

SOUNION REVISITED:  
THE SANCTUARIES OF  
POSEIDON AND ATHENA  
AT SOUNION IN ATTICA

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Cover illustration: lead miniature kouros, recovered from the artificial fill in the sanctuary of Athena Sounias;  
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# Table of Contents

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Prologue .....   | vii |
| Notes .....  | ix  |
| Acknowledgements .....   | x   |
| Introduction .....   | 1   |
| <b>Chapter 1</b>   |     |
| <b>Problems Arising from the Excavations of 1897–1915</b> .....  | 3   |
| Valerios Stais at Sounion .....  | 3   |
| The bothroi deposits .....   | 4   |
| Finds from the bothroi and landfills whose provenance can be ascertained from the reports                  |     |
| of Stais .....   | 6   |
| The sanctuary of Poseidon .....  | 6   |
| The sanctuary of Athena .....  | 6   |
| <b>Chapter 2</b>   |     |
| <b>The History of Sounion and the Sanctuaries of Poseidon and Athena: Sources and Early Research</b> ..... | 8   |
| Literary and epigraphic evidence .....   | 8   |
| Settlement and sanctuaries .....   | 10  |
| The Latin testimonia .....   | 15  |
| Early travellers and excavations before 1897 .....   | 16  |
| The excavations of Valerios Stais .....  | 17  |
| The sanctuary of Poseidon .....  | 17  |
| The sanctuary of Athena .....  | 21  |
| The large temple .....   | 22  |
| The small temple .....   | 22  |
| The bothroi, landfills and their contents .....  | 23  |
| The finds from the Poseidon bothros .....  | 24  |
| The finds from the artificial fill and bothros in the Athena sanctuary .....                               | 25  |
| <b>Chapter 3</b>   |     |
| <b>The Finds: Analysis and Discussion</b> .....  | 29  |
| Terracotta figurines (1–126) .....   | 29  |
| Female figurines (1–45, 47–61, 63–73, 75) .....  | 29  |
| Standing female figurines (42–45, 47–61, 63–66, 68–71) .....   | 29  |
| Seated female figurines (67, 72–73) .....  | 33  |
| Protomai (1–41, 75) .....  | 36  |
| Male figurines (46, 62, 74, 76–81) .....   | 42  |
| Standing male figurines (46, 62, 74–77) .....  | 42  |
| Seated male figurines (78–80) .....  | 44  |
| Other male figurines (81) .....  | 45  |
| Heads and miscellaneous body parts (82–87) .....   | 45  |
| Animals (88–126, 129) .....  | 46  |
| Horses (92, 94–102, 104–113, 117–119, 124, 126) .....  | 47  |
| Horses with riders (90–91, 93, 103) .....  | 50  |
| Chariot groups (88–89) .....   | 51  |
| Other animals (114–116, 120–125, 129) .....  | 52  |
| Plastic vases (127, 128, 130–135) .....  | 53  |
| Human figures (127, 134) .....   | 54  |
| Animals (128, 130–133, 135) .....  | 56  |
| Terracotta plaques (136–172) .....   | 58  |
| Relief plaques (136–146) .....   | 58  |
| Human figures (137, 139–144, 146) .....  | 58  |
| Winged creatures (136, 138, 145) .....   | 63  |
| Painted terracotta plaques (147–172) .....   | 64  |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Faience and imitations (173–181) .....  | 74  |
| Human figures (173–178) .....   | 75  |
| Animals (179–181) .....   | 77  |
| Stone sculpture (182–215) .....   | 78  |
| Human figures (182–195, 204–206) .....  | 79  |
| Male and female body parts (183–194) .....  | 79  |
| Child's hand (195) .....  | 81  |
| Head of a female statuette (182) .....  | 82  |
| Votive relief (206) .....   | 83  |
| Folds of drapery (204–205) .....  | 83  |
| Animals (196–197, 199–203) .....  | 84  |
| Snakes (199a, b–203a, b) .....  | 84  |
| Other animals (196–197) .....   | 85  |
| Miscellaneous (198, 207–215) .....  | 85  |
| Marble fragment of an inscribed moulding (207) .....  | 85  |
| Fragments of branches/staffs (209–212) .....  | 86  |
| Branch with coiled snake (198) .....  | 86  |
| Weights (213–215) .....   | 87  |
| Metalwork and jewellery (216–261) .....   | 87  |
| Human subjects (216–218) .....  | 88  |
| Animals (219–222) .....   | 90  |
| Jewellery (223–241, 261) .....  | 92  |
| Silver finger-rings (223, 225–228) .....  | 92  |
| Lead finger-ring (224) .....  | 93  |
| Bronze finger-rings (229–237) .....   | 93  |
| Plain rings (231–237) .....   | 93  |
| Spiral rings (229–230) .....  | 94  |
| Earrings (238–240) .....  | 95  |
| Bronze pin (241) .....  | 95  |
| Cylindrical bead (261) .....  | 96  |
| Weapons, utensils, <i>ex-votos</i> (242–260) .....  | 96  |
| Swords (242–243) .....  | 96  |
| Arrowheads (244–249) .....  | 98  |
| Ex-voto spearheads (250–251) .....  | 99  |
| Ex-voto double axes (252–253) .....   | 99  |
| Punch (254) .....   | 100 |
| Ex-voto shields (255–256) .....   | 101 |
| Ex-voto phiale (257) .....  | 101 |
| Ex-voto tripods (258, 259, 260a, 260b) .....  | 102 |
| <b>Chapter 4</b>  |     |
| <b>Cults and Cult-practices at Sounion</b> .....  | 104 |
| Attica, the Laureotike and Cape Sounion: the beginnings of cult activity .....                | 104 |
| The earliest evidence for cult activity .....   | 105 |
| Phrontis and hero cults .....   | 107 |
| A rural shrine at Sounion .....   | 108 |
| Reviewing the sanctuary of Athena .....   | 109 |
| Discussing the finds from the sanctuary of Athena .....                                       | 112 |
| Reviewing the sanctuary of Poseidon .....   | 118 |
| Herakles and the Salaminioi .....   | 120 |
| Discussing the finds from the sanctuary of Poseidon .....                                     | 122 |
| A comparative discussion of cults and dedications at sanctuaries of Poseidon and Athena ..... | 127 |
| Sanctuaries of Poseidon .....   | 129 |
| Sanctuaries of Athena .....   | 132 |
| Other attic sanctuaries .....   | 134 |
| Remarks, conclusions and prospects .....  | 136 |
| <b>Catalogue of Objects (1–261)</b> .....   | 145 |
| <b>Appendix A</b>   |     |
| <b>Greek and Latin Testimonia</b> .....   | 242 |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Greek sources.....   | 242 |
| Latin sources.....   | 255 |
| <b>Appendix B</b>  |     |
| <b>Pottery from the Bothroi and Artificial Fills</b> ..... | 258 |
| Corinthian pottery .....                                   | 260 |
| Imitations of Corinthian pottery.....                      | 263 |
| Attic pottery.....   | 265 |
| Laconian pottery .....                                     | 267 |
| Selected illustrations .....                               | 268 |
| <b>Appendix C</b>  |     |
| <b>Scarabs, Seals and Beads from the Sanctuaries</b> ..... | 273 |
| Selected illustrations .....                               | 280 |
| <b>Bibliography of Works Cited and Consulted</b> .....     | 281 |
| Abbreviations .....  | 281 |
| Ancient Greek and Latin authors .....                      | 285 |
| Greek authors .....  | 285 |
| Latin authors .....  | 286 |
| Modern references .....                                    | 286 |
| <b>Figures</b> .....                                       | 304 |

## List of Figures

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Figure 1. Map of Attica (drawing P. Arvanitakis, 2012).....  | 304 |
| Figure 2. The Laureotike and Cape Sounion (drawing P. Arvanitakis, 2012). ....   | 304 |
| Figure 3. Promontory of Sounion: temple of Poseidon, view from the west (photo: author,<br>September 2012). ....   | 305 |
| Figure 4. Cape Sounion, plan of the two sanctuaries and the two harbours (drawing P.<br>Arvanitakis, 2012).....  | 305 |
| Figure 5. View of the temple of Poseidon at Sounion from the north-west. Albumenised<br>salt-print from wet collodion glass plate negative by James Robertson, signed on the right,<br>1853–1854. 24.8x29.2 cm. Benaki Museum Photographic Archive, Athens (Constantinou<br>and Tsigakou 1998, 128–29). .... | 306 |
| Figure 6. View of the temple of Poseidon at Sounion from the north-east. Albumenised<br>salt-print from wet collodion glass plate negative by James Robertson, unsigned, 1853–<br>1854. 25.0x28.5 cm. Benaki Museum Photographic Archive, Athens (Constantinou and<br>Tsigakou 1998, 130–31). ....           | 306 |
| Figure 7. Sanctuary of Poseidon. View of the Classical temple from south-west (photo: author,<br>January 2015). ....   | 307 |
| Figure 8. Sanctuary of Poseidon, plan of the monumental entrance (N.D. Ioannitis 1898, <i>AE</i><br>1900, pl. 7). ....   | 307 |
| Figure 9. North fortification wall of the sanctuary of Poseidon (photo: author, September 2012).....   | 308 |
| Figure 10. Sanctuary of Poseidon. North fortification walls, tower and outer fortification walls<br>(photo: author, January 2015).....   | 308 |
| Figure 11. North wall of bastion on the eastern fortification wall at the sanctuary of Poseidon<br>(photo: author, August 2008).....   | 309 |
| Figure 12. Stoa and Propylaia of the sanctuary of Poseidon looking west (photo: author, August<br>2008). ....  | 309 |
| Figure 13. South-east corner of Classical temple of Poseidon, Archaic remains and find spot of<br>kouroi (photo: author, August 2008). ....  | 310 |
| Figure 14. The bothros at the south-east corner of the sanctuary of Poseidon (photo: author,<br>January 2009).....   | 310 |
| Figure 15. Sanctuary of Poseidon. South colonnade of Classical temple, foundations of Archaic<br>temple and east anta (photo: author, January 2015). ....  | 311 |
| Figure 16. Plan of the Classical temple of Poseidon (drawing P. Arvanitakis, 2012).....  | 311 |
| Figure 17. Plan of the sanctuary of Athena (A. Orlandos, <i>AE</i> 1917, 178).....   | 312 |
| Figure 18a. Sanctuary of Athena looking north-east (photo: author, August 2008). ....  | 313 |
| Figure 18b. Sanctuary of Athena looking north-east (photo: author, January 2015). ....   | 313 |
| Figure 19. Remains of the oval enclosure at the sanctuary of Athena looking north-west (photo:<br>author, January 2014). ....  | 314 |
| Figure 20. Entranceway to the sanctuary of Athena looking west (photo: author, January 2014).....  | 314 |
| Figure 21. Sanctuary of Athena: large temple looking west with base of cult statue in the<br>background (photo: author, January 2014).....   | 315 |
| Figure 22. Plan of the large temple at the sanctuary of Athena (A. Orlandos, <i>AE</i> 1917, 182).....   | 315 |
| Figure 23. Sanctuary of Athena. South peristyle and cella wall of the large temple looking east<br>(photo: author, January 2015).....  | 316 |
| Figure 24. Reconstruction of the east elevation of the large temple of Athena (A.Orlandos, <i>Stais</i><br>1920, pl.Δ).....  | 316 |
| Figure 25. Plan of the small temple in the sanctuary of Athena (A. Orlandos, <i>AE</i> 1917, 180).....   | 317 |
| Figure 26. View of the small temple, the large temple of Athena and the temple of Poseidon in<br>the background (photo: author, January 2015). ....  | 317 |
| Figure 27. Stone base of the cult statue in the small temple at the sanctuary of Athena (photo:<br>author, August 2008). ....  | 318 |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Figure 28. Conjectural reconstruction of the east elevation façade of the small temple in the sanctuary of Athena (drawing P. Arvanitakis, 2012). .....   | 318 |
| Figure 29. Sanctuary of Athena. Small temple and oval enclosure looking north west. (photo: author, January 2014). .....  | 319 |
| Figure 30. (left) Base of the south Doric column of the small temple at the sanctuary of Athena (photo: author, August 2008). .....   | 319 |
| Figure 31. (right) Base of the north Doric column of the small temple at the sanctuary of Athena (photo: author, August 2008). .....  | 319 |
| Figure 32. (left) Doric capital from column of the small temple at the sanctuary of Athena (photo: author, August 2008). .....  | 319 |
| Figure 33. The bothros, the eastern peribolos wall and the artificial fill looking north at the sanctuary of Athena (photo: author, January 2014). .....  | 320 |
| Figure 34. The bothros with the rock hewn steps at the sanctuary of Athena (photo: author, August 2008). .....  | 320 |
| Figure 35. Traces of the oval enclosure looking north-west (photo: author, January 2014). .....   | 321 |
| Figure 36. Sanctuary of Athena. Small temple, large temple and oval enclosure in the background, looking south-west (photo: author, August 2008). .....   | 321 |
| Figure 37. Sanctuary of Athena. Detail of the foundations at the south-east corner of the small temple (photo: author, January 2014). .....   | 322 |
| Figure 38. Sanctuary of Athena. Detail of the marble threshold of the small temple (photo: author, August 2008). .....  | 322 |
| Figure 39. Sanctuary of Athena. Foundations of altar in front of the small temple looking west (photo: author, January 2009). .....   | 323 |
| Figure 40. Carbonised piece of wood, carbonized figs and three sherds including one Late Geometric, from Sounion. NMA 22552 (photo: author, November 2008). .....   | 323 |
| Figure 41. Sanctuary of Athena. Bothros, east peribolos wall and propylon with east harbour in the background (photo: author, January 2015). .....  | 324 |
| Figure 42. Sanctuary of Athena. Traces of a rectangular structure within the oval enclosure, looking east (photo: author, August 2008). .....   | 324 |
| Figure 43. Sanctuary of Athena. East peristyle of large temple in foreground; possible altar and 'hestiatorion' in near background; temple of Poseidon in distance, looking south (photo: author, January 2009). .....      | 325 |
| Figure 44. Sanctuary of Athena. Possible altar near large temple; looking east (photo: author, January 2009). .....   | 325 |
| Figures 45 and 46. Sanctuary of Athena. Bases for awning posts on the levelled area west of the large temple (photo: author, January 2009). .....   | 326 |
| Figure 47. (left) Sanctuary of Athena. Two bases <i>in situ</i> , possibly supporting an offering table; seen from the east (photo: author, January 2009). .....  | 326 |
| Figure 48. (right) Sanctuary of Athena. Fragment of a base, possibly for an offering table (photo: author, January 2009). .....   | 326 |
| Figure 49. (left) Sanctuary of Athena. Two bases, possibly supporting an offering table, and fragment of a third base; remnants of a wall from a structure; seen from the north-west (photo: author, September 2012). ..... | 327 |
| Figure 50. Sanctuary of Poseidon. Classical temple and terrace wall of sanctuary, seen from the north-west (photo: author, January 2015). .....   | 327 |
| Figure 51. Sanctuary of Poseidon. LM I lentoid seal (NMA 10297), found in the bothros (drawing P. Arvanitakis, 2012). .....   | 328 |
| Figure 52. The fortified settlement on the promontory. Main east-west road and dwellings, looking west (photo: author, January 2015). .....   | 328 |
| Figure 53. Sanctuary of Athena. Classical temple, hestiatorion and western harbour, looking north (photo: author, January 2014). .....  | 329 |
| Figure 54. Sanctuary of Athena. Conjectural reconstruction. Phase 1: oval enclosure (isometric drawing P. Arvanitakis, 2012). .....   | 329 |
| Figure 55. Sanctuary of Athena. Conjectural reconstruction. Phase 2: early shrine (isometric drawing P. Arvanitakis, 2012). .....   | 330 |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Figure 56. Sanctuary of Athena. Conjectural reconstruction. Phase 3: Archaic Doric temple and kouroi (isometric drawing P. Arvanitakis, 2012).....                  | 330 |
| Figure 57. Sanctuary of Athena. Conjectural reconstruction. Phase 4a: Archaic and Classical temples coexisting (isometric drawing P. Arvanitakis, 2012).....        | 331 |
| Figure 58. Sanctuary of Athena. Conjectural reconstruction. Phase 4b: Classical temple (isometric drawing P. Arvanitakis, 2012). ....                               | 331 |
| Figure 59. Plan of the sanctuary of Poseidon (N.D. Ioannitis 1898, <i>AE</i> 1900, pl. 6).` .....   | 332 |
| Figure 60. Sanctuary of Athena. Ridge cover tile LM 658 and fragment of a Doric capital echinus LM 1124, from the small temple (drawing P. Arvanitakis, 2012). .... | 332 |
| Figure 61. Sanctuary of Athena. Architectural details from the Classical temple (N.D. Ioannitis 1898, <i>AE</i> 1900, pl. 9). ....                                  | 333 |
| Figure 62. Sanctuary of Athena. Western peribolos wall of oval enclosure. (photo: author, January 2014).....  | 333 |

