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## 4.1: Temples and Sanctuaries

Michael Scott

### Introduction

The many temples and sanctuaries of the Mediterranean Greek world have traditionally been seen not only as the most obvious (and impressive) physical incarnations of Greek religious practice and belief, but also as one of the clearest indicators of the continuity and unity of Greek religion and, more widely, of Greek society. In Herodotus (8.144), Athenian ambassadors to Sparta provide the famous definition of *to hellenikon* ('the Greek thing') as 'common blood, common language, common temples and religious customs...'. A resulting irony, however, is that although the Athenians argued that temples and sanctuaries and customs were connected, the way in which temples and sanctuaries have been studied in modern scholarship has been anything but continuous with the study of religious rituals and beliefs.

Temples and sanctuaries, and to a great extent the art they contained, have traditionally been the preserve of scholars of architecture, art and archaeology, while the study of Greek religious ritual has principally been conducted through a study of the literary and epigraphic texts (cf. Most recently Wescoat and Ousterhout 2012: xxi-xxii). As a result, temples and sanctuaries (across Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic periods) have, in general, been studied either as part of architectural treatises; sanctuary excavation reports (e.g. *Fouilles de Delphes* series on Delphi, *Olympia*, *Olympia Bericht* and *Olympia Forschungen* on Olympia); and typological handbooks (cf. Most recently Emerson 2007), rather than alongside the religious practices which they framed and were intimately involved with.

Such investigations, of course, continue to provide crucial insights not only into the physical development of these sites, but also into how to read and understand the constantly changing meanings of their art and architecture within these sacred spaces. Yet, over the last thirty years in particular, there have also been substantial efforts to re-connect this material with its surrounding contexts. Temples and sanctuaries are being pulled from their typological categories and inserted

into wider histories (e.g. Whitley 2001), and contextualising landscapes (e.g. Pedley 2005); while sacred spaces and structures are beginning to be integrated with the literary and epigraphic evidence for religious ritual and belief (e.g. Mylonopoulos and Roeder 2006). This process can be seen clearly in four (inter-connected) areas of scholarly debate over sanctuaries and the structures and objects they contained over the Archaic to Hellenistic periods: i) what a sanctuary is; ii) why sanctuaries are where they are; iii) the roles sanctuaries played within the wider landscape; and iv) the experience of being within sacred space.

## I. What is a Sanctuary?

The earliest architectural surveys labelled sacred spaces with visible monumental architecture as spaces of ‘public’, ‘official’ religious practice, and those without as ‘private’, ‘unofficial’. This division contributed in turn to the unhelpful distinction in ritual practice between ‘religious’ and ‘magical’ acts, a distinction which, as the introduction to this volume suggests, studies of Greek religion are still having to work to erase. Yet, in recent decades in particular, there has been a much wider recognition of the flexible and indeed indeterminate nature of sacred space and what is necessary for a sanctuary to be a sanctuary--that is to say, almost nothing (cf. Whitley 2001: 134).

In relation to temple architecture, there has been increasingly lively debate over what a temple represented in terms of both economic investment and social cohesion in the wider community (e.g. Davies 2001). At the same time, thanks in part to developments in theoretical approaches to architecture (e.g. Jones 2000), emphasis has also been put on the varying layout and resultant functionality of temple architecture (e.g. the implications of barriers within temples between viewer and cult statue: Mylonopoulos 2011).

## 2. Why Are Sanctuaries Where They Are?

Vincent Scully explained the layout of the sacred landscape in terms of the natural suitability of particular spaces for particular gods (Scully 1969). In the 1980s, however, his explanations were

superseded by ones which connected sanctuaries to the developing political landscape (de Polignac 1995; original French version published 1984). De Polignac argued for the development of sacred spaces in conjunction with the articulation of polis communities and territories, with sacred spaces often acting as political boundary markers. His approach has been taken up, explored, and nuanced (by himself and others) in subsequent scholarship that has argued for a wider variety of factors affecting the placement of sanctuaries in the landscape (e.g. Schachter and Bingen 1992; Marinatos and Hägg 1993; Alcock and Osborne 1994; Burkert 1996; Cole 2004).

