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# Insights into the Cult of Apollo and Artemis at the Parian Sanctuaries

## Introduction

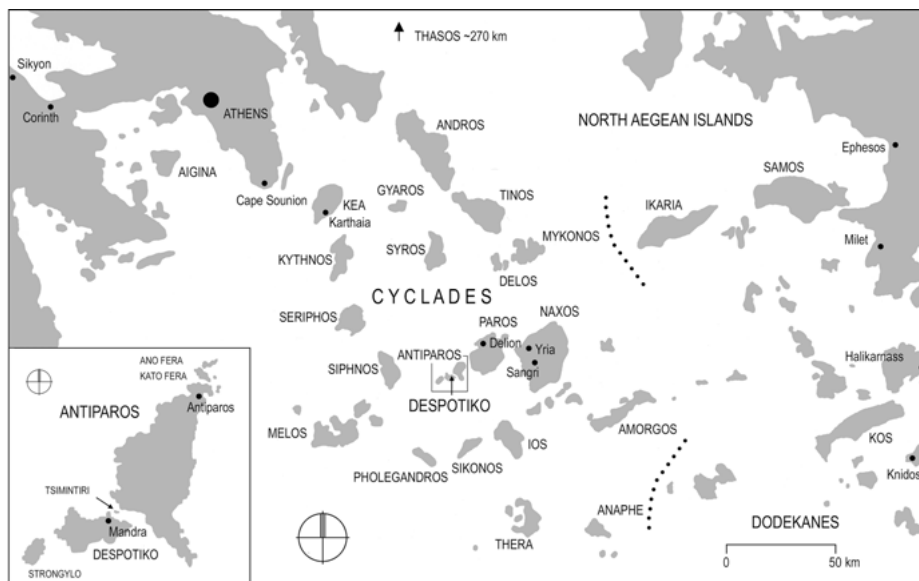
Apollo and Artemis were widely worshiped across the Cyclades, including in sanctuaries at the most important cult centre in the archipelago, Delos, the island that was considered their birthplace.<sup>1</sup> Other sanctuaries and cult sites dedicated to these gods were found on nearly all of the inhabited islands.<sup>2</sup> These sanctuaries were usually distinct, but, in some instances, Apollo and Artemis were venerated together in parallel cults. Paros was another of the islands with numerous sanctuaries dedicated to Apollo and/or Artemis. There, Apollo was worshipped under the epicleses Pythios and Delios, and with no epiclesis in three or more locations, and Artemis was worshipped as Delia, or under no epiclesis in four or more places. In two instances, the sanctuary on Despotiko and the Delion on Paros, both divinities had cults in the same sanctuary (Fig. 1).

The aim of this paper is to explore the roles of Apollo and Artemis at the Parian sanctuaries from the perspective of the evidence for cultic activity at these latter two sites. This material and epigraphic evidence reveals the nature of the cults, including their differences and similarities. The nature of the worship of Apollo and Artemis on Paros emerges through comparisons between the configuration of the cult of these divinities on Delos, where these gods were worshipped in independent cults located close together. The connections with Delos also inform the consideration of the significance of Artemis' "Delia" epiclesis on Paros as well as the arguments for a Delian cult at the Despotiko sanctuary. The analysis here thus takes into account the nature and meaning of the cults of Apollo and Artemis in assessing the links between the islands of Paros, Delos, and Despotiko. The time span considered here includes the Archaic and Classical periods, when the cults at these sanctuaries were most active. The analysis covers the extent of the interconnections and nature of the Delian divinities and their veneration with reference to an extensive collection of archaeological materials (e.g., cult statues, votives, sanctuary layouts)

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1 Mythological narratives such as the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* (1–179) narrate the gods' birth on Delos: the island allowed Leto to give birth on its shores after she had fled around the Greek world to escape of the wrath of Hera. Later Greek and Latin ancient authors retold episodes from the Archaic legends of Delos, sometimes adding additional information. Artemis, for example, is said in some narratives to have been born on Ortygie. For a complete list of ancient authors mentioning the birth and other episodes involving Apollo and Artemis on Delos, see Bruneau 1970, 15–56; Durvy 2021a; Pirenne-Delforge/Pironti 2022, 188–194.

2 For a list of cult sites dedicated to Apollo and Artemis in the Cyclades, see Angliker 2017.



**Fig. 1:** Map of the Cyclades. Courtesy of Yannis Kourayos.

from Despotiko and the Delion on Paros. A comparison of these sets of votives reveals nuances of the cult activity at two sanctuaries dedicated to divinities venerated by the same population. Overall, then, this study explores the interactions and variations among the cults of Apollo and Artemis in two Parian sanctuaries, demonstrating the complexity and fluidity of their influence and shedding further light on the ancient Greek polytheistic system.