**Note:** All black and white photographs in Chapter 3 are by Vassilis Stamatopoulos, with the exception of **183–215**, which were photographed by Dr K.-V. von Eickstedt. Photographs of objects **62, 73, 133, 136, 138, 139, 140, 142–150, 154, 156, 158, 161, 162, 172-180, 182, 187, 192, 193, 206, 216, 218, 223-228, 254** and **22432**, are by Elias Eliades. All ultraviolet (UV) and raking light photographs are by Erietta Attali (1999). Additionally, plaques **146, 155, 156, 164, 165, 166, 163, 168**, were photographed with ultraviolet (UV) and raking light by Elias Eliades, who also digitally enhanced all the images published in this book. All photographs in the List of Figures are by the author, unless otherwise stated.

## Prologue

This book presents unpublished small finds of different categories and materials discovered in the bothroi (pit-deposits) and the landfills in the sanctuaries of Poseidon and Athena at Sounion, excavated by Valerios Stais in the years 1897–1915. It re-examines the two sanctuaries and the structures within them in order to provide context for the material presented. The work offers a catalogue of small finds and then interprets and assesses them in terms of their contribution to the understanding of early cults at the two Sounion sanctuaries. The overall organisation and content of this book are those of my PhD thesis, awarded in 2010 by King’s College London, and now suitably recast and updated.

Within the two sanctuaries Stais discovered a large quantity of material of great importance, notably impressive Archaic and Classical sculptures (such as a number of Archaic kouroi and korai) and architectural elements. Indeed the wealth of material from surveys and excavations undertaken in the sanctuaries of Poseidon and Athena at Sounion during the 19th and 20th centuries has led scholars such as C. Rhomaios, G. Richter, I. Sakellarakis, G. Hanfmann, Sir John Boardman and P. Calligas, among others, to extract for publication either single important finds or a homogeneous group of objects — the publication of the Archaic kouroi by G. Papathanassopoulos is a case in point. The monumental Archaic sculpture, the reliefs and the architectural spolia are not discussed here in detail. They have received considerable scholarly attention, and have been thoroughly studied and published already. Reference to as many as possible of these publications will be given in this book where appropriate. Naturally these major objects have tended to overshadow the plentiful small finds: as yet no publication has drawn together the small artefacts of various materials found in reasonably definable contexts, nor have they been previously studied in depth.

Permission to study and publish the material from the bothroi and the landfills from both sanctuaries presented by Stais in AE 1917, was granted to me in 1990 by the National Archaeological Museum, Athens, and with the consent of the Archaeological Society at Athens, after Charikleia Lanara, who in 1984 had started postgraduate work on this material under Professor V. Lambrinoudakis, joined the Archaeological Service. At that time, I was generously provided with photographs of some of the finds. Their effective use was, however, curtailed by the difficulty of securely reconciling the old numbering system of the objects with the NMA’s new index. Moreover the photographs were of groups rather than individual objects, and without a scale. In the following years I was able to study and record a substantial number of objects, some of which had never before been catalogued. In 1999, the late Eos Zervoudaki, the then Director of the NMA, drew my attention to a tray recovered during the re-arrangement of the Museum’s store rooms, which held 28 terracotta plaques, mostly fragmentary, of which 24 were painted and four in low relief. The importance of these significant uncatalogued finds and their poor state made it imperative to arrange for their recording by UV and raking light photography, in order to unravel their depictions, some invisible to the naked eye. A resumed study of this important group of finds with more advanced equipment, aiming to reveal more information, is currently in process. The Athens earthquake of September 1999 caused serious structural damage to the Museum, resulting in its immediate closure. The Vase Collection re-opened only in 2005. The stores were finally re-arranged and access was first allowed to researchers late in 2008, but with severe limitations, which have constrained certain aspects of the way in which objects have been recorded here.

In view of the quantity and diversity of the material, which could not be treated in its entirety within the confines of a single monograph, its occasionally repetitive nature, the lack of information from the excavator in his brief reports regarding the exact provenance of many objects, as well as the complete omission from these reports of nearly half the material, I have elected to present here a selected but representative group of finds. Consequently, the Catalogue and discussion focus on 274 small finds of various materials from the two bothroi and the artificial fills, which are presented in 261 catalogue entries. Three groups of circa 560 small finds are not fully discussed in this publication. One is the pottery, the provenance of which is not securely documented. However, a selection of representative groups of vases is listed in Appendix B. The second group comprises the seals, scarabs and beads. Information on this material was briefly given by Stais, as discussed in Chapter 2, and 16 stone seals

were published by Sir John Boardman in 1963. Consequently these seals are not discussed further. Some scarabs are exhibited, but most are kept in the NMA safe to which I had no access until recently: a thorough study at this late stage was not feasible. As a result, only a selection of representative material (scarabs, scaraboids and beads) can therefore be listed in Appendix C. Appendices B and C do nonetheless help give a somewhat fuller picture of the excavated material.

Finally, the third group consists of several boxes in the NMA stores, which had not been opened, catalogued or conserved since Stais had them transferred there. I have recently been given access to them: they contain unrecorded bronze and mainly iron finds from the two sanctuaries.

A systematic study of the 100 or so metal artefacts mentioned above, as well as the nearly 460 items of pottery, scarabs, seals and beads, some of which are only summarised in the appendices here, is underway and the material will be published in the very near future.

My decision to use throughout the text, the term ‘bothros’, as defined by Ekroth, is justified, especially in the case of the Athena sanctuary, by the ‘undamaged offerings’ and the structure in which they were stored, as discussed in Chapters 2 and 4. The fact that the natural triangular fissure in the rock at the Poseidon sanctuary stored the kouros fragments might reflect the impact of Persian vandalism of sacred images. A second ‘bothros’ outside the old polygonal wall at the sanctuary of Poseidon, as mentioned in Chapter 2, filled with offerings of the late 8th to the early 5th centuries BC, may allude to an early cult as discussed in Chapter 4.

This book, then, comprises four chapters, a detailed catalogue of objects and three appendices. Their organisation is as follows:

Chapter 1 deals with Stais’ excavations, their aims and extent, with particular reference concerning the limitation of site recording. In Chapter 2, the historical information on Sounion is presented together with the sanctuaries. It is derived mainly from literary evidence and inscriptions, discussion of the excavations prior to 1897, and an interpretation of Stais’ reports on the excavated sites of both sanctuaries and their finds. These discussions refer in detail to the source of the material, the two bothroi, the fills and their finds. Chapter 3 includes stylistic analysis of the material and discussion according to subject matter or category. In Chapter 4, a synthesis of the material dealt with in this book leads to conclusions on the establishment and development of the two sanctuaries and the factors that made Sounion a vital part of Athenian territory, while comparisons are made with other relevant sanctuaries in Attica and elsewhere. A review of the physical remains, as well as of the dating, provenance and interpretation of the finds sets early cults into context, while an attempt to link these cults with specific documented and undocumented finds reveals the identity of deities worshipped in both sanctuaries. Patterns of socio-economic growth and the identity of the dedicators at both sanctuaries are presented.

A Catalogue of Objects precedes Appendix A which lists virtually all the Greek and Latin testimonia on Sounion with translations; the content of Appendices B and C has already been mentioned above.

Serious questions about the topography and especially the early cults on the promontory of Sounion have repeatedly been raised. Therefore, it has been essential to examine the primary records of the sole main excavations undertaken by Stais, where they survive, in an attempt to provide answers. It is, however, important to emphasise that many questions continue to remain unanswered: the need for further fieldwork at both sanctuary sites is self-evident.

## Notes

Numbers in **bold** within the text correspond to the numbering of the finds in the Catalogue of Objects.

Numbers in *bold and italics* within the text correspond to the numbering of Greek and Latin testimonia cited in Appendix A.

Surface A refers to the surface of a painted plaque on which the assumed main theme is depicted.

Surface B refers to the surface of a painted plaque on which the assumed secondary theme is depicted, if any.

Under ‘Metalwork and Jewellery’ in Chapter 3, as well as in the Catalogue of Objects, the term bronze is generally used for various metal objects which are copper-based alloys. The results of XRF spectrometry, and thus their actual composition, will be presented in a second volume to be published in the near future.

Dimensions are given in metres, centimetres or millimetres as appropriate.

H = Height, L= Length, D = Depth or thickness, W=Width.

**NMA**: National Archaeological Museum, Athens.

*PAE*: Πρακτικά της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας.

*AE*: Αρχαιολογική Εφημερίς.

*AD*: Αρχαιολογικόν Δελτίον.

Some facts and details, which the present author considers to be of relevance to the development of the subject, are unavoidably repeated in various sections of the book.

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## Introduction

Valerios Stais was the first excavator to systematically reveal the two sanctuaries at Sounion, those of Poseidon and of Athena. Stais also discovered a large number of finds of great importance, such as the Archaic kouros, as well as numerous small finds in two bothroi, one in each sanctuary, in an artificial fill from the Athena sanctuary and in an extensive landfill inside the temenos of Poseidon, which he investigated thoroughly in the hope of finding more architectural parts.<sup>1</sup> These small finds were not studied in depth, as their importance was overshadowed by the discovery both of impressive Archaic sculpture and of the sanctuary of Athena, which, until Stais' excavations, had been wrongly located at the site of the sanctuary of Poseidon.

Stais reported<sup>2</sup> that he had started excavations at the promontory to recover whatever could be salvaged from the temple of 'Athena'. He and his predecessors had based their assumptions about the god to whom the once great temple on the promontory had been dedicated on the testimony of Pausanias (51, 52; see Appendix A). Indeed he added that had he paid more attention to Scylax (21), he would not have made this error. Stais' discovery<sup>3</sup> in 1898 on the promontory of a military decree of the early 3rd century BC, praising the *strategos* Kephisodotos of the Acharneans for his services and indicating that it was to be placed in the sanctuary of Poseidon, confirmed that the Classical temple on the promontory had been dedicated to Poseidon and not to Athena. Having excavated in 1900 the site on a low hill to the north-east and very close to the sanctuary of Poseidon, Stais was left in no doubt that here was indeed the sanctuary of Athena. He noted that an 'obscure and somewhat inaccurate passage' in Vitruvius (71) refers to the larger of the two temples, which he found at that sanctuary, as that of Athena.

Stais' work in both sanctuaries was considered one of the major excavations of the time and was largely funded by the Archaeological Society at Athens. The material was finally stored in the National Archaeological Museum, Athens (NMA). A certain number of finds are presently displayed in the Vase Collection of the Museum. A substantial number of the items that I have catalogued and studied are in the Museum storerooms, and yet others had been transferred to the Museum safe during a previous re-arrangement of the Vase Collection. A small representative group of these objects, consisting of votive weapons, *protomai* and various clay figurines, seals and scarabs, clay plaques etc., had been exhibited in case 45 following the re-arrangement of the displays in 1991. The closure of the NMA in 1999 for structural repairs and a further re-arrangement of the exhibits have again affected the display of the material from Sounion, which is now in room 52 (case 55). Fortunately, there has been no change in the numbering of individual objects. It is worth noting that the majority of small offerings had been catalogued in groups according to material. Thus groups of objects, such as clay plaques or animal figurines, were given single numbers in the NMA inventory.

The purpose here is to analyse stylistically selected material from the two bothroi and the artificial fills, date it and evaluate it in terms of its find context, and to consider the cults practised at the two sanctuaries. To effect a secure dating of many objects requires good evidence of their provenance. Unfortunately, the excavator provides very little information on this subject. The exact find spot can be ascertained for only 120 objects out of the 261 catalogue entries (though certain entries encompass two or more items). A lack of contextual information from the excavations conducted in the 19th and early 20th centuries is a familiar phenomenon, as is emphasised in publications of sites such as the sanctuary of Artemis Mounychia in Piraeus,<sup>4</sup> the early pyres from the *telesterion* at Eleusis,<sup>5</sup> to name but a few. The diversity of the material from both bothroi and the artificial fills, the quantity of objects excavated, but most importantly the lack of site notebooks makes it impossible to ascertain the exact provenance of a large number of objects. It must be stressed here that the lack or possibly loss of the excavator's site notebooks has been confirmed by members of his family.

<sup>1</sup> Stais 1917, 188.

<sup>2</sup> Stais 1900a, 133–134.

<sup>3</sup> *IG II<sup>2</sup> 1270*, a stele of Pentelic marble, first published by the excavator: Stais 1900a, 132–134.

<sup>4</sup> Palaiokrassa 1991, 42–43

<sup>5</sup> Kokkou-Viridi 1999, 50.

The original context of use and/or deposition of these objects is equally hard to reconstruct, especially in the case of the Athena Sounias sanctuary, as they were found in secondary deposition in the artificially levelled area, east of the Classical temple of Athena and in the layer above the bothros near the temple's south-east corner. It is therefore impossible to present the material by context, so instead it has been divided by material and type, noting that the majority of objects can be dated within the 7th and 6th centuries BC.

