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THE PNYX IN THE HISTORY OF ATHENS

Edited by
Björn Forsén and Greg Stanton

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Contents

Assembly Places and Theatres in the Greek World and their Later Reuse for Religious Functions*

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The importance that the different collective decision-making bodies have in Greek *poleis* can be observed in the variety and number of buildings devoted to housing them. Among them, the Pnyx in Athens is undoubtedly one of the most remarkable and representative buildings, due in part to the particular prestige of the political system which it served: Athenian democracy. The history of the Pnyx is extremely complex, and here I cannot mention it more than briefly; however, even before it was excavated in the thirties,[1] the existence of a number of marble plaques was already known, whose original location was the Pnyx hill. Kourouniotes' and Thompson's excavation revealed the existence of an area that had, at some point, been consecrated to Zeus Hypsistos;[2] the chronology of the sanctuary, as well as its relation with the whole structure, is still at the centre of a debate, as this conference itself proves.

In any case, an assembly place, clearly identified as such, has experienced at a particular moment a process of reuse that has eventually converted it into a place for cult worship, a sanctuary. This is what has provoked my interest and what justifies my participation in this colloquium, since this is a fact that has a parallel in other places of the Greek world. The aim of this paper is to review the evidence available concerning the re-use, mainly for religious purposes, of other assembly places throughout the Greek world.[3] The analysis will concentrate on *ekklesiasteria*, like the Pnyx itself, and *bouleuteria* in which this type of reuse appears to be proven; I will not include, except for

* I would like to thank Prof. G.R. Stanton and an anonymous reader for reading and suggesting improvements to an earlier draft of this paper. Needless to say, the faults that remain are entirely my own responsibility.

1 Kourouniotes and Thompson (1932), 90-217.

2 Kourouniotes and Thompson (1932), 193-200.

3 I am referring primarily to the type of reuse that modifies or disregards the original use; therefore I will not take into consideration reuses involving the use of assembly places as places for public spectacles, a situation which is relatively frequent, as shown by McDonald (1943), 278-279 who mentions in passing two examples which are, nevertheless, of interest for the present study — Mantineia and Delos: *ibid.*, 279. However, he did not study in depth the topic of our concern here.

one case, other types of constructions such as theatres and odeia because, although their political function in many instances appears to be clear,[4] there are so many of them that it would take us far from our objective in this paper. The only exception will be the theatre in Syracuse, for which we have a substantial number of references concerning its use during a large part of its history as the almost certainly exclusive headquarters of the assembly of the Syracusian *demos*; as well, there exists at Syracuse the possible remains of a reuse similar in type to the one noted in the Pnyx in Athens. As will be shown, this reuse for religious purposes is found more clearly in some places than in others.

As will be seen, there are four ways in which reuse takes place:

1) The earlier architectonic structure is retained, as in the Pnyx at Athens and the theatre in Syracuse.
2) The earlier architectonic structure is buried and new cults are established on top of the old structure (e.g. Poseidonia and Agrigento).
3) The old structure is retained but its function changes (e.g. Delos and Mantineia).
4) The old structures are upgraded and possibly retain their function, though they may now be used for public spectacles (e.g. Metapontion and Gortyn).

Particularly where the meeting place is buried, but in other cases as well, religious reuse is determined by new power structures. Quite often, the transformation coincides with the presence of Rome as a governing power.

I. Retention of the Earlier Architectonic Structure

Athens. The Pnyx (Figs. 29-30)

I will start my analysis with Athens, concentrating on the Pnyx. I will not get involved in a description of the Pnyx and its building stages, facts which are well-known and which will be dealt with by other papers, but will move on to the evidence concerning its reuse.

The remains in question are of two types: on the one hand, niches which are still visible in the scarp to the east of the bema of the last period; on the other hand, marble plaques (*pinakes*) with representations of figures and inscriptions which, without doubt, belonged to those niches.

Let us look at the niches first. They are located in the scarp to the east of the bema, although as observed by Kourouniotes and Thompson "not all the niches were cut in the smooth face of the scarp. The majority of them are found over an area having a more roughly dressed surface lying in a plane behind that of the general surface of the scarp, set back to a maximum of 0.20 m.";[5] the authors counted a total of 58 niches, 33 of which were found in the depressed area.[6]

The relative chronology of the niches has always been related to the agreed succession of the three building stages of the Pnyx; thus, for Kourouniotes and Thompson, the sanctuary would have appeared in the first century B.C., when the Pnyx was no longer being used as a meeting place for the *demos*. The sanctuary would have been respected during the third stage of the building process — regarded by Kourouniotes and

4 Kolb (1981), 88-89 with the epigraphic and literary references; see also Hansen and Fischer-Hansen (1994), 24.

5 Kourouniotes and Thompson (1932), 193.

6 Kourouniotes and Thompson (1932), 195-196.

Thompson as belonging to the age of Hadrian — which would not only not extirpate the worship but would in fact encourage it.[7] In later studies Thompson modified his earlier chronology, locating the third stage in the second half of the fourth century B.C., so that the niches on the face of the scarp would be from a time after the end of the political use of the Pnyx;[8] it was the theatre of Dionysus that ultimately housed the assembly of the *demos*.[9]

As for the *pinakes*, Kourouniotes and Thompson identified 20 in total, as well as making reference to fragments of other *pinakes*. From the type of script they dated them between the first and the third century after Christ — mostly belonging to the second century;[10] in later work some new ones have appeared and others have reappeared.[11] They are rectangular plaques of little thickness that usually display representations of parts of the human body (eyes, feet, breasts, etc.), of women generally; the most frequent ones are female breasts and *pudenda*.[12] The names on the epigraphs are mostly women's names. This suggests that "Zeus Hypsistos with his healing aspect was worshipped mostly by the Athenian women",[13] even though this fact is only explicitly mentioned in one of the inscriptions known today (*θ]ερα πευ[θεῖ]σα*).[14] The pattern of the dedication is very simple: there appears the name of the worshipper in the nominative case; sometimes, in the dative case, the name and/or epithet of the god, followed by the type of offering, a vow (*εὐχήν*), and only occasionally a verb (*ἀνέθηκεν*).

Van Straten, in his catalogue of Greek votive offerings representing parts of the human body, included most of these plaques,[15] but the most thorough study to date is that by Forsén. This author has measured the niches and those plaques which are intact or almost complete, and has not found noticeable chronological differences between the niches cut in the depressed area of the scarp and those cut in the elevated part; he attributes the existence of two different surfaces to structures belonging to some stage preceding the third one.

Similarly, Forsén attributes to the sanctuary a *floruit* of about two hundred years, between the middle of the first and the third century after Christ, after the Pnyx had ceased to be used as a meeting place for political purposes.[16] The fact that the god receiving tribute is Zeus Hypsistos would also seem to guarantee its later use as a place for cult worship;[17] there does not seem to be a direct relation between this cult worship and that of Zeus Agoraios, which took place there when the Pnyx was operating as the meeting place for the Assembly.[18] The testimony of Athenaeus is of great interest, concerning Athenion's speech around the year 87 B.C., in which reference is made to

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7 Kourouniotes and Thompson (1932), 216-217; according to their own words (105) "the worship when once rooted could not really be displaced".

8 Thompson (1982), 133-147.

9 On the theatre of Dionysus see Pickard-Cambridge (1946); cf. Travlos (1971), 537-552 and, recently, Polacco (1990a). On the use of the theatre as the seat of the assembly, McDonald (1943), 56-61 and Kolb (1981), 92-96; cf. also Hansen and Fischer-Hansen (1994), 44-45.

10 Kourouniotes and Thompson (1932), 196-198; chronology re-asserted in Thompson (1982), 142; other plaques found later come from the same dates (cf. Łajtar (1987), 165-166).

11 Thompson (1936), 154-156; Forsén (1990), 9-12; all the bibliography in Forsén (1993), 507-521.

12 Derda and Łajtar (1987), 163-164.

13 Derda and Łajtar (1987), 164.

14 Thompson (1936), 156; Derda and Łajtar (1987), 163-164.

15 Van Straten (1981), 116-119.

16 Forsén (1993), 507-521; on the abandonment of the Pnyx, McDonald (1943), 60-61, citing a notice by Athen. V.212e-f, 213d; see Judeich (1931), 396.