## Cults and Sanctuaries of Paros

An overview of the sanctuaries of these divinities on the island will serve to contextualise the discussion on the Parian cults of Apollo and Artemis. The precise configuration of the pantheon on most of the Cycladic islands is unclear owing to the meagre information available about most of the divinities. Paros is privileged in this regard as a place where, despite some gaps, the nature of the local cults of some divinities is relatively well known. Indeed, various types of evidence have served to identify the cult of the divinities on Paros. Unlike most Cycladic islands, Paros has hosted several extensive archaeological excavations, and the materials recovered from the modern and medieval city that now covers the ancient one have been sufficient to reconstruct the ancient cultic sites there. There are, in addition, archaeological artefacts such as statues, their bases, and reliefs that originated in the sanctuaries (though it may be

impossible today to associate them with any specific sanctuary). In addition, inscriptions recovered from several of the island's ancient monuments, along with literary and numismatic evidence, attest to the veneration of various divinities on Paros and, indirectly, to the existence of additional sanctuaries that have not yet been identified by archaeological evidence.<sup>3</sup>

One of the earliest Parian sanctuaries is at Koukounaries on Naousa Bay, where excavations have revealed layers of occupation dating from the Late Neolithic to Early Archaic periods.<sup>4</sup> In the Geometric era, a significant settlement, with organised residential units, public areas, and streets, flourished.<sup>5</sup> The most prominent cult structure at Koukounaries was a sanctuary temple on the southern slope of the hill that consisted of a temple and a square enclosure identified as a temenos.<sup>6</sup> Cult practices in the area antedate the erection of the temple.<sup>7</sup> The earliest material from the deeper strata of the temenos dates to the late LH and PG periods; Schilardi identified a semi-circular stone there as an altar.<sup>8</sup> The temenos was originally intended for hy-paethral cult activities and included an altar, a rectangular structure measuring 1.58 x 0.80m that, according to Schilardi, was built atop an earlier Geometric altar.<sup>9</sup> The early Archaic temple was a stone-built, oikos-shaped structure, oriented east-west and measuring 9.50 x 6.40m, erected soon after 700 B.C.<sup>10</sup> The identification of the cult of Athena is based on fragments of votive vessels inscribed with the name ΑΘΗΝΑΙΗΣ.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to Athena, finds from the temple deposit and around the sanctuary suggest the veneration of Apollo on this site. In particular, three Archaic inscribed shards bearing the name of the god found in the temple deposit and in an area east of the temple may indicate the existence of at least one altar dedicated to him.<sup>12</sup> However, the lack of both architectural remains and a final publication of the finds prevents further speculation about this cult. Whatever the case, the settlement on Koukounaries was abandoned around 700 BCE, though the temple of Athena saw

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3 Kourayos/Angliker/Daifa/Tully 2018.

4 For the latest presentation of the site, see Schilardi 2017.

5 Schilardi 1988, 45, Schilardi 2017, 290.

6 Schilardi 1985, 117–136, Schilardi 1988, Mazarakis-Ainian 1997, 185–187, 329–330, Schilardi 2017 with earlier bibliography.

7 Schilardi 1986, 193–196, Mazarakis-Ainian 1997, 329–330.

8 Schilardi 1986, 193, Schilardi 2017, 288–290.

9 Schilardi 1988, 45, Schilardi 2017, 290.

10 Mazarakis-Ainian 1997, 187 with detailed bibliography.

11 Schilardi 1983, 294, Schilardi 1985, 137, plate 50b, Schilardi 1988, 45. On the basis that one inscribed shard bears the letters ΠΟΑ, Schilardi (2017, 288) suggested that Athena was worshipped under the epithet ΠΟΛΙΟΥΧΟΣ. However, based on the later chronology of the inscribed shard, there is reason for caution regarding the goddess' epithet, at least in the Archaic period.

