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IRAD MALKIN

What were the Sacred Precincts of Brea? (IG I³ no. 46)*

In the Athenian decree concerning the foundation of a colony at Brea it is stated:

13. ... τ]-
14. [ἄ δὲ τεμ]ένη τὰ ἐχσειρεμένα ἕαν καθά[περ ἐστ]-
15. [ί, καὶ ἄλ]λα μὲ τεμενίζεν

... The sacred precincts which have been reserved shall be left just as they are and others should not be established.

Although partially restored, the text seems certain.¹ We are concerned here with two provisions: (1) to leave the reserved precincts just as they are, and (2) not to create new precincts.

Why would the state be interested in preserving the sacred precincts of a colony not yet founded? What purpose could these provisions have served? Why these limitations on the oikist's powers?² These questions are relevant not only for the Brea decree but also for Greek religious practices in general and for colonization practices in particular. The answer seems to lie in the nature of the precincts in question.

What were the sacred precincts of Brea? The two explanations one finds in the commentaries suggest that: either the precincts antedated the colony, i.e., were native precincts which the new Athenian colony then used as its own, or that they were chosen for the gods of the new community just before the passing of the Brea decree (probably by an Athenian advance party).³ I find both explanations hard to accept and would like to suggest a third approach to the problem.

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¹ IG I³ no. 46. For commentary and references to previous work see R. MEIGGS and D. LEWIS, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions to The End of The Fifth Century B. C.* (Oxford 1969) no. 49 (henceforth abbreviated ML).

² For other limitations see A. J. GRAHAM, *Colony and Mother City in Ancient Greece*. Reprinted with minor corrections (New York 1971), p. 35.

³ See ML ad loc. and below, note 12. There is no difficulty in calling non Greek sacred areas «*temenē*»; see DAREMBERG and SAGLIO, Vol. V, p. 87. Cf. S. LURIA, «Mitteilungen und

In general, archaeological evidence is of little help in determining if and when Greek colonists worshipped at native sites.⁴ Literary references are few and obscure; the most explicit, the *nomos* cited by Thucydides to the effect that sanctuaries and their cult belong to those who have power over the land, seem to refer in context (Delium) only to Greek sanctuaries.⁵ In Cyrene the oikist Battus is said by Pindar to have «founded greater groves for the gods» (κτίσεν δ' ἄλσεα μείζονα θεῶν);⁶ if this is more than just a figure of speech («very great»)⁷ one could argue that Battus used previously existing native precincts.⁸ But even if Battus enlarged upon already existing precincts this serves to illustrate the need to adapt the given precincts to the requirements of the new Greek community.

Since the precincts at Brea were decreed to be left «just as they are» the real difficulty with the explanation of «native precincts» is the assumption that these pre-existing precincts would have overlapped precisely with the needs of the new Greek *temenē*. This seems improbable. Moreover, since precincts had to be of con-

Nachrichten. Zur Rechtfertigung meiner Ergänzung von IG I² 1» *Klio* 21 (1926–7) p. 71: «... doch keine hellenischen Götter in Brea ein Heiligtum erhalten!» LURIA may be right, but for the wrong reason because he does not take into account the possibility of syncretism (see also below on Cyrene).

⁴ See in general my *Religion and the Founders of Greek Colonies* (University of Pennsylvania dissertation, Philadelphia 1981) ch. iv, pp. 242–325. Note the important comments of G. VALLET «La cité et son territoire dans les colonies grecques d'occident», *La città e il suo territorio*, *Atti del VII convegno di Studi sulla Magna Grecia*. Taranto 1967 (Naples 1968) p. 88.

⁵ Thuc. IV. 98.2. The Boeotians' charge had been (IV. 97.2–3) «for it was an established norm (*nomos*) of them all when invading *each other's* country, to avoid the sanctuaries there.» Cf. LURIA loc. cit. In general see N. MARINATOS, *Thucydides and Traditional Religion* (Königstein/Ts. 1981) pp. 37–39. Other references are less informative: Apoll. Rhod. Arg. II 1271–5; Aesch. *Suppliants* 893–4; 922; 520; Plato, *Phaedrus* 230b. See also the opening scene of *Oedipus in Colonus*.

