounion and the journey lasted one day. The alternative ways, through Vari on the south, or through Stauros on the north, are longer and not reachable in a day's walk.⁴⁸⁷

Concluding, it seems that the inhabitants of Attica preferred to cross the mountain in order to reach the Mesogeian plain, and then continued to the east coast in order to reach the *Sounion demos* and its promontory. The other important fact of this road is that it connected directly Thorikos directly with Sounion. Hence, the people of both *demes* were able to travel quickly from the one to the other either for entertainment or religious reasons.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter was concentrated on the area in which the promontory is located, and its relationship with Athens during the Archaic and Classical period, to show the development of this area over the time, its relationship with other neighboring areas and the *astu* as well as its importance for the latter.

The earliest settlement of the whole Laureotike region was Thorikos, with evidence of human activity going back to the Neolithic Age. Following on the theory of van den Eijnde concerning the emergence of the Athenian *polis* and the Attic *ethnos* in the 10th century, it has been explained that Thorikos, located far from the *astu*, was a settlement in its own right with probably a small dependency on Athens. Being the largest settlement in the area, Thorikos controlled all the others smaller villages. Hence, it seems that the inhabitants of the Sounion area were more dependent on Thorikos than on Athens. The absence of a theatre in Sounion indicates

⁴⁸⁴ Korres and Tomlinson (1998): 48-52.

⁴⁸⁵ Korres and Tomlinson (1998): 53.

⁴⁸⁶ Korres and Tomlinson (1998): 44.

⁴⁸⁷ Korres and Tomlinson (1998): 53, 57.

that its inhabitants might have gone to Thorikos for entertainment reasons among others. Moreover, the sanctuary of Poseidon might have served as a cult centre for people from the Sounion area, Thorikos, other settlements of the south Attica and the Cycladians. The position of the sanctuary, the *kouroi* with the strong Naxian characteristics and the sacrificial calendar of Thorikos make this assumption stronger. In contrast, the finds and the architecture of the Athena's sanctuary imply that it had a more local character. However, the foreign seafarers passing from the promontory, left dedications in both sanctuaries, as they wanted to thank the two deities for their safe travel to the Attic land.

After the reforms of Kleisthenes Sounion attracted the interest of the *astu*. Not only the cape due to its strategic and religious character, but all the region due to the silver mines. The *demos* of Sounion flourished due to the mines, and so did the Athenian state in general as the indirect long-term benefits of mining made it gradually the major power of the Aegean Sea. Due to the intensive mining activity many roads were built throughout the region as well as a long road which connected the *astu* with the promontory.

The whole peninsula was unified under the reforms of Kleisthenes. However, even before these reforms, from the mid-6th century BC, the *astu* started to be of interest for the religious, strategic and economic activities of whole Attica. Hence, Cape Sounion was not the only extra-urban sanctuary which became important for the *polis*. Thus, a discussion concerning other major sanctuaries located on the borders of the Attic land and their relationship with the *polis*, will follow in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

Other Rural Sanctuaries on the Borders of Attica

The examination of the Laureotike region both before and after the reforms of Kleisthenes, as well as its importance for the Athenian *polis*, was essential in order to show the significance of Cape Sounion for both the whole area of south Attica and the *polis*. However, was the sanctuary of Poseidon at Sounion the only important one for the Athenian *polis*? In his book, de Polignac stated that Athens was the sole exception to his bi-polar *polis* theory.⁴⁸⁸ However, in a later article, he applied the model of mediation, competition and sovereignty to Attica, and he argued that Athens had in fact a bi-polar axis, which connected Athens with Sounion.⁴⁸⁹ De Polignac argued that the sanctuaries of Sounion are the only ones which can compare with the shrines of the Athenian Acropolis as regards architecture and votives.⁴⁹⁰ This theory has of course many flaws, as Attica was a region full of important sanctuaries with rich architecture and offerings in various locations. Hence, as Sounion was not the only sacred place which attracted the interest of the Athenians, an examination of other sanctuaries located on the borders of the Attic territory is needed.

This chapter will deal with four major coastal sanctuaries located in similar locations as the sanctuaries of Sounion. These are the sanctuaries of Eleusis, Brauron, Rhamnous and Mounichia. Warford used all of them (plus Sounion), as part of her multipolar *polis* theory (PLATE 30). This theory –which is a response to de Polignac’s bipolar *polis* theory concerning the case of Athens– argues that the centre of Athens was connected with the sanctuaries of the periphery and the borders by various axes of processions. In essence, Warford argued that in the case of Athens

⁴⁸⁸ De Polignac (1995)a: 81-88. The theory which associates the emergence of extra-urban sanctuaries with the formation of the first Greek city-states. For more see De Polignac (1995)a.

⁴⁸⁹ De Polignac (1995)b: 75-101.

⁴⁹⁰ De Polignac (1995)b: 92-93.

there was not a single axis which connected the *polis* with one extra-urban sanctuary, but many axes which connected the *polis* with many sanctuaries.⁴⁹¹

By examining briefly each one of these sanctuaries, I will show their religious, military and political importance for Athens. Subsequently, I will compare them with the sanctuary of Poseidon at Sounion, in order to find similarities and differences, in architecture, connection with Athens (by the form of procession or sacred travel) and promotion of the Athenian “national narrative”. Through this comparison we will understand if Sounion had a special use which all the others lacked.

4.1 Eleusis (PLATE 31)

21 kilometers away from Athens and ca. 20 kilometers away from Megara, lies the Eleusis. Although some Bronze Age remains have been found, the earliest certain evidence of cult activity of Demeter and Kore dates to the late 8th century BC.⁴⁹² However, the first dedicated temple of the site is dated later, varying between the late 7th and the mid-6th century BC, as scholars do not agree on its precise chronology.⁴⁹³ This was the so-called “Solonian” Telesterion (Hall of Mysteries), a large roofed building supported by interior columns.⁴⁹⁴ Later in the 6th century BC the “Solonian” Telesterion was replaced by the so-called “Peisistratid” Telesterion, a larger structure built of *poros* stones, and was enclosed by a *peribolos* wall, which also enclosed the city of Eleusis.⁴⁹⁵ Miles argued that the “Peisistratid” Telesterion should be dated to the end of the 6th century, as the architecture of the latter bears a notable resemblance with the Old temple of Athena Polias, dated to the same period. As for the *peribolos* wall, Miles suggested that it was probably built in ca. 506 BC, after the raid of the Spartan king Kleomenes.⁴⁹⁶ In 480 BC the Telesterion was in the process of being rebuilt to twice the capacity of its predecessor, but the Persian invasion postponed the project.⁴⁹⁷

⁴⁹¹ Warford (2015): 7, 35, 169-170,177. See also the Introduction of this thesis.

⁴⁹² Camp (2001): 284; Van den Eijnde (2010): 138-163.

⁴⁹³ Van den Eijnde (2010): 375, late 7th century; Camp (2001): 284, early 6th century; Miles (1998): 8-33, middle of the 6th century.

⁴⁹⁴ Camp (2001): 284.

⁴⁹⁵ Boersma (1970):135, 155-159.

⁴⁹⁶ Miles (1998): 28; Hdt. 5.74.

⁴⁹⁷ Shear (1982): 128-140; Clinton (1994): 163.

It is visible from the changes in the size of the Telesterion, that over the time the cult of Demeter and Kore gained more and more popularity. When did Athens become interested in the cult and when did Eleusis become an important place for the former? As in the case of Sounion, it seems that this happened gradually. Eleusis was an independent settlement, the only one in the Thriasian plain. As van den Eijnde noted, the establishment of the cult of Demeter maybe “was a response to the foundation of its Athenian counterpart” (i.e. Athena).⁴⁹⁸ He also argued that relationships between the elites of Eleusis and Athens must have existed during the Geometric and Early Archaic period.⁴⁹⁹ However, it seems that Athens began to promote the Eleusinian cult in the mid-6th century BC, at the same time as the re-organization of the Great Panathenaia.⁵⁰⁰ At the same time, the hero Triptolemos – who was associated with the cult of Demeter and Kore– began to appear in the Attic pottery.⁵⁰¹

However, the evidence which attests to the strong religious link between Athens and Eleusis is the branch sanctuary of Eleusis located on the northwest slope of the Acropolis: the well-known City Eleusinion. Two votive deposits indicate that a cult was active at least from the mid-7th century BC.⁵⁰² In the mid-6th century the upper terrace was enclosed by a *peribolos* wall.⁵⁰³ At the end of the 6th century the sanctuary was expanded to the north and a temple dedicated to Triptolemos was built in the middle terrace, after the demolition of the houses which were located there.⁵⁰⁴ As the votives indicate, the sanctuary was probably dedicated to Demeter from the 7th century.⁵⁰⁵ But this does not mean that the City Eleusinion was identified as a branch sanctuary of Eleusis at that time. The earliest epigraphical testimonies that helped to identify the area as the Eleusinion, are two groups of fragmented blocks of Pentelic marble dated to ca. 510-500 BC.⁵⁰⁶ The inscribed laws concerned the Eleusinian Mysteries, the prerequisites of priesthoods and sacrifices at festivals. However, it has been noted that the laws appear to be a revision or collection of earlier texts, and that

⁴⁹⁸ Van den Eijnde (2010): 375.

⁴⁹⁹ Van den Eijnde (2010): 376.

⁵⁰⁰ Clinton (1994): 162-163;

⁵⁰¹ The earliest depiction is on an *amphora* dated to ca 540. See Miles (1998): 53, n. 51.

⁵⁰² Miles (1998): 14-18.

⁵⁰³ Miles (1998): 25-28.

⁵⁰⁴ Miles (1998): 28-33.

⁵⁰⁵ Miles (1998): 14-22.