### 3. What Roles Did Sanctuaries Have?

In tandem with discussions about placement within the landscape, debate over the roles sanctuaries had in Greek society has moved on from the overtly political (in particular, 'peer polity interaction': Snodgrass 1986). It has also developed beyond the attempt to apply neat categorisations for 'types' (and thus roles) of sanctuaries (e.g. inter-urban, extra-urban, urban, rural). Instead, more recent characterizations of sanctuaries tend to highlight not only the vast number of activities that took place within them (e.g. Sinn 2000), but also the way in which sanctuaries could simultaneously act as more than one 'type' of sanctuary: Delphi, for example, was the local sanctuary at the heart of the city of Delphi and simultaneously an inter-urban 'panhellenic' sanctuary.

### 4. The Experience of Sanctuary Space

Scholarship has also tried to move away from positivist approaches to the experience of particular sacred spaces, which emphasized objective, scientific interpretation based on the archaeological data (and which were often encouraged by the a-chronological, Pausanias-era, 'frozen in time' descriptions of temples and sanctuaries in the typological handbooks). Such a move has sought to highlight not only the changing spatial development of particular sanctuaries over time (e.g. Scott 2010), but also to link fundamentally with the ritual activities and non-permanent elements of the sanctuary experience (e.g. Ritual dance: Connelly 2011). In addition, it has drawn attention to the

question of how visitors engaged within sacred space with structures, dedications and inscriptions (e.g. most recently Burrell 2009; Papalexandrou 2011).

In all four of the (inter-related) areas of debate reviewed above, the tendency has been for scholarship to move away from a conception of the sanctuary and its contents as a static uniform place, as collections of structures performing single functions, with a fixed role within the wider landscape. Instead, it has moved towards the conception of a much more flexible, multidimensional, and polyvalent sacred space, with architectural spaces undertaking multiple simultaneous roles, and being perceived and experienced in many different ways by different users at different times.

The challenge now is to understand better how, in any particular chronological period and geographical place, this new conception of the multi-dimensionality of the physical spaces and places of Greek religion reflected, articulated and contributed to Greek ritual practice, through a more integrated and inter-disciplinary approach to all the evidence available by scholars on both sides of the old material/ritual divide. Recent initiatives in the study of Greek religion (e.g. *Kernos* edited volumes and the *Thesaurus cultus et rituum antiquorum*), as well as in relation to a variety of ancient cultures (e.g. De Grummond and Edlund-Berry 2011), demonstrate the importance (and difficulty) of this challenge.

The following short case studies, which between them cover the Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic periods, are intended not only to re-iterate the multi-dimensionality of sacred spaces, but also the advantages that can come from an integrated and inter-disciplinary approach to the evidence available. In particular, they are intended to show the way in which such an approach can contribute to our understanding of the way in which temples, sanctuaries, and their contents articulated the complex nature of Greek religious rituals and beliefs within the physical landscape at a particular place and time and, in turn, influenced their development.

## The Samian Heraion

The surviving literary sources provide very little insight into the sanctuary of Hera on Samos. Pausanias, for example, gives us no in-depth account of its sacred space, Herodotus records it primarily as a marker of Samian prowess in the wider Greek world and Athenaeus records a few chance references about its cult practices (cf. Kyrieleis 1993: 125). Inversely, thanks to its careful excavation and the excellent preservation conditions, its archaeological, architectural and sculptural remains testify to its unique monumental sculpture, the awe-inspiring architecture of its sixth century temples, copied and competed with around the Greek world, and the extraordinarily diverse and exotic range of small dedications (cf. Freyer-Schauenburg 1974; Kienast 1992: 193-8; Karakasi 2003: 29; Mazarakis Ainian 2009: 229-31; Osborne 2009: 93, 274-6). This discussion will focus on how the archaeological evidence opens up a unique window onto the changing place of the sanctuary in the landscape during the eighth to sixth centuries BCE, as well as onto the vitality, variety and specificity of ritual within this sanctuary during that period.