⁶ Pind. *Pyth.* V. 89. Groves are synonymous here with *temenē*; see scholia ad loc. (119 DRACHMANN). Cf. Pind. *Ol.* VII 49; *Hdt.* V 78–80; IX 65; Hom. *Hymn to Apollo* 84; 384; Strabo the rationalist is angry about the confusion (IX 412).

⁷ The scholiasts saw no implication of comparison (ἀντι τοῦ μεγάλα ἀπλῶς, οὐ πρὸς ἄλλα συγκρίνον). In general, μέγας, «big», may also mean «important»: LSJ s.v. μέγας. A. II. 4; the Greek comparative can also signify «very» as well as «more». E. g., H. W. SMYTH, *Greek Grammar* (1963) p. 279.

⁸ F. CHAMOIX, *Cyrène sous la monarchie des Battiades* (Paris 1953), pp. 130–131. If the precincts in question may be identified with the area of the Artemision and the first temple of Apollo down from the sacred cave, then we may also adduce an argument from general religious practices: grottos and caves are considered almost universally as inherently sacred. See: P. STENGEL, *Die griechischen Kultusaltertümer*, 3. Auflage (München 1920), pp. 10–11; 21 ff.; RE s.v. «Kultus» (PFISTER) XI.2 esp. Col. 2146 (Naturmale); M. P. NILSSON, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion* 4th ed. (München 1976) Vol. 1, p. 71 ff. W. BURKERT, *Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche* (Stuttgart, Berlin, Köln, Mainz 1977) II.5.

siderable size in order to bear revenues (and clearly so in Athenian settlements),⁹ it is unlikely that such big and well defined *temenē* existed previously at Brea unless, one may argue, the site was inhabited.¹⁰ However, since the inscription is silent about local inhabitants; and since the only danger foreseen is a possible external attack (lines 17, 18) – we may conclude that the site was most probably vacant.¹¹

The second explanation, that precincts were especially consecrated for the gods of the new community, implies that there existed an official advance party prior to the passing of the decree which determined the locations and the boundaries of the sacred areas.¹²

The provisions in the decree concerning the precincts make it clear that the precincts in question were already established.¹³ This implies previous consecration with all the official and appropriate foundation rites normally executed by the oikist.¹⁴ It is hard to see how anybody but an oikist could have had the authority to create sacred precincts for the colony before that.

⁹ Athenian colonization: Thuc. III 50, 2 (Lesbos); Ael. VH VI. 1 (2nd cleruchy at Chalkis) with IG I² 376 and ATL III p. 296; IG I² 30 (Lemnos) with R. S. STROUD in *Hesperia* 40 (1971) p. 172; cf. SEG III p. 117 lines 8–11; Hyperides IV. 16. As a general Greek practice: Ath. Pol. 47. 4; IG I² 377 line 2; Xen. Vect. IV. 19; Aristotle, *Oecon.* II 1346b 13ff., etc. See R. A. TOMLINSON, *Greek Sanctuaries* (London 1976) ch. 4. Cf. Aristotle, *Pol.* 1267b–1269a, where it is clear that what Hippodamus of Miletus means by land for religious purposes is revenue-bearing land. See also R. MARTIN, *L'urbanisme dans la Grèce antique*² (Paris 1974), p. 16 and note G. R. CULLEY, *Hesperia* 46 (1977) p. 288 with note 20.

¹⁰ It seems probable that Brea had once been inhabited by non Greeks (but not in the time of the Athenian decree); «brea» or «bria» is a Thracian word signifying «city» as Strabo asserts: VII. 319; see D. DETSCHEW, *Die thrakischen Sprachreste* (Wien 1957) s.v. «Brea», «bria». Examples: Kombreia in Chalcidice (*Hdt.* VII, 123. 2), Mesembria in Thrace «proper», etc.

¹¹ The possibility that there may have been some sort of agreement or even coexistence between the Greek settlers and local inhabitants should not of course be ruled out on *a priori* grounds. But even if that were the case, the possibility, at least, of local resistance or the breaking of the «agreement» would have been taken into account. This is not to be found in the military provision in the inscription and since we have that provision almost in full the absence seems significant.

¹² Cf. M. N. TOD, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions to the End of the Fifth Century B. C.*, Vol. 1 (Oxford 1933) No. 44, p. 89: «Whether the *temenē* in question are those consecrated by the previous inhabitants of Brea or those marked by the promoters of the colony is not stated.»