Nevertheless, important questions of context remain. In particular, the original purpose of the bothros in the Athena sanctuary has been open to question because of its 'unusually careful' construction and the deposition of the objects discovered in the years 1907, 1909, 1911 and 1912. Close study is therefore required, with emphasis upon the individual objects, to cast light on the circumstances that caused them to be carefully 'stored' in the bothros. Additionally, comparisons to similar assemblages deriving from sanctuaries whose deities have been securely identified and which provide better dated contexts, are offered in Chapter 4.

# Chapter 1

## Problems Arising from the Excavations of 1897–1915

### Valerios Stais at Sounion

Valerios Stais (1857–1923), together with figures such as C. Tsountas and P. Kavvadias, belongs to the generation of Greek archaeologists generally accepted as pioneers in their field.<sup>1</sup> Having completed his studies in Bonn, Berlin and Halle, Stais returned to Greece in 1885 with his doctoral degree. In October 1885, he entered the Greek Archaeological Service as Ephor of Antiquities in Argolis and Corinthia, where he supervised the excavations in Epidaurus.<sup>2</sup> In 1887, the Antiquarium was established in the National Museum, Athens and Stais became head of the recently established Collection of Vases, a position he retained for 26 years. Stais was responsible for the registration of all new finds that were brought to the Museum and published two catalogues of the Bronze, Marble, and Mycenaean Collections. Late in 1901, he attempted to continue the work of G. Vyzantinos and K. Kourouniotis on the Antikythera wreck, but the lack of appropriate equipment and exceptional storms led the search to be abandoned. He was, however, the first to realise the importance of one particularly enigmatic find from the wreck, the now famous Antikythera Mechanism.<sup>3</sup>

In 1896, Stais became a Member of the Council of the Greek Archaeological Society at Athens, a post which he held for four consecutive three-year terms. In 1909 he was forced to resign as the Society underwent an internal crisis stirred by Kavvadias, a man of grand ambitions and authoritarian behaviour. He was, however, re-elected for a further term in 1921. Stais conducted excavations in the sanctuaries of Poseidon and Athena at Sounion between 1897 and 1915. In 1897, the Council of the Greek Archaeological Society at Athens had authorised him to proceed with this major programme because of his abilities, knowledge, and the experience he had accumulated in excavating other sites in Attica (the Archaic tumuli in Vurva, Velanideza, Neon Phaliron, the tumulus of the Athenians in Marathon, the sanctuary of Nemesis in Rhamnous, the sanctuary of Amphiaraios and Thorikos).<sup>4</sup> His reports on these excavations differ in quantity and quality of detail. Whereas, for example, the reports on the tumuli in Vourva and Marathon were fairly detailed and were amplified by two long articles in *AM*, his reports on Rhamnous and, as discussed below, on Sounion, were shorter and written ‘in haste’ as Stais often prefaced them. For the excavation at Rhamnous for example, he submitted three brief reports to *PAE*, as well as writing some draft reports to the Archaeological Society which were only published in 1986 by V. Petrakos.<sup>5</sup>

The excavation at Sounion was a difficult task for a number of reasons. First, there were limited means available for such an excavation in Greece at the end of the 19th century. The condition of the site was also poor, as Stais observes. The temple of Poseidon was covered with bushes and trees,<sup>6</sup> a deep fill and piles of freshly dug earth. All the remaining architectural elements of the temple were scattered among this vegetation and debris. In his report of 1900, Stais wrote that he did not expect to make any major discoveries — as he did later on — and that his main purpose was to clear the sides and the interior of the temple. A second impediment was the fact that Stais tried to excavate the whole of Cape Sounion and its monuments. The results and the excavation reports seem incomplete by modern standards. It is generally accepted that the excavation methods and evaluation of finds in Stais’ time differ in most ways from present day requirements. His reports lack valuable information on the exact find spots of the excavated small scale material, as well as on their stratigraphical contexts. As a result, a large number

<sup>1</sup> Petrocheilos 1992, 11; Petrakos 1987, 111, 129.

<sup>2</sup> Stais 1886, 79–82; Stais 1887, 67–68.

<sup>3</sup> Stais 1889, 237–242.

<sup>4</sup> Stais 1890a, 105–112; Stais 1890c, 318–329; Stais 1890d, 16–28; Stais 1893, 46–63; Stais 1892, 29–31; Stais 1890b, 159–161; Petrocheilos 1992, 21–33, 44, n. 64.

<sup>5</sup> Petrakos 1986, 24–52.

<sup>6</sup> Stais 1900a, 114; Stais 1917, 169–171, figs 2, 3, 3a; Stais 1920, 21.

of small finds from the two bothroi and the landfills is bereft of context.<sup>7</sup> Whether the nature of his reports reflect time constraints, funding limitations, the means at his disposal, or contemporary methods is not certain — probably a number of factors were together responsible for the quality of the results, testimonies and accounts. Nonetheless, it is clear that if Stais kept detailed logbooks, these were never handed over to the Archaeological Society at Athens. Scientific information on this major excavation survives only in his brief reports published in the Society's journals. On the other hand, his major discoveries (the kouroi, the sanctuary of Athena, his definition of the cults at Sounion,<sup>8</sup> inscriptions, etc.), as well as those small finds considered by Stais to be of minor or even 'of no importance,' have made a major contribution to archaeology. For many decades, Stais' work was — and to some extent still is — the only source of reference for Sounion. His devotion to his 'mission' — the discovery and reports of the finds — is noteworthy. Moreover, he allowed colleagues to examine and even publish material from his excavations, notably the kouroi<sup>9</sup> and some of the scarabs and seals from Sounion.

In 1989, the Archaeological Society at Athens decided to stop funding the excavation of new sites and to concentrate instead on publishing the material from all previous excavations. It was also decided to complete all previous unfinished excavations dating from the beginning of the century. Under these directions, material from old excavations was given to young archaeologists to be classified and studied. The present monograph stems from this decision. In 1994,<sup>10</sup> the Secretary General of the Archaeological Society at Athens, Dr V. Petrakos, reported that the Council had decided to investigate and complete all excavations conducted by Stais (Thorikos, Sounion, etc.), because his work could be characterised 'more as reconnaissance than as a full excavation.' Dr Petrakos referred to Sounion, in particular to the fortress, which had not been excavated systematically. The Society undertook a limited excavation at Sounion in the summer of 1994 to examine Tower H, situated on the north wall, close to the shipsheds, and a small temple near the shipsheds, west of Tower Z,<sup>11</sup> which had been preceded by a two year (1967–1969) survey and clearance by Homer Thomson and William B. Dinsmoor, Jr in both sanctuaries. Restoration work and extensive clearance in Sounion was carried out by the 2nd Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities (2007–2013) within the framework of the programme of 'Improvements to the archaeological site of Sounion,' as part of the NSRF programme. The aim is to render not only the two sanctuaries but all the other monuments in Sounion accessible to the public, so as to highlight the role Sounion played in the economy and defence of the Athenian city-state.

### The bothroi deposits

As noted above, the lack of clear information about the exact location of the finds causes problems of dating, interpretation and association with the cults. Contradictory information about the precise location of the finds appears very often in Stais' reports. For example, in *AE* 1917, in discussing the bothros in Poseidon's sanctuary, he reported finding several terracotta plaques and male figurines, but he did not specify the number and type of plaques and figurines, or illustrated any of them. A researcher who has an overall picture of the material from both sanctuaries, may therefore wonder, for example, to which of the two bothroi several terracotta male figurines and painted plaques may belong. Equally, when referring to 'figurines,' Stais may instead have meant the faience amulets, some of which were presented in his 1917 report<sup>12</sup> and later included in Pendlebury's catalogue.<sup>13</sup> The only small objects whose find spots can be confirmed with certainty are those presented in the plates accompanying Stais' reports, or described individually by the excavator.

Stais presented the numerous vases, found in both bothroi and the fills, as 'common, small, of similar shape, and of no importance.' It is impossible to separate them according to find spot, and so they can only be studied stylistically and not assigned to either sanctuary, at least not individually. Certain

<sup>7</sup> Despinois 1999, 181, emphasises the problems caused by the lack of precise information about find spots.

<sup>8</sup> The discovery of the inscription with Poseidon's name was considered as 'a major find' even by the Athenian press. See e.g. *Estia* 31/7/1899.

<sup>9</sup> Stais, having recognised the importance of kouros NMA 2720, allowed Deonna to study it and include it in Deonna 1909.

<sup>10</sup> Petrakos 1994a, 27.

<sup>11</sup> For the construction of tower H and the rectangular building inside it, which probably was a guard-house, see Petrakos 1994b, 229–230, pls 127–129.

<sup>12</sup> Stais 1917, 196–197, figs 8 and 9.

<sup>13</sup> Pendlebury 1930, nos 83–88.

vases from the Athena sanctuary were presented in Stais' 1917 report, but even here it is unclear whether they all came from inside the bothros or from the artificially levelled area.<sup>14</sup> Although the vases are not part of the detailed subject matter of this study, they do provide some significant dating evidence, a review of which is given in Appendix B.

Stais divided his finds according to their material. In all his reports he briefly presented each group and, selectively, one or more representative objects, without clarifying the conditions and circumstances in which they had been found or describing them in detail. He frequently commented on groups of finds in terms such as '...a selection of items in plate...' or '...as I find it unnecessary to describe each of these separately...'<sup>15</sup> He gave only vague information about the numbers in each group and their precise find spot. A typical example of Stais' way of referencing concerns the discovery of the kouroi in the Poseidon sanctuary. In *PAE* 1909, he wrote that he found 'many fragments of statues...' without giving the exact number. In the same vague way, he referred twice to the discovery of the 'many fragments of Archaic kouroi,' in the artificially levelled area in front of the large temple in the Athena sanctuary.<sup>16</sup> In 1983, G. Papanthanasopoulos published a catalogue of these fragments and reached the conclusion that the fragments, torsos and bases found during Stais' excavations, comprise four kouroi from the sanctuary of Poseidon and nine from that of Athena.<sup>17</sup> Numerous bronze objects were found in both sanctuaries; these were singled out but presented selectively. More bronze items were stored in the NMA: some until recently remained in boxes, without having been conserved or indexed, as mentioned before. The clay figurines found in the sanctuary of Athena form a significant collection of *protomai*, male and animal figurines, but information about their find spots is ambiguous. Stais referred twice to the *protomai*,<sup>18</sup> but it remains uncertain which ones were found in the bothros and which in the fill. In his report,<sup>19</sup> he described the offerings in the fill as 'rich in numbers,' and continued '...the torso of a kouros, small votive offerings...and protomai, from the pit-deposits of Athena's sanctuary...'. In the same report,<sup>20</sup> he mentioned the numerous clay figurines from the artificially levelled area and continued '...we present in plate 9 several clay figurines many of which come from the artificial fill and some from the pit...'. It is interesting to note that a number of small aryballoi were found together with many *protomai* in the fill.

Stais was responsible for giving catalogue numbers to the small finds when they were transferred from the storeroom at Sounion to the National Museum, Athens.<sup>21</sup> He generally gave a single number to a group of objects of the same material, such as all the silver rings, the relief plaques, or 'metal objects'. Unfortunately, Stais' descriptions of specific items are generally inadequate and his comments on the artistic style, quality, and importance of certain finds are difficult to justify: for example, the bronze helmeted warrior **216** was considered to be '...carelessly rendered and artistically primitive'; he believed the votive relief of a youth crowning himself to be funerary<sup>22</sup> and thus deposited recently in the Athena sanctuary from a cemetery elsewhere, rather than being associated with the cult and offerings of this particular sanctuary. He tended to write in a poetic and sentimental way, especially when referring to the discovery of the kouroi, or the pedimental statue of a Nymph. This combination of group inventory numbers and poor descriptions often makes it difficult to identify individual items, especially those not illustrated in Stais' plates. This is not the first time that this observation has been made. Indeed Boardman, noting confusion in the apparent attribution of a specific aryballos to two

<sup>14</sup> Stais 1917, 189 '...we found in the pit, at its deepest stratum, a large number of vases, figurines (*protomai*) and other small objects.'; *ibid.* 1917, pl. 8.

<sup>15</sup> Stais 1917, 194 (bronze objects from the bothros in the sanctuary of Poseidon), 197 (vases from the bothros in the sanctuary of Poseidon), 207 (bronze objects from the bothros in the sanctuary of Athena), 208 (vases from the bothros and fill in the sanctuary of Athena).

<sup>16</sup> Stais 1909, 118; Stais 1917, 201.

<sup>17</sup> Papanthanasopoulos 1983, 20-25.

<sup>18</sup> Stais 1917, 208, pl. 9.

<sup>19</sup> Stais 1917, 188.

<sup>20</sup> Stais 1917, 208.

<sup>21</sup> During a visit to the Archaeological Museum of Laurion in November 2008, which was still under refurbishment, I was informed by the staff of the 2nd Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities that further material, mainly deriving from the Poseidon sanctuary, is kept in the Museum. Permission to see the material stored at the Laurion Museum was granted to the author in September 2012. The material consists mainly of fragmentary architectural members of poros stone, marble and terracotta, such as fragments of an architrave, of capitals, cover tiles, gutters etc., as well as fragmentary votive and funerary reliefs. The Museum confirmed that no small finds from Stais' excavations were held.

<sup>22</sup> Stais 1917, 204–206; Goette 2000, 41–42.

different deposits, remarked that the material published, ‘as well as being highly selective, may have been confused and must be used cautiously for dating.’<sup>23</sup>

Nonetheless, the material from the two bothroi and fills is of great interest and importance, and a thorough examination of it may enable us to clarify questions concerning the most ancient cults at Sounion and the period they came into being. Because of the importance of the find spots, an attempt will be made to assign objects to the two bothroi and the fills, based on such evidence as is available from the excavator. This may then help in the interpretation of the remaining material where find spots cannot be ascertained with precision. There follows a list of objects whose find spots have been recorded in Stais’ report of 1917 (see also Appendices B and C).

### **Finds from the bothroi and landfills whose provenance can be ascertained from the reports of Stais**

#### ***The sanctuary of Poseidon***

**Terracotta figurine** (*AE* 1917, 197, fig. 9).

Sandalled foot: **87** (NMA 14928).

**Relief plaques** (*AE* 1917, 197, fig. 10).

Seven relief plaques: **137** (NMA 14929.6), **139** (NMA 14929.1), **140** (NMA 14929.2), **141** (NMA 14929.3), **142** (NMA 14929.7), **143** (NMA 14929.8), **145** (NMA 14929.g).

**Faience figurines** (*AE* 1917, 196–197, figs 8, 9).

Seven figurines: **173** (NMA 14927.4), **174** (NMA 14927.3), **177** (NMA 14927.2), **178** (NMA 14927.1), **179** (NMA 14928 a), **180** (14979), **181** (NMA 14928 b).