12 Schilardi 2017, 297–298.

continuous use until the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE, as attested by pottery finds and successive paved floors in the sekos.<sup>13</sup> The population that abandoned Koukounaries seemed to move to Paroikia, where a settlement had been flourishing since the Geometric period.<sup>14</sup>

Ancient Paroikia covered a large area that included the ancient fortified city with public and secular areas, cemeteries outside the wall, and several sanctuaries, some inside and some outside the city proper. Since this settlement became covered by medieval and modern development, the sanctuaries and cults can only be reconstructed in part.<sup>15</sup> Rubensohn identified temples in the ancient city and collected several inscriptions discovered in the area.<sup>16</sup> The sanctuaries of Paroikia, however, became better known through the efforts of a group from the Munich Polytechnic School led by Gruben that collected, compared, and studied thousands of architectural fragments and created hypothetical reconstructions of several temples.<sup>17</sup> Temple A (ca. 530–520 BCE) was located on the hill of Kastro; only the foundations have survived, while the marble was removed for reuse in the construction of a castle by the Venetians in 1260 CE.<sup>18</sup> According to the reconstructions, Temple A was an Ionic amphiprostyle temple with six columns and a pronaos, cella, and opisthodomos measuring 14.70 x 16.7m and with a door 6.06m high and 2.75m wide.<sup>19</sup> Though scholars initially associated this building with Athena,<sup>20</sup> others have since argued that the existence of a cult of Athena on the site cannot be considered certain.<sup>21</sup> Nonetheless, Athena occupied an important place in the Parian pantheon. A colossal, three-metre-tall statue depicting her as Promachos (480–470 BCE) found on the island suggests that a temple in the ancient city was dedicated to her.<sup>22</sup> The statue obviously refers to Athena's martial character; she was simultaneously a patroness of the city and goddess of war.<sup>23</sup> The fact that she was worshiped for her warrior qualities in Paroikia is also confirmed by epigraphic sources in which she is mentioned under the epiclesis *Poliouchos* (*IG* XII.5 134 and *IG* XII.5 1029).

Architectural remains have also allowed scholars to reconstruct Temples B (dating to 520 BCE) and C (Late Archaic).<sup>24</sup> While the identity of the divinity worshipped in the latter remains uncertain, it has been suggested – with reservations – that

<sup>13</sup> Schilardi 1983, Schilardi 1985, 141–142, Schilardi 2002, with earlier bibliography.

<sup>14</sup> Schilardi 2017, 298.

<sup>15</sup> Kourayos 2015, 28–51.

<sup>16</sup> Rubensohn 1901, Rubensohn 1902, Rubensohn 1917.

<sup>17</sup> Gruben 1972, Gruben 1982a, Gruben 1982b and Gruben 1997; Ohnesorg 1993, Ohnesorg 2005.

<sup>18</sup> Kourayos 2015, 28–29, 65.

<sup>19</sup> Gruben 1970, 144.

<sup>20</sup> Rubensohn 1917, 2–7.

<sup>21</sup> Berranger 1992, 73.

<sup>22</sup> Kostoglou-Despoini 1979, 69.

<sup>23</sup> Kourayos/Angliker/Daifa/Tully. 2018.

<sup>24</sup> Gruben 1970; Gruben 1972, 366–368.

Temple B housed a cult of Apollo Pythios since the adyton was suitable for divination rituals.<sup>25</sup> Whatever the case, inscriptions found on the walls of rebuilt houses on Paros suggest that Apollo Pythios was the poliad deity of the main city (e.g., *IG XII.5* 110, 134 and 155).

At Aghia Anna, on the urban perimeter, a cult of Apollo flourished during the Archaic period.<sup>26</sup> Here, a 6<sup>th</sup>-century relief depicting Apollo and Artemis (Paros Museum A1289) was found, though it is difficult to say whether a cult of Artemis also existed at this site, for the relief could be merely a votive for Apollo in his capacity as the main divinity of the sanctuary. Whatever the case, in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, the cult of Apollo was overtaken by that of Asclepius. This development, and the presence of a spring at the site, suggest a healing aspect to the Archaic cult of Apollo.<sup>27</sup>

Inscriptions, coins, and literary sources (mostly dating from the Archaic to Classical periods) indicate the veneration of other divinities in the ancient city of Paros, including Hestia, Aphrodite (who may have had a sanctuary at Paroikia), Kore, Demeter, and Zeus Basileos.<sup>28</sup> However, it is difficult to determine with certainty whether any of these divinities were, in fact, worshipped in the city before the Classical period.