⁵⁰⁶ *IG I³ 231; IG I³ 232*. Inscribed in *boustrophedon*.

the use of *boustrophedon* for their inscribing was probably due to religious conservatism.⁵⁰⁷ Hence, it seems that the sanctuary was identified as the City Eleusinion sometime during the 6th century BC. Probably, this happened in the mid-6th century BC, when the sanctuary was enclosed by the *peribolos* wall. As mentioned before, Triptolemos appeared in Athenian art in the same period, and it was probably then when Athens started to promote the Mysteries.

With the establishment of the City Eleusinion the Athenians highlighted their interest in the cult of Demeter. The Athenians participated in the procession of the Eleusinian Mysteries which took place between Athens and Eleusis through the well-known Sacred Way. However, this religious connection between the Athenian *polis* and Eleusis does not necessarily imply any political connection. This happened later, during the reforms of Kleisthenes and the unification of Attica.⁵⁰⁸ If indeed the “Peisistartid” Telesterion was built at the end of the 6th century,⁵⁰⁹ its construction can be seen as an interest of the Athenian *polis* in both its borders and the extra-urban sanctuaries which were situated in the latter. Due to its size, similar to the Archaic temple of Poseidon at Sounion, the Telesterion of the late 6th century was probably funded –at least partially- by the *polis*.

Furthermore, it appears that Eleusis also played role in the construction of the Athenian “national narrative”. In his work, Herodotus described an incident where the Persians, when they were in control of Attica before the battle of Salamis (480 BC), heard the Iakchos-song coming from Eleusis and a dust cloud arose as if from a crowd of about 30.000 men. The song foretold the destruction of the Persian fleet in the naval battle of Salamis.⁵¹⁰ Hence, in this passage the importance of the cult and the connection of Eleusis with Athens at that time is indicated, as well as the association of Demeter Eleusinia with the Athenian victory at Salamis.⁵¹¹

Finally, Eleusis also become an important strategic location for Athens. Located in the very west of the Athenian territory, Eleusis was transformed into a fort which was able to impede anyone who might come from the Peloponnese, Corinth or

⁵⁰⁷ Miles (1998): 8.

⁵⁰⁸ For more about the unification of Attica under Kleisthenes, see Kragset (2015); Anderson (2003).

⁵⁰⁹ If this is the case, the name “Peisistratid” should be abolish.

⁵¹⁰ Hdt. 8.65.

⁵¹¹ For more about the role of Demeter in the Persian Wars, see Boedeker (2007): 65-84.

Megara. Indeed, both the Telesterion and the town of Eleusis were fortified at the end of the 6th century BC.⁵¹² In the late 4th century BC garrisons settled in Eleusis to protect the west border of Attica.⁵¹³

4.2 Brauron (PLATE 32)

The sanctuary of Artemis Brauronia is located in the eastern coast of Attica, ca. eight kilometers north of the modern town of Porto Rafti and fifteen kilometers east of Athens International Airport. Although it is not visible from the coast, it is located near a harbour which was probably used by the visitors to the sanctuary. The sanctuary stands alone between hills with no evidence of a nearby settlement. This means that it was probably used by different local neighboring communities. It might have served as a mediation centre where different communities met.⁵¹⁴ It appears that the sanctuary was active from ca. 700 BC. Numerous votives have been found on the site, while the first architectural remains were dated to the middle of the 7th century BC.⁵¹⁵

It seems that a stone temple –probably of Doric style– was erected in the late 6th or early 5th century BC.⁵¹⁶ Moreover, two terraces (one to the east, one to the west), a rock-cut platform to the south of the temple and a possible early *stoa* with propylon were constructed.⁵¹⁷ The scale of the whole transformation of the sanctuary implies that Athenians funds were probably used once more.⁵¹⁸ As was the case with Sounion, the sites was destroyed by the Persians in 480/79 BC and rebuilt again in the mid-5th century BC.⁵¹⁹

The interest of the Athenians in the cult of Artemis Brauronia is attested by the existence of a branch sanctuary of Artemis Brauronia on the Acropolis, near the Propylaea: the so-called Brauronion. The Brauronion is usually connected with Peisistratos. Shapiro argued that because Peisistratos had family connections with

⁵¹² Miles (1998): 28.

⁵¹³ Whitehead (1986): 404.

⁵¹⁴ Hence, one of the parts of de Polignac's three-type model, appears here.

⁵¹⁵ Van den Eijnde (2010): 130-137.

⁵¹⁶ Ekroth (2003) 105.

⁵¹⁷ Ekroth (2003): 105-108.

⁵¹⁸ Anderson (2003):195-196.

⁵¹⁹ Ekroth (2003): 108-113.

Brauron, he transferred the Bauronia cult to the Acropolis.⁵²⁰ However, the earliest evidence from the site is a *krateriskos* and a pair of marble hounds from the late 6th century BC.⁵²¹ Hence, the Brauronion was established probably not by Peisistratos himself, but by his sons, or even later by Kleisthenes.⁵²²

A grand festival for Artemis Brauronia was held every four years, administered by the *hieropoioi* where young girls also participated.⁵²³ As part of the festival, a procession went from Athens to Brauron.⁵²⁴ Although the starting point of the procession had not been recorded it is very possible that this was the Brauronion.⁵²⁵ It is also uncertain if the festival was held before the late 5th century BC, as there are no earlier literary testimonies. However, the erection of the large Doric temple, the addition of the terraces and the construction of the *stoa* in the sanctuary of Artemis indicate that the festival probably existed from the late 6th-early 5th century BC, as all these structures were able to accommodate a large crowd of people. This date for the establishment of the festival is also likely due to the political situation of Attica. The establishment of both the Brauronion and the festival with its procession, strengthened the relationship of the *polis* with one of the extremities of its territory. After the reforms of Kleisthenes the *astu* tried to establish ties with all the peripheries. Brauron became an important cult centre for the *polis*, and people from the whole of Attica participated in or attended the festival as visitors.

4.3 Rhamnous (PLATE 34)

Rhamnous was the most northeast *demos* of Attica, located ca. 13 kilometers north of Marathon. The *demos* was famous due to the large temple of Nemesis constructed in the mid-5th century. The cult may have been established in the late 7th century BC, although this is not certain.⁵²⁶ Later, at the beginning of the 6th century BC, a small

⁵²⁰ Shapiro (1989): 65-66.

⁵²¹ Hurwit (1999): 117. For more about the hounds, see Ridgway (1993): 201. For the *krateriskos* see Kahil (1981): 253-263.

⁵²² Hurwit (1999): 117, attributes the establishment of the Brauronion to Peisistratos' sons.

⁵²³ The so-called *Arkteia* ritual, was the initiation ceremony of the festival, where the girls "played the bear". Warford (2015): 183; Parker (2005): 230-231.

⁵²⁴ Aristophanes *Lys.* 641-647; Parker (2005): 230-231.

⁵²⁵ Parker (2005): 52.

⁵²⁶ Van den Eijnde (2010): 247.

temple was erected.⁵²⁷ The sanctuary flourished during the 5th century BC. Initially, a small temple in polygonal style was built. The two marble thrones, which were found on its front porch, were dedicated to Nemesis and Themis respectively. North of this temple the large Doric temple of Nemesis which has been described by Pausanias was erected.⁵²⁸ Inside the temple, the statue of Nemesis was housed.⁵²⁹

The case of the cult of Nemesis is interesting as it seems that it was locally controlled well into the Classical period.⁵³⁰ However, due to its size and architectural style similar to the temples of Sounion and Brauron, it is possible that Athens helped to finance its construction.⁵³¹ It is possible that the cult became more popular after the battle of Marathon. According to an epigram from the 1st century BC, when the Persians arrived in Marathon, they brought with them a large block of Parian marble in order to build a victory monument after the battle. Angered by the Persians' *hybris*, Nemesis turned against them and helped the Athenians to defeat them. Subsequently, the Athenians used the marble block for the statue of Nemesis.⁵³² This story is another example of the Athenian "national narrative" concerning the Persian Wars. However, as the story is attested to the 1st century BC, it is uncertain if for the Athenians of the 5th century Nemesis was connected with the battle of Marathon.

The major festival of Rhamnous was the Nemesian. No procession from Athens to Rhamnous is attested in any source. However, Athenians may have visited the festival, especially in the 4th century BC, when athletic competitions and torch-races were added.⁵³³ *Ephebes* from all the ten Kleisthenic tribes participated in the torch-races, and hence Athenians probably traveled from the whole of Attica to Rhamnous to see them. The *ephebes* entered a two-year military training, during which they had to protect the whole Attic land.⁵³⁴ As is mentioned in the *Athenaion Politeia*, as part of their training the *ephebes* made a tour of the sanctuaries around Attica.⁵³⁵ The visit of the *ephebes* of the tribe Pandionis in Rhamnous, is attested by

⁵²⁷ Van den Eijnde (2010): 247; Camp (2001): 301.

⁵²⁸ Paus. 1.33; Camp (2001): 301.

⁵²⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵³⁰ Warford (2015): 187.

⁵³¹ *Ibid.*

⁵³² Miles (1998): 137-138. Paus. 1.33 also mentioned the story.

⁵³³ Palagia and Lewis (1989): 340-341; Warford (2010): 188.

⁵³⁴ Steinbock (2011): 294. For the Oath of the *Ephebes*, see *GHI* 88.

⁵³⁵ *Ath. Pol.* 42.3.

an inscription of ca. 330 BC.⁵³⁶ The inscription records honours given to the *ephebes* of the specific tribe and to their officers by the Council and the Assembly, the Rhamnousians, Eleusinians and men of Phyle.⁵³⁷

At the northern corner of east Attica, opposite the Euboea island, Rhamnous was a perfect strategic point. That is why the Athenians fortified both the sanctuary and the town in the late 5th or in the 4th century BC.⁵³⁸ Similar to Cape Sounion and Eleusis, an Athenian garrison later settled in the fort.⁵³⁹

4.4 Mounichia (PLATE 35)

Interesting is the case of the last sanctuary which is going to be examined in this chapter, the sanctuary of Artemis Mounichia in Piraeus. The sanctuary was located on the southwest hill of the smallest harbour of Piraeus (modern Mikrolimano).⁵⁴⁰ The earliest evidence of cult activity on the site dates to the 10th century BC, but the sanctuary flourished from the 7th century BC onwards.⁵⁴¹ A large number of ceramic shreds are dated to the 7th, 6th and the 5th century BC, while it is interesting that the clay figures dedicated to Artemis increased towards the end of the 6th century BC.⁵⁴² Concerning the *krateriskoi* (ritual vessels) which were found on the site, Chyssanthi Papadopoulou argued that they were probably associated with the *Arkteia* ritual. According to her, apart from Brauron, the *Arkteia* was also performed in honour of Artemis Mounichia until the 5th century BC. At this time, the character of Artemis Mounichia probably changed and began to be associated with the victory at Salamis and the Athenian navy.⁵⁴³

⁵³⁶ *SEG* 34.150.