**Metalwork** (*AE* 1917, 195, fig. 7).

- a. Nine rings: **229** (NMA 14936.2), **230** (NMA 14936.3), **231** (NMA 14936.1), **232** (NMA 14936.4), **233** (NMA 14936.5), **234** (NMA 14936.6), **235** (NMA 14936.7), **236** (NMA 14936.8), **237** (NMA 14936.9).
- b. One bead: **261** (NMA 14932.15).
- c. Figurine of a warrior: **216** (NMA 14926.22).
- d. Figurine of a bull: **219** (NMA 14932.1).
- e. Twelve weapons and utensils: **244** (NMA 14932.10), **245** (NMA 14932.6), **246** (NMA 14932.7), **247** (NMA 14932.8), **248** (14932.12), **249** (NMA 14932.9), **250** (NMA 14932.11), **251** (NMA 14932.13), **252** (NMA 14926.2), **253** (NMA 14926.3), **254** (NMA 14926.1), **257** (NMA 14932.14).

#### ***The sanctuary of Athena***

**Protomai** (*AE* 1917, 208, pl. 9).

Sixteen *protomai*: **2** (NMA 14934.10), **3** (NMA 14934.8), **4** (NMA 14934.34), **12** (NMA 22487), **13** (NMA 14934.7), **18** (NMA 14934.26), **20** (NMA 14934.13), **22** (NMA 14934.28), **24** (NMA 14934.36), **26** (NMA 14934.33), **27** (NMA 14934.12), **28** (NMA 14934.27), **36** (NMA 14934.4), **39** (NMA 14934.5), **40** (NMA 14934.6), **41** (NMA 14934.9).

**Terracotta figurines** (*AE* 1917, 208, pl. 9).

Eight figurines: **42** (NMA 14934.49), **43** (NMA 14934.18), **44** (NMA 22476), **47** (NMA 22496), **50** (NMA 22481), **58** (NMA 14934.47), **62** (NMA 22533), **63** (NMA 22497).

**Terracotta painted plaques** (*AE* 1917, 209, fig. 19).

Twenty-six plaques: **147** (NMA 14935.3), **148** (NMA 14935.2), **149** (NMA 14935.1), **150** (NMA 14935Γ), **151** (NMA 14935Δ), **152** (NMA 14935E), **153** (NMA 14935ΣΤ), **154** (NMA 14935Z), **155** (NMA 14935H), **156** (NMA 14935Θ), **157** (NMA 14935I), **158** (NMA 14935K), **159** (NMA 14935Λ), **160** (NMA 14935M), **161** (NMA 14935N), **162** (NMA 14935Ξ), **163** (NMA 14935O), **164** (NMA

<sup>23</sup> Boardman 1963, n. 124; Stais 1917, fig. 8.

14935Π), **165** (NMA 14935P), **166** (NMA 14935Σ), **167** (NMA 14935Τ), **168** (NMA 14935Υ), **169** (14935Φ), **170** (NMA 14935Χ), **171** (NMA 14935Ψ), **172** (NMA 14935Ω).

**Plastic vases** (*AE* 1917, 210, fig. 20).

Five plastic vases: **127** (NMA 14936.2), **128** (NMA 14936.3), **131** (NMA 14936.4), **132** (NMA 22442), **133** (NMA 14936.5).

**Animal figurines** (*AE* 1917, 208, pl. 9, *AE* 1917, 210, fig. 20).

Two animal figurines: **88** (NMA 22511), **93** (NMA 14936.5).

**Faience-like figurine** (*AE* 1917, 208, pl. 9).

Faience –like figurine: **175** (NMA 14934.20).

**Metalwork** (*AE* 1917, 202, 207, figs 13, 17, 18).

- a. Six rings: **223** (NMA 14931e), **224** (NMA 14931a), **225** (NMA 14931b), **226** (NMA 14931f), **227** (NMA 14931c), **228** (NMA 14931d).
- b. Miniature kouros: **218** (NMA 14930.20).
- c. *Ex-voto* silver mask: **217** (NMA 14931.1).
- d. Two swords: **242** (NMA 14932a), **243** (NMA 14932b).
- e. Four pieces of jewellery: **238** (NMA 14932.19), **239** (NMA 14932.20), **240** (NMA 14932.21), **241** (NMA 14932.18).
- f. Three animal figurines: **220** (NMA 14926.5), **221** (NMA 14932.22), **222** (NMA 14932.23).
- g. Two votive shields: **255** (NMA 14932.5), **256** (NMA 14932.4).
- h. Four tripods: **258** (NMA 14932.17), **259** (14932.3), **260a**, **260b** (NMA 14932.24a, b).

As this exercise shows, the exact provenance of only 120 of 274 objects is definitely recorded. Thirty-nine derive from the bothros in the Poseidon sanctuary, and 81 from that in the Athena sanctuary and the nearby artificial fill. Vases, presented in Appendix B, are the most difficult objects to assign as they are numerous, generally similar in size and shape, and have been found at both sites. Animal figurines (41 items) are another group of objects whose provenance is often uncertain. We may assume, from the excavator's report, that the majority derive from the Athena sanctuary, both from the bothros and its fill, but their individual find spot remains unclear. Of the 42 *protomai* catalogued, only 16 are illustrated in *AE*. Still, I believe that all *protomai* derive solely from the sanctuary of Athena but unfortunately, information on the exact find spot of each (bothros or artificial fill), is lacking. The 41 objects (34 entries) that form the corpus of stone sculpture are considered of uncertain provenance, as the excavator does not mention them at all. The only source which helps to identify their find spot is Stais' comment (*AE* 1917, 201) concerning the many fragments of male Archaic statues and several insignificant fragments of female ones, that they derived from the Athena sanctuary. Unfortunately, the NMA records do not provide further information on the find spot of any more objects other than those listed in Stais' reports.

## Chapter 2

# The History of Sounion and the Sanctuaries of Poseidon and Athena: Sources and Early Research

### Literary and epigraphic evidence

The rocky headland of Cape Sounion, on which the sanctuary of Poseidon lies, is at the southernmost tip of Attica, about 69km south-east of Athens (Fig. 1). It rises to a height of 60m above the Aegean Sea. The strategic and geographical position of the promontory, which commanded communication routes on both land<sup>1</sup> and sea, as well as the rich ore-bearing area of the Laureotike nearby — as cited by Euripides in *Cyclops* (8) — were the main factors for its development through the centuries. Sounion is mentioned in literary sources from the 8th century BC onwards and among modern authors we should note Byron's lyric description of the sanctuary of Poseidon. Analysis of these sources reveals that certain basic characteristics are frequently repeated, with little variety in the treatment of the site. Therefore, in the following discussion these characteristics will be reviewed with reference to the texts catalogued in Appendix A.<sup>2</sup>

Sounion is frequently described as a landmark of the Athenians (Sophocles, *Ajax*, 2, Pseudo-Scylax, *Periplus*, 20), stressing the fact that it was an integral part of Athenian territory. Numerous references to the promontory as 'ἄκρον' imply that Sounion remained a well-known and important location across the centuries: these begin with Homer (*I*), reappear in the 5th century BC in the plays of Sophocles *Ajax* (2) and Aristophanes' *Clouds* (14) and then in Demosthenes' *On the Crown* (19) of circa 330 BC, the *Hymns* of Callimachus (24), Strabo (27, 31, 33) in the 1st century BC and Pausanias in the 2nd century AD (53) before the last recorded ancient testimony, that of Stephanus, in the 6th century AD (66).

Herodotus describes Sounion in geographical terms (5, 6) and as an area granted to Aeginetan refugees (4) between 491 and 481 BC. However, the most substantial geographical description of the promontory appears in Sophocles' *Ajax* (2), where the promontory is termed a 'level summit.' The high plateau of Sounion, as described by the chorus, clearly refers to the artificially-levelled fortified area at the south-east corner of the promontory. This area is identified, in Sophocles' indirect reference, with the sanctuary of Poseidon at Sounion. It is possible that Sophocles intended to praise the glory of Athens, of which Cape Sounion was an integral part, as well as the special relationship of Ajax and his descendants with the city. Nearly a century later, Pseudo-Scylax in his *Periplus* (20, 21 and 22) mentioned the promontory and fort, and calculated the distance to the border between Attica and Boeotia only from Sounion. In his *Histories*, Polybius (25) names the several peninsulas jutting out from Europe, the third one being that including Malea and Sounion. Diodorus Siculus (26) also mentions Sounion as a geographical feature.

The Athenians recognised the importance of Sounion in navigation to and from the east, which by day relied on visual identification of landmarks. There are many references to this effect from Homer (*I*) onwards. Nearly three centuries later, Sophocles, in the third *stasimon* of the *Ajax* (2), refers to Sounion as a point the Salaminioi wish to sail past, while Herodotus (5, 6), in discussing the route of the Persian fleet, mentions Sounion as the natural point by which one must sail on the way to Athens. The urgent need to control these sea routes in order to secure the import of goods, in particular from Euboea during the Dekeleian siege, is clearly stated by Thucydides (10). The importance of Sounion in this respect continued, as is confirmed in the 4th century BC by Scylax (21), in the 2nd century AD by Galen (50) and Pausanias (51, 52), and in the 3rd century AD by Philostratus (56) and Porphyrius (58). In the 1st

<sup>1</sup> In contrast to the inaccessibility of Sounion by land in the 19th century because of the appalling state of the few surviving roads, a well established road network in antiquity spread north of Sounion, and provided access from Athens to the Laureotike as well as to the promontory itself. See Kordellas 1896, 127, n. 27; on the *Sphettia Odos*, see Korres and Tomlinson 1998, 43–44, 57–58; Steinhauer 2001, 81–82; Parker 2005, 57, notes that 'numerous coastal sanctuaries were typically intended to be approached by land.'

<sup>2</sup> Literary evidence directly related to the context of the bothroi is limited to the testimonia of Homer (*I*), Sophocles (2) and Herodotus (3, 4, 5, 6, and 7), cited in Appendix A. Athena is mentioned for the first time in Euripides' *Cyclops* (8).

century BC, Strabo pays particular attention to the position of Sounion (27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35 and 36), which is also defined as the southernmost point of Attica and thus on the sea route to the port of Piraeus by Dio Chrysostomus in the 1st century AD (37). Plutarch (39) in his work *On Exile*, mentions Sounion, Taenarus and the Ceraunian mountains as the boundaries of continental Greece. Further evidence to this effect is provided in the 2nd century AD by Aelius Herodian (43, 44), Lucian (48, 49), Galen (50), Philostratus (56) and around 500 AD by Stephanus (60).

Yet, if the importance of Sounion as a landmark in Athenian territory is consistently emphasised over the centuries, references to the sanctuaries on the promontory are few, and mostly reiterate the initial testimony of Homer in the *Odyssey* (I). In describing the return of Menelaus' ships from Troy, Homer specifies Sounion both as the place where the ships anchored and as the burial site of Phrontis, son of Onetor and Menelaus' helmsman, who was slain by Apollo on the journey home. Here Sounion is attested both as a geographical notion, a landmark, and as a cult locus. Homer clearly describes Sounion as a 'sanctuary' ('*Σούνιον ἱρόν*'), which implies that cult was practised there before the burial of Phrontis. Picard<sup>3</sup> was the first to explain this passage of Homer as the *aition* for a cult which already existed at the site. Abramson also supported the idea of a hero-cult existing before the 'age of Homer,'<sup>4</sup> and Parker agreed that a cult of Phrontis already existed or that Homer's testimony could 'have encouraged one to arise.'<sup>5</sup> This Homeric passage offers the most substantial information on Cape Sounion of all the surviving testimonia, indicating not only its geographical and religious importance, but also its political status, implying that the area had already undergone synoecism with Athens.<sup>6</sup> Athens and Attica are treated as synonymous, first in the 'Catalogue of Ships' (*Iliad* 2.546 and onwards) and later in this passage of the *Odyssey*. And as Lorimer notes, apart from Athens 'the only other Athenian locality mentioned in either epic is Sounion.'<sup>7</sup> The 4th century BC testimony of Scylax (20) is proof that Cape Sounion was considered an integral part of the Athenian territory.

It is therefore hardly surprising to find that Sounion was included in the cultural and political unification of Attica — what Athenians termed 'the synoecism of Theseus.'<sup>8</sup> The gradual growth of Athens was further marked by the city's claim to the whole of Attica, expressed in the planting of sanctuaries on sites far from the centre.<sup>9</sup> Sounion was considered until recently an unusual deme without a major settlement. This can be explained up to a point as a result of the extensive industrial activity<sup>10</sup> undertaken in the region, and also because of the need for farming land, as is attested by the discovery of seven towers,<sup>11</sup> which were probably used for storing farm produce to meet demand from the large mining community. The fortified enclosure around the sanctuary of Poseidon incorporated housing certainly for the garrison from the 3rd century BC, as is testified by decrees discovered in it<sup>12</sup> and possibly for the priesthood as well, but it was by no means the only centre of the deme. Instead, the functions of the deme were spread out,<sup>13</sup> as archaeological finds have proven, with perhaps at least four or five agoras, one of which, 'the agora in Koile,' attested in *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 527, was probably the agora of the *genos* of the Salaminioi.<sup>14</sup> The 'agora in Koile,' has been ascribed to the area of modern Limani Passa, half-way between Sounion and Laurion, thanks to the survey and excavation of 1977–1979 which brought to light a large building complex at the agora, of circa 3,150 square metres.<sup>15</sup>

The earliest (6th century BC) deme dedication to Zeus from the inhabitants of Sounion/ (OYNIEΣA) is attested in *IG* I<sup>3</sup> 1024a, b, an inscription discovered by Stais on two fragments of the leg of a life-size

<sup>3</sup> Picard 1940, 5–28.

<sup>4</sup> Abramson 1979, 1–15.

<sup>5</sup> Parker 1996, 35.

<sup>6</sup> Lorimer 1950, 437, n. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Lorimer 1950, 436–437.

<sup>8</sup> Parker 1977, 10–17; Welwei 1992, 32–39; Moggi 1976, 44–81.

<sup>9</sup> Osborne 1994, 151; de Polignac 1995, 85.

<sup>10</sup> The *poletai* records of the year 367/6 BC attest to the existence of 56 mines in the deme of Sounion, see Crosby 1941, 14–30. Boundary stones of mines dating from the 4th century have been found in the Laureotike, see *SEG* XXVIII, nos 204, 205, 206; *SEG* XXXII, no. 233. For mining leases, see Crosby 1957, 9–13, pls 1, 3; Crosby 1950, 210–267.

<sup>11</sup> Osborne 1985, 33–34.

<sup>12</sup> *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1260, *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1300.