The sanctuary is located some 6km away from the ancient town in a marshy river basin on the coast of the island, in a place often associated in myth with Hera's birth. It had a temple and altar from 800 BCE—one of the earliest examples of temple architecture in the Greek world (Osborne 2009: 89). Their construction marks the beginning of a period during which temples and sanctuaries, as part of wider changes in the perception of the sacred in ancient society, were coming to play a more visible role in the Greek landscape (cf. De Polignac 2009: 427-9). Yet in the case of Samos, what is crucial is that the sanctuary was not linked to the polis in any official way before the late seventh/early sixth centuries BCE (indeed a branch of the nearby river cut it off from the town settlement). Instead, in this early period, the archaeology reveals that the sanctuary's earliest orientation was towards the nearby coast: its users and worshippers came to it from the sea (Duploux 2006), and what we know of its ritual ceremonies centred around contact with the sea (cf. *Ath. Deipn.* 525F; and for more discussion of this aspect see this volume, Constantakopoulou, chapter 4.5). It has been argued that the earliest orientation of the Hera sanctuary underlined the

sanctuary's independence from the nearby town, pointing towards its own 'sacred centrality' as the reason for its early and rich development. This highlights the hugely important role sanctuaries could have, in their own right, as central focus points for a wider community, rather than, as often argued in polis-centric scholarship, simply acting as reflections of the development of civic centres to which they were linked (cf. Morgan 2003; de Polignac 2009: 435).

In the late seventh century BCE, however, the situation changed: the sanctuary was re-orientated towards the city, following construction of a processional route linking the two (necessitating a diversion of the river that had hitherto divided them); a variety of new or replacement cult buildings were constructed within the sanctuary. Over the course of the sixth century, the temple to Hera was rebuilt twice on an increasingly elaborate scale. The first version, undertaken by the architect Rhoikos, c. 570 BCE, was the first Ionic monumental temple in the Greek world. The second, part of the building programme initiated by the island's tyrant ruler, Polycrates, in the 530s was described by Herodotus (3.39-60) as one of the greatest buildings in all of Greece. The number of cult buildings surrounding these temples proliferated as did the number of monumental free-standing sculptures, all of which were turned to face the processional route towards the city (cf. Duploux 2006: 190-203; Mazarakis Ainian 2009: 229).

The Heraion on Samos clearly received remarkable investment and attention during this period. Yet what the archaeology also underlines is the vital, varied, and specific nature of cult practice at this sanctuary. Three wells have been discovered between the sanctuary and the ancient shoreline, constructed at the time of the sanctuary's re-orientation in the late seventh century and which were progressively filled with debris (much of which has survived because of the marshy conditions) until they were closed off in the late sixth century BCE (cf. Kyrieleis 1993: 135). In analysing the contents of the wells, several aspects of how Hera was worshipped at this sanctuary came to light: there was an unusually low number of goat bones left over from sacrifices and sacrificial meals in comparison to most Greek sanctuaries; the number of wild fallow deer that had been sacrificed was striking, in contrast to the widespread belief that wild animals were not used in Greek sacrificial

ritual; there was a marked absence of thigh bones, indicating that the thigh bones (normally a particular delicacy to eat) were most likely, as part of the ritual in this particular sanctuary, burnt as an offering to the gods (Kyrieleis 1993: 137-8).