Based on the fragmentary archaeological and epigraphic evidence available, no sanctuary seems to have been dedicated to Artemis within the ancient city of Paros, while Apollo may have been associated with the polis and worshipped under the epiclesis Pythios. Outside the ancient city, a “crown” of sanctuaries was established across several sites, some of which have yielded abundant archaeological remains. Outside the city, in addition to the aforementioned cults at Koukonaries, the Parians worshiped divinities such as Zeus Hypatos, Aphrodite, and Eileithyia on Mt Kounados.<sup>29</sup> A colossal statue and relief depicting Artemis at Aspro Chorio indicate that a sanctuary dedicated to the goddess once existed in the area, but, since the area has yet to be excavated or surveyed, it is difficult to say much about the character of the cult.<sup>30</sup> A cave sanctuary that was home to a cult of Artemis, who was especially associated with initiatory rituals for Parian youths, has also been identified on the island of Antiparos.<sup>31</sup>

The Parians also maintained a Delion on the crest of a hill north of Paroikia and another sanctuary of Apollo on the island of Despotiko (Fig. 2). Some scholars have

25 Rubensohn 1901, Rubensohn 1902, 213–214.

26 Melfi 2002; Kourayos/Angliker/Daifa/Tully, 141.

27 Kourayos/Angliker/Daifa/Tully 141. Rubensohn 1900, Rubensohn 1901, and Rubensohn 1902 argued that the deity worshipped here was Apollo Pythios. However, this assertion is questionable, as no inscription has yet been found in the area; see Kourayos/Angliker/Daifa/Tully, 141.

28 Papadopoulos 2013.

29 Kourayos/Angliker/Daifa/Tully 2018.

30 Kourayos/Angliker/Daifa/Tully 2018, 146–150.

31 Angliker 2020b.



**Fig. 2:** Aerial View of the Delion on Paros. Courtesy of Yannis Kourayos.

also identified the latter sanctuary as a Delion, but their arguments have not been entirely convincing. Confirmation that the sanctuary near Paroikia was, in fact, a Delion, is provided by epigraphic evidence, including a 4<sup>th</sup>-century inscription on the base of a statue mentioning the worship of Artemis Delia (Τεισήνορος Ἀρτέμιδι Δηλίῃ, *IG* XII.5.211) and six stones found repurposed for medieval construction in Paroikia with inscriptions mentioning the cult of Apollo Delios (ὄρος χωρίο | ἱερὸ Ἀπόλλω | νος Δηλίο).<sup>32</sup> The connections of this sanctuary with Delos, therefore, are beyond dispute, though the meaning of these connections and the significance of the local practices at this sanctuary await analysis.

Finally, a Parian sanctuary of Apollo has been identified on the island of Despotiko (Figs. 3 and 6).<sup>33</sup> A profusion of ceramics inscribed with the god's name uncovered from various parts of the sanctuary confirms that the site was dedicated to

<sup>32</sup> Zapheiropoulos 1960, 245–246; Papadopoulou 2010–2013; *IG* 12.5.214; *SEG* 62.572–7. The inscriptions mentioning the cult of Apollo Delios found at Paroikia have been interpreted in various ways. Rubenson 1962, 39 suggested that the inscriptions marked land on Paros belonging to the cult of Apollo on Delos, and Kontoleon 1966 arrived at similar conclusions. More recently, Papadopoulou 2010–2013, 403–409 proposed that the inscriptions were used to mark the extent of the Delion on Despotiko. For a complete list of Delia sanctuaries on the Aegean, see Grandjean/Salviat 2006.

<sup>33</sup> For the discussion of Despotiko as a Parian sanctuary, see Kourayos/Angliker/Daifa/Tully 2018.



Fig. 3: Despotiko, Building A after restoration (October, 2020). Courtesy of Yannis Kourayos.

the god, who was also the main divinity of Despotiko.<sup>34</sup> Some scholars have interpreted the sanctuary as a Delion.<sup>35</sup> Papadopoulou cited Pindar (*Fragment 140a*) in support of this interpretation. The fragment tells of Heracles, on the orders of Apollo Delios, founding an altar in the territory of Paros to worship the god under this epiclesis. Her argument is that, because the text mentions the crossing of an isthmus, the sanctuary to which it refers cannot be the Delion on Paros, which is located on a hill with no isthmus nearby, and that the only sanctuary that fits this description is Despotiko, which, in antiquity, was connected to the adjacent island of Antiparos by an isthmus. Moreover, a cult of Hestia Isthmia is, in fact, mentioned on Despotiko.<sup>36</sup> Despite these suggestive connections linking a cult of Apollo Delios to Despotiko, the Pindar passage is inconsistent with the extant evidence where Heracles is said to have found two altars (one for Apollo and another for Zeus) and, so far, no cult of Zeus has been discovered on Despotiko – nor has any inscription from the sanctuary surfaced that mentions the epiclesis Delios or Delia. Even if the status of the sanctuary on Despotiko as a Delion is unproven, the cult there does show some similarities with the cult of Apollo on Delos.

In sum, Apollo and Artemis were worshipped at various cult sites on Paros. Within the territory of the