⁵³⁷ See also Osborne (2010): 51.

⁵³⁸ Petrakos (1991): 31, dated the fortification to the late 5th century BC. Ober (1985): 135-137, dated some of the acropolis' walls to the same period with the temple of Nemesis, but dated the major walls of the fortifications to the 4th century BC. Osborne (2010): 50, agreed with Ober.

⁵³⁹ Whitehead (1986): 405.

⁵⁴⁰ The other two were the Zea and the Kantharos harbours. The latter is the nowadays main and largest harbour of Piraeus.

⁵⁴¹ Van den Eijnde (2010): 227-228.

⁵⁴² Palaiokrassa (1991): 53-56, 66, as cited by Warford (2015): 189-190.

⁵⁴³ Papadopoulou (2014): 113, 120-122.

Although there are no architectural remains from the Archaic period, it is possible that a small temple stood on the hill during that era.⁵⁴⁴ Fortification walls dated to the late 6th century BC stand on the hill until today. Warford suggested that the walls may have been erected by the Athenian state as part of a development of the sanctuary, similar to the case of Sounion, Eleusis and Brauron. However, she also noted that it is not certain whether Athens was directly associated with the cult, or whether the cult was still under local control, similar to Rhamnous.⁵⁴⁵ The changes on the hill during the late 6th century BC may have occurred due to an increment of the worshippers. This is also attested by the increased votive activity of this period. Indeed, at the time of the Kleisthenic reforms, Piraeus sent nine demesmen to the *Boule*, which means that the *demos* was populous.⁵⁴⁶ The population increased during the 5th century BC, and so did the number of the worshipers in the sanctuary of Artemis Mounichia. Gradually, Mounichia was transformed from an extra-urban sanctuary of the Archaic period, to a central sanctuary of Piraeus.⁵⁴⁷ A temple was probably constructed during the Classical period. Pieces of marble roof tile from that era have been assigned to a temple by Lydia Palaiokrassa.⁵⁴⁸

Hence, as the sanctuary of Artemis Mounichia was mainly of interest to Piraeus, how was it associated with the *polis*? It seems that this sanctuary was also connected with the Persian Wars and the Athenian “national narrative”. According to Plutarch, Artemis shone with a full moon and thus helped the Athenians win the naval battle of Salamis, because they were able to see the Persian fleet and estimate its size. Artemis’ intervention was celebrated annually, on the 6th of Mounichion at Mounichia.⁵⁴⁹ However, it is not known if a procession started from Athens and ended at Mounichia. It seems that there was only a local procession.⁵⁵⁰

However, the latter does not mean that there was not any kind of link between Mounichia and the *astu*. Opposite Aegina and on the edge of the small harbour, the location of the sanctuary was very strategic. From the late 4th century BC onwards,

⁵⁴⁴ Palaiokrassa (1991): 49-50, as cited by Warford (2015): 189.

⁵⁴⁵ Warford (2015): 189.

⁵⁴⁶ Garland (2001): 59.

⁵⁴⁷ Papadopoulou (2014): 116.

⁵⁴⁸ Palaiokrassa (1991) 47-48, as cited by Warford (2015): 189.

⁵⁴⁹ Plut. *De Gloria Atheniensium* 349.f.

⁵⁵⁰ Warford (2015): 190.

garrisons of *ephebes* were stationed inside the fortification of Mounichia.⁵⁵¹ According to inscriptions dated to the 2nd and 1st century BC, the *ephebes* participated in ship-races, in commemoration of the victory at Salamis, and Athenians probably visited the sanctuary to see them.⁵⁵² It is visible that even centuries after the battle of Salamis, Artemis was considered to be one of the deities who aided the Athenians against the Persians.

4.5 Conclusion – A Comparison of the Sanctuaries

The brief examination of four extra-urban sanctuaries located on the borders of the Attic territory was important in order to understand that Sounion was not the only important border-sacred place for the *polis*. In which characteristics was Sounion similar with the all the aforementioned sanctuaries and in which did it differ? To answer this question, a comparison between Eleusis, Brauron, Rhamnous, Mounichia and Sounion is needed.

As has been explained, all the aforementioned sanctuaries attracted the interest of the polis at the end of the 6th century BC. The exception was Eleusis, whose cult became important for the Athenians from the mid-6th century. However, it seems that Eleusis became connected politically with the *astu* later, during the reforms of Kleisthens. During the aftermath of the reforms, in the late 6th/early 5th century BC, grand temples in the sanctuaries of Poseidon at Sounion, Demeter and Kore in Eleusis, Artemis Brauronia in Brauron were erected. Their size implies that they were probably built at least partially with Athenian funds. All these temples were destroyed by the Persians in 480/79 BC, but were re-built in great fashion by the Athenians in the middle of the 5th century BC. In the same period the large temple of Nemesis and probably a temple of Artemis Mounichia were erected at Rhamnous and Mounichia respectively.

The significance of the cults of Eleusis and Brauron was further highlighted with the construction of the branches sanctuaries of the Eleusinion and the Braurionion

⁵⁵¹ According to the author of the *Athenaion Politeia*, after the tour of the Attic shrines, some of the *ephebes* went to Piraeus, while others did guard duty at Mounichia. For more see *Ath. Pol.* 42.3; Papadopoulou (2014): 119-120; Warford (2015): 190.

⁵⁵² *IG II²* 1006; *IG II²* 1011; *IG II²* 1028; *IG II²* 1030; *Hesperia* 16: 170, 67.

on the Acropolis, in the mid and late 6th century BC respectively. Similarly, in the late 5th century BC Poseidon was also worshiped on the Acropolis as “Poseidon-Erechtheus”. Furthermore, penteteric festivals were held at Sounion and Brauron, and annual festivals in Eleusis, Rhamnous and Mounichia. Athenians participated in processions to Eleusis and Brauron as well as sacred journeys to Sounion. There is no evidence of formal processions to Rhamnous and Mounichia; however, it is possible that Athenians traveled to these sanctuaries in order to participate in the festivals and see the races which were held by the *ephebes*.

It is interesting that all the sanctuaries which have been discussed –with the exception of Brauron– had some kind of ideological link with the Persian Wars and the victories of the Athenians. Artemis Mounichia and Demeter and Kore were associated with the naval battle of Salamis through myths, while a Phoenician trireme was dedicated to Poseidon at Sounion after the same battle.⁵⁵³ Moreover, the frieze of the Classical temple of Poseidon is an allegory of the battles against the Persians.⁵⁵⁴ The Athenians are depicted as the Lapiths and the gods, while the Persians as the Giants and the Centaurs. In addition, the scene of Theseus with the bull of Marathon is an analogy of the battle of Marathon. Through a myth, Nemesis was also connected with the victory of the Athenians in Marathon. The association of all these deities with the victories of the Athenians against the Persians, was used both as Athenian propaganda and as a reinforcement of the Athenian cultural memory. Hence, at their seaside borders the Athenians were able to manifest their contribution against the Persians by erecting temples dedicated to the gods who helped them. Moreover, by travelling to the sanctuaries to participate in, or simply watch the festivals and the athletic events (warship-races, torch-races), the Athenians honoured the aid of the gods and the victories of their ancestors.

Apart from locations of power manifestation, the sanctuaries were valuable strategic points and the Athenians exploited this. Eleusis, Mounichia, Sounion and Rhamnous were fortified during the late 6th and throughout the 5th century BC. In the Hellenistic period garrisons settled on these forts in order to patrol the borders of the Athenian territory.

⁵⁵³ See 2.4; Hdt 8.121.

⁵⁵⁴ See 2.4.

It is visible that the sanctuary of Poseidon at Sounion had several of the characteristics of the other sanctuaries: a stone temple which was rebuilt in the mid-5th century, a penteteric festival and warship-races for which the Athenians travelled to the site, an ideological link with the Persian Wars which contributed to the Athenian “national narrative” and lastly, it was located on a strategic point which was fortified. However, did Sounion differ in something compared to all the other sanctuaries? It seems that the frieze of the Classical temple of Poseidon at Sounion was used as a means for the Athenian propaganda and cultural memory to a greater extent than the other sanctuaries. The allegory of the mythical scenes of the frieze with the Persian Wars has already been discussed. An analysis of the Theseus’ myth has also been given in chapter 2.⁵⁵⁵ Theseus was associated with the unification of Attica and the collective identity of the Athenians. Hence, its depiction in the frieze of the Poseidon temple at the southmost point of Attica, can be interpreted as an effort by the Athenians to manifest their unity, identity and power to all the non-Athenians as well as to the following Athenian generations, successors of the “Athenian Empire”. As the sanctuary of Poseidon was located at the very southern tip of the Athenian territory where various sea-roads passed, it is understandable why it had this kind of use.

⁵⁵⁵ See 2.4.

