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City and Sanctuary in Hellenistic Asia Minor. Sacred and Ideological Landscapes

Introduction

The research presented here investigates the role played by extra-urban sanctuaries in Hellenistic Asia Minor (fig. 1). Using an interdisciplinary approach, it addresses the social and geographical network, the influence of cities, federations, and rulers, as well as the reception by the public, and the periods of political and economic change. In this way it will be seen how extra-urban sanctuaries were essential in solidifying or redefining the conceptual landscapes of their urban political centers. This paper discusses the background, goals, targets, and method of this research.

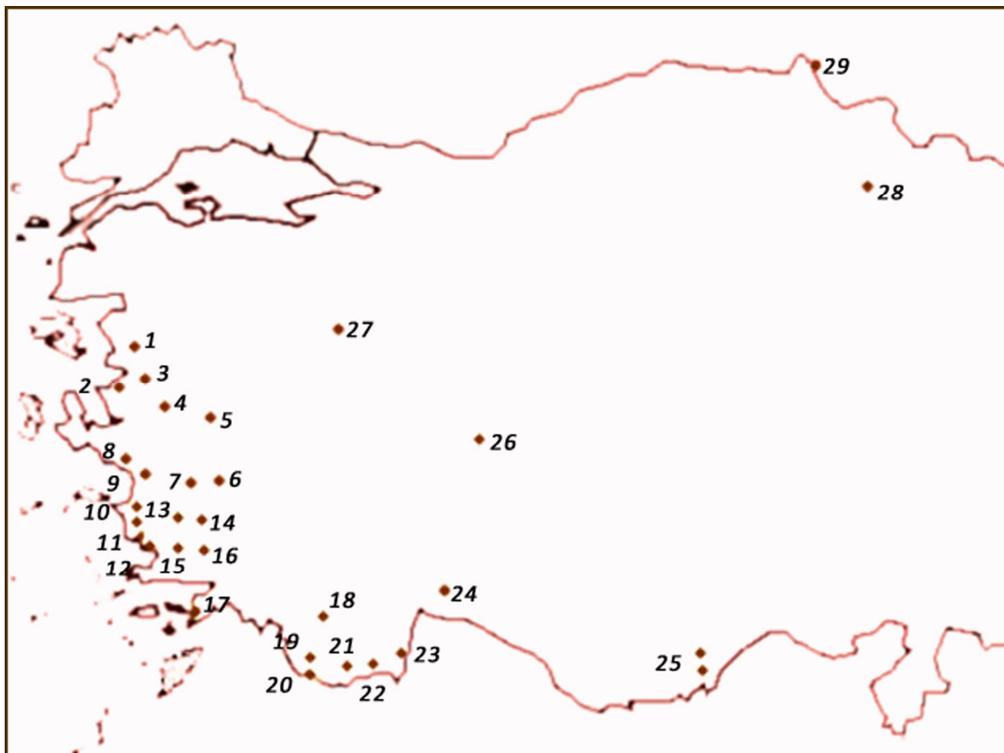


Fig. 1 - Map showing cities with major outlying sanctuaries; the numbers correspond with Table 1.

Background

As platforms of power and diplomacy, sanctuaries in remote areas were often extensions of the political dimension beyond the urban core of the polis into its territory, anchoring the city to its countryside and vice-versa. Extensive studies have been made of these issues for the Archaic and Classical Greek worlds, but rarely for the Hellenistic period¹. Yet in this period sanctuaries particularly seem to exhibit issues of concern to society and state; through the dedications made and the decrees set up there they function as arenas where formal relations between rulers and cities, between cities and other cities, between a city and its citizens, and between citizens themselves were established and acknowledged as points of reference. Combined with the volatile political situation, as cities found themselves subject to first one ruler then another, sanctuaries often reflected shifting royal allegiances as privileges were bestowed while frontiers were redrawn and the political landscape reshaped. Questions of territory became increasingly dynamic as cities gained power and sought to expand their spheres of influence, sometimes through *sympoliteia* or even *synoikismos*. Sanctuaries were media outlets where formal agreements were posted; their festivals also served as channels to other poleis by invitation to participate². Also, sanctuaries increasingly appear as bases for *koina* and larger multi-polis federations³. Outlying sanctuaries may well have been instrumental in mobilizing local populations for the formation of new cities in the general surge of urbanism. Finally, issues of origin and ethnicity were never far away from the politics of culture, best seen through style, whether indigenous, adopted, or both. Through reorganizations, royal benefactions and civic display, rural sanctuaries were often the linking pin between these various forces; when they are at the heart of a community, sanctuaries, more than any other institution, can give the clearest picture of both the issues at stake and the players concerned.