17 Cumont (1914), 444-450; Cook (1925), 876-877, 889-890.

18 Schol. ad Aristoph., *Eq.* 410; cf. Wycherley (1957), no. 381.

both the sacred nature of the Pnyx ("once consecrated to sacred uses by divine oracles") and the abandonment of the Pnyx at the time of the speech.[19]

Consequently, the Pnyx in Athens gives us one of the clearest examples of the reuse of an assembly place for religious purposes; in this case, a popular religion, linked to a divinity apparently with healing gifts related to illnesses affecting several parts of the body, but "specialising" perhaps in the healing of illnesses affecting women.[20]

Syracuse. The Theatre (Figs. 41-42)

The theatre in Syracuse seems to have been used as the habitual headquarters of the people's assembly at least from the fourth century B.C.;[21] it is to this period, and more precisely to that of Timoleon, that is normally attributed the building of the first circular theatre which would reach the area of the middle *diazoma* of the later Hieronic theatre (the so-called Syracuse IV).[22] This signifies that at this point the theatre was still independent from the sacred area situated to the north, in the area of the Temenites hill. It is during the next stage (Syracuse V, in the age of Hieron II, *ca.* 230 B.C.) that the connection between the two locations is established. In fact, in the age of Hieron the *koilon* was artificially extended to the point where it reached the rocky edge that divided the area of the theatre from that of the Temenites hill.

In this place there existed a grotto, perhaps dedicated to the Nymphs, which became part of a big L-shaped terrace which was used as a base for a large portico. On the northwestern side of that terrace was the access to the other important sacred area, connected through the so-called *Via dei Sepolcri.*[23] It seems that after the fall of the city into Roman hands (212 B.C.) and until the age of Nero we have no evidence about any particular activity in the theatre; the total transformation of the old Greek theatre could have taken place in the second century after Christ.[24]

The part that concerns us here is that belonging to the Upper Terrace and the approaches to the sanctuary *in summis*; during the age of Hieron II the rocky areas surrounding the *koilon* were sculpted to build the terraces and porticoes by means of two large cuts, which are called *katatomai* due to their resemblance to the theatre of Dionysus in Athens. At the centre of the northern *katatome* was a great Nymphaeum, which was later modified. In the northwestern corner there was a rectangular area, possibly of a sacred nature; however, it seems that the project as a whole was not completed until the second century after Christ. Until then the walls of the *katatome* were bare and attention was paid only to the façade of the Nymphaeum, the northwestern room and the access to the *Via dei Sepolcri.*[25]

Throughout the *katatome* and in the northwestern room there are numerous small niches carved into the wall; it is possible that some of them predate the development of the area, but others almost certainly postdate it, since they are carved in the plaster covering

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19 Athen. V.213d.

20 On the relations between the votive offering and the illness whose healing is asked for, see the remarks by van Straten (1981), 149-151.

21 Plut. *Dion* 28, *Timol.* 34, 38; see Anti (1948), 50, 77; cf. Kolb (1981), 91-92.

22 Polacco and Anti (1981), 179-187; Anti (1948), 77. Bernabò Brea (1967), 100-102 argues for a construction in a single stage, in the time of Hieron II. In any case, it does not matter for our purpose.

23 Polacco and Anti (1981), 191-200; Anti (1948), 92-93.

24 Polacco and Anti (1981), 201-212; cf. Anti (1948), 95-113.

25 Polacco (1990b), 31-58.

the walls.[26] The *Via dei Sepolcri*, which is carved into the rock face, already existed before the construction of the theatre's Upper Terrace, but access to it was made a part of the new development.[27] Along this road there are many small niches — obviously related to the niches in the upper terrace of the theatre — together with Christian rock-cut tombs, which evidently belong to a later period, and with larger niches which also belong to another period; in fact, the small niches are sometimes cut by the other two kinds of structure. There are 47 of these small niches in the north wall and 94 in the south wall, up to the point where they are no longer found, at about 34 metres from the entrance.[28]

The whole group of niches in the upper part of the theatre in Syracuse and the sanctuary *in summis* have not been properly investigated, but they are of great complexity; while there is some indication that some of them may predate the construction of the Upper Terrace,[29] others could only postdate the cutting of the *katatomai* that delimit the northwestern area of the theatre. The phenomenon of niches carved on the walls, however, is not restricted to this area, but is very common in the rocky areas of Syracuse[30] and its colonies.[31]

The niches were used, undoubtedly, for *pinakes,* or even painted decorations; unfortunately, fewer than ten examples are known from various locations, though in some cases their origin is in this part of the city.[32]

It seems to be beyond doubt that the whole zone had been a sacred area since the origins of Syracuse; however, it is not until the end of the third century B.C. that the monumentalisation took place which established both a physical and a symbolic connection with the theatre.[33] The main outlines of the new group of monuments had been drawn since Hieron II; however, until the middle of the first century B.C. the area does not seem to have experienced much activity. The definitive layout, with its clearly monumental purpose, seems to correspond to the age of imperial Rome. Therefore, I would argue that, between the end of the third century B.C. and the middle of the first century B.C., the whole area of the Upper Terrace of the theatre must have been in a certain state of disuse. The numerous niches in the walls of the area would have been carved at that time, for if the area had been in active use, it seems unlikely that worshippers would have been able freely to carve their own niches. Thus, one is led to suppose that the theatre and its extensions, abandoned in practice but still retaining their religious nature, became the recipient of the tribute of a popular religious feeling. This reuse would come to an end when, at the time of imperial Rome, the area would be regained for the use of the theatre. This reuse is, then, somewhat different from that attested in the Pnyx in Athens, but with some common features: in particular, the seemingly popular nature of this reuse and the use of rock walls for the carving of niches.

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26 Polacco (1990b), 46-47; Bernabò Brea (1967), 99-100 believes that the custom of carving niches, which spread through all of south-eastern Sicily under the influence of Syracuse, is not earlier than the fourth century B.C.

27 Polacco (1990b), 53; cf. Polacco, Trojani and Scolari (1989), 37-46.

28 Polacco, Trojani and Scolari (1989), 37-38; *id.* (1984-85), 839-846.

29 Polacco, Trojani and Scolari (1989), 76-77.

30 Polacco, Trojani and Scolari (1989), 104-105.

31 On the niches at Akrai see Bernabò Brea (1956), 51-62 (urban quarries, curiously very near the complex theatre-*bouleuterion*) and 73-78 (extra-urban quarries); on Noto see Orsi (1897), 69-90.

32 Polacco, Trojani and Scolari (1989), 104-105; 107. Cf. Orsi (1891), 393-394; *id.* (1904), 276-280; *id.* (1925), 308. See Pace (1946), 510-518.

33 Pace (1938), 313-314, with the references in the written sources to the sacred areas existing in that part of the city.

This type of place for cult worship, whose main characteristic is the presence of niches, is quite frequently found in the Greek world.[34]

II. Burial of the Earlier Architectonic Structure

Poseidonia. The *Bouleuterion* (Fig. 43)

This Achaean colony of Magna Graecia has also provided evidence of a meeting place which, some believe, could have been used as the place for a *boule* — or even an *ekklesia*,[35] although those who discovered it argue in favour of the former.