¹³ This is also supported by the expression ἐξαιρεμένα. The verb ἐξαιρέω is often associated with choice and reservation of sacred lands; see *Hdt.* IV 161.3; Thuc. III 50.2; Plato *Laws* 848d; Xen. *Cyrop.* IV 5.51; VII 5.35; VII 3.1; Hyperides IV 16. The perfect participle should be understood therefore as signifying a particular action although in similar contexts it may have merely an adjectival force; notably, Xen. *Cyrop.* VIII 3.1; cf. *Hdt.* I 148.1; Plato, *Crit.* 117c; Alc. 123c. Note also the adjective ἐξαιρετός Plato, *Laws* 738d; Xen. *Rep. Lac.* 15.3; *Hdt.* II 168.1; *DITT.* *Syll.*³ 141 lines 4, 6, 7.

¹⁴ On the role of the oikist see GRAHAM, ch. III and MALKIN (note 4 above) pt. I. Our first and remarkably explicit evidence is Homer, *Od.* VI 7–10. In general see G. HOCK, *Griechische Weihegebräuche* (Diss. München 1905).

However, it is only in the decree that Demokleides is appointed as *oikistēs* of Brea for the first time (lines 12–13):

12. . . . Δεμ]οκλείδεν δὲ καταστῆσαι τὸν ἄ[ποικί]-
 13. [αν αὐτο]κράτορα, καθότι ἄν δύνηται ἄ[ριστα. . . .]

Demokleides shall establish the colony with full powers as best as he can.

Demokleides, then, would not have been able to establish the sacred precincts before the decree empowering him to do so was passed. This seems to rule out the possibility of an official advance party since an official party would have had to be headed by an official oikist – like Hagnon at Amphipolis, for example.¹⁵

A second difficulty with the explanation of an «advance party» is also inherent in the decree and concerns the allocation of land:

10. . . . γεονόμος δὲ ἡελέσθ[αι δέκα]
 11. [ἄνδρας,] ἕνα ἔχ φυλᾶς· ἡούτοι δὲ νεμάντ[ον τὸν]
 12. [γῆν· . . .]

. . . Geōnomoi shall be elected, 10 men, one from each phyle; these shall allocate the lands.

The decree provides for the selection of *geōnomoi*, a selection which had not yet occurred. This obviously means that land allocation did not yet take place as that would be the task of the *geōnomoi*.¹⁶ It follows, then, that those who support the explanation of an advance party must also accept the idea that such a party would have had the power to define the boundaries and allocate the sacred precincts, but would not have had the power to regulate the division of the common land. This makes little sense, especially since the sacred areas would have formed an integral part of the city and its territory.¹⁷

¹⁵ Thuc. IV 102.3.

¹⁶ According to Phrynichus (Praec. Soph. p. 57) «a *geōnomēs* is the one who allocates in the colonies to each person his plot; the *geōmetrēs* is the one who measures (or «surveys») the plots.» (γεωνόμης μὲν ὁ διανέμων ἐν τοῖς ἀποικίαις ἐκάστῳ τὸν κλῆρον, γεωμέτρης δὲ ὁ μετρῶν τοὺς κλήρους.) Could one claim that since the inscription mentions only *geōnomoi* it would still have been possible for *geōmetroi* to be part of an official advance party? This seems improbable because Phrynichus' distinctions do not belong to the 5th century B.C. but to the 2nd century A.D. The term *geōmetrēs* itself in the sense of *surveyor* is not attested before that time (LSJ s.v. γεωμέτρης). Phrynichus belongs to the world of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus and was probably influenced by Roman ideas and practices. Actual surveying in Greek colonies was probably done by professionals, as the figure of Meton in Aristophanes' *Birds* (esp. lines 995–6) suggests; but Phrynichus' definitions in themselves are irrelevant to the case here.

¹⁷ For a general discussion of religious centers in the Greek polis see R. MARTIN, *L'urbanisme dans la Grèce antique*, 2nd ed. (Paris 1974) p. 253 ff.

We see therefore that neither of the two commonly accepted explanations for the sacred precincts of Brea seem to be valid. Moreover, neither of them address the question of *necessity* implied in the provisions about the precincts: – Under what circumstances would it have seemed necessary for Greeks to accept pre-existing precincts? The answer seems to lie in the nature of Greek religion.