CONCLUSION

Both of the sanctuaries at Sounion were active at least from 700 BC. As I have argued, over the years the sanctuaries gradually developed and gained prominence, initially for the people of the Laureotike region and of the south Attica in general, and then for the Athenians. It should be mentioned that the works of de Polignac concerning the bi-polar *polis* theory and the three-type model of mediation, competition and sovereignty were the main inspiration for this thesis. As de Polignac examined the Archaic extra-urban sanctuaries and the case of Athens, he inspired me to look closely at Cape Sounion and see if it could be part of his theories. However, after reading the works of recent scholars (such as van den Eijnde's and Warford's dissertations), who had expressed their contrast in de Polignac's ideas, I knew that I had to examine the case of Sounion with a critical mindset and without using the model of de Polignac as my main method. Instead, by examining specific characteristics of the sanctuaries and the connection of various people with the promontory, I tried to see if Sounion was indeed a place of mediation, competition and sovereignty, as de Polignac described the Archaic extra-urban sanctuaries.

I soon understood that de Polignac's model is fragile and difficult to be apply in every case. Concerning the mediation, the sanctuary of Poseidon was probably a place where the different communities of south Attica and probably of the Cyclades – as the *kouroi* with the Naxian characteristics indicate– met and arranged alliances and other matters. However, the numerous imported offerings from Rhodes, Egypt and the Levant which have been found in both sanctuaries, seem to have not been used a means of communication between the people of the area and the foreign sailors from the former places. Being traders mostly and travelling innumerable nautical miles in the open sea, the sailors probably just wanted to thank Poseidon and Athena for their safe travel before entering Attica and selling their goods in Piraeus. Furthermore, I argued that the existence of a theatre in the settlement of Thorikos could imply that the latter was also a place of meeting for different communities. Hence, similar to the sanctuary of Poseidon, Thorikos with the only theatre in the broader region probably also served as a place of mediation for the different communities of south Attica. Finally, the existence of other extra-urban sanctuaries on the borders of Attica with similar characteristics to Cape Sounion, such as Eleusis, Brauron, Rhamnous and

Mounichia, implies that there was more than just a single axis which connected the centre of the *polis* with its borders. This statement was also one of the main arguments of Warford for her multipolar *polis* theory concerning the case of Attica.

At this point it should be mentioned that theories can help us in the examination of specific characteristics of the Ancient world. However, we should always use them as tools and not as “truths” which can be applied in every case. In the case of this thesis, the three-type model of de Polignac inspired me to look more closely at the contents of the *bothroi* and the imported votives, the Cycladian artist influences which can be traced in the *kouroi* of the sanctuary of Poseidon, the competition of the elites which have been took place throughout the Archaic period, and the frieze of the Classical temple of Poseidon which actually expressed the Athenian power on the promontory. That is why, although I do not agree with the idea that the three-type model can be applied without any flaws in the Archaic rural sanctuaries of Attica, I have to thank François de Polignac for his theory, as this not only inspired me to examine the Sounion case, but mainly helped me throughout the procedure of this thesis.

In order to give an answer to the research question of this thesis, I examined the promontory itself, the broader region of Laureotike both before and after the reforms of Kleisthenes and I also compared four other rural sanctuaries located at the borders of Attica with Cape Sounion. Hence, what was the actual significance of the cape for the people who lived nearby and most importantly, for the Athenian *polis*?

Initially, both of the promontory’s sanctuaries developed in a more local level. Far away from the Athenian city, the sanctuary of Poseidon probably attracted different communities from all over south Attica. The later sacrificial calendar of Thorikos implies that the people of the settlement visited the sanctuary of the sea god to make sacrifices in honour of the latter. Being the only large sanctuary in the broader area, the sanctuary of Poseidon probably served as a place of mediation for the different communities of south Attica. It is also very possible that the people from the nearby Cycladian islands visited the promontory and made ties with the people of south Attica. Thus, the sanctuary of Poseidon could be interpreted as an important political point for the people of south Attica and the Cycladians during the first two centuries of its use. However, as already mentioned, the people from the various

communities of south Attica also met in other places (for example, at the theatre of Thorikos). In contrast, the sanctuary of Athena, was probably used mainly by the people of the broader area of Sounion, in order to make their personal dedications there. However, both of the sanctuaries were also known outside Attica and the nearby Cyclades. Visible from the sea and being the first piece of Attic land, the promontory attracted foreign traders from the Levant, Egypt and the island of Rhodes, who stopped there and dedicated votives to the two gods. Hence, due to its position in the middle of various sea-roads, Cape Sounion also gained an international character, and acquired rich votives originated from foreign lands.

In the late 6th/early 5th century, Cape Sounion started to attract the Athenian aspirations. Under the reforms of Kleisthenes the territory of the Attic peninsula came to be identical with that of the Athenian *polis*. Thus, the Athenians showed religious, political and military interest in the cape. Fortification walls were built around the south hill, while the sanctuary of Poseidon was monumentalized –at least partially by the Athenians– probably at some point between 490 and 480 BC as a response to the battle of Marathon. During the same period –if not earlier– a penteteric festival spectated by Athenians, started to take place at Sounion, and auxiliary buildings, such as stoas, were constructed in order to house the festival’s visitors. Probably in ca. 600 BC, the small temple of Athena was built, most likely with funds from the people of the Sounion *demos*.

The large size of the Archaic temple of Poseidon, visible from both land and sea, expressed the Athenian power. The presence of the nearby silver mines —thanks to which the Athenian economy was monetized and as a result the *polis* flourished– probably constituted another reason for the Athenian interest in the cape. It is possibly that the large temple expressed the Athenian sovereignty not only in the southernmost piece of the Attic land, but also to the broader region of Laureotike with the rich mines. Moreover, due to the mines an extensive road system was constructed in Laureotike as well as a long road which connected directly the *astu* with Cape Sounion.

Both of the sanctuaries were destroyed by the Persian raids in 480/79 BC. However, they were rebuilt in the mid-5th century BC in greater fashion. First, the Ionic Classical temple of Athena was erected most probably again by Sounies, while

the Classical Doric temple of Poseidon, standing until today, followed. During this period, the Athenian expression of sovereignty on the promontory culminated. In 413/12 BC, the fortification of the south hill was reinforced with new walls, and a settlement gradually expanded inside the fort, while later, during the Hellenistic period an Athenian garrison settled inside the former. Moreover, at some point during the late 5th century BC, an altar was dedicated to Poseidon-Erechtheus on the Acropolis. This possibly indicates the religious connection between Sounion and the heart of the *astu*. The presence of Poseidon on the Acropolis (the altar, its important position on the west pediment of the Parthenon –contest for the land of Attica– and its position on the frieze of the temple of Athena Nike), can imply the significance of Cape Sounion for the Athenians and the interest of the *polis* in the sea.

The characteristic which indicated the biggest expression of the Athenian political power on the cape, was the sculpture of the Classical temple of Poseidon. The frieze of the temple was decorated with themes which promoted the Athenian “national narrative”. Similar to the metopes of the Parthenon, the scenes from the Gigantomachy and the Centauromachy were used as allegories of the Persian Wars, while the Theseus’ deeds expressed the unity of the Athenians and their common identity. The construction of this “national narrative” began immediately after the end of the Persian Wars with allegories in the sculpture and the emergence of various stories which linked the Athenian victories with prominent gods of the Attic land. It continued throughout the 4th century BC with the speeches of rhetors such as Isocrates and Lycurgus, and even carried on during the Hellenistic period, as the story from the 1st century BC which linked Nemesis with the victory at Marathon and the warship races staged by *epebes* during the same period attested. The representation of this “national narrative” on the frieze of the Classical temple of Poseidon was not incidentally (δεν ἦταν τυχαία). In this way, the Athenians propagandized to all the non-Athenians who passed from the promontory, their power and contribution to the Persian Wars, while at the same time, they reinforced the cultural memory of their fellow citizens and the next generations, who visited the sanctuary for the penteteric festival and the warship races.

In conclusion, for the people from the broader area of Sounion, the cape was not only important for the sanctuary of Athena which was probably used mostly by them, but also, as the sanctuary of Poseidon attracted other people from the whole

south Attica and the Cyclades, the Sounies were in an advantageous position to live near a mediation centre, where they could communicate with all the former people. In addition, when Athens showed interest in the cape and the broader region of Laureotike, the Sounies benefited more. Their *demos* became famous due to the mines, roads were built and the inhabitants themselves became rich from lending their land to mining operators. Although many important sanctuaries were located around the borders of Attica, Cape Sounion seemed to have a special significance for the Athenians. The god that was worshiped on the south hill of the promontory was Poseidon, who expressed the interest of the Athenians in the sea, while on the north hill, the smaller sanctuary was dedicated to his competitor, Athena, the *poliouchos* goddess of Athens. In economic terms, the cape was near the rich silver mines, thanks to which Athens obtained the massive fleet which dominated the Aegean during the 5th century BC. Furthermore, the cape was a perfect fort. Not only due to its walls and the shipsheds, but mostly due to its geographical location. The position of the sanctuary of Poseidon on the high hill, overlooking the Aegean, was also ideal for political purposes. The sculpture of the Classical temple of Poseidon expressed the Athenian cultural memory and propaganda. Even today, anyone who passes the cape when entering or exiting Attica, is awed by it. It is easy to understand why there, on the last piece of land of the Athenian territory, the Athenian sovereignty was expressed in such a degree to the outside world.

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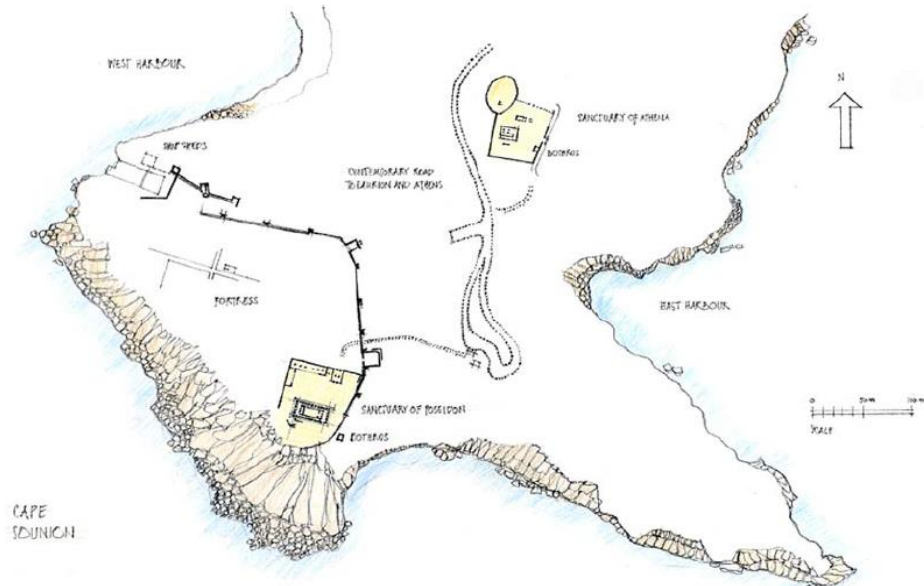
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2 Cape Sounion, plan of the two sanctuaries.