In the central part of the *agora* of Poseidonia, and to the east of it, a circular (35 m. diameter) structure carved into the rock and built around 470 B.C. was discovered. Around 270 B.C., after the foundation of the Roman colony of Paestum, the building was taken down and sealed with earth from different places, possibly during the celebration of a religious rite in which cattle were sacrificed (a hecatomb?).[36] Only a *stele* with inscriptions, a small altar, and the blocks of stones which formed the terraces of seats in that area remained *in situ*, though buried of course. Once the building was sealed, a small Roman religious precinct with a fountain next to it was built on top; its chronology is difficult to specify, but it is undoubtedly from Republican times; the southern part of this Roman sanctuary is located on the same site and has almost the same width as the diameter of the earlier assembly place. A few metres further south there is a fountain, connected to the Roman sanctuary, which coincides exactly with the southern border of the Greek seating terraces. The entire area of the old Greek *agora* was for a long time outside the urban development of the rest of the Roman city, it being an area of eminently sacred nature.[37] Greco has emphasised the importance of the suppression of a construction symbolic of the earlier political context — though carried out with respect for the gods — and its replacement by a completely new sanctuary immediately above it.[38]

There is, however, another fact to be taken into account regarding this construction in Poseidonia. As is well known, towards the end of the fifth century B.C. the city was invaded by the Lucans, who retained the public areas of the old Greek city, making very few changes.[39] It is in the *bouleuterion* that one of the few remains of Lucan activity has been found. We are talking about the *stele* found *in situ* in the penultimate terrace of the building, used as a base for a bronze statue and preserved after the closing of the building. The *stele* dates from around the year 300 B.C. and has inscriptions in Greek letters and Oscan language. It reads:

[σ]ƮąƮ[ι]ς [----ι][2]ες
ιουFηι [----] ą[3]νąρῃι
α[----] fεδ[4]
βραƮηις δατας

the translation into Latin of which would be something like:

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34 Cf. Orsi (1891), 394 (note) with a catalogue of sanctuaries with niches.
35 Hansen and Fischer-Hansen (1994), 69-71.
36 A different interpretation in Pedley (1990), 80 who thinks that the area was used for a time as a waste deposit.
37 Greco and Theodorescu (1983), 34-49.
38 Greco and Theodorescu (1983), 83-84.
39 Greco and Theodorescu (1983), 81-83.

Statius ... ius
Ioui ... anari
dicauit (?)
gratiae datae

It is, then, a dedication by somebody called Statius (a magistrate representing the community?) to Jupiter in gratitude for something.[40] Without doubt the place where the inscription was located must have had a strong religious significance for the Lucans of Paestum, which would explain the choice of location. Similarly, the Romans must have been aware of the sacredness of this part of the building as they demonstrated respect when it was taken down and buried.

In summary, we have in Poseidonia two kinds of reuse of the Greek *bouleuterion*; the first, in Lucan times, which adds religious symbolism to the building by the erection of the *stele* of Jupiter. We cannot determine, however, whether it was still being used as a meeting-place, but this would not be unlikely. The second reuse is marked by the ritual closing of the political and religious area and the placing of a sacred precinct and a fountain on top of the space gained by burying the old *bouleuterion*. The relation between the second reuse and the primary use, which is repeated in Agrigento, is not accidental, but represents a deliberate attempt to regain the sacredness inherent in the previous structure, although in a different way.

Agrigento. The *Ekklesiasterion* (Fig. 44)

In Sicily as well we find an example of an assembly place with a possibly circular ground plan which shows indications of a later reuse.

In contrast with the circular building in Poseidonia, that in Agrigento has not been the object of detailed research and there are only brief references to it. In the central part of the old city, *poggio di San Nicola*, it had always been known that there existed a small Roman building, traditionally called the Oratory of Phalaris, but there had been no detailed studies of the area.[41] When excavations took place there around the sixties a *koilon* carved into the rock was found. Doubts remain as to whether it was totally circular or whether it extended to just over three quarters of the circumference. Its maximum diameter is forty-eight metres, and it is estimated that it could hold about three thousand people. There is also uncertainty about its chronology: De Miro assigned it to a somewhat late period, around the end of the third century B.C., in part because of a wish to establish a chronological connection with the Oratory of Phalaris.[42] However, Greco believes that the date of the *ekklesiasterion* in Agrigento must be earlier than that suggested by De Miro, proposing that it dates from the fifth or fourth centuries B.C.; the archaeological materials corresponding to the third century would be signs in his opinion of the abandonment of the building.[43] In this area there appears to have existed, since ancient times, a sanctuary devoted to Demeter and Kore.

Once the meeting place was abandoned, there appeared, perhaps around the second century B.C., immediately on top of the place it had occupied, a series of buildings formed by a podium temple (the so-called Oratory of Phalaris), and its altar, in line with the axis of the temple, 13 metres to the west. To the south of the altar, and about 5 metres

40 Greco (1981), 245-250; Greco and Theodorescu (1983), 137-138.
41 Marconi (1926), 93-148 at 106-118.
42 De Miro (1963), 57-63; *id.* (1967), 164-168; more recently, *id.* (1992), 151-156.
43 Greco and Theodorescu (1983), 80.

away, there was a small *exedra*, perhaps intended to house a statue. Curiously, the altar is positioned directly above one of the corridors in the *ekklesiasterion* below.[44] Greco has already pointed out the striking similarities between Poseidonia and Agrigento; in both cases a Roman temple is built on top of an earlier circular Greek building as though to mark the emergence of a new political order.[45] Torelli suggests that the new sacred buildings are contemporary with the *deductio* of the Roman colony by Scipio in 197 B.C., and could have been dedicated to the newly heroised founder. In any case, according to this author, the temple should be seen as a symbol of an expiatory action (*piaculum*), which follows the suppression of an earlier public or religious space.[46]

Here we would have, consequently, a situation similar to that in Poseidonia, and one also promoted by the Romans. The sacredness of the place is recognised by the new occupants, but its real and symbolic meaning is suppressed by means of some kind of *translatio* or symbolic transference. Once again we can talk about reuse, but what is being reused here is not so much the physical space for the assembly place, but its symbolic and ideological significance. Here, in my opinion, there is a strong influence from the idea of Roman *euocatio*, by which Rome attracts to its side the ancient tutelary divinity, which allows the desanctification of the place. After this, however, Rome reinstates a different cult, which to some extent, as previously suggested, is an attempt to expiate the earlier desanctification.[47]

Athens. The Old Bouleuterion (Fig. 45)

The Old Bouleuterion in Athens was built *ca.* 500 B.C. in the western part of the *agora*; to the north there would have been a temple dedicated to the Mother of the Gods; this cult worship was probably transferred to the Old Bouleuterion, together with the cult's statue, after the Persian Wars. It seems that between 415 and 406 B.C., immediately to the west of it, another building was erected for the same purpose, the New Bouleuterion which among other elements had a shrine dedicated to Zeus Boulaios and Athena Boulaia, as well as altars for Hestia Boulaia and other gods.[48] Here I will not go into details concerning the internal structure of the two buildings.[49] From then on the Old Bouleuterion, which still contained the statue of the Mother of the Gods, stopped being used for political purposes and became an archive and a place for cult worship. Perhaps from the middle of the fourth century B.C. the old building had begun to be known only for the latter function, receiving the name *Μητρῷον*, although it remained the official archive. Around 140 B.C. a new building was erected on top of the Old Bouleuterion. It

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44 The succession of the two complexes appears to be undoubted, despite the fact that some authors seem to suggest a contemporaneity between the two: e.g. Guido (1967), 128. Likewise must be rejected the function of the Oratory of Phalaris as the *heroon* of a Roman woman, which has been supposed since Marconi (1926), 111.

45 Greco and Theodorescu (1983), 80: "la costruzione di un tempio o di un santuario sopra quello che era stato un edificio pubblico si spiega benissimo con un nuovo ordine politico ed istituzionale; e quale può essere dal III secolo a.C. in poi questo nuovo ordine se non quello romano?".