Goals

This project aims to understand the various ways in which major extra-urban sanctuaries in Hellenistic Asia Minor were vital in the creation of civic identity in the landscape and territory of their corresponding cities. The relationship between sanctuary and settlement may differ depending on the kind of interaction between the two, or the origin of the city. Ancient Ionian poleis, such as Ephesos or Miletos, have a longstanding relationship with their extra-urban sanctuaries, although they underwent a significant new phase in the Hellenistic period, due in part to their special relationship with the Hellenistic kings. Other cities, more local or even indigenous in character, often monumentalized their territorial sanctuaries as expressions of 'globalization', adopting a style derived from Greek architecture to communicate to a wider audience, e.g. Xanthos and the Letoon, or Alabanda and her sanctuaries. Also, in this period several poleis were newly founded or refounded directly by the monarchs; longstanding sanctuaries had their own networks and local ties with the territory and were often the key to the success of the new polis, as is the case with Stratonikeia and the envelopment of the Hekateion at Lagina.

The list of poleis with extra-urban sanctuaries in Table 1 shows that this was a fairly common phenomenon for poleis in Hellenistic Asia Minor. This research focuses on *new or developing poleis* which relied on an existing sanctuary and its god(s) to establish its ideology. To examine the ways in which the

¹ E.g. studies such as DE POLIGNAC 1995, or those in ALCOCK, OSBORNE 1994, and more recent anti-binary views such as POLINSKAYA 2006, deal primarily with the issue of rural sanctuaries and polis formation in the Archaic and Classical periods. Sanctuaries in Hellenistic Asia Minor have been the subject of comprehensive social, economical and political studies in DEBORD 1982, BOFFO 1985 and DIGNAS 2002, though less with regard to their particular role in civic territory.

² See also the sanctuary of Zeus at Aizanoi, in Phrygia, which received gifts of land from a Pergamene king (probably Attalos I) and a Bithynian king (Prusias I); Aizanoi lies outside the territory of both kingdoms, but may have been perceived as a potential area of conquest or buffer zone, see BOFFO 1985, 109–110, and LAFFI 1971.

³ On the discussion of *koina*, *ethnoi* and federations as parts of the societal organization of at least Karia, see DEBORD 2003.

Table 1 - Poleis with extra-urban sanctuaries in Western Asia Minor (* case studies).

No.	Polis	Sanctuary	Distance
1	Pergamon*	Meter Aspendone (<i>Mamurt Kale</i>)	>30 km SE
		Meter (<i>Kapıkaya</i>)	6.5 km NW
		Asklepios	5 km SW
		Athena Nikephoros (extramural)	?
2	<i>Kyme</i>	Meter	Extramural
3	<i>Aigai</i>	Apollo Chresterios	c.3 km E
4	<i>Magnesia under Sipylos</i>	Meter Sipyrene	
5	<i>Sardis</i>	Artemis	1 km SW
6	<i>Nysa</i>	Kore & Pluton (<i>Acharaca</i>)	c.6 km W
7	<i>Tralles</i>	Zeus Larasios (<i>Larasa</i>)	?
8	<i>Notion/Kolophon</i>	Apollo Klaros	c.13 km to S
9	<i>Ephesos</i>	Artemis	c.2.3 to NE
10	<i>Priene</i>	Poseidon (<i>Panionion</i>)	10/27 km to N
11	<i>Miletos</i>	Apollo Didyma	20 km to S
12	<i>lasos</i>	Artemis? (<i>Çanacık Tepe</i>)	c.3 km N
		NW extramural sanctuary	Extramural
13	<i>Amyzon</i>	Artemis	?
14	<i>Alabanda</i>	Artemis	Extramural
15	Mylasa*	Zeus Labraundos	13 km N
		Sinuri	12 km SE
16	Stratonikeia*	Hekate (<i>Lagina</i>)	c. 13 km N
		Zeus (<i>Panamara</i>)	c. 12 km S
17	<i>Bybassos</i>	Hemithea (<i>Kastabos</i>)	c.2km E
18	<i>Oinoanda</i>	Leto	?
19	<i>Xanthos</i>	Leto	c.3.5 km W
20	<i>Patara</i>	Apollo	Extramural
21	<i>Trysa</i>	Zeus & Helios	Extramural
22	<i>Myra</i>	Apollo (<i>Sura</i>)	c. 4.5 km W
		<i>Moskar</i>	5 km N