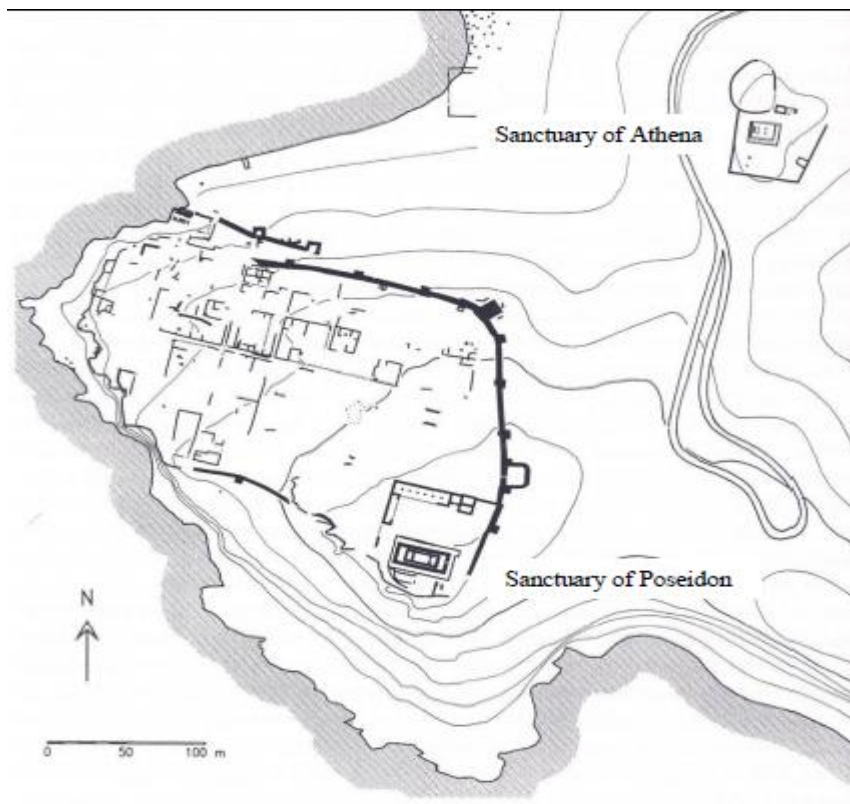


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The sanctuary of Poseidon from the west.



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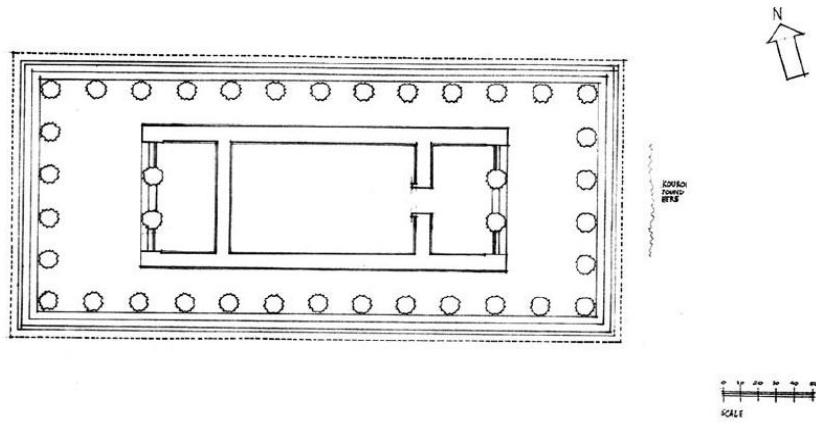


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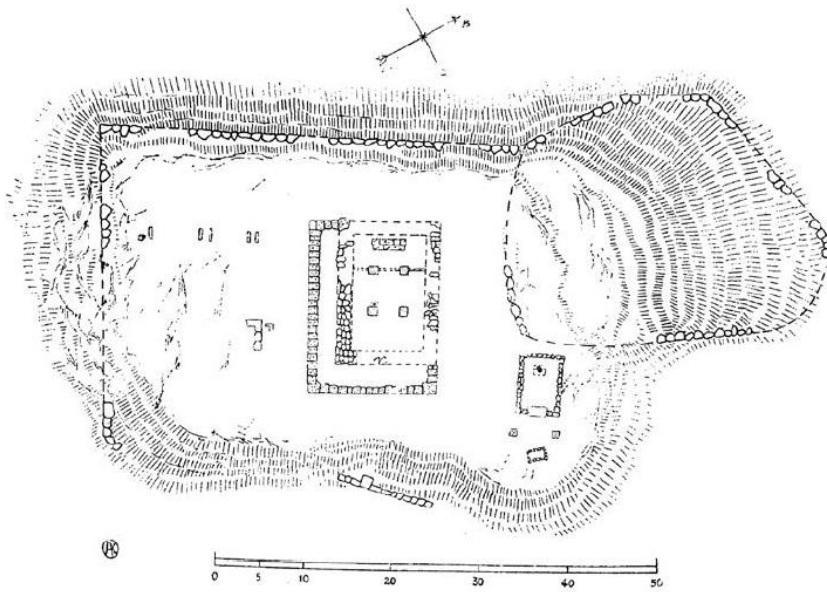


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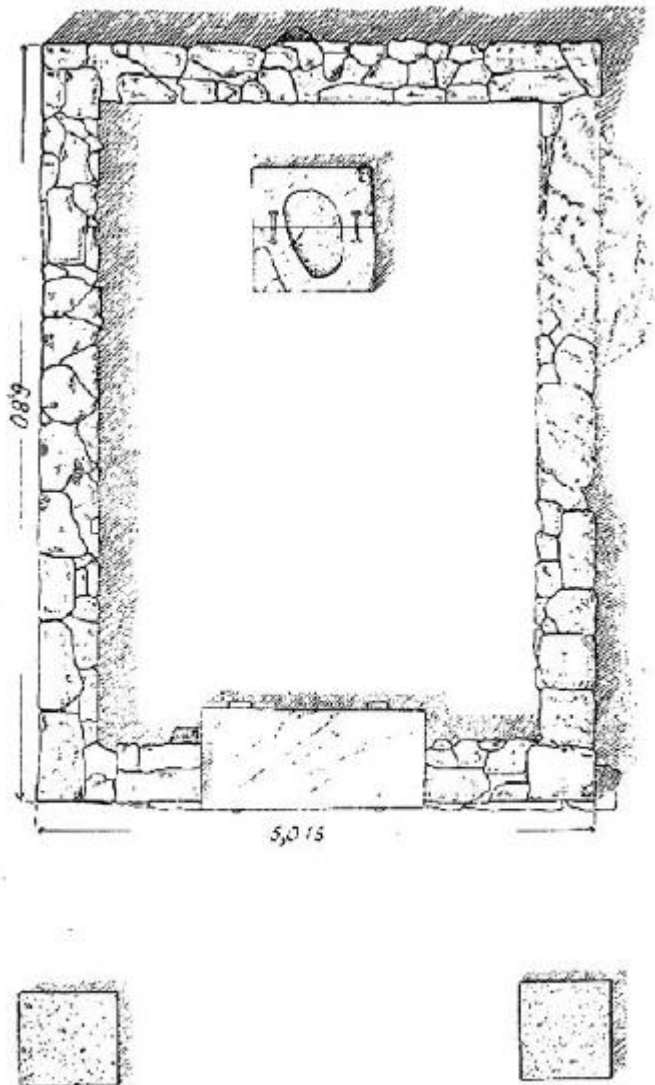


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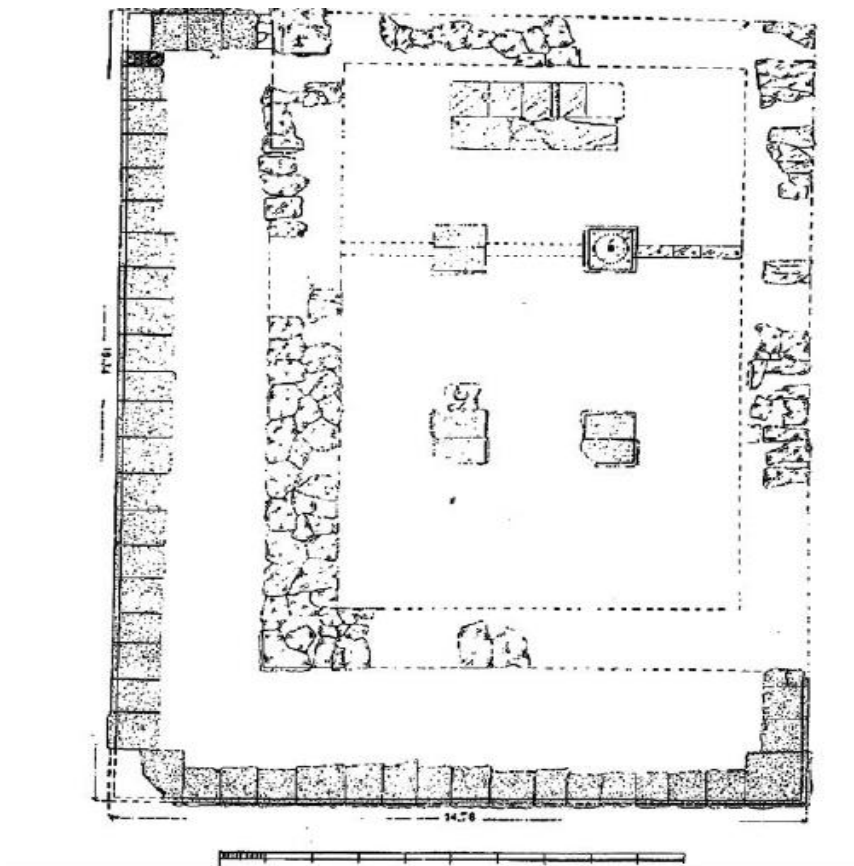