46 Coarelli and Torelli (1984), 152-153.

47 On this subject see Alvar (1985), 236-273; *id.* (1984), 143-148.

48 References in Wycherley (1957), 128, and nos. 387-433.

49 See a recent discussion in Hansen and Fischer-Hansen (1994), 42-43; on the chronology of that part of the *agora*, see Shear (1993), 383-482.

had two functions: to house the cult of the Mother and, at the same time, to be used as an archive for the state.[50]

It is, consequently, a clear instance of reuse; the old assembly place loses its primary function completely, but retains that of an archive, which had previously been its secondary function. In this case, moreover, the religious reuse seems to be closely related to both the original function and the function fulfilled by the New Bouleuterion immediately next to it, since archives and many legal documents were kept under Rea's protection.[51]

III. Retention of the Earlier Architectonic Structure, but Change of Function

Delos. The *Ekklesiasterion* (Fig. 46)

We find another possible instance of reuse in Delos. There, to the north of the northern portico of the Artemision, a building was excavated in the twenties which was identified as the *ekklesiasterion*. This has a complex history of architectonic modification which I will not go into here. However, I would like to mention that during the first century B.C. a longitudinal wall was erected on that same spot, dividing the building in half. In one of the resulting rooms, called "X" during the excavation process (16.60 x 14.50 m.), a small *naiskos* appears to have been built later and devoted to the imperial cult and, additionally, benches from the theatre were placed there. There was perhaps a statue of Augustus, and it is not unlikely that assemblies would have continued to take place here. In the other room there is another base for a statue, but a smaller one.[52]

The complex building history of the *ekklesiasterion* in Delos, owing to its age and intricacy, provides data which are difficult to interpret. What is certain, however, is that the size of the space devoted to political assembly gets smaller and the place is transformed into a shrine for the imperial cult. It is also conceivable that this reduction in space is related to the decline of the civil administration, and that their meetings are now guided by a new divinity, the *genius imperatoris*; perhaps this situation is similar to that attested by Cicero regarding the *bouleuterion* in Syracuse, which contained statues of Marcellus and Verres.[53] In any case, it is possible to consider this a certain kind of reuse of an assembly place for religious purposes.

Mantineia. The *Bouleuterion* (Fig. 47)

Some similarities with the case just described are found in what at the time of its

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50 Thompson (1937), 115-217; an early criticism of this reconstruction in Picard (1938), 97-101. See also McDonald (1943), 131-138, 170-179; Travlos (1971), 191-193, 352-356; Rhodes (1972), 30-48; Camp (1986), 52-53, 90-94, 179-180. The references in the ancient authors have been collected by Wycherley (1957), nos. 465-519.

51 McDonald (1943), 161-165; Camp (1986), 93-94.

52 Vallois (1929), 185-315 at 278-312; McDonald (1943), 91-96; Bruneau and Ducat (1983), 159.

53 Cic. *II Verr.* II. 19, 21, 59; *ibid.* IV. 53, 61, 64.

discovery was considered to be the *bouleuterion* of Mantineia in Arcadia.[54] It is a rectangular building, situated in the *agora* and facing into it; its measurements are 35 by 19 metres, and it has wings at each side. In its main, northern, façade, there were several bases for statues. Its initial stage belongs to the fourth century B.C. and the building was extended during the Hellenistic period (third century B.C.). During the Roman Empire some alterations take place which change the building as a whole. In the western wing some walls are erected which delimit a rectangular space (15.90 x 8.35 m.) from the rest of the construction; its orientation is radically changed, since a door is opened on the southern side, with two columns supporting a pediment. Through the lobby, there is access to an *oikos* in which two bases for statues were found. It has been suggested that this could be a shrine for the imperial cult. There has not been any recent work here either, with the exception of some cleaning and consolidation work in the sixties.[55]

In Mantineia, the meeting place is finally closed down after the construction of a chapel devoted to the imperial cult. The suitability of the location could not be better: next to the *agora* and in a prominent place in the old Hellenic city, as in some of the cases described above. The reuse, therefore, must have had a clearly symbolic nature in this case as well. Moreover, the change in the general orientation of the building is most significant, and is possibly a consequence of the new requirements and demands of the Roman city.

IV. Upgrading of the Earlier Architectonic Structure, with Possible Retention of its Function

Metapontion. The *Ekklesiasterion*-Theatre (Fig. 48)

We return now to the colonial Greek world, to look at one of the newest and most representative political assembly places in the Greek world as a whole, the *ekklesiasterion*-theatre in Metapontion.

In the northwestern part of the *agora* in Metapontion, near a *temenos* devoted to Zeus Agoraios, a wooden platform, *ikria*, was erected towards the end of the seventh century B.C., which was possibly of trapezoidal shape and which was later destroyed by fire; it was perhaps replaced by a rudimentary earth bank supported by large stones. In the middle of the sixth century the monumentalisation on the site was begun, by means of the construction of a circular structure devised to contain an earth bank bounding on the inside a flat, rectangular space or *orchestra*, with access through two axial *dromoi*; this could hold about 7,500-8,000 people. During the first quarter of the fifth century, it was covered with stone to form terraces of seats and delimit the space inside. This most original structure was used for both political and athletic activities, with an important religious background. From the second half of the fifth century it seems that the structure began losing its function; during the first half of the fourth century it was abandoned and partially dismantled; from the second half of the fourth century onwards a period of

54 This is the general opinion, though Anti (1947), 275-276 considers this building to be a royal stoa, similar to that in Athens and those in Tarsos and Calauria. In any case, at least in Athens the Royal Stoa was sometimes used as a meeting place for the Areopagus, certainly from the fourth century B.C.: cf. McDonald (1943), 130; Camp (1986), 104. Recently, Gneisz (1990), 330-331 has accepted that the building in Mantinea could be a *bouleuterion*, but Winter (1987), 240-241 rejects this hypothesis.

55 Fougères (1887), 486-487; *id.* (1890), 256-260; *id.* (1898), 174-177; McDonald (1943), 198-200; Demakopoulou (1965), 178.

growth for the city leads its inhabitants to recover the old meeting place, although music and athletic contests now dominate its uses. In consequence, a theatre is built on the remains of the old *ekklesiasterion*, possibly because in that period the theatre had already become the habitual meeting place for political assemblies.[56]

If the term reuse can be applied to this case, one must admit that the reuse is of a special type. If we accept, with Mertens, that there is a similarity between the uses of the first circular building and the theatre, it would be inappropriate to speak of reuse *per se* since there is a certain continuity; however, the building of a new construction, which is totally different from the previous one, indicates an undoubted separation. In both periods the assemblies held there can be observed to be generally — though not exclusively — religious; this is reinforced by the proximity to the *temenos* of Zeus Agoraios. Moreover, there is no doubt that the theatre was built on that site because that was where the remains of the previous building were; thus the recovery of a previously partly-abandoned area of the *agora* is emphasised. Therefore, in Metapontion it is possible to speak of a symbolic space which is reused and takes on similar functions, although under a different formal appearance.

Gortyn. The *Bouleuterion*-Odeion (Fig. 49)

From Magna Graecia we move on to Crete, to the city of Gortyn, where we may find a similar case to that witnessed in Metapontion.

At the beginning of this century the Italian Mission excavated a group of monuments with a complex history; it seems that the oldest part belonged to a quadrangular construction, of about 28.74 x 34 m., which may possibly be a *bouleuterion*; its date has not been determined. Possibly on the same site another building was erected during the first half or the middle of the fifth century B.C., this time of a circular layout, in the walls of which was carved the famous Law Code of Gortyn. Guarducci suggests that it was a portico in which public meetings were held. However, with the knowledge we now have of other examples of circular meeting places, it may not be at all unlikely that it could have contained circular or semi-circular terraces of seats. The whole construction was dismantled in the first century B.C. in order to erect another building, also in the same place and almost certainly with a circular ground plan as well. The blocks of stone with ancient laws were placed within, suggesting that it still maintained a political function. In Roman times (Trajan) all the space would be retaken in order to build an odeion and the wall with the inscription would become part of the external *diazoma* of the odeion.[57]

In spite of some uncertainty regarding the stratigraphical sequence of the group of buildings, it seems quite likely that the precinct was used for political purposes in Greek times;[58] the construction of an odeion in Roman times may have partially changed its character, but the reuse of the legal inscription may perhaps indicate that there was some continuity in use — for political purposes — of the new odeion in Roman times.

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56 Mertens (1982), 1-60; cf. Mertens (1985), 664-668.

57 Pernier (1914), 373-376; *id.* (1925-26), 1-69; cf. McDonald (1943), 189-192; Anti (1947), 158; Guarducci (1969), 68-76. On the elaborate process of transformation see Meinel (1980), 177-178, 183-187, 253-259. On the inscription and its chronological problems, Willetts (1967).