23	<i>Olympos</i>	Hephaistos (<i>Chimaera</i>)	c.4 km N
24	<i>Perge</i>	Artemis Pergaia	?
25	<i>Olba Diokaisareia & Seleukeia</i>	Zeus Olbios (<i>Uzuncaburç</i>)	c.32km to NW
26	<i>Pisidian Antioch</i>	Men Askaenos	c. 3.5 km SE
27	<i>Aizanoi</i>	Meter Steunene	2.3 km SW
28	<i>Amaseia</i>	Zeus Stratios	c. 10 km E
29	<i>Sinope</i>	Zeus Dikaiosyne (<i>Asar Tepe</i>)	c. 6 km SW?

religious and social landscape was critical in this regard, three cities and their sanctuaries will serve as case studies for more in-depth analyses.

Case studies

The selection of these sites is based on their suitability according to the list of criteria shown under methodology, the availability of data, both literary, historical (epigraphical), and/or archaeological, but also because each of these poleis had more than one remote sanctuary that was important to civic ideology. Also, the first two cities were neighbours in Karia, and Pergamon was a royal city as well, with clear ruler involvement at its sanctuaries. These aspects help to show how complex the relationship between city and sanctuary could be, and help prevent oversimplifying the meaning of any given rural sanctuary for its city and civic territory.

- 1) *Pergamon*: Pergamon (modern Bergama), was radically transformed by Philetairos in the early 3rd century BC from a modest Greek town on a small but prominent mountain in the Kaikos valley, into a major fortified and prestigious center of a super-state. Under Philetairos' successors, the Attalids, Pergamon rose to become a major power in the Hellenistic world by the 2nd century BC. Much of their success depended on their negotiation skills and resourcefulness in creating allies. When Philetairos targeted the sanctuary of the Mother of the Gods, Meter Theon, some 30 km southeast of town, for endowment, he set the ambitious tone of expansion for his successors. The sanctuary is located at Mamurt Kale, on the highest peak of the Aspodene mountains (today the Yünd Dağ); many of the communities around it now fell under Pergamene rule, as did the sanctuary itself. Whether Philetairos was also responsible for the development of the sanctuary of Meter at Kapıkaya, 6 km northwest of Pergamon, is unclear. Although this was more of a nature sanctuary, on a craggy peak overlooking the Selinus river, it formed a direct line of visibility with Mamurt Kale across the sanctuary of Athena on the Pergamene acropolis. It also became a popular place of cult despite the difficulty of access.
- 2) *Stratonikeia*: According to Strabo (14.2.25), Stratonikeia was a military colony founded by the Seleukid kings in the first quarter of the 3rd century BC. Epigraphic and archaeological evidence indicates that the new city was made up of the older surrounding communities, probably together with a modest group of colonists. One of these cities was Koranza, whose goddess Hekate at Lagina, 8 km north of Stratonikeia, became the major tutelary (protective) deity of Stratonikeia by the 2nd century BC. The sanctuary of Zeus at Panamara, some 10 km south of Stratonikeia, belonged at first to a separate community but was also later absorbed into the civic ideology of Stratonikeia, and by the 1st century BC his cult became the foremost cult of the developing city.
- 3) *Mylasa*: Mylasa (modern Milas) was the old royal residence of the Hekatomnids, satraps of the Persian Achaemenid empire in the region of Karia in the 4th century BC. In the mid-4th century, the

Hekatomnid ruler Maussollos radically reorganized Karia, among others by moving the royal residence to the coast at Halikarnassos (modern Bodrum) and by monumentalizing the sanctuary of Zeus at Labraunda, some 13 km to the north. Sinuri, was a local Karian god whose sanctuary was located roughly 12 km to the ESE; his was also one of the few sanctuaries to receive benefactions from the Hekatomnids during their rule.