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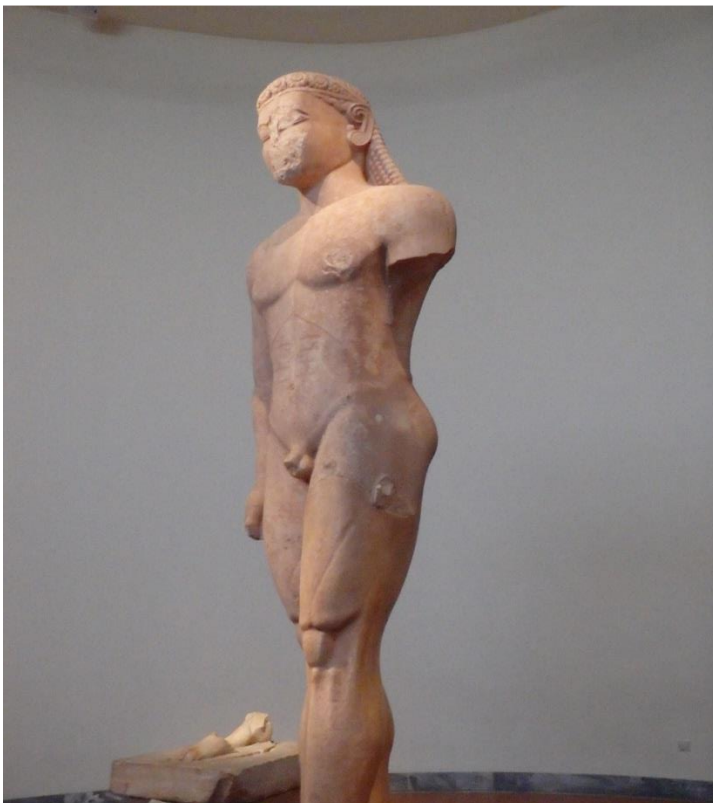


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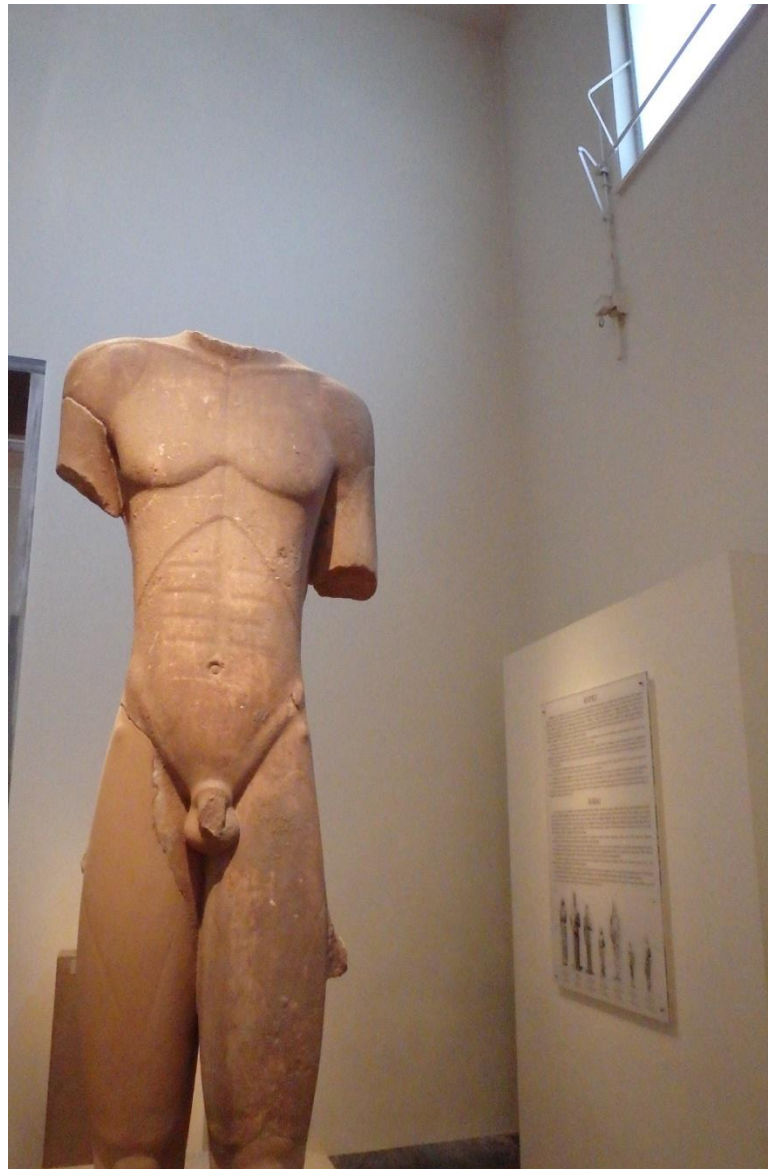


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PLATE 25

The Laureotike region and its place in Attica.

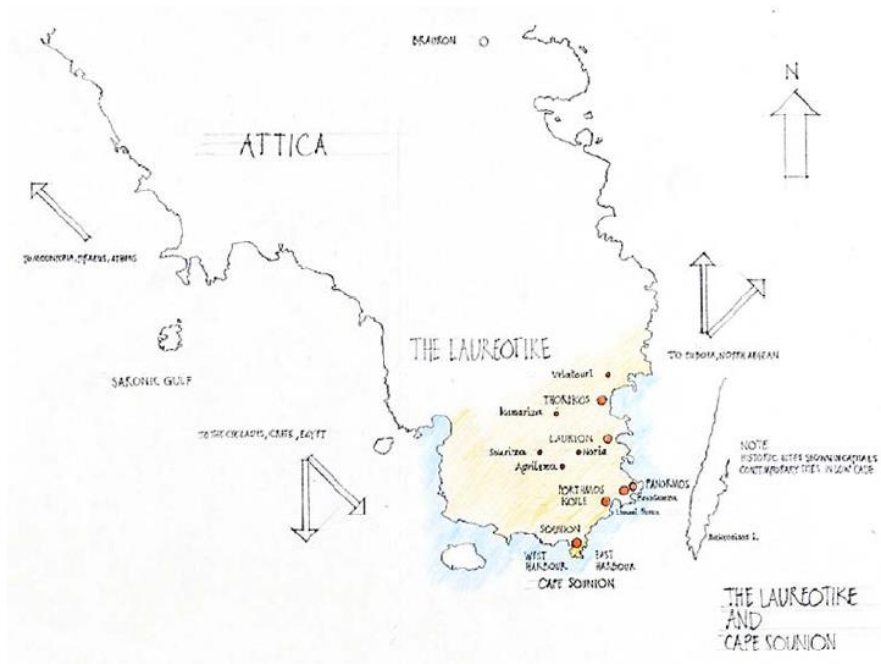


PLATE 26

The settlement of Thorikos on the map.

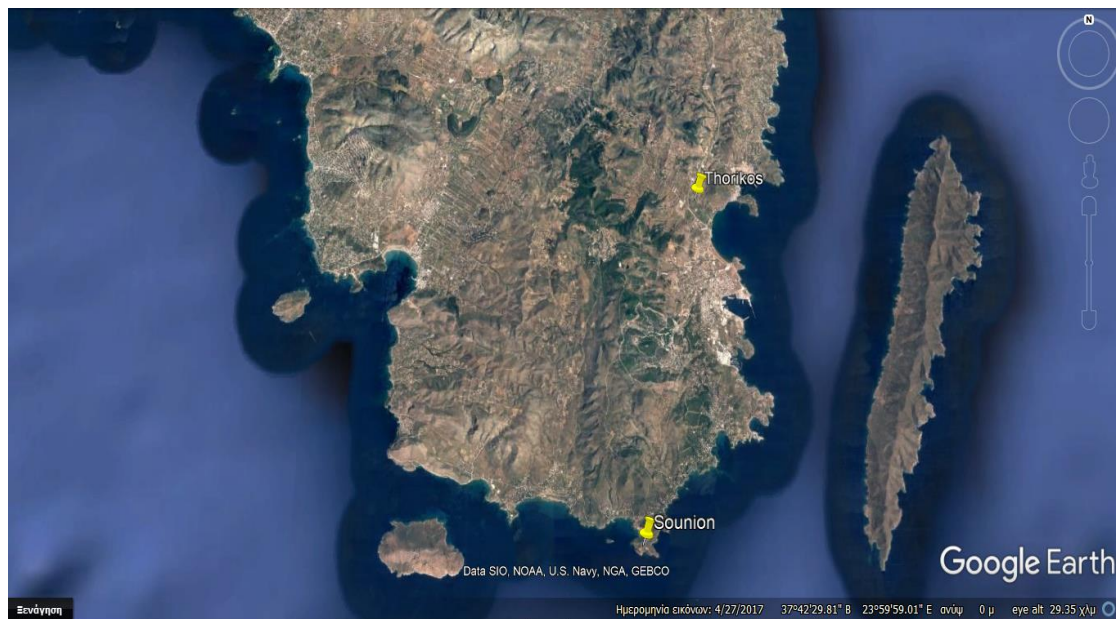


PLATE 27

The Sounion *demoi* and its inhabited areas.



PLATE 28

The place of the Salaminioi in Sounion.