58 Against, Hansen and Fischer-Hansen (1994), 55, n. 123.

Ephesos. The *Bouleuterion*-Odeion (Fig. 50)

For a long time it was thought that this building had been an odeion; however, more recent studies have finally identified it as a *bouleuterion*; it is also near the city's *agora* and the prytaneion. It is of late construction, from the first century after Christ; as indicated by certain epigraphical evidence, it had great symbolic and political importance within the city. It must have been in the middle of the second century after Christ when a Roman senator of Ephesian origin, Publius Vedius Antoninus, transformed it into an odeion,[59] perhaps for the festivities honouring the Emperor Hadrian every four years.[60]

Not much more can be said about this building, except that thanks to the epigraphy[61] we know that it was presided over by a golden statue of Artemis as well as other images; given that its political and religious use is obvious, it does not seem strange that it should be converted from a *bouleuterion* into an odeion, where its use for cult worship and public spectacle was continued, in connection with the worship of the Emperor Hadrian. It can be included, then, among the other examples of the transformation of political assembly places into places of public spectacle.[62]

Conclusion

Having finished this brief overview, and as a conclusion to what we have seen so far, we should first recall that political assembly places had an obviously sacred nature, which was reinforced through sacrifices whenever an assembly took place. As Hansen asserts, referring to the Athenian assembly: "When the citizens had settled in the auditorium, proceedings began with a sacrifice: a pig was slaughtered and the *peristiarchos* dragged it round the Pnyx and purified the Assembly-place with its blood. Then the crier (*keryx*) declaimed a prayer (*euche*) and a curse (*ara*) upon any speaker (*rhetor*) who should attempt to lead the people astray";[63] as stated in an inscription from the year 228/7 B.C., it was an ancestral custom (*patrios*) to offer sacrifices to Apollo Prostaterios, Artemis Boulaia and other divinities before the beginning of the assembly;[64] the existence of altars and images of gods within those places is also known,[65] and frequently there is a relation between assembly places and the *agora*,[66] sanctuaries and places of cult worship. There are also those who have established a relation between political assembly places and the

59 *I.Ephesos* 460.

60 Eichler (1966); Fossel (1967), 72-81; cf. Meinel (1980), 125-133; see also Rogers (1991), 86-87. On the quarter in which the odeion-*bouleuterion* is located, Alzinger (1972-75), 229-300.

61 *I.Ephesos* 27, lines 157-158.

62 It is, however, quite common that these small political assembly places ultimately acquire more varied functions in Roman times, as can be seen, among other cases, in Iasos, which is very similar to that of Ephesos; cf. Parapetti (1985), 105-136.

63 Hansen (1991), 142; it seems that the same thing can be said about the meetings of the *boule*; cf. Rhodes (1972), 36-37 and McDonald (1943), 281-282.

64 Wycherley (1957), 56, no. 119, lines 10-13.

65 E.g. for the *bouleuterion* in Athens: McDonald (1943), 131-138: Zeus Boulaios, Athena Boulaia, Apollo, Demos, Hestia; also, *ibid.*, 274-275 and the list of gods usually related to the assembly places in 279-284.

66 McDonald (1943), 275; this is true, even, in the case of the Athenian Pnyx as Joyner (1982), 121-130 has shown.

cult of heroes.[67] Thus, the main explanation for the religious reuse of these constructions would appear to be found in what we could call the "inherent sacredness" of the place.

As we have been able to observe in the cases analysed here, reuse can take place in four different ways:

1) The earlier architectonic structure is retained. This is what we find in the Pnyx in Athens and the theatre in Syracuse. In both instances, the reuse does not bear much relation — in terms of its function — to the earlier structure; on the contrary, advantage is taken of the abandonment of the structure, and of the religious nature of the place, to establish religious manifestations which are completely alien to the original purpose of the constructions. In both cases, additionally, such manifestations have a distinctly popular character.

2) The earlier architectonic structure is destroyed. The clearest examples of this are Poseidonia and Agrigento, which show significant similarities. In both cases, the meeting place is carefully buried, and Roman cults originate on top of the same spot. As has been said before, Rome would assimilate the sacred character of the previous place, but would transform it for its own benefit. This type of reuse is much more subtle since it involves an ideological transfer in favour of a new political and cultural structure which, while it retains a symbolic connection with the past, channels the past through its own ways of expression.

We could also possibly see the case of the Old Bouleuterion in Athens as some kind of a transition between the first and the second model, since it is relatively easy to follow the transformation of the Old Bouleuterion into a Metroon: for a long period of time the old structure is retained, already devoid of its political function, basically for religious use until a temple is erected on that spot at a given moment.

3) The old structure is retained, but its function changes. This would be the case in Delos and Mantineia. In both instances, the old assembly places suffer architectonic alterations by which specific places are reserved, apparently, for the imperial cult. Perhaps here it is possible to think of a symbolic transference between the old power centres in the independent Greek *poleis* and the new type of power that Rome represents. We do not know, however, if the resulting places continue to fulfil political functions. But this would not be at all improbable.[68]

4) The old structures are upgraded and possibly retain their function. This would be a specific situation which I have not gone into here in detail and which involves the transformation of political assembly places into places for public spectacles, such as theatres or odeia. The cases we know of are Metapontion, Gortyn and Ephesos, and some others which are not as well documented.[69] Evidence for the possible frequency of this type of change is seen in the lengthy time-span during which such processes took place (from the sixth century B.C. to the second century after Christ). Old political assembly places undergo, because of the particular circumstances of each case, transformations which convert them into theatre-like structures, such as theatres and

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67 McDonald (1943), 276; cf. Kolb (1981), 5-19 and Anti (1969), 14 which includes the theatres also.

68 See, for instance, the case of the *bouleuterion* in Syracuse, still in use in the age of Cicero (*II Verr.* II. 19, 21, 59; *ibid.* IV. 53, 61, 64), although a statue of Marcus Marcellus, the Roman conqueror, was erected within it; cf. McDonald (1943), 153.

69 We are referring to cases such as the *synedrion* of Messene and the *bouleuterion* of Miletus, as well as the example of Tralles mentioned by Vitruvius (*De Archit.* VII. 5.5); McDonald (1943), 63, n. 101, 204-217; Gneisz (1990), 333-334, 335-336. On the *ekklesiasterion* in Argos, where the odeion is built upon the terraces of the previous construction, McDonald (1943), 80-84, and Hansen and Fischer-Hansen (1994), 57-61. In the first three cases, it seems that a stage for theatrical purposes was added to the old political meeting places.

odeia. Although the new buildings are likely to continue to fulfil political functions as well, the emphasis on their new form seems to have changed their appearance into that of places of public spectacles. It is also possible that a modification in the religious underpinning of such structures may have taken place, even when, as in the case of Ephesos, it seems that the transformation of the old *bouleuterion* into an odeion is related to religious festivities honouring the Emperor Hadrian.

Another aspect which arises out of the analysis above is that, in most cases, religious reuse follows a clear direction established by the power structures. The most obvious examples of this are Poseidonia and Agrigento, where the enormous task involved in the urban and symbolic transformation can only be attributable to an explicit intention on the part of the political powers; the same can be said about some of the other transformations considered here. As opposed to these, the examples of the Pnyx in Athens and the theatre in Syracuse appear to be manifestations of religious feelings which are popular in character, and which express, by means of extremely simple and inexpensive procedures, the kind of religious sentiment of the average citizen.

We have also observed that in a great number of cases the period of the transformation coincides with the Roman presence, which sometimes played an instrumental role in such processes. In other instances, however, the role played by Rome is almost passive; in fact, it is the Roman presence that, by keeping the old political assembly places in disuse, favours the growth of accompanying, and somewhat marginal, religious manifestations.

Finally, and although I have not dealt with the topic here at all, it might be worth reflecting further about the eventual formal connection between the Greek and Roman assembly places, especially in relation to the question concerning the origin of the Roman *comitium*;[70] this is of course outside the scope of our present purposes but there is no doubt that there exists a clear connection between them.