At the same time, the nature of the small votive offerings in the sanctuary indicates not only how particular aspects of the goddess were emphasised by different social groups on Samos, but also how her worship on Samos was both different from, and linked to, forms of worship she received elsewhere in the Greek world. For a goddess whose ritual worship included engagement with the sea, it is perhaps not surprising that a collection of wooden boat carvings have been found. These, rather than being representations of worshippers' modes of transport, seem to have had a ritual and symbolic value in the worship of Hera that was unknown elsewhere in the Greek world (Kyrieleis 1988: 217). At the same time, in no other Greek sanctuary has such a large collection of horse trappings (bronze bridles and harnesses) been found. This suggests a particular emphasis on the worship of Hera here as a protector of horses and riders, potentially by those most likely to have owned horses, the higher (and land-based) social ranks of Samian society (Kyrieleis 1993: 145). At the same time, dedications of small wooden stools (too small to be of practical use) with carved sides have survived. Their best parallel is in Near Eastern art (Kyrieleis 1993: 141-5), which suggests an Eastern aspect to the cult of Hera on Samos, perhaps not surprising given the island's position just off the coast of Asia Minor. This Eastern influence is also indicated by the dedication of both real and terracotta and ivory representations of pomegranates, pine-cones, and poppy pods and their seeds. The abundance of these ritual dedications, thought to be associated with fertility aspects of the goddess, are best mirrored in the ritual practices of the ancient Near East in the seventh century BCE, and particularly in Assyria (Bürchner 1892: 29, 92; Kyrieleis 1988: 219-220). Even more indicative of this link with the East is the way in which some foreign visitors to the sanctuary seem to have equated Hera to deities in their own pantheon, as a bronze statuette of man and dog from Babylonia, normally reserved for the local mother goddess Gula, seems to show (Kyrieleis 1993: 146).



At the same time, it seems that Samians took their practices for the worship of Hera with them as they travelled and settled around the Mediterranean world. Special dining pottery with the name Hera painted on the side was found discarded in the wells on Samos, a practice best paralleled in the sanctuary of Hera at Naukratis in Egypt, originally set up also by Samian traders (Kyrieleis 1993: 139-40; Mazarakis Ainian 2009: 231). Alongside this particularity of ritual worship of Hera on Samos and by Samians around the Mediterranean, there are similarities with the ritual practices at other Hera sanctuaries. For example, the discovery of small dedicated house models in terracotta at the sanctuary on Samos have parallels exclusively at the other major Greek sanctuaries of Hera at Argos and Perachora on the Greek mainland (Kyrieleis 1988: 217), linking the cult at the Samian Heraion to other communities of Hera worshippers around Greece.

The picture provided by the archaeology of ritual at the Samian Heraion underlines the complexity and variety of cult practice within a single sanctuary, and, by extension, across the Greek world. Ritual practice may have been a strong cohesive agent between Greeks, but it was not uniform: it could link together sanctuaries and places within the Greek world; it could link Greek sacred space to practices of very different cultures; it could also underline the uniqueness of cult practice in one particular place and the variety of ways in which different members of the same community could engage in worship of the same goddess. This picture of the complexity of ritual practice offers an important insight into the role and nature of a sanctuary even after it had been officially attached to a polis. Although the monumental dedications, were all made by the rich Samians of the local polis, the widespread origins of the sanctuary's smaller dedications suggest a far wider network, and this is also indicated by the ritual at the Samian Heraion, which continued to link the sanctuary to a much wider Greek and non-Greek world.

#### Case Study 2: The Temple of Artemis Aristoboule, Athens

Athens was, according to Pausanias, a city more devoted to the gods than most (1.24.3). Its complex system of myths, rituals, and festivals have often been studied with a view to stressing the integral

place of religion in Athens, the special intensity of Athens' relationship with the divine, and the complex ways in which Athenian religious practices oscillated between tradition and change. More rarely investigated is the question of how the physical space of the sacred fits into this picture, and in particular, how the less well-known Athenian sacred spaces complement our understanding of its more famous temples and sanctuaries (cf. Parker 2005: 52-60).