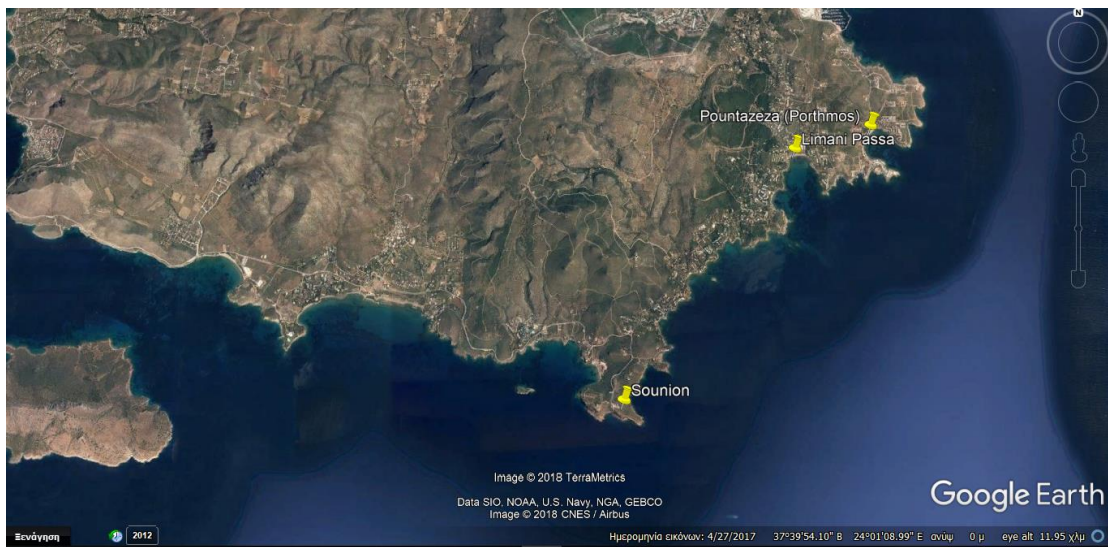
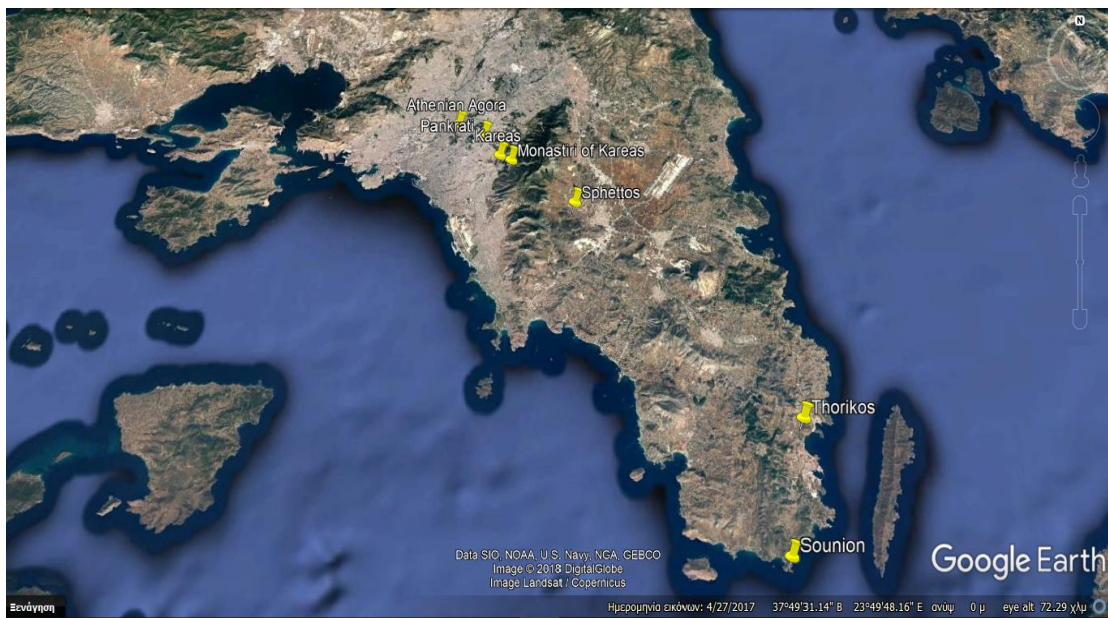


PLATE 29

1 The road which connected the *astu* with Cape Sounion.



2 A closer look to the Hymmetos pass.

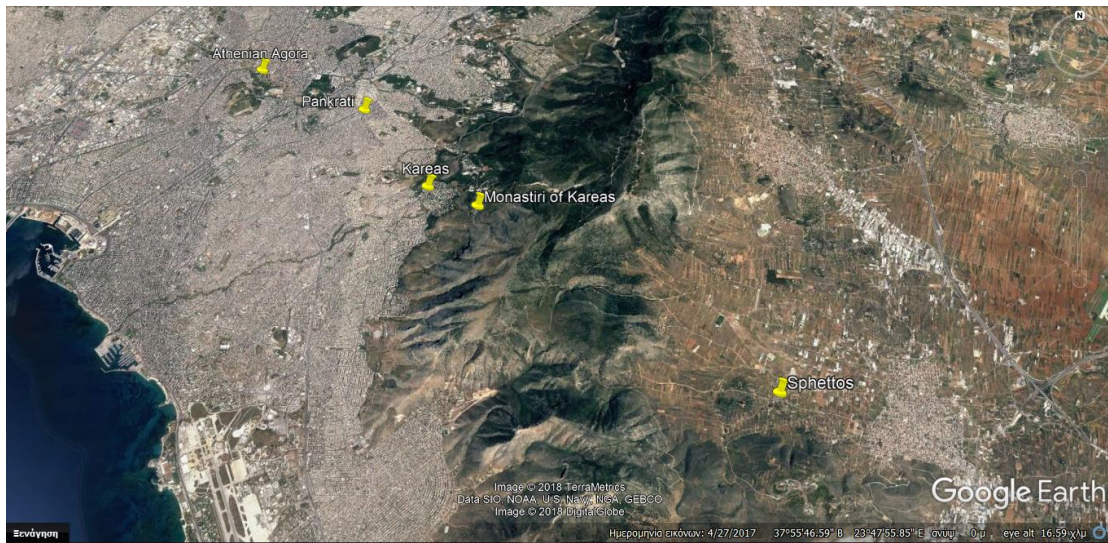


PLATE 30

The locations of the five important border sanctuaries of Attica.

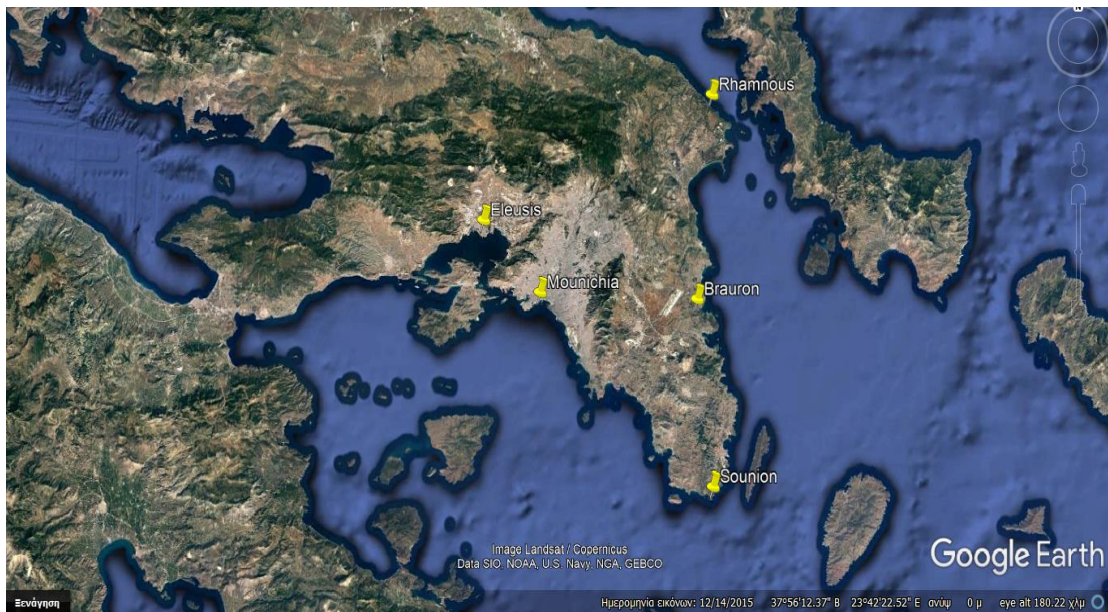


PLATE 31

Late Archaic/Early Classical Eleusis.