In this paper I have tried to integrate the phenomenon of the growth of the cult of Zeus Hypsistos found in the Pnyx with other more or less similar instances which have taken place in different parts of the Greek world. The common factor is the reuse of places for political assembly; the main conclusion is that similar patterns of reuse can be observed. This may provide another means of understanding the evolution of the Greek city, especially in its transition into a Roman city, or a city of the Roman period.[71]

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70 Sjöqvist (1951), 400-411; Krause (1976), 31-69.

71 On this topic, see Domínguez (1994), 125-126.

General Bibliography

References to ancient authors in the Proceedings follow the abbreviations of *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*[2], with occasional expansion for clarity. The references to modern literature follow the Harvard system, giving only the author's name and the date of publication in the footnotes, whereas the full bibliographical references are printed in this bibliography. All abbreviations of serials in this bibliography follow the system used in *The American Journal of Archaeology* 95 (1991), 1-16.

In addition the following abbreviations have been used in the Proceedings:

IG = *Inscriptiones Graecae*, Berlin 1873-
I.Iasos = *Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien* 28.1-28.2. *Die Inschriften von Iasos* I-II, Bonn 1985.
I.Ephesos = *Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien* 11.1-17.4. *Die Inschriften von Ephesos* I-VIII, Bonn 1979-1984.
SEG = *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*, Leiden 1923-

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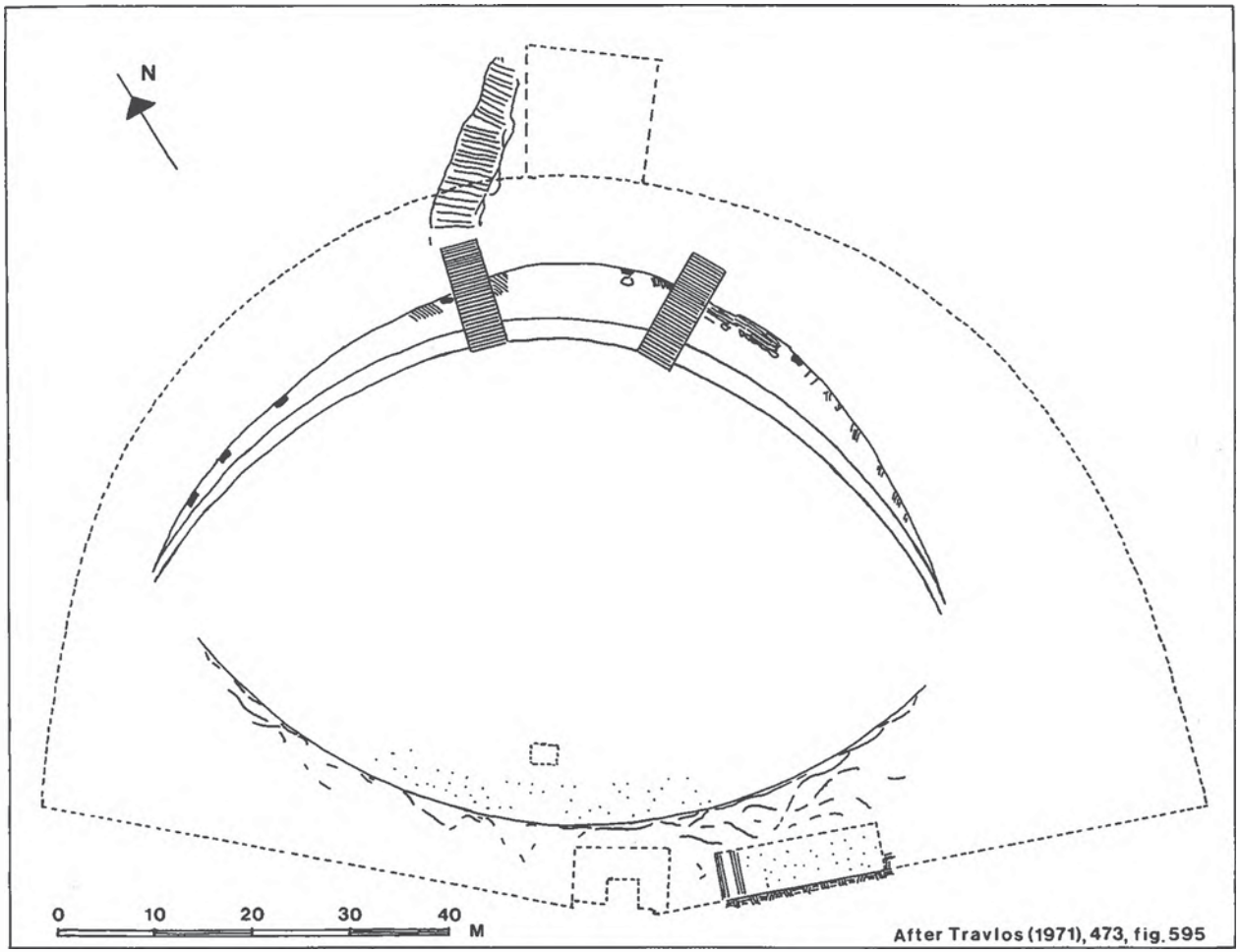

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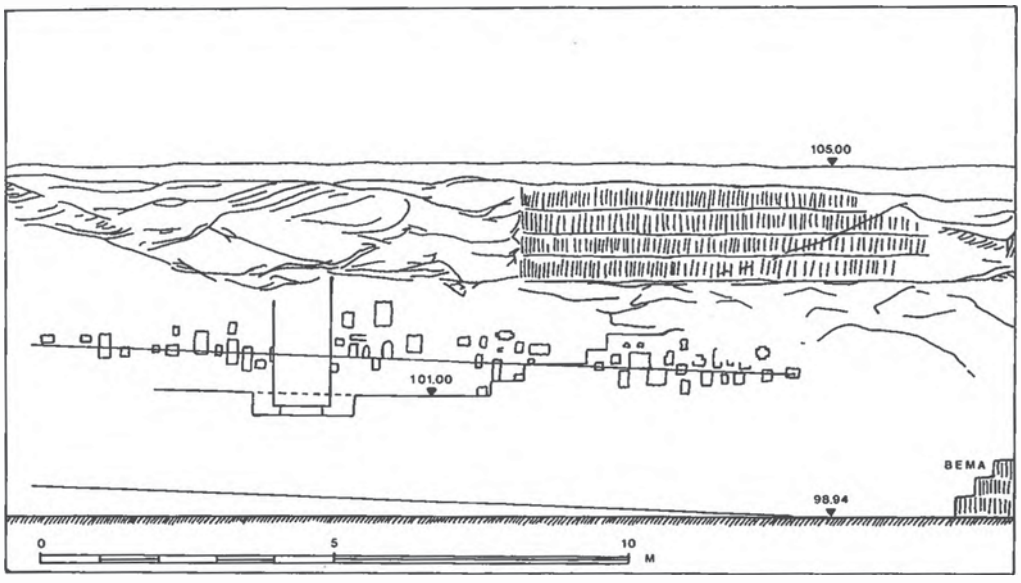

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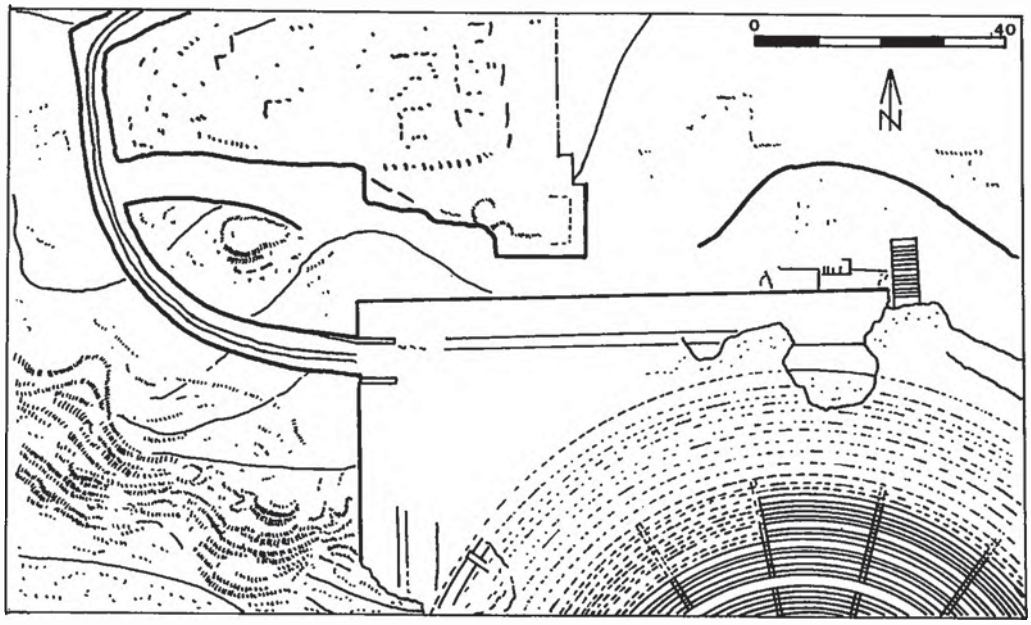