Plato wrote that «no one shall consecrate a second time what is already sacred». In antiquity this sentence was time and again understood to refer to a customary general prohibition:¹⁸ once sacred, a land held fast to its sacredness.¹⁹ There may have been previous consecrations of precincts at Brea due either to a previous attempt to found a colony at the site (which failed) or to an earlier Greek presence (but not an actual colony). According to this hypothesis, the prohibition to consecrate in the Brea decree is in fact a prohibition to *reconsecrate*.

Let us turn to the general area of the site of Brea, the «Thraceward region»:²⁰ In spite of the grim picture suggested by our literary sources of disastrous failures to establish colonies (particularly in the area of Amphipolis),²¹ we now have archaeological evidence which seems to suggest a more complex picture of Greek presence. At the site of Amphipolis, near its north wall, was found a sanctuary with terracottas and pottery dating down to ca. 450 B. C., i. e., before the actual Athenian foundation by Hagnon.²² Similarly, at a site some 12 km. West-North-West of Amphipolis, levels containing late 6th and early 5th centuries pottery were discovered. A hilltop sanctuary was discovered there containing deposits dating also to the late 6th and early 5th centuries as well as a few female protomes of that period.²³ The evidence, then, seems to signify Greek presence at these sites although probably not in the form of a proper colony.²⁴ It is noteworthy that so much of the

¹⁸ LAWS, 955 e. For the specific context in Plato see G. R. MORROW, *Plato's Cretan City. A Historical Interpretation of the Laws*. (Princeton, N.J. 1960) p. 412 with note 42. For the view in antiquity: E. S. J. DES PLACES, «Le Platon de Theodoret. Les citations des *Lois* et de *L'Epinomie*» REG 68 (1955) p. 182.

¹⁹ For example, the only asymmetrical element in the grid plan of the new site of Magnesia on the Maeander is the preexisting *temenos*. See A. VON GERKAN, *Griechische Städteanlagen* (Berlin 1924) p. 105. Cf. R. A. TOMLINSON, *Greek Sanctuaries* (London 1976) p. 137. In general: R. E. WYCHERLEY, *How the Greeks Built Cities* (New York 1962) pp. 88–89.

²⁰ The term: our inscription, line 21. For the elusive site of Brea see ML's commentary with D. ASHERI who makes a strong case for Chalcidice (AJP 90, 1969, 337–340).

²¹ Hdt. V 11; 23; 124. Thuc. I 100; IV 102. Diod. XI 70.5; XII 68.1–2. Schol. on Aeschines II 31.

²² See Praktika 1975, p. 61 ff.; Ergon, 1975, pp. 41 ff.; D. LAZARIDIS, «La cité grecque d'Amphipolis et son système de défense» CRAI 1977, pp. 194–214; B. ISAAC, *The Greek Settlements in Thrace Until the Macedonian Conquest* (diss. Tel Aviv U. Tel Aviv 1980) pp. 8–10.

²³ Arch. Delt. 26, p. 413; AR 1977–8, p. 50; ISAAC, pp. 7–8.

²⁴ One should also keep in mind the network of personal connections, trade and mining interests, marriages, etc. Representatives of great families must have frequented Thrace or

evidence is found particularly in the context of sanctuaries which were evidently located in sacred precincts. It is certainly not unreasonable to postulate a similar situation at the unknown site of Brea, namely, that there were already Greek sanctuaries there when Athens passed the decree. It is also possible, as in Amphipolis, that there had been official attempts to establish an actual colony at Brea which had failed. Had there been such attempts it is likely that sacred precincts would have been established as an integral part of the act of foundation.

Abdera, in the same general area of the Thraceward region, provides some sort of analogy: there, the Greek colonists from Teos established a worship to Timesias of Clazomenae – who some 100 years earlier acted as oikist at the site, and was driven out by Thracians.²⁵ Here we do not have a proper sacred area, as Timesias was not buried at Abdera and his tomb could not have served as the center for the customary cult of the oikist. On the other hand, the worship established by the Teian colonists demonstrates their respect for the sacredness associated with an earlier historical attempt of foundation.

even lived there; the figures of Miltiades the Elder and his descendants, of Pisistratus, of Thucydides son of Olorus, are sufficient examples.

²⁵ Hdt. I. 168.