<sup>13</sup> Young 1941, 163, on ruins of settlements in Pountazeza; Salliora-Oikonomakou 2004, 72. Other settlements have been investigated in Agrileza and Kamariza, the Botsari valley, Noria and Magganopigatho, Salliora-Oikonomakou 2004, 76–105.

<sup>14</sup> On the *genos* of the Salaminioi, see Young 1941, 163–190; Ferguson 1938, 1–68, who believes that they were well established before the Cleisthenic reform; Osborne 1985, 36. For the possible association of the *genos* of the Salaminioi with a deme cult, see Parker 1996, App. 2, n. 73.

<sup>15</sup> Young 1941, 163–190; Salliora-Oikonomakou 2004, 51–63, figs 32, 33, 39, 40.

kouros (or two different kouroi) from the sanctuary of Athena Sounias.<sup>16</sup> This confirms the view that demes existed as social as well as cult groups before Cleisthenes.<sup>17</sup> Decrees of the deme of Sounion<sup>18</sup> of the 4th and 3rd centuries BC mention Athenians stationed at Sounion (for which the term ‘demos’ is used). In the 1st century BC, Strabo (34) refers to Sounion as a ‘noteworthy demos.’ In the 2nd century AD, Herodian in *De prosodia catholica* (45) proclaims Sounion as the ‘demos’ of the Leontis tribe. In the 6th century AD, Stephanus (66) repeats the point that Sounion is the ‘demos’ of the Leontis tribe, its promontory being called sacred by Homer.

### **Settlement and sanctuaries**

Eastern Attica and the Laureotike have been continuously inhabited since the 6th millennium BC<sup>19</sup> (Fig. 2). Small settlements grew up along the coastal fringe, close to Marathon and Laurion, which offered water, cultivatable land and proximity to the sea for fishing and gathering shellfish. Sites at Rhamnous, Nea Makri, Spata, Pallene and near Brauron have yielded evidence of this period. In Thorikos, late Neolithic and early Bronze Age settlements stretched from the Velatouri peaks to the seashore. In Velatouri at Thorikos there is evidence of mining activity from the Late Neolithic to the Archaic period.<sup>20</sup> Related pottery with the characteristic Nea Makri motif, that is concentric rhomboids in a row,<sup>21</sup> has been found in the western Cyclades as far as Melos, from where valuable obsidian was obtained. To reach that far, ships would have sailed past Sounion, south to Kea and onwards.

The promontory of Sounion itself was inhabited from the 3rd millennium BC onwards. Strabo (35) mentions the tribes of the Aones, Temmices, Leleges and Hyantes, who having lived in Sounion later settled in Boeotia. Theocharis discovered Early Helladic tombs at the eastern edge of the peninsula and scattered sherds on the Athena sanctuary site.<sup>22</sup> Two Early Cycladic marble figurines (which can no longer be traced in the NMA, as Calligas pointed out in 1993)<sup>23</sup> and a Late Minoan I lentoid seal,<sup>24</sup> described by Sakellarakis as ‘*Kretisch-Mykenisch*’ (Fig. 51), were discovered during Stais’ excavations in the sanctuaries of Athena and Poseidon respectively. They may have been locally deposited objects later recovered and dedicated, although one cannot preclude a more distant source. Another site dated to the Early and Middle Helladic period has been excavated in the valley of Limani Passa.<sup>25</sup> The finds testify to seafaring between Attica and the Cyclades as well as the Peloponnese. There are few Late Helladic finds on Cape Sounion to date, but the Mycenaean acropolis on Velatouri hill in Thorikos was unlikely to have been the only Mycenaean presence in the Sounion area. Yet the south-east coast of Attica, the Laureotike with Sounion at its southern tip, has scant remains of any major settlements, Thorikos being the exception. Geometric pottery was found in the cemetery of Agios Petros, situated at the west side of the bay of the promontory; the burial ground was in continuous use up to the Classical period.<sup>26</sup> Taken together, these facts testify that this coastal area close to the promontory was inhabited throughout that period.

The absence of continuous archaeological evidence after the Bronze Age at both sanctuaries leaves a substantial historical gap. However, the discovery by Stais of a LM I seal inside the Poseidon bothros, as mentioned above, and a few figurines of undocumented find-spots dated to LH IIIB-LH IIIC may well encourage discussion for cult continuity, despite arguments to the contrary until the publication of the present material.<sup>27</sup> It is clear, however, that Sounion was no exception to the ‘8th century renaissance’<sup>28</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Stais 1917, 202–203, fig. 14; NMA 3449 and 3450; Papathanassopoulos 1983, 52–53; Goette 2000, 35. It is unclear if the fragments belong to the same kouros.

<sup>17</sup> Another early deme-dedication comes from Halai Aixonides: *IG I<sup>3</sup>* 1013.

<sup>18</sup> *IG II<sup>2</sup>* 1260 (the general protects the fort of the ‘demos’); *IG II<sup>2</sup>* 1181 (...of the demos...); *IG II<sup>2</sup>* 1300 (they honour the benefactors of the ‘demos’), *IG II<sup>2</sup>* 1195 (...the general appointed by the ‘demos’...). The term ‘demesmen’ appears in *IG II<sup>2</sup>* 1180, a decree of the deme of Sounion in honour of Leukios, who presented a plot of land to his fellow demesmen for use as an agora.

<sup>19</sup> Pantelidou-Gofas 2000, 10, 11, 18, 87, 88, 117.

<sup>20</sup> Osborne 1985, 111 speaks of mining activity from the Late Bronze Age until the Protogeometric period; Kanta 2003, 21, 23. For a revised dating based on the latest finds, see Laffineur 2011, 26–27.

<sup>21</sup> Pantelidou-Gofas 2000, 116–117.

<sup>22</sup> Theocharis 1955, 287, n. 18; Syriopoulos 1968, 88, no. 105, 238.

<sup>23</sup> Calligas 1993, 305, n. 8, confirmed also by the present author.

<sup>24</sup> Sakellarakis 1976, 304, fig. 15; Sakellarakis. *CMS I*, 1982, 93–94, Cat.No.53; for its dating, see Pini 1984, 126, fig. 6.

<sup>25</sup> Salliora-Oinomakou 2004, 32, 33; Late Helladic II pottery was found between Sounion and Laurion, see Syriopoulos 1968, 132.

<sup>26</sup> Salliora-Oinomakou 2004, 34.

<sup>27</sup> Parker 1996, 12.

<sup>28</sup> Parker 1996, 18.

in the Attic countryside and at about 700 BC,<sup>29</sup> or possibly earlier, two cult centres developed: that of Athena and that of Poseidon (Fig. 4), both most likely housing an ancient hero-cult.<sup>30</sup> Athens gradually recognized the economic, social, and political importance of the rural demes. It thus encouraged Sounion's growth as a religious centre,<sup>31</sup> closely linked to the might of Athens, both for the locals and as a place of pilgrimage from all over Attica,<sup>32</sup> as well as for mariners sailing to and from Piraeus. Around 600 BC, kouroi were set up in both sanctuaries, testament to the fact that the Cape was already a focus of cult in the Archaic period.<sup>33</sup>

Evidence for cult activity is provided by the offerings discussed further in Chapters 3 and 4. By contrast, literary and epigraphical testimonia are very limited. Despite the strategic emphasis placed on these two Attic sanctuaries during the Classical period, neither is mentioned with any frequency. The cult of Poseidon at Sounion is attested in the 5th century BC indirectly in Sophocles' *Ajax* (2), in Herodotus (7), who refers to the destruction of the sanctuary by the Persians in 480/479 BC, and in Aristophanes' *Knights* (13) and *Birds* (15), in which Poseidon is mentioned as *Souniaratos* and *Sounierax* respectively. The cult of Athena is only mentioned once during the Classical period, in Euripides' *Cyclops* (8), while Athena's 5th century BC 'unusual' temple is mentioned only in the 1st century BC by Vitruvius (71). Euripides (8) in the *Cyclops* mentions both divinities worshipped at Sounion. Moreover, his reference to the goddess Athena as *Sounias* is the oldest testimony to her cult on Cape Sounion, implying both the close link of Sounion with Athens as well as the sanctuary's importance. In line 294, Euripides refers to the rich in silver Sounion, implying the mines of Laurion, one of the main sources of Athenian wealth. It is possible that at the time of the production of *Cyclops*, shortly after 411 BC,<sup>34</sup> the Laurion mines were occupied by the Spartans based at Dekeleia, and so Euripides may have wished to emphasise this serious loss.

As noted above, the only reference to and description of the temple of Athena is that of Vitruvius (71). Pausanias (51) in the 2nd century AD testifies to the presence of a sanctuary of Athena at the promontory of Sounion, and following Homer, repeats (54) the legend of Phrontis. The fact that Pausanias mentions only the sanctuary of Athena Sounias on the promontory had caused considerable confusion about the deity to whom the temple there was dedicated, but this problem was solved thanks to the excavations of Stais. Nonetheless, it is still unclear why Pausanias only mentions the temple of Athena, while the temple of Poseidon was probably better known and still standing on the top of the promontory, unless he incorrectly attributed the temple of Poseidon to Athena. Stais was very reluctant to ascribe to Pausanias such a generalisation.<sup>35</sup> It is possible that a reference to the temple of Poseidon had been omitted from one of the successive copies of Pausanias' text over the centuries.<sup>36</sup> Certainly Pausanias omitted to mention other important monuments elsewhere, such as the temple of Aphaia on Aegina. If, however, this was not the case and the text survived as it had been written, it is worth noting that Pausanias was sailing from the Cyclades towards Piraeus. Therefore his description would have started from what he would have seen first.

The temple of Poseidon, standing at the highest point of the promontory, could be seen from far away. By contrast, the sanctuary of Athena stood on a hill, north of the promontory, which rises to a height of 40m above sea-level and is visible only when sailing close to the promontory. Had the temple of Athena not been dismantled and transferred to the Athenian Agora<sup>37</sup> during the reign of Augustus (31 BC–AD 14), well before Pausanias' arrival, then his misnaming of the highly visible temple of Poseidon would

<sup>29</sup> Picard 1940, 13, considers the death and burial of Phrontis to be the poet's acknowledgement of an existing cult on the promontory; see also Abramson 1979, 9 on the votive deposit in the sanctuary of Athena. See Parker 1996, 18 and n. 34, and more generally for other sites in Attica; Parker 2005, 58; Osborne 1994, 35; D'Onofrio 1995, 69, 72.

<sup>30</sup> Abramson 1979, 1–19; Picard 1940, 5–28; Parker 1996, 18, includes Sounion as one of the settlements of Attica that demonstrate religious activity around 700 BC, proof of which is the bothros and its finds from the sanctuary of Athena, but he does not accept Abramson's dating of it as early as the 9th century BC. The present author believes that a hero cult, that of Herakles, was established at the site of the Poseidon sanctuary.

<sup>31</sup> Parker 1996, 25 'if rites are celebrated away from the city, that is partly because, for religious reasons, they belong in the countryside, partly because a city should exploit the whole of its territory.'

<sup>32</sup> Parker 1996, 27, 'Athenians from the city were already going to worship throughout Attica in the eighth century'; Osborne 1985, 154–182.

<sup>33</sup> Osborne 1985, 37.

<sup>34</sup> Seaford 1984, 48.

<sup>35</sup> Stais 1900a, 126–127.

<sup>36</sup> Stais 1900a, 127; Oikonomidou 1957, 20–22.

<sup>37</sup> Dinsmoor Jr. 1982, 410–431.

have been justified. Pausanias' testimony led Sinn to advance the theory that the temple described by Vitruvius was a *hestiatorion* for feasting and dining in honour of the hero Phrontis,<sup>38</sup> and that the sanctuary of Athena was solely dedicated to Phrontis. He then came to the conclusion that the temple of Athena mentioned by Vitruvius and Pausanias stood on the promontory near to that of Poseidon. Sinn's hypothesis is, however, unconvincing, and is refuted by several scholars.<sup>39</sup> The description of the temple of Athena by Vitruvius, the architectural remains *in situ* such as the foundations of the east and south peristyle, the base of the cult-statue, as well as the remains of the altar and the bases of tables of offerings and the votive offerings, leave no doubt that the edifice brought to light by Stais on the hill north of the promontory is the Classical temple of Athena Sounias.

In the 1st century AD, the coastal demes of Attica were depopulated and activity had ceased in the mines of Laurion. The temple of Athena had experienced the same fate as those of Athena Pallenis<sup>40</sup> and the temple of Nemesis in Rhamnous, being dismantled and transferred to the Athenian Agora. It is, therefore, quite possible that the cult of Athena was transferred to the temple of Poseidon,<sup>41</sup> after the Athena temple was dismantled. A co-habitation was not unusual, in particular in Attica, the Erechtheion being the most notable example. If this was the case, Pausanias perhaps was not mistaken in attributing the temple of Poseidon to Athena, as she was the patron goddess of Athens. In the 3rd century AD Philostratus (57) in *Apollonii epistulae*, testifies in an indirect way to the dismantling of the temple of Athena, and clearly to the cessation of the worship of Athena at Sounion.

So far, no epigraphical evidence has been found which relates to the cult of Athena Sounias. *IG I<sup>3</sup> 1024*, a, b found on two fragments of the leg of a life-size kouros (or two different kouroi) as discussed, possibly refers to Zeus: it is so far the only inscription securely deriving from the sanctuary of Athena.

Early in the 5th century BC, the construction of a limestone Doric temple began in the sanctuary of Poseidon; this was still incomplete in 480/479 BC when the Persians destroyed it. The buildings in the sanctuary of Athena experienced the same fate. According to Herodotus (7), the Athenians' dedication in the sanctuary of Poseidon of a Phoenician ship captured at the battle of Salamis provoked the wrath of the Persians. The destruction of the sanctuaries is thus well attested; Herodotus' evidence gives a *terminus ante quem* confirmed by the signs of fire on certain finds, notably the fragments of kouroi. The end of the Persian wars marked the dawn of a period of great importance in the history of Athens. The Athenians piously buried the remnants of the destroyed offerings in artificial fills. The ditch in front of the temple of Poseidon, revealed the shattered statues of the Archaic kouroi, while the bothros and artificial fill brought to light other important finds. Under Pericles,<sup>42</sup> a major building programme included many sanctuaries in Attica. It is generally accepted that in 444/3 BC, the foundations of the old temple were used for the erection of the marble temple of Poseidon at Sounion, while the foundations for the large temple of Athena were likely laid around 460 BC.<sup>43</sup> The small temple in the Athena sanctuary, which had been probably repaired a few years earlier, may have continued in use for a while.