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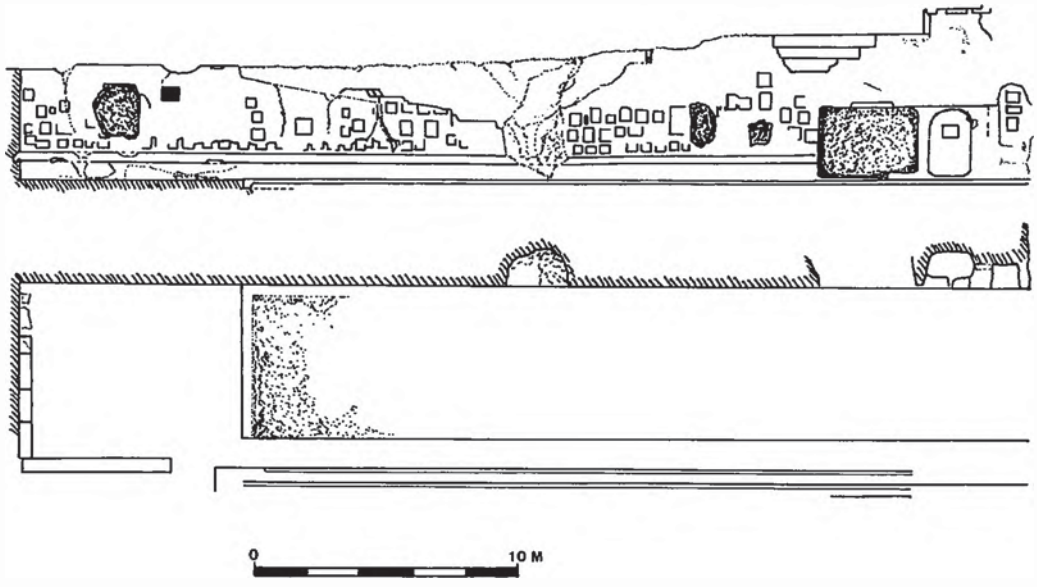

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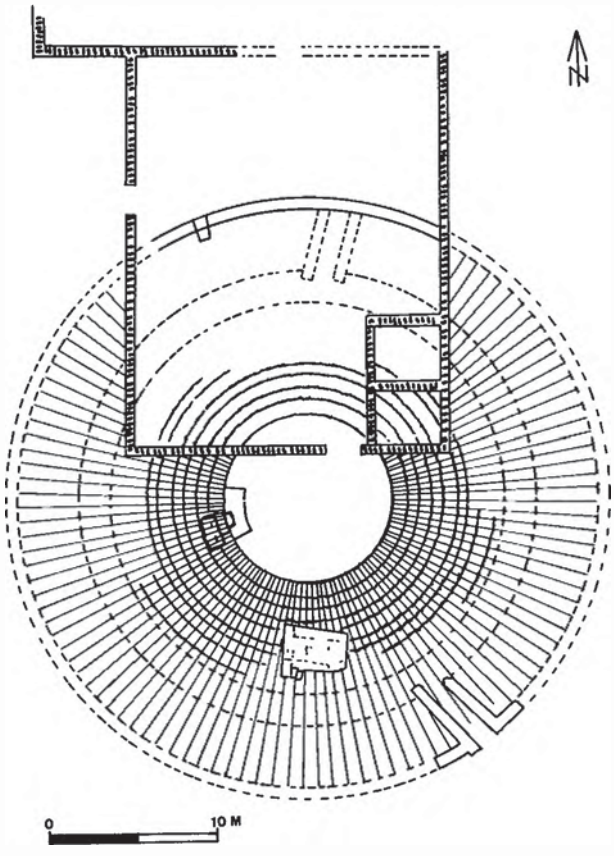

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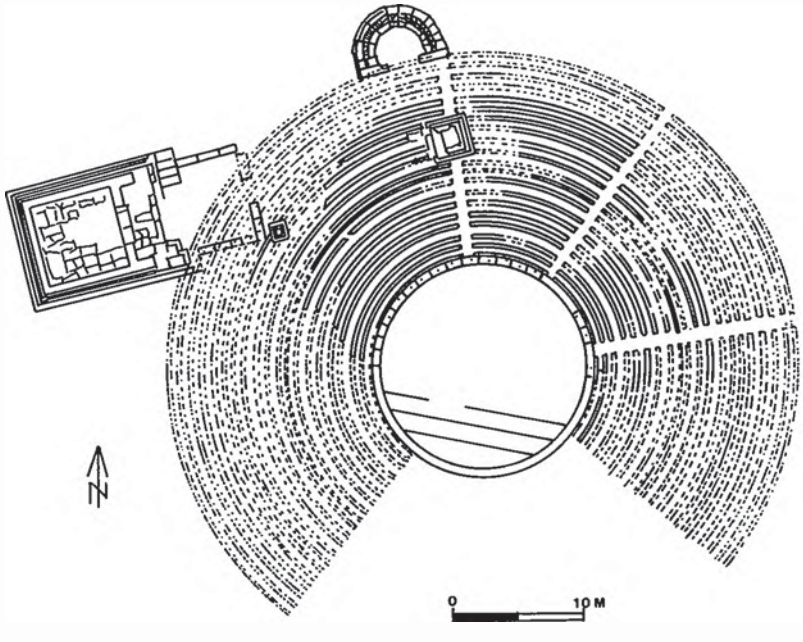

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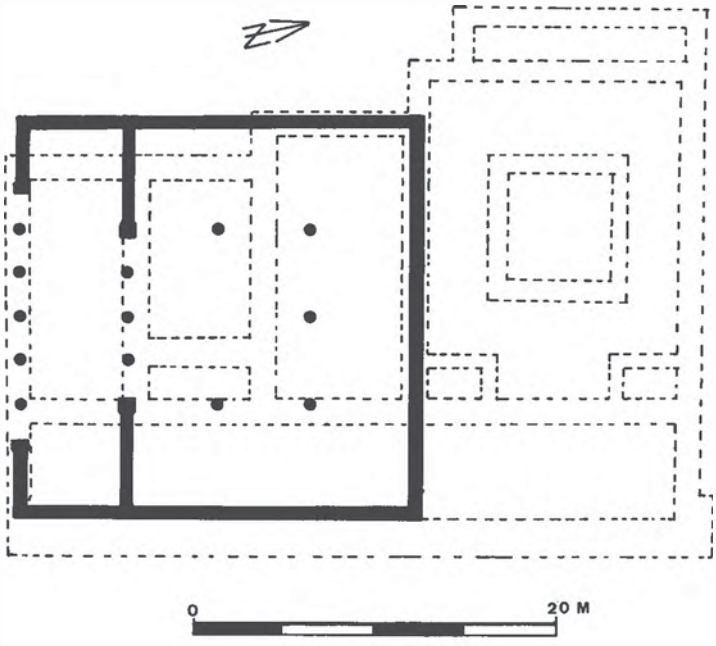