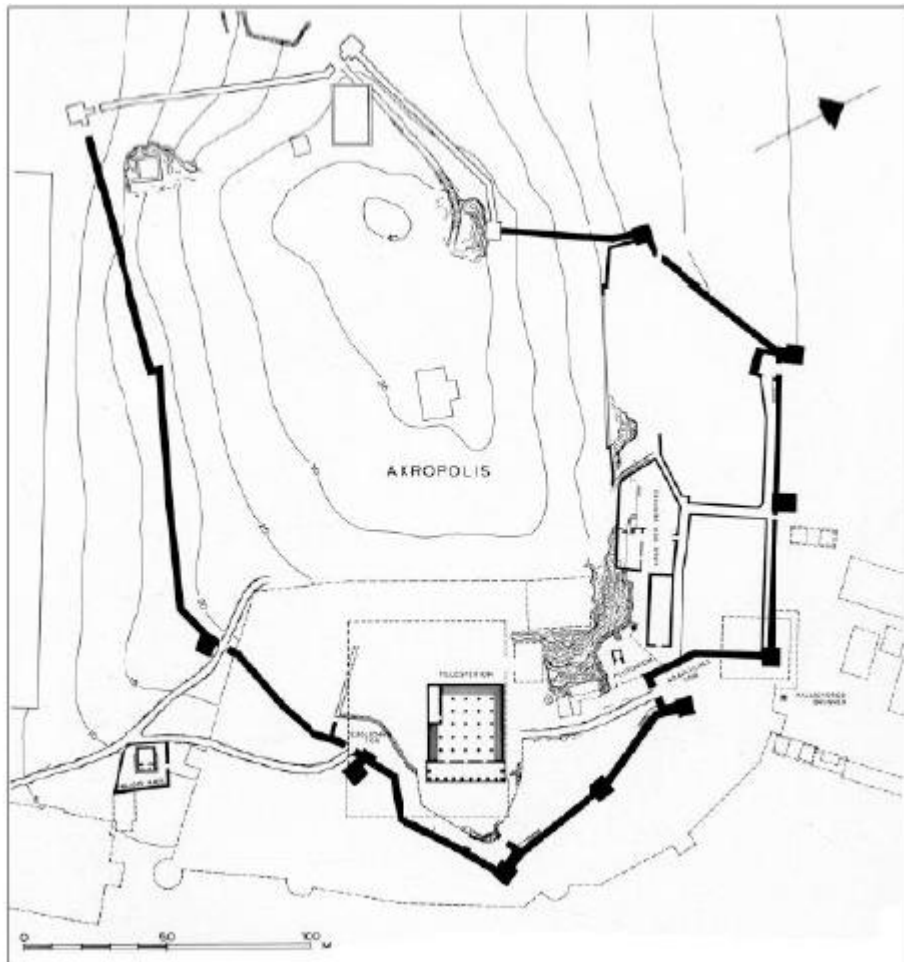
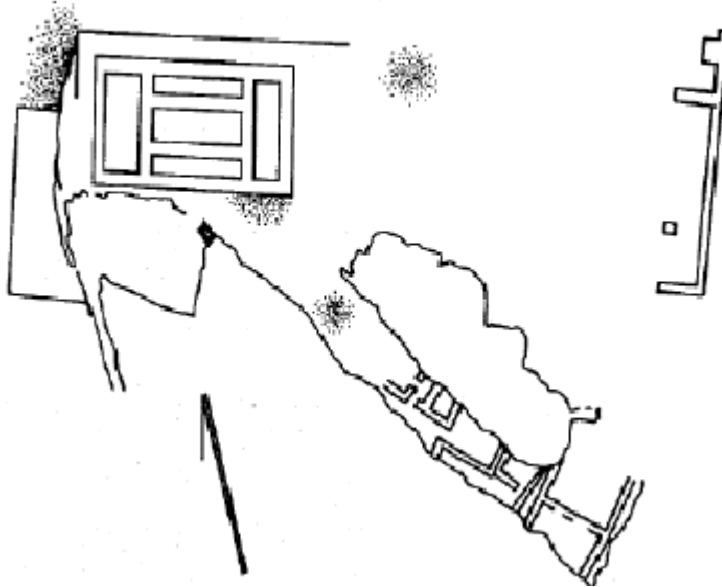


PLATE 32

- 1 Brauron, areas of activity in the late 6th and early 5th century BC.



- 2 Brauron, areas of activity in mid-to late 5th century BC.

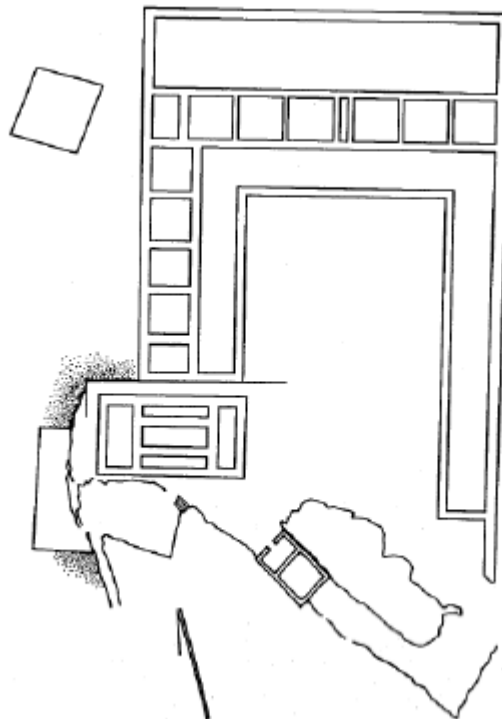


PLATE 34

Plan of the sanctuary of Nemesis at Rhamnous.

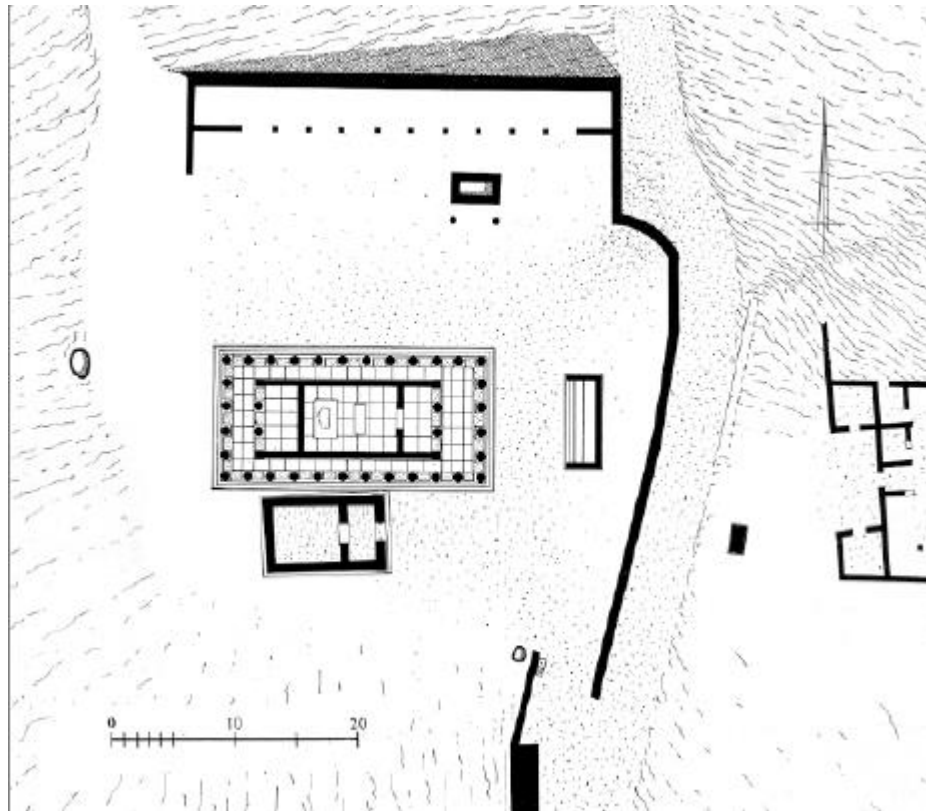
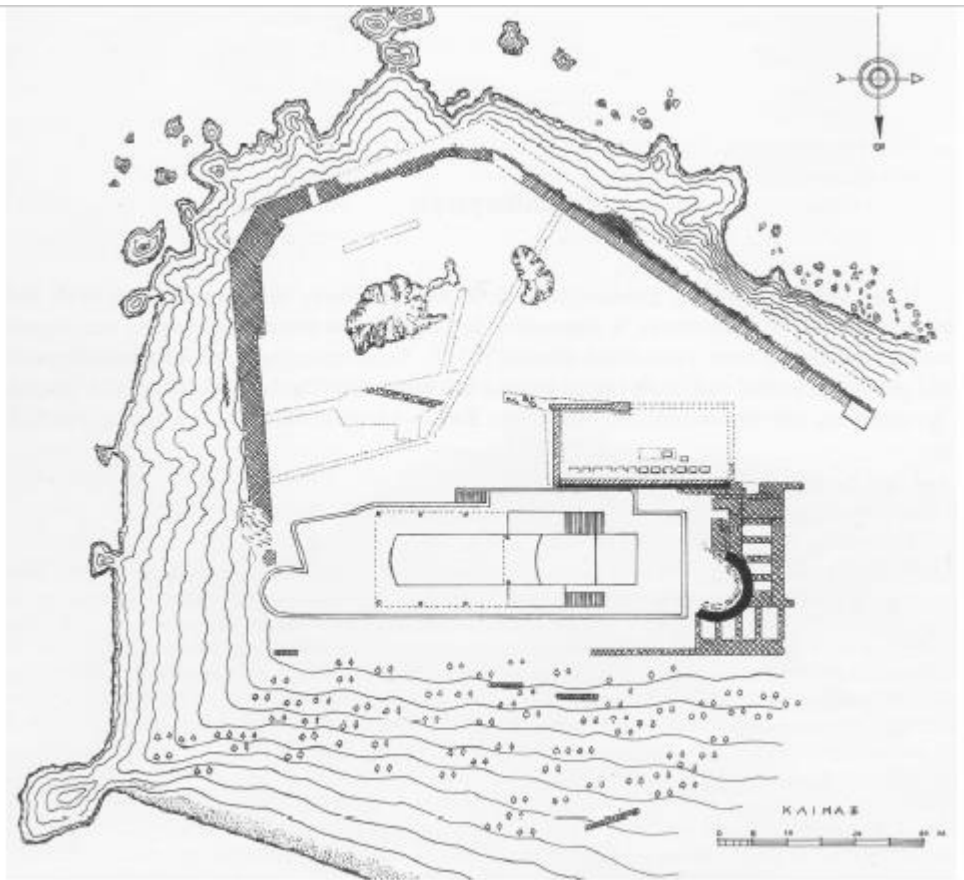


PLATE 35

Plan of Mounichia hill with excavated architectural remains.



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IG I³

8, 35, 36, 231, 232, 369, 838, 1204a, 1204b

IG II²

1006, 1011, 1028, 1030, 1180, 1260, 1270, 1281, 1300, 1302, 1308, 1582, 5058

Agora

XIX L4b

Hesperia

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