Method

In order to apprehend the nature of the various relationships between these sanctuaries and their poleis, data from a number of well-documented sites will closely be examined and correlated with their historical contexts. Criteria will be used to distinguish the various aspects of civic identity at sanctuaries. Based on these results, classifications will be formulated, which will form the base for a multi-faceted model.

Criteria

The criteria listed below serve as a framework for the basic line of investigation, but also to determine the extent to which a sanctuary was integrated in civic or political ideology. These criteria include:

- ◆ Social-geographical location
- ◆ *description*: proximity to roads, villages or boundaries, economic resources
- ◆ *source type*: historical topography, literary sources, geographical data
- ◆ Visibility
- ◆ *description*: viewshed of the sanctuary, dominance over the environment
- ◆ *source type*: geographical data, architecture
- ◆ Processional routes
- ◆ *description*: connecting polis to sanctuary, encompassing landscape
- ◆ *source type*: historical topography, geographical data, architecture (roads)
- ◆ Festival rituals
- ◆ *description*: primary function of sanctuary, public participation, political concerns
- ◆ *source type*: architecture, ceramics, inscriptions, literary sources
- ◆ Public space
- ◆ *description*: open spaces in/near the sanctuary for gatherings (festivals, banqueting) and display
- ◆ *source type*: architecture, ceramics, inscriptions
- ◆ Monumentality
- ◆ *description*: visual prominence and representational status, stylistic associations
- ◆ *source type*: architecture, monumental art, inscriptions, spatial design
- ◆ Administration and priesthoods
- ◆ *description*: controlling parties over the sanctuary and its resources
- ◆ *source type*: inscriptions, numismatics
- ◆ Civic communication
- ◆ *description*: public documents, dedications, regional scope of sanctuary
- ◆ *source type*: inscriptions, monumental art
- ◆ Cult iconography in civic contexts
- ◆ *description*: deity as emblem of state
- ◆ *source type*: monumental art, numismatics
- ◆ Historical context
- ◆ *description*: change, political development, chronological shifts in scope of public, renown beyond polis
- ◆ *source type*: literary sources, all of the above mentioned.

Any of these criteria may indicate a political relationship between a sanctuary and its polis, they do not all have to be met for a sanctuary to be considered representative of civic ideology. Assessing sanctuaries according to these criteria of course also depends on the quality of the data available. These indicators are first used to determine suitable case studies, Pergamon, Stratonikeia, and Mylasa and their sanctuaries, which are then further analyzed according to the criteria.

Classifications

Once the sanctuaries are assessed as to how civic ideology was expressed, then certain types of function may emerge as the sanctuaries are seen in their wider socio-political-geographical context; some possibilities include, for example, sanctuaries as territorial markers (e.g. frontiers or borders), as connecting urban and hinterland, as connecting nodes in a network (crucial to the polis), as means of access (e.g. along roads or mountain passes), as a way to incorporate an important 'rural' or 'village' community, as an economic security in the territory (through landholdings), etc. A sanctuary may occupy various roles simultaneously and they may also change with time.

Model

The data and classifications will allow for comparisons to provide information on similar but less well-documented situations. For example, understanding how Mamurt Kale helped to solidify the power of Pergamon and the Attalids may help understand the role of the sanctuary of Zeus Stratiotes for Amaseia and the Mithridatic kingdom. Yet comparisons will also extend beyond these categories of ethnicity or origin. Understanding, for example, how the economic system of sacred land leases worked at 'indigenous' Mylasa and her sanctuaries, may also help interpret a similar situation at 'colonial' Pisidian Antioch and the sanctuary of Men Askaenos. Realizing the various stages and sacred stops documented for the processional route of c.20 km from Miletos to Didyma shows a landscape full of meaning that may help picture the route between Stratonikeia and Panamara.

This research will thus provide the framework for a multi-faceted model to better interpret the diverse ways that civic identity was expressed through extra-urban sanctuaries. This model should furthermore serve as an aide in understanding those sites less thoroughly investigated but nonetheless significant.

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