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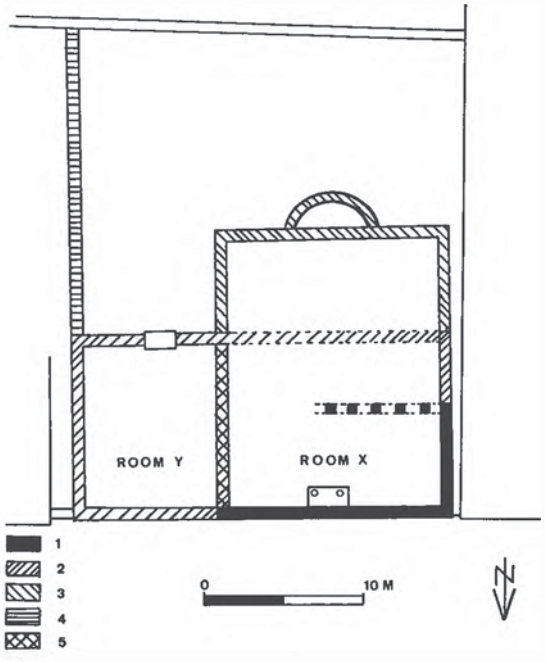

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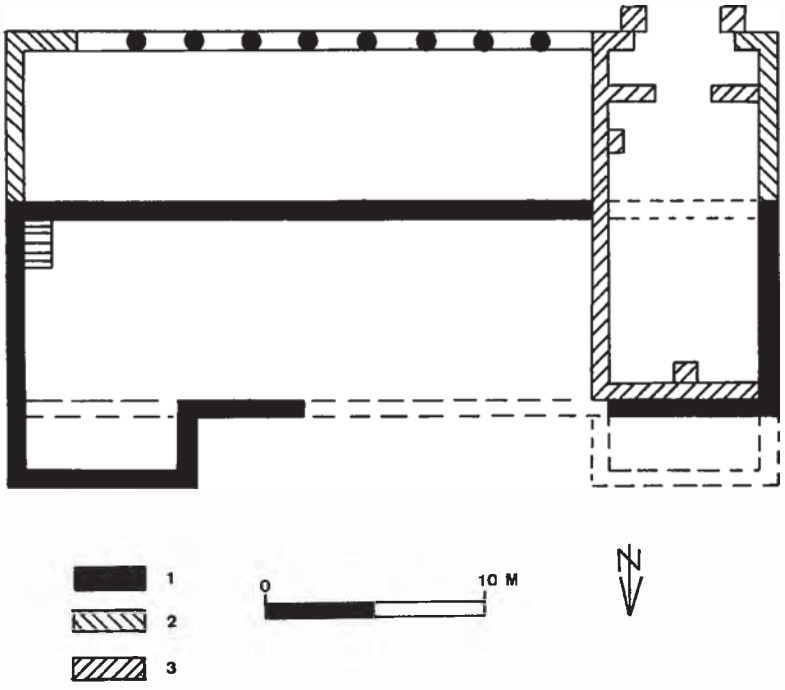

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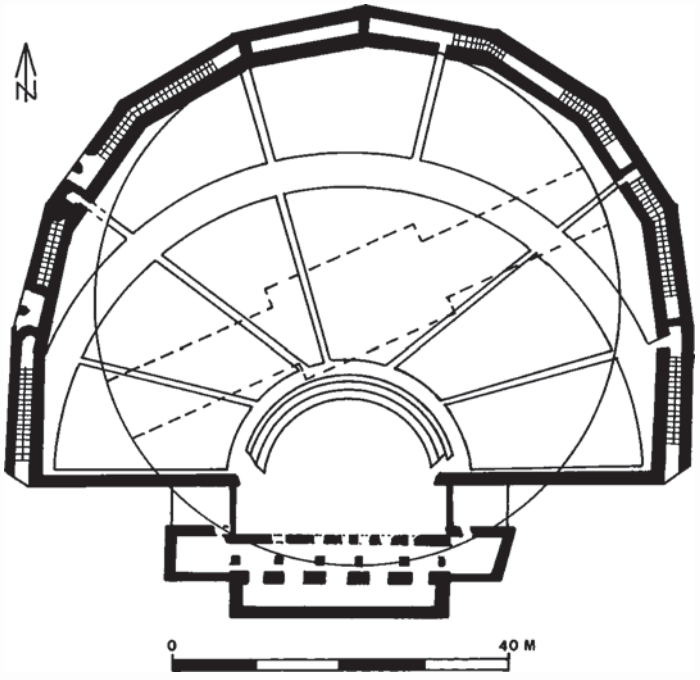

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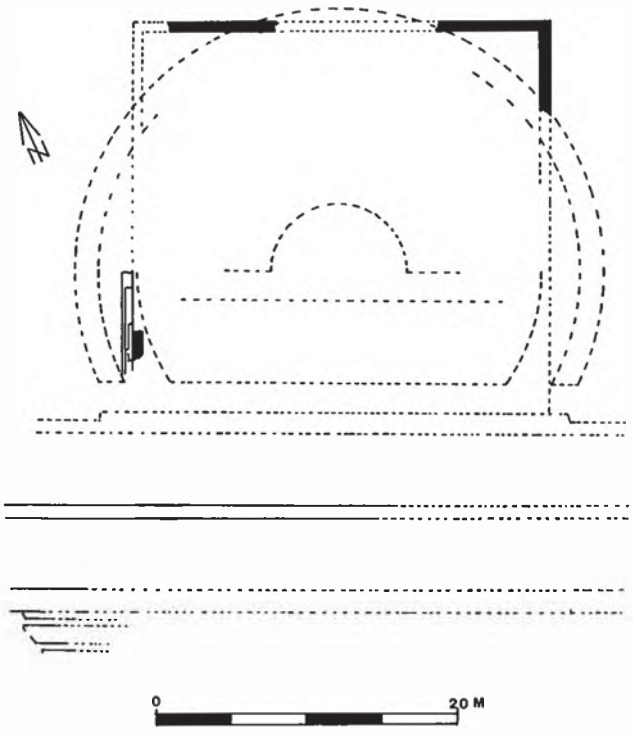

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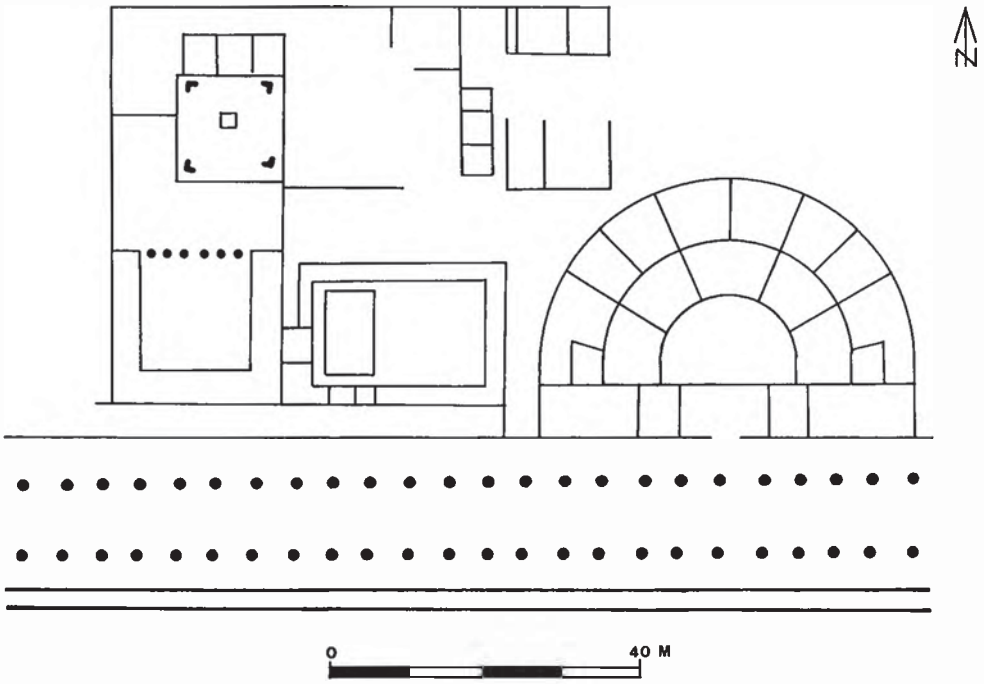

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