From this time epigraphical testimonia to the existence of a sanctuary of Poseidon on Cape Sounion become more frequent, even though the two inscriptions, *IG II<sup>2</sup> 1270* and *IG II<sup>2</sup> 1300*, found in the sanctuary itself are of the 3rd century BC. These two inscriptions, discovered amongst others as noted below, were brought to light during the excavations of 1898<sup>44</sup> and 1900,<sup>45</sup> and confirmed the deity worshipped on the Cape. The importance of the discovery of *IG II<sup>2</sup> 1270* by Stais has already been discussed. The honorary decree *IG II<sup>2</sup> 1300* (circa 230 BC), records that the authorities of the deme bestow honour on Eurikleides from Kephissia, general of the Athenians stationed at Sounion,<sup>46</sup> and clearly states that the decree was to be erected in the sanctuary of Poseidon *Soter* on the promontory at Sounion. The cult title *Soter* appears in Herodotus (7.192, 193) in a passage which describes the

<sup>38</sup> Sinn 1992, 176–177.

<sup>39</sup> Despina 1999, 181, n. 40; Goette 2000, 39–41; Boehringer 2001, 64, n. 4.

<sup>40</sup> Korres 1992–1998, 83–104.

<sup>41</sup> Despina 1999, 181; Goette 2000, 40.

<sup>42</sup> Boersma 1970, 36–37, 165, 184, 195; Parker 1996, 123.

<sup>43</sup> Miles 2014, 125.

<sup>44</sup> Stais 1900a, 133–134.

<sup>45</sup> Stais 1900a, 132–150.

<sup>46</sup> Stais 1900a, 143, no. 4.

shipwreck of Xerxes' fleet on the coasts of Mount Pelion. Herodotus describes how the watchers on the heights of North Euboea ran down and told the Greeks of the disaster which befell the invading fleet. The Greeks, on hearing this, offered prayers and libations to Poseidon whom, from that day onward, they called *Soter*.<sup>47</sup> However, epigraphical testimony to the existence of the Poseidon sanctuary at Cape Sounion appears earlier in three 5th century BC inscriptions: *IG I<sup>3</sup> 8* (460–450 BC), *IG I<sup>3</sup> 383* (429/8) and *IG I<sup>3</sup> 369* (426/5 or 423/2). *IG I<sup>3</sup> 8* (460–450 BC)<sup>48</sup> provides our earliest evidence for the Sounion harbour, as well as for the importance of the site to seafaring and its control by the Athenian state.<sup>49</sup> The inscription provides evidence that landing-taxes were imposed on every cargo ship that entered the harbour at Sounion, and the amount of seven obols was charged as a contribution towards the upkeep of the sanctuary of Poseidon. It is, however, unclear whether a proportion of the revenue recorded in this inscription would have gone to the State treasury.<sup>50</sup>

Inscription *IG I<sup>3</sup> 383* (429/8) is an inventory of the treasures of 'the Other Gods,' drawn up by the *Tamiai* of the Other Gods.<sup>51</sup> A long list of the treasures of individual gods, such as Artemis Agrotera and Poseidon Hippios, is recorded, showing in detail what belonged to each. 'Poseidon from Sounion' is registered in lines 59, 106, 107 and 330, while Athena Sounias is either missing or possibly not included, indicating that the sanctuary was not considered a major sanctuary. *IG I<sup>3</sup> 369*, the accounts of the treasury of Athena for the years 426/5–423/2,<sup>52</sup> deals with the accounts of the *Tamiai* of Athena Pallas and the *Tamiai* of the Other Gods, which were audited and issued annually. The figures for payments as well as interest were audited by the annual boards, and an audit was required by the *Logistai* from one Greater Panathenaia to the next. 'Poseidon from Sounion' is recorded twice; in line 62, where the payment of interest for the first year's loan, which is recorded to reach the amount of a minimum of 32,000 drachmas, was 370 Athenian drachmas and in lines 82-83, where the interest of the payment for the second year's loan, which exceeded the amount of 25,527 drachmas, was 14 drachmas and 2 and three-quarter obols. Given the date of these records and the wealth of the sanctuary of Poseidon, it is perhaps surprising that it is clearly mentioned in literary testimonia for the first time only in the 4th century BC, in *Periplus Scylacis* (21).

The panathenian, and even panhellenic importance of the sanctuaries on Sounion as they had developed by the middle of the 5th century, may have overshadowed any older local religious festivals.<sup>53</sup> Literary evidence from the 5th century BC confirms the celebration of a five-yearly festival in honour of Poseidon, as well as boat races. Herodotus (3) narrates how the Aeginetans captured the *theoros* that carried noble Athenians on their way to Sounion together with the newly appointed general. Lysias, in *Ἀπολογία ἀπαράσημος* (16), compares the costs of participation in other panathenian festivals with that of the races of warships held at Sounion, thus testifying to their perceived importance. An Early Classical relief found near the surface of the fill in the sanctuary of Athena, depicting an athlete adjusting a crown of victory on his head, has been related by scholars to the boat-races.<sup>54</sup>

Sounion's strategic position, from which the Athenians could control the sea routes in the Aegean, the Euboean Gulf and the silver mines of Laurion (some 4km to the north), prompted them to fortify the promontory. It was considered among the five most important fortresses in Attica after the mid 5th century BC.<sup>55</sup> Moreover, the well-protected harbour with its sandy beach at the north-west bay of the promontory has played a significant role in the history of Sounion, as seen in the literary sources. The two rock-cut shipsheds, one situated on the north-west of the promontory with two slipways and the second a little further to the east with a single slipway, both considered to have the steepest gradient anywhere in the Mediterranean,<sup>56</sup> confirm Sounion as an Athenian naval station, in visual contact with

<sup>47</sup> Parker 1996, 262–263; Shapiro 1989, 102, n. 10.

<sup>48</sup> Peek 1934, 35–39.

<sup>49</sup> Peek 1934, 39; Parker 1996, 125; Osborne 1985, 35–36.

<sup>50</sup> Peek 1934, 35–39; Sinn 1992, 175; Goette 2000, 43.

<sup>51</sup> Wade-Gery 1931, 75.

<sup>52</sup> Pritchett 1965, 145–146; Lang 1965, 244–246; Goette 2000, 43.

<sup>53</sup> See de Polignac 1994, 5–6, on local festivals in rural sanctuaries; Parker 2005, 58–59, notes 'that penteteric games were organized by state magistrates and were open to all.'

<sup>54</sup> Stais 1917, 176, n. 5; Parker 1996, 35; Antonaccio 1995, 167; Picard 1940, 18; Ridgway 1970, 49–50; Abramson 1979, 4–5; Papathanassopoulos 1983, 82. They all connect the naval games to the cult of Phrontis, to whom this relief may be dedicated; according to Goette 2000, 41, it is a *palaistra* scene.

<sup>55</sup> On Attic fortresses, see Ober 1985, 115, 135–137, 140–141, 145–146, 160–161, 178–179 and in particular on Sounion, 135 and 193–194.

<sup>56</sup> Dinsmoor Jr 1974b, 35–36; Rankov 2013, 105.

that at Poiessa on the island of Kea, for the efficient control of maritime access to Athens.<sup>57</sup> Their dating to the Classical period<sup>58</sup> is probably contemporary with repairs and additions executed at the fortress, as Stais described. Homer (*I*) indirectly refers to Sounion as the place where Menelaus' ships had anchored, as does Herodotus (*3*). Xenophon (*17*), in book 5 of the *Hellenica* dated around 388 BC, refers to the capture by Teleutias of Athenian trading vessels sailing to and from Sounion, causing the Athenians to fear that Piraeus might be occupied. A direct reference to the harbour appears in Plato's *Crito* (*18*), when Socrates is informed that the *theoros* anchored at the bay of Sounion will shortly arrive at Piraeus. The most direct reference to the Sounion harbour is made by Pausanias (*51*), who mentions the promontory, the 'λιμὴν' and the sanctuary of Athena. In the 3rd century AD, Libanius (*59*) refers to other harbours amongst which he includes that of Sounion.

Sounion re-emerged in Athenian history during the Peloponnesian War (431–404 BC). In 421 BC, the Athenians fortified the promontory<sup>59</sup> after the Spartans had seized Dekeleia and cut Athens off from the main route to Euboea, whence cereals came to the city.<sup>60</sup> Safe passage for Athenian ships was secured, and thus the flow of provisions to the besieged city, as Thucydides notes (*II*). Thucydides' testimony coincides with the archaeological evidence provided by the excavations of Stais. The fortification walls and their square towers formed roughly a semicircle running from the base of the promontory at the south end of the bay of Sounion, in the north-west of the fort, to the south-east cliff edge. Its south-east end joined the east peribolos wall of the sanctuary and was reinforced here by a tower. The sanctuary of Poseidon was supported and enclosed on the north and west by terrace walls. Stais, misled by the mixture of various types of construction, claimed in his reports that the fortification walls were built in the 6th century. This may apply only to the polygonal terrace wall surrounding the sanctuary of Poseidon, traces of which are still visible north of the temple and at the west side of the sanctuary<sup>61</sup> (Fig. 50). The fortress was defended by a force of Athenian ephebes who did their military service under a general, among whose responsibilities was the maintenance of the fort, as attested on decrees of the 4th and mainly 3rd centuries BC found in the fortress.

Sounion was occupied by a Macedonian garrison in 322 BC. In 307 BC, Demetrius Poliorketes occupied it briefly. *IG II<sup>2</sup> 1260*, a decree of the Athenians stationed at Sounion dated around 307–304 BC, refers to the 'περιπόλαρχος' who was responsible for the safety of the fort of Sounion as well as that of Rhamnous and of all coastal demes.<sup>62</sup> Epigraphic evidence demonstrates a substantial reinforcement of the various Athenian garrisons, in particular those of Rhamnous and Sounion, whose functions and duties varied. The Athenian decree *IG II<sup>2</sup> 1302*, dated 222/1 BC,<sup>63</sup> proclaims that general Theomnistos has erected the sanctuary of Asklepeios next to the existing sanctuaries, and that the deme accepts that he and the garrison will take care of it. It is worth noting that on all these inscriptions it is clearly mentioned that the garrison is stationed 'ἐπὶ Σουνίου', implying the fort on Cape Sounion.

Turbulent periods of alternating local rule and subjection to the Macedonians followed. The Athenians made an unsuccessful attempt to re-occupy Sounion during the Chremonidean War (267–261 BC). A decree of this period, *IG II<sup>2</sup> 1281* found by Stais, states that the appointed general was responsible for the repairs to the granary, as well as for the provisions of the army stationed at Sounion.<sup>64</sup> Antigonos Gonatas besieged Athens and occupied the fort of Sounion, which remained under Macedonian control until 229 BC.<sup>65</sup> Plutarch in *Aratus* (*38*), narrates how the leader of the Achaean League bribed the garrison commander Diogenes with the sum of 150 talents to surrender the fort of Sounion and other Attic forts.<sup>66</sup> The same event is described in the 2nd century AD by Pausanias (*53*). The honorary decree of 230 BC, *IG II<sup>2</sup> 1300*, proclaims that the authorities of the deme pay honours to Eurikleides from

<sup>57</sup> Baika 2013a, 226–227.

<sup>58</sup> Kenny 1947, 197, dates them to the Hellenistic period; Baika 2013b, 530–531.

<sup>59</sup> Dinsmoor Jr. 1974b, 30–35.

<sup>60</sup> Stais 1900a, 136.

<sup>61</sup> On the circuit walls see Lauter 1989, 11–33.

<sup>62</sup> Stais 1900a, 147, no. 5.

<sup>63</sup> Stais 1900a, 139–140, no. 3; *ibid.* 1917, 213, where the excavator notes that general Theomnistos is also mentioned on other inscriptions found in the area of Sounion.

<sup>64</sup> Stais 1900a, 137, no. 2.

<sup>65</sup> Stais 1900a, 139; Stais 1917, 172–175 for the fortification walls and extensions made during the Macedonian occupation.

<sup>66</sup> Pausanias 3.6.6.

Kephisia, general of the Athenians stationed at Sounion.<sup>67</sup> In 104–100 BC the fortress was occupied by a thousand slave-workers from the mines of Laurion, who were following the example of their fellow slaves in Sicily.<sup>68</sup> In the 2nd century AD, Pausanias (51) referred to the temple, seen on the crest of the promontory which he believed to belong to Athena Sounias. For want of alternative literary sources, the temple of Poseidon remained wrongly attributed to Athena until Stais excavated the sanctuary at the promontory. There he came across an inscription, *IG II<sup>2</sup> 1270*,<sup>69</sup> an honorary decree of general Kephisodotos from Acharnai, which ended in common fashion by mentioning the sanctuary of the god in which it was dedicated — that of Poseidon. At the same time, Stais brought to light a sanctuary some 500m north-east of the fortress, on a low hill, which, based on Vitruvius (71), he attributed to Athena Sounias. Athenaeus (55), in around 228 AD, refers to the uprising of the slaves and the siege of the fortified citadel at Sounion, attesting to its existence into the Roman period.

### **The Latin testimonia**

The Latin texts assembled here cover a period of 239 years from 161 BC to AD 78. We learn from Terence (69) in *Eunuchus*, that in the middle of the 2nd century BC the Aegean Sea was beset with piracy and Sounion, a vital point for seafarers, had become a pirates' lair. The well-protected harbour on the north-west of the promontory continued to attract pirates through the centuries. By the middle of the 1st century BC, Sounion is described as a fortified 'town' by Cicero in *Ad Atticum* (70), although it is rather a fine point whether his text indicates that Piraeus is a town or a deme, and whatever Piraeus was, so should Sounion be. By the time that Cicero wrote his letter, Piraeus was already in decline after the town's fall to Sulla in 86 BC.<sup>70</sup>

In the 1st century BC, the promontory and both sanctuaries were abandoned. Under the rule of Augustus (31 BC–AD 14) the temple of Athena was dismantled and transferred to the Agora of Athens.<sup>71</sup> Vitruvius, writing between 27 and 23 BC, refers to the temple of Athena Sounias adding that it and the temple of Athena Polias, the so-called Erechtheion, were the first temples to be built with their entrances on their long sides, a practice later imitated in Rome.<sup>72</sup> This is the only reference to and description of the Classical temple of Athena Sounias. It is upon this Latin text that Stais and Orlandos based their conclusions in 1900. However, the importance of Sounion as a landmark continued to be emphasized in Latin sources. At the end of the 1st century BC Sounion appears in Livy as a place for fleets to gather (72 and 73), and Pomponius Mela in his *de Chorographia* (75), a geographical treatise of the mid 1st century AD, refers to Sounion as an important marker in identifying the boundaries of the Aegean Sea.

Pliny in his *Naturalis Historia* (76) also sketches the geography of Attica and places Sounion 45 miles from Piraeus, the only location to be so identified in the relevant passage. He further refers to Sounion as the place where the best melilot in Greece grows (77). Melilot, *μελίλωτος* in ancient Greek, of the *leguminosae* family is a branched annual or biennial plant with loose clusters of either white or yellow flowers and a subtle scent of honey. It was well known in antiquity, and used for making chaplets as well as for medicinal purposes.<sup>73</sup> Only one source links it to a divinity. Philochorus (*Historiae Fragmenta*, 188.4, of circa 280 BC) while commenting on Euripides' *Hippolytos* (at 188) notes that Hippolytos had crowned the goddess Artemis with a wreath made of melilot. It is unclear whether Artemis was associated with this plant. If so, it may provide evidence for her worship on Sounion, as noted by Pliny, given the excellent quality of melilot growing in the region.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Stais 1900a, 143, no. 4.