The temple of Artemis Aristoboule ('of best council') was constructed in 480-72 BCE to the west of Kolonos Agoraios in the *deme* of Melite (near the modern Thissio metro station) (cf. Travlos 1971: 121-3; Wycherley 1978: 189-90; Garland 1992: 76-8; Camp 2001: 61). Plutarch, in his account of the life of Themistocles, states that the temple, along with several other religious structures (e.g. the *telesterion* at Phyle, the temple of Aphrodite at Eetioneia), were built by Themistocles himself, in honour of his own advice and council during the Persian wars (*Vit. Them.* 1.3-4, 22.1-2; *Mor.* 869C-D). Plutarch adds that the temple was built near Themistocles' house, and that Themistocles set a portrait statue (*eikonion*) of himself in the temple, which survived into Plutarch's time, and which suggested 'that he had not only a heroic spirit, but also heroic presence as well' (*Vit. Them.* 22.2).

The physical remains of the temple, excavated 1958-64, show that it was a modest structure: 3.6m square with a porch 1.85 m in depth, but that it was located in a highly visible site at the junction of two roads (Travlos 1971: 121), one coming from the agora to the Peiraic gate, and the other leading to the Demian gate (through which those condemned to death were led on the way to the Barathron). The presence of numerous examples of *krateriskoi* (miniature mixing bowls exclusive to the cult of Artemis) dating from the early fifth century BCE not only reinforce the speed at which the shrine was constructed following Themistocles' role in defeating the Persian invasion, but also suggests a strong continuity of cult practice with that of other Artemis sanctuaries like Artemis Mounychia (Garland 1992: 76). There was also a connection between the Artemis Aristoboule and Artemis Mounychia regarding the reason for their worship: the festivals of Artemis Mounychia

were said to commemorate the bright moonshine before the battle of Salamis (see Parker 2005: 400).

Despite the fact that traditional accounts of temple building characterize them as the preserve of civic bodies within the polis system, Parker has emphasized how the founding of a temple to a new god (or at least a god with a new epithet) by an individual was not an unusual occurrence in ancient Athens (Parker 1996: 3, 215-6, 238). Telemachos, for example, built a place of worship for Asklepios on the Acropolis and Konon in 394 BCE built a temple to Aphrodite Euploia in honour of his victory. Indeed, given that, with the exception of the Tyrannicides statue in the agora, Athens did not award honorific statues to individuals during the fifth century BCE (the first known honorary statue was awarded to the same Konon who built himself a temple in 394 BCE), the building of a temple by an individual within the polis of Athens seems to have been one of the more acceptable ways of celebrating an individuals' contribution to the city (although Plutarch relates that, in Themistocles' case, he was also chastised for his excessive dedications: *Vit. Them.* 22.1). Themistocles' modest temple, dedicated to Artemis 'of best council', and thus, by extension, a testament to Themistocles' own excellent advice to the people of Athens, formed part of a wider religious landscape. This provided the context for how the people of Athens interpreted not only different parts of their city, but also their more prestigious temples and sanctuaries. Many scholars have argued that during the fifth century, the central city, the *astu*, of Athens was more open to the worship of new gods and gods with new epithets than ever before (Parker 1996: 196). In contrast, it has been argued that, in Athens' port, the Piraeus, the entry and worship of new gods was monitored very closely by the demos (Garland 1987: 107; on new gods see this volume, Anderson, chapter 5.2). As such, Themistocles' temple, I would argue, would have played a role in making visually apparent the distinction between the *astu* and Piraeus of Athens. At the same time, this monument would also have been a reminder to Athenians of the central, and perhaps unnervingly important, role played by individuals in Athenian society (cf. Wycherley 1978: 200).

Yet this temple's place in the Athenian landscape did not remain constant. Following Themistocles' fall from grace, the archaeological evidence indicates that the shrine also fell on hard times.

(Although insets carved into the anta block of the temple for votive stelai indicate that the shrine was never completely abandoned: Travlos 1971: 121.) The epigraphical evidence then reveals how, over the course of the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, as Themistocles' reputation revived, the sanctuary was refurbished and adopted as the central *deme* shrine for the *deme* of Melite. By 330 BCE, the demesmen of Melite set up a decree (*SEG XXII.116.5*) praising Neoptolemos, son of Antike, for his services to Artemis, most probably in connection with the refurbishment of the temple, including the installation of a threshold in Hymettian marble (Travlos 1971: 121). The temple henceforth seems to have been administered by the *deme* (perhaps serving as Themistocles' hero shrine: Wycherley 1978: 192).

Nor was Themistocles' temple the only sacred space dedicated by an individual to be taken over by the wider community in the same period: for example, Telemachos' Asklepios sanctuary on the Acropolis was taken over by the Kerykes, a *genos* of Athens (Parker 1996: 215-6); while the altar to Pythian Apollo by the Illisos river, set up by Peisistratos to celebrate his own archonship (*IG I<sup>3</sup> 948*), was taken over by the *boule* and *demos* (*IG I<sup>3</sup> 84*). Pressures on the city, like the Peloponnesian war, seem to have caused the polis to become much more concerned with controlling sacred spaces over the course of the fifth and fourth centuries BCE: for example, *IG I<sup>3</sup> 78, 422* BCE, records how the *archon basileus* ('royal archon') was given power to fix the boundary of the *hiera* ('sacred area') in the Pelargikon (area around the base of the Acropolis), and the *boule* and *demos* take control of what happens within those spaces).

It is a question whether Themistocles would have been allowed to build his temple at such a time. As it was, although its associations with him as an individual rose and fell depending on how the city regarded him, the temple and sanctuary seem slowly to have been absorbed into the concerns and purview of the local civic administration (ironically enough, during a time in which honouring

individuals with statues, an option which had been out of bounds in the fifth century, was becoming more and more commonplace).

The shrine of Artemis Aristoboule thus seems to have performed a number of roles within the *deme* of Melite and within the wider religious landscape of Athens. It was the highly visible marker of the role and importance of (an) individual to the city. But it was also, through its associations with other Artemis cult spaces and rituals, part of a wider network of worship for an important god within the Athenian pantheon, and, as such, worked to integrate Athens as a community and maintain its stability. Its links with an individual may have worked to contextualize Athenians' understandings of their more famous civic constructions around which the city of Athens and Attica were focused. But it also helped to clarify differences in styles of management of ritual practice between the *astu* of the city and the Piraeus. Increasingly, over time, it acted as a religious focus for the *deme* of Melite. But it was also Melite's trump card, stressing that *deme*'s ascendancy over, and difference from, others. It demonstrated the importance of one of their own demes-men, a claim they may have needed if we are to believe Plutarch (*Vit. Them.* 22.2) that the *deme* was also the dumping ground for the remnants of the unsavoury civic business of putting people to death (cf. Garland 1992: 77; Parker 2005: 54 n.13).

### Case Study 3: Worshipping Foreign Deities on Delos

In the Hellenistic period, within the vibrant religious community on Delos (see this volume, Constantakopoulou, chapter 4.5), one of the most distinctive features was the number and variety of 'foreign' deities worshipped (cf. Baslez 1982). Following excavation during the nineteenth century, their initial discovery, provoked disbelief: no literary sources had survived attesting to the presence of Egyptian divinities on the island and so excavators at the time were unwilling to attribute the extensive remains of (what we now know were three different) sanctuaries to Egyptian deities (Roussel 1915-16: 9-10). Unlike most foreign cults that seem to have been introduced to the island by worshippers as part of their time and activity on Delos as traders (cf. Baslez 1977: 312), the

introduction of the worship of the Egyptian god Sarapis was undertaken by the priest of the cult himself in the third to early second centuries BCE. The inscription relating the story of the establishment of the first Egyptian sanctuary of Sarapis (Sarapeion 'A'; *IG XI*, 4,1299), which was subsequently set up in the sanctuary, reveals how, for over two generations of the priestly family in charge of the cult, its worship had been mobile on the island, without any permanent built sanctuary (Roussel 1915-16: 29, 248-9). Moreover, even when the application was made for a permanent sanctuary (according to the inscription at the behest of the god himself to his priest), there seems to have been some reserve amongst the Delian authorities: permission for a private cult was temporarily withheld before being eventually granted (Bruneau 1970: 658).

This first sanctuary of Sarapis was not constructed near the central Apollo and Artemis sanctuary on the shore (where the vast majority of buildings and dedications by Hellenistic rulers were concentrated), but in a cleft of the hills leading up to Mount Kynthos. Such a position has been in part explained by the needs of this Egyptian cult (a flowing stream—the Inopus—was able to 'resemble' the Nile and provide water for cult activity). But such a position also chimes with the hesitancy registered in the sanctuary's founding inscription: nestled into the cleft of the hillside as it was, Sarapis' first sanctuary on Delos was almost invisible from the Apollo and Artemis sanctuary and from the shoreline. Its succeeding counterpart, Sarapeion 'B'—also a private cult establishment—was given a similarly invisible position within the same hillside cleft. At the same time, however, the architecture of these sanctuaries for the Egyptian god, while clearly catering for a different set of rituals than those for Hellenic deities, does not conform to any strict canon of Egyptian worship. Their architecture is a mix of Greek style and responses to the needs of the Egyptian cult, coupled with a response to the pressures of space and the hill's incline within this cramped part of the island (for example, the entrance to Sarapeion 'B' is a long staircase squeezed in between two shops).

In contrast, however, the initial construction of Sarapeion 'C', the third Egyptian sanctuary on Delos, some time in the first half of the second century BCE, reveals the continually changing

relationship between the priests and worshippers of Sarapis and the island authorities. Sarapeion 'C' was made a public, official, rather than private, cult and, in turn, it was placed next to (and indeed enveloped) the temple of Hera. This was on a visible platform above the cleft where Sarapeion 'A' and 'B' had been located, marking 'C' out as a more public entity in the island's sacred landscape—and therefore, presumably, more acceptable. Its finished form is the result of several enlargements during the second and first centuries BCE and its architecture can seem much more 'Egyptian' than its predecessors: its *dromos* ('entrance passage') with sphinxes has basic similarities in layout and attributes with other Egyptian temples, particularly the Sarapeion in Memphis (Roussel 1915-16: 68-9; Bruneau and Ducat 2005: 279; Bruneau 2006). Yet, at a more detailed level, neither its architecture nor surviving sculpture is in any way Egyptian in style. Moreover, at least one of its temples, that of Isis, was, according to its accompanying inscription, actually dedicated by the Athenians after their re-assumption of control of the island in 166 BCE (*ID* 2041), along with the cult statue of Isis placed inside it (*ID* 2044), which represents the Egyptian deity in Hellenized form, resembling closely that of the Greek figure Tyche (Marcadé 1969: No. 30).

A picture is thus emerging of the fluidity and complexity surrounding the place and perception of foreign, particularly Egyptian, deities on Delos in the third to first centuries BCE. The layout and feel of these cult spaces, as may be expected, bore witness to the combined pressures of necessity, cult activity, and Hellenic influence. And yet that balance was continually in flux: later, cult spaces became more visible and official, looked more and more Egyptian, and yet were often constructed by Hellenic communities keen to invest in the worship of these foreign deities in an increasingly cosmopolitan world. At the same time, however, this fluidity obscures a much stricter set of parameters pertaining to how these sanctuaries were perceived by the different communities who used them. Right next to the Sarapeion 'C', a sanctuary to the Syrian divinities Atargatis and Hadad (both of whom had been assimilated to Hellenic divinities elsewhere on the island and within the Syrian sanctuary itself e.g. Zeus Hadad and Hagne Aphrodite), was constructed sometime after the

middle of the second century BCE. It became a prosperous and popular cult location on the island (Will and Schmidt 1985). This sanctuary, while once again responding architecturally to the needs of the particular cult (Roussel 1916: 260), was also physically joined to the Sarapeion 'C' through a shared wall (although there was no access between the two: Roussel 1915-16: 13). These sanctuaries thus seem to have been perceived, in the minds of those responsible for allocating space for these sanctuaries, as linked. Moreover, Greek worshippers on the island seem to have considered them equally worth engaging with: Greek dedications are found in both sanctuaries, offered to traditionally Greek gods like Apollo, as well as to Hellenized versions of the foreign deities, and to the foreign deities themselves (Laidlaw 1933: 225; Bruneau 1970: 466-73). During the period of Athenian rule after 166 BC, Athenian involvement in both 'official' cults is clear: three of the attested officials in the sanctuary of the Syrian gods, for example, had to be Athenians, and we saw above the Athenian-led construction in Sarapeion C. At the same time however, while dedications to Egyptian deities were being made within cult spaces across the island, the worship of Syrian deities (rather than their Hellenic 'counterparts') outside the sanctuary of Syrian gods was very rare (Bruneau 1970: 473). Despite the physical proximity of their sanctuaries and the willingness of Greeks to dedicate in both, there are no attested cases of Syrian divinities being associated with Egyptian divinities in any single dedication (Roussel 1916: 255).

This architectural, archaeological, and epigraphical evidence reveals the complex, multiple, and conflicting ways in which the different communities and authorities on Delos perceived and worshipped these particular divinities, and how this changed over time. The Egyptian sanctuaries on Delos were initially located out of sight, before gradually becoming an official cult with a visible cult location. At the same time, their architecture and art underlined a complex interplay between Egyptian ritual and Greek styles of architecture and art. Meanwhile, despite the evidence that those allocating sanctuary space on Delos perceived there to be similarities in cult for Egyptian and Syrian divinities, and despite equal engagement with these divinities by Greek worshippers, there was no linking of these divinities in individual dedications.



## Conclusion

These brief case studies of three different sanctuaries have ranged in time and across place. They have focussed on the evidence of small cult offerings and practices to grand art and architecture. In some examples, the material evidence has opened up a world almost unknown through the literary sources, while others have revealed a complex interplay between the surviving literary, epigraphic, and archaeological evidence. In each case, using an inter-disciplinary approach, we can see how the physical spaces and structures of Greek religion performed multiple simultaneous and changing roles in the wider landscape, and were engaged with and perceived by their different users in multiple, sometimes conflicting ways. Sanctuaries were flexible, multidimensional, and polyvalent institutions which, thanks in turn to the structures and objects they contained, reflected, articulated, and facilitated the extraordinary number of ways in which religious practice was inter-woven and embedded into Greek society, many of which we are still only beginning to understand (cf. Elsner 2012: 18). Herodotus was right to claim temples and sanctuaries as a key part of *to hellenikon*, not because they were all the same, nor because they were understood in the same way, nor because they demonstrated that Greek ritual was all the same, but because they were all equally good at showing the unique and complex nature of Greek religious life.

## Suggested Reading

In addition to the titles in the bibliography:

Chaniotis, A., ed. 2011. *Ritual Dynamics in the Ancient Mediterranean*. Stuttgart. This is an very useful volume particularly for thinking about how religious practice influenced and reflected interaction amongst different Mediterranean communities.

Hägg, R. ed. 1998. *Ancient Greek Cult Practice from the Archaeological Evidence*. Stockholm.

This is an important volume which tackles insightfully the difficult relationship between ritual and material object.

Haysom, M. And Wallensten, J., eds. 2011. *Current Approaches to Greek Religion*. Stockholm.

This volume offers a range of recent approaches to accessing religious practice through not only the full range of evidence, but also the full range of senses.

Prêtre, C. ed. 2009. *Le donateur, l'offrande et la déesse*. Kernos Supplement 23. Liège. An interesting volume looking at the variety of ways in which ritual belief, practice and material culture can be tied together.

Spawforth, T. 2006. *The Complete Greek Temples*. London. An up to date and thoughtful analysis of the variations inherent in both the construction and purpose of temples across the wider Greek world.

Westcoat, B. D. and R. G. Ousterhout. eds. 2012. *Architecture of the Sacred: Space, Ritual and Experience from Classical Greece to Byzantium*. Cambridge. This volume offers a series of innovative approaches to the analysis of sacred space.

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