<sup>68</sup> Poseidonios 6.272 E.

<sup>69</sup> Stais 1900a, 131.

<sup>70</sup> Appian, *History of Rome-Mithridatic Wars*, 5.30

<sup>71</sup> Dinsmoor Jr. 1982, 410–431.

<sup>72</sup> Corso 1997, 388–389.

<sup>73</sup> Hippocrates, *De ulceribus*, 19.2; Plutarch *De Iside et Osiride*, E.11; Sappho *Supp.* 25.14; Theophrastos *Historia Plantarum*, 7.15.3; Ovid 4.440; Pliny *Historia Naturalis* 13.13, 21.151; Pelagon 26.42; Chiron 241; Dioscorides *De simplicibus medicinis*, 2.7.1.

<sup>74</sup> During research in Zakynthos and Crete, I managed to extract the following information: in the present day at Zakynthos, where it is known as *nychaki*, melilot grows wild on hills, but occasionally migrates to the vineyards where the farmers believe that it absorbs all moisture to the detriment of the vines. Its seeds contain cumarin. It is also customarily used to decorate Christ's Sepulchre in churches on Good Friday. In Crete it is known as *beribokladi*, and the locals use it as a veterinary medicine or as a tisane for babies, because it is calming and relieves intestinal pains. In the old days it used to be grown as a fodder crop.

Finally, a passage in Avienus' *Carmina* (78), which although poetic is of historical interest, describes Sounion, together with Rhodes, Aegina and Salamis, as being not far from the shores of Egypt. Although this is a very vague geographic description, visitors to Sounion, either Egyptian or others who had travelled to Egypt, may have felt that their pilgrimage was incomplete without leaving an offering to the gods, an act of veneration which goes some way to explain the numerous scarabs and amulets excavated from the site.

### Early travellers and excavations before 1897

Sounion and its sanctuaries gradually fell into oblivion, and so they remained until the 17th century AD when the few columns still standing on the promontory began to attract the attention of foreign travellers. Wheler was the first of many visitors to refer to Cape Sounion in 1676.<sup>75</sup> He noted the ruinous condition of the temple, with nine columns left standing on the south side and five on the north. In 1754, Le Roy<sup>76</sup> found only four columns from the north side *in situ*. Both Wheler and Le Roy described the surviving pilasters of the *pronaos*, plus the two columns *in antis*. In 1765, Chandler<sup>77</sup> found only three columns standing on the north side as did Dodwell in 1805;<sup>78</sup> these were reduced to two by the time of Blouet<sup>79</sup> (the two that were still *in situ* when Stais started his excavations).

The poor condition of the few remaining parts of the temple and, most importantly, the almost complete absence of the square blocks of the *krepidoma* had raised many questions about the time and causes of the monument's destruction. Weather conditions were probably a major factor in the destruction of the exposed parts of the temple, but the absence of nearby villages makes it unlikely that the blocks of the *krepidoma* were removed for building material. Further destruction was more likely caused by people inspired by legends of mythical treasures buried in the ruins of isolated edifices or pirate lairs such as Sounion. The name of Sounion became fashionable and known world-wide thanks to its great admirer, Lord Byron, who visited the site in 1810. In *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (Canto II, 86), Sounion is described as the 'Marbled Steep' and the sanctuary as 'Tritonia' on 'Colonna's cliff.' The name of Lord Byron, carved on the cella's pilaster, immortalised his visit.

The carefully composed photographs of Athenian and other Greek antiquities<sup>80</sup> by the Scottish artist James Robertson (1813–1888) are part of the tradition of numerous British travellers and artists of the 19th century who played an important role in the rediscovery of Greece. Having been employed as the chief engraver at the Ottoman Imperial Mint in Constantinople, he visited Greece between the years 1853 and 1854. Robertson did not fail to visit Sounion and make a photographic record of the temple of Poseidon. His images show no differences from earlier painted or engraved impressions (Figs 5 and 6).

Although Sounion was rediscovered late, initially by pirates and then by travellers and admirers of antiquity under the influence of the Romantic Movement, it did not escape from having architectural members removed and exported. According to N. Papahatzis,<sup>81</sup> shortly before and during the Greek War of Independence, drums were removed and an entire column, including its capital, taken in 1826 to Venice.<sup>82</sup> A second column was recently identified at Chatsworth in England.<sup>83</sup> Three drums appear in the collection of Charles of Prussia, at his palace of Klein Glienicke near Potsdam, and five more were transferred to England just before 1825 (one to the British Museum and four more were joined to form a pedestal on which the bronze bust of the sixth Duke of Devonshire was placed).<sup>84</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Wheler 1682, 448.

<sup>76</sup> Le Roy 1770, 15.

<sup>77</sup> Chandler 1776, 6.

<sup>78</sup> Camp 2013, 62–65.

<sup>79</sup> Blouet 1837–1938, 15–20.

<sup>80</sup> Photographs by James Robertson, *Athens and Grecian Antiquities*, Tsigakou and Constantinou 1998. The photographic archive of the Benaki Museum owns this invaluable material, which was exhibited in Athens in 1998 at the Museum of Cycladic Art and in 2001 in London, at the Hellenic Centre (London exhibition organised by the present author.)

<sup>81</sup> Papahatzis 1974, 1.1.1, 86.

<sup>82</sup> Beschi 1969–1970, 417–433; Pavan 1969–1970, 433–437.

<sup>83</sup> Waywell 2007, 152.

<sup>84</sup> Beschi 1969–1970, 417ff.; Beschi 1972, 173; Waywell 2007, 152.

The first investigations and excavations at Sounion were undertaken by the Society of Dilettanti in 1812.<sup>85</sup> In 1829 a French mission led by Blouet attempted unsuccessfully to make detailed plans of the temple.<sup>86</sup> At that time only two flanking columns from the north side and one column *in anta* in the *pronaos* remained standing. An in-depth and systematic scientific investigation, accompanied by a partial excavation of the temple of Poseidon, was successfully undertaken by the eminent German archaeologist W. Dörpfeld from 1884 to 1895.<sup>87</sup> Dörpfeld, who excavated only the south and part of the east side of the Poseidon temple, was the first to prove that human action had caused destruction of the *krepidoma* at the west side of the temple to a depth of approximately 2m. He revealed the existence of an earlier limestone temple of the end of the 6th century BC, on whose ruins the marble structure stood. Dörpfeld's measurements proved that the dimensions and architectural style of the Classical temple were almost identical to those of its Archaic predecessor, although the plan of the two cellas differed. The Archaic temple had an interior colonnade of unfluted columns, which ran parallel to the cella walls.

In 1897, the Archaeological Society at Athens funded an extensive excavation project in order to fully uncover the temple of Poseidon, which, as mentioned above, was until then wrongly attributed to Athena, under the direction of Valerios Stais with the assistance of the architect Anastasios Orlandos.

## The excavations of Valerios Stais

### *The sanctuary of Poseidon*

The sanctuary of Poseidon, situated at the south-east corner of the fortified area, occupied the highest spot of the promontory, an area of 9 acres in total. The whole area of the sanctuary was artificially levelled and together with the fort formed the citadel of Sounion (Fig. 50). The fortified south-west end of the peninsula of Sounion was considered by the Athenians to be one of the oldest and most important forts of Attica.

In his report of 1900, Stais described how the excavation of 1897, which lasted only eight days, aimed to reveal the north and south sides of the temple of Poseidon which were covered with fallen large fragments of architraves and column drums. Stais was obviously not expecting to discover important finds, since Dörpfeld's investigations had shown that the monument had been plundered and severely damaged. Stais excavated systematically for two months each year between 1898 and 1915. In 1910, the Society withdrew the funding. According to Stais' report in *AE* 1917, excavations continued until 1915 with funds provided by the Archaeological Committee,<sup>88</sup> which at that time was part of the Ministry of Education. Simultaneously, Orlandos studied the column drums and capitals from the temple scattered on the stylobate and published in two reports a reconstruction of the temple's pediments and cella walls.<sup>89</sup>

Stais made the most extensive excavation on the promontory to date. He brought to light shrines, stoas, the main road of the citadel, the monumental entrance to the sanctuary of Poseidon and a number of buildings integral to the settlement (Fig. 8). He also identified the fortress walls and 10 of its square towers. In 1898 he made the major discovery of the inscription,<sup>90</sup> which solved the riddle of the deity to whom the temple on the promontory was dedicated. He had to make certain urgent interventions. His first aim in the years 1899 and 1900 was the complete restoration of the temple's *krepidoma*. In 1903, as he briefly reported in *PAE* 1903, he had to restore urgently the nine columns at the south side of the temple. The restoration of the east antae in the *pronaos* and the reinforcement of the various parts of the temple of Poseidon were undertaken with the help of Orlandos. Much later, other interventions were made on a larger scale with the re-erection of several columns in 1958 and in the 1970s.

Stais also excavated and revealed the hitherto-unidentified sanctuary of Athena Sounias. His excavations and publications of finds remain the definitive work on the promontory of Sounion and its monuments.

<sup>85</sup> Society of Dilettanti 1817, 53–56; Society of Dilettanti 1840, 20–23, pls IX–XVI.

<sup>86</sup> Blouet 1837–1838, 15–20.

<sup>87</sup> Dörpfeld 1884, 324–337.

<sup>88</sup> Stais 1917, 169, fn.1.

<sup>89</sup> Orlandos 1915, 1–27; Orlandos 1917, 213–226.

<sup>90</sup> Stais 1899, 98.

He reported annually on the course of the excavations in *PAE* and further reports by him are found in *AE* and *AD*. His two detailed reports were published in *AE*. His report in *AE* 1917 is a revised and more detailed edition of the earlier one of 1900. The 1917 report replaced the ‘missing’ excavation notebooks: I have based my study on this report as well as on the short annual reports in the Archaeological Society at Athens’ publications.<sup>91</sup>

In his report at 1917, Stais claimed that the fortification walls were built long before 413–412 BC and not, as Thucydides wrote (*II*), during the Peloponnesian War. According to the excavator’s report ‘the walls are still visible and well maintained; they were built at least 100 years before the Peloponnesian War in the polygonal style which indicates the date of their erection.’ Stais dated the fortification closer to the end of the 6th century BC, when the Athenians were at war with the Aeginetans.<sup>92</sup> He supported the idea that the Athenians reinforced the existing fortress at its west end with new walls of isodomic marble and limestone masonry in the years 413–412. These second fortification walls started from the bay west of the promontory, and continued towards the top of the promontory for a distance of 75m (Fig.10). Two defensive towers, which were integral parts of this later fortification wall, were uncovered.<sup>93</sup> According to Stais, an attempt by the Athenians to extend this new isodomic wall towards the bay as well as to link it with the existing polygonal wall, was never completed.<sup>94</sup> Thus the fortress was inadequately protected on its western side during the Peloponnesian and Macedonian wars.

The enceinte<sup>95</sup> was 400m long and 3.50m thick, roughly semi-circular in shape and reinforced by square towers of different sizes placed at irregular intervals according to the natural strength of the wall. The larger north-easternmost tower was set at an angle which offered a clear view of both the north and east enceinte. The walls, facing inland, protected the north and east sides of the fortress. They were built from limestone blocks, reinforced with isodomic masonry in later stages of repair.<sup>96</sup> The south and west were not fortified since the promontory’s inaccessible cliffs offered a natural defence. As Stais found ten towers and since part of three more towers at the northwest end of the isodomic north fortification wall have since been exposed (the westernmost was possibly constructed earlier and incorporated) the enceinte was reinforced with a total of 13 towers. A new entrance-gate to the fort was built, placed between the enceinte and this later wall at right angles to the original entrance (Figs 9 and 10). The spacious tower by the water’s edge and immediately north of the shipsheds, now submerged, may have been built to better defend them.<sup>97</sup> The sanctuary was enclosed by a trapezoidal peribolos, the eastern wall of which was incorporated in the main fortification and reinforced with a tower in 412 BC (Fig. 4). A terrace was built at the north-west side of the sanctuary in the 6th century BC and its northern peribolos wall, which also incorporated the Propylaia, was joined to the eastern fortification wall.

The east side of the fortification wall contains a narrow entrance, which may have served for a while as an access to the fortress from inland. This particular entrance<sup>98</sup> was incorporated into a large bastion (14.20x17.25m), erected in the Hellenistic period and served as access to it. The bastion<sup>99</sup> is rectangular with rounded corners, and its carefully-built isodomic walls stand to a height of 2–5m (Fig. 11). The basement was dressed with thin marble slabs. The lower courses of the walls are made of marble, while the upper are of limestone.<sup>100</sup> Stais found an inscription<sup>101</sup> that initially led to the building’s identification as a storeroom for cereals. Later, the excavator found a large number of bronze arrows and spears, stone balls with engraved numerals indicating their use as weights, iron nails and a bronze ratchet wheel

<sup>91</sup> Additionally, I have used Stais’ brief book on Sounion, published in 1920.

<sup>92</sup> Herodotus 6.87, 90.

<sup>93</sup> Stais 1917, 172 ; Lauter 1989, 23.

<sup>94</sup> Stais 1917, 173.

<sup>95</sup> Scranton 1941, 170–180; Mussche 1964, 423–432; Wrede 1933, 10–59 ; Baika 2013b, 527–529.

<sup>96</sup> Lauter 1989, 11–17.

<sup>97</sup> Kenny 1947, 196, 200, pls 31–32; Baika 2013b, 528–529.

<sup>98</sup> Stais 1920, 39; Dinsmoor Jr. 1974b, 11, 31; Lauter places this entrance to the south of the bastion, immediately north of the north peribolos wall of the sanctuary and defended by the Hellenistic bastion, see Lauter 1989, 19–21.

<sup>99</sup> Wrede 1933, 10–11; Picard 1940, 5–28; Mussche 1964, 423–432 includes it as a part of the fortifications but does not specify its function. See also Young 1953; Dinsmoor Jr. 1974b, 11, 31; Lawrence 1979, 389; Goette 2003, 154–157.

<sup>100</sup> Stais 1917, 174, fig. Z, fig. 5.

<sup>101</sup> Stais 1900a, 136.

identified as a catapult washer.<sup>102</sup> The room therefore appears to have been used as an armoury or more likely as a catapult tower.<sup>103</sup> The alternative view that it served as a mint has also been abandoned.

Stais admitted that his report on the fortification was rather brief. A detailed study, plans and measurements were said to be unfeasible due to the limited means available and the many interventions that had taken place over time,<sup>104</sup> as was clear from the inscriptions that Stais brought to light. The plans of the fortifications that survive were executed by Orlandos. In his 1917 report, Stais described the discovery of the entrance to the fort and the road that led to the Propylaia of the Poseidon sanctuary, the monumental construction of which, in his words, ‘secured the crossing of chariots.’<sup>105</sup> The ancient entrance to the fortress, according to the excavator, was situated at the north-west side of the enceinte, between the inner and the outer walls, near the seashore and not far from where Stais discovered the remains of the two rock-cut shipsheds.<sup>106</sup> He reports the almost complete destruction of this part of the fort, but the discovery of the road, which led to the sanctuary, lent justification to his belief in the location of the entrance.<sup>107</sup> Approximately 90m of this road, which started at the Propylaia and terminated at the harbour at the now lost gate, were excavated. The road (3-3.50m wide) ran parallel to the northern fortification walls. Stais excavated houses of two and three rooms on both sides of the road.<sup>108</sup> These houses were occupied by the garrison, officers, merchants and local people and were simple constructions dating from the 6th century BC to the Roman period. Most had large stone or clay basins and clay drain pipes,<sup>109</sup> as well as marble thresholds.

Stais proved that the fortress was densely inhabited. The houses, shrines,<sup>110</sup> wells and cisterns, shipsheds, and stoas to accommodate visitors for the religious festivals<sup>111</sup> were integral parts of every aspect of life in the citadel of Sounion. The inscriptions found in the fort testify to the presence of a strong garrison and an Athenian commander, as already discussed. A large number of visitors would also gather inside the fortress for the feasts,<sup>112</sup> seeking shelter from the heat and at night. The various structures in the fort<sup>113</sup> must have had permanent residents, as the excavator noted, since he found no trace of any alternative accommodation outside the fort, indicating that this was the main settlement of the area. Recently, extensive clearances in the settlement inside the fort as well as at the northeast section of the fortification walls have been carried out by the 2nd Ephorate under the supervision of Dr Eleni Andrikou. As a result, the settlement including the houses and shops on both sides of the main road, dated to the Hellenistic period, which had been excavated by Stais, have now been revealed (Fig. 52). The whole of the surviving enceinte and the 13 towers have been made structurally sound and are now accessible to the public. A network of footpaths as well as the ancient main road allow visitors to reach the lower part of the cliff to the west with a clear view of the now partially submerged shipsheds and the westernmost tower (Fig. 10).

In 1900, Stais excavated a stoa, west of the sanctuary’s Propylaia.<sup>114</sup> The foundations of this large stoa (25 x 9 m), built after the monumental marble Propylaia, ran along the north side of the sanctuary (Fig. 12). A second smaller stoa (20.8m long) was built along the west side of the sanctuary. The larger stoa, built entirely of limestone, had eight or nine Doric columns on the façade and the sanctuary’s peribolos was used as its rear wall. A second row of six columns, without fluting and still with traces of red colour, stood in the middle of the stoa. The excavator believed that these limestone columns had originally belonged to the interior colonnade of the cella of the Archaic Poseidon temple.<sup>115</sup>

<sup>102</sup> Williams 1992, 181–188.

<sup>103</sup> Dengate 1967, 185–186.

<sup>104</sup> Stais 1900a, 139; *ibid.* 1917, 175.

<sup>105</sup> Stais 1900a, 119, pl. 7; *ibid.* 1917, 175; Berve and Gruben 1961, 191–192; Davaras 1974, 22.

<sup>106</sup> Stais 1903, 13; Stais 1917, 172; for a detailed description of the two rock-cut shipsheds at Sounion, see Blackman and Rankov 2013.

<sup>107</sup> Stais 1917, 175, n. 2: ‘...it is possible that at a later date, a propylon stood at the entrance...’; Goette does not accept a north-west entrance to the fort, see Goette 2003, 155–157.

<sup>108</sup> Stais 1917, 173–175.

<sup>109</sup> A well was found in one of the houses. Stais 1917, 176, n. 1.

<sup>110</sup> Stais 1900b 51–52; Stais.1903, 14.

<sup>111</sup> North-east of the road, Stais investigated a large Archaic polygonal building: Stais 1917, 176, n. 4.

<sup>112</sup> Stais 1917, 176, n. 5, ‘it is known from inscriptions that boat races were held at Sounion’; Deubner 1932, 215.

<sup>113</sup> Stais 1917, 176.

<sup>114</sup> Stais 1908, pls 11–12.

<sup>115</sup> Stais 1920, 16; Boersma 1970, 218; Coulton 1976, 118, 285.

The sanctuary of Poseidon was protected by its own perimeter wall,<sup>116</sup> built at the end of the Archaic period (Fig. 59). The eastern polygonal peribolos wall curves to the west and continues towards the south side which is partly demolished. The north and west sides, made from limestone blocks dressed with marble in the isodomic style, form the boundary between the sanctuary and the fortress. The entrance to the sanctuary was on the north side through the Propylaia excavated by Stais in 1900.<sup>117</sup> The exterior and interior façades of this building had two Doric columns in antis supporting the pedimental roof (Fig. 8). Inside the building, two solid blocks, aligned with the columns, created three entranceways. The main entrance was 2.20m wide and had a ramp to accommodate chariots and sacrificial animals, and the side entrances were 1.12m wide.<sup>118</sup> These limestone Propylaia were partly dressed with thin marble slabs (0.05m thick), possibly added at the same time as the erection of the Classical marble temple of Poseidon. Stais discovered traces of red wash on the walls and the *anta* of the east side. He also found a guardhouse to the west of the Propylaia with traces of red wash on its interior walls.

In 1899, Stais started a major clearance at the temple of Poseidon, which he described as ‘covered with bushes and trees.’ Many *spolia* from the building lay on the ground and it was with great difficulty that he moved them from the *krepidoma* and placed them in good order near the temple. Orlandos was successful in his efforts to reconstruct the pediments of the temple and the walls of the cella.<sup>119</sup> Stais discovered many architectural *spolia* from the Archaic temple, such as drums, capitals and parts of the architrave. According to Stais the first temple was built of limestone in the late 6th century BC<sup>120</sup> and was destroyed in 480/479 BC by the Persians. It has been accepted that the erection of the Archaic temple began around 490 BC and according to archaeological evidence, was still incomplete when destroyed<sup>121</sup> (Fig. 13). Soon afterwards, stones from the destroyed temple may have been used to construct a temporary *sekos* to accommodate cult activities.<sup>122</sup> The marble Classical temple, usually believed to have been erected between 444 and 440 BC, stood on the stylobate of the limestone one.<sup>123</sup> There are many similarities between the two monuments. Both were Doric, with 13 columns on the long sides and six on the short,<sup>124</sup> although the Archaic temple was slightly smaller, 30.34 x 13.12 m as opposed to 31.15 x 13.18 m for the Classical one. The difference in their dimensions is insignificant; the stylobate of the Classical temple was slightly extended at the peristyle. The cella dimensions of both temples were the same and the foundations of the Archaic cella walls were reused for the Classical building. Another difference between the two monuments is that the Archaic temple had two rows of five columns inside the cella, a pattern not repeated in the Classical temple.

Stais attributed only one fragment of marble sculpture to the Archaic temple. This fragmentary relief is of a headless female figure: only the body to the lower waist and the left upper arm which is bent at the elbow<sup>125</sup> survive. The figure, found in the artificial fill to the east of the temple, faces frontally and is dressed in a *chiton*. Another fragment which Stais describes as an Archaic votive relief (0.18 x 0.30 cm) has the lower part of the body and legs of two naked male figures leading an animal, possibly a ram, to sacrifice. This was also considered an important find and briefly described in his 1917 report.<sup>126</sup> Under the artificial fill, 3m from the bottom step of the entrance of the Classical temple, Stais discovered in 1906 inside a natural fissure of the rock, two colossal Archaic kouroi (NMA 2720 and 3645) and four statue bases.<sup>127</sup> He concluded that the Athenians levelled the Poseidon sanctuary after the Persian destruction of the Archaic temple. The kouroi in the fissure and other *spolia* were covered with the fill.<sup>128</sup> In an area of 60 x 80 m at the eastern side of the sanctuary, several honorary decrees were discovered (*IG II<sup>2</sup>* 1260, 1270, 1281, 1300, and 1302). In 1907, Stais excavated a bothros at the south-

<sup>116</sup> Stais 1900a, 113–122, pl. 6; Stais 1920, 15–16.

<sup>117</sup> Stais 1920, 15: ‘the Propylaia were previously excavated, inadequately designed and described in *Ant. of Att.* (VII, pl. 1–3), *Ant. of Ionia* (III pl. 9) and in *Expédition de Morée* (V 36) by Blouet; Dinsmoor 1950, 205.

<sup>118</sup> Stais 1900a, 119, pl. 7.

<sup>119</sup> Orlandos 1917, 213; Stais 1920, 21, pl. 5.

<sup>120</sup> Stais 1920, 23.

<sup>121</sup> Dinsmoor Jr 1974, 8.

<sup>122</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1983, 37; Boersma 1970, 64; Dinsmoor Jr. 1974a, 211–238.

<sup>123</sup> Berve, Gruben and Hirmer 1978, 49, 85; Dinsmoor 1950, 181–185; Herbig 1941, 87–133, Knell 1973, 94–114; Mussche 1968, 10–11.

<sup>124</sup> Orlandos 1915, 1–27; Orlandos 1917, 213.

<sup>125</sup> Stais 1909, 117; Stais 1917, 194; Delivorrias 1974, 73.

<sup>126</sup> Stais 1917, 194.

<sup>127</sup> Stais 1917, 189–193; Stais 1920, 25–28, pl. 7; Deonna 1909, 137–138, 348, pls 16–17; Rhomaios 1931, 91ff, pls 55–56; Richter 1960, 45, figs 42–47, no. 4; Kallipolitis 1973, 47–51; Papanthanasopoulos 1983, 19ff.

<sup>128</sup> Stais 1917, 189.

east corner of the sanctuary of Poseidon, outside the polygonal wall, which contained many offerings (Fig. 14). All were small finds of various materials. The excavator<sup>129</sup> described the finds by category, according to their material.

The Classical temple (444–440 BC)<sup>130</sup> was made of local marble from Agrileza (Fig. 7). This marble does not contain iron and so does not lose its white colour but wears easily. The columns had slender proportions, no *entasis*, and fewer flutings than usual (16 instead of 20), a trait usually ascribed to the quality of marble used. These characteristics had a noticeable effect on the monument's appearance. The architect of this temple is not known by name but his work is usually identified in two other temples of the same period — of Hephaistos and Athena in the ancient Agora at Athens, and of Nemesis at Rhamnous. The common features of these temples are their slender columns, a relief frieze and the alignment of the antae with the third flank column.<sup>131</sup> The temples do, however, differ in certain details, and the temple of Sounion may, on balance, have been designed by a different architect.<sup>132</sup> Nine columns remain on the south side and six on the north (four were re-erected by Stais in 1908), with their architraves. The *pronaos* and the *opisthodomos* had the same dimensions and were distyle in antis. The north anta of the *pteroia* with its adjacent column survives, as does the south anta which was reconstructed in 1908. The cella enclosed by two transverse walls, housed the cult-statue of the god. The transverse wall between cella and *opisthodomos* had no entrance through to the cella and access was gained only through the east side of the temple (Fig. 16).

The architectural sculpture of the temple, although very fragmentary, is of great interest. The metopes were left blank. An Ionic frieze ran on all four sides of the eastern *pteroia*. Stais found 14 slabs of the frieze, in Parian marble, now exhibited in the Laurion Museum, whose figures were much eroded.<sup>133</sup> The scenes depicted on the frieze were not related to the cult of Poseidon. On the contrary, scenes from the Gigantomachy and the Centauromachy, frequently seen on temples or sanctuaries during the Classical period (the Hephaisteion, Parthenon, Bassae, etc.), decorated the interior of the *pronaos*.<sup>134</sup> The pediments of the temple, measured by Orlandos, were 12.16m long and 1.44m high at the centre, with an anthemion above the centre and at the corners of each pediment. An anthemion discovered in 1880 (NMA 1112), long before Stais' excavations, was kept in the NMA, where Fiechter identified it.<sup>135</sup> In 1906, Stais was excavating the eastern area in front of the temple when he came across a headless female seated statue (0.62m high and 0.45m wide). The statue belonged to the sculptures of the east pediment of the temple:<sup>136</sup> it possibly represents a Nymph, (NMA 3410), and together with 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, all of Parian marble, are the only Classical pedimental sculpture found thus far.<sup>137</sup>

### ***The sanctuary of Athena***

In the hope of tracing the temple of Athena, Stais, encouraged by traces of a peribolos, started excavating in 1900 the area which would later be identified as the sanctuary of Athena<sup>138</sup> (Fig. 17). The sanctuary of Athena is situated on a low hill north-east of the temple of Poseidon, approximately 500m outside the fortress of Sounion (Fig. 18a, b). This hill, surrounded by an ancient polygonal wall, is 85m long and 40m wide.<sup>139</sup> The peribolos wall was still visible on the south and west sides of the hill. The north side of the wall has been completely eroded away; only its surviving north-west corner is attached to an oval enclosure which extends towards the north side of the sanctuary, made from large blocks (Fig. 19). 'The purpose of this enclosure is still unknown to us,' wrote Stais in his 1917 report. Stais conjectured that

<sup>129</sup> Stais 1907, 103; Stais 1917, 194–197.

<sup>130</sup> Stais 1900a, 113–118; Stais 1920, 28–35; Lambrinouidakis 1983, 139–141.

<sup>131</sup> Dinsmoor 1940, 47; Dinsmoor 1950, 181–185; Dinsmoor Jr. 1974a, 218–220; Travlos 1988, 404–429; Carpenter 1970, 108–110; Plommer 1950, 78–94; Plommer 1960; Plommer 1976, 113–116; Boersma 1970, 61, 184, fig. 52.

<sup>132</sup> Delivorrias 1974, 76–81; Lambrinouidakis 1983, 139–141.

<sup>133</sup> Lange 1881, 234–237; Furtwängler 1882, 396–397; Fabricius 1884, 338; Stais 1900a, 117; Orlandos 1953–1954, 1–18; Dörig 1958a, 88–93; Delivorrias 1974, 61–93; Felten 1984, 66–69; Felten and Hoffelner 1987, 169–184.

<sup>134</sup> For a recent study and interpretation of the frieze, see Leventi 2009, 121–130.

<sup>135</sup> Delivorrias 1974, 60–64.

<sup>136</sup> Stais 1917, 198–199, fig. 11; Stais 1920, 33, pl. 8.

<sup>137</sup> Delivorrias 1974, 62–75, pls 18a, 19a–b, 21a–b, 23a–c, 24a–d and 25a–e.

<sup>138</sup> Stais 1900a, 122–130, pl. 8.

<sup>139</sup> Stais 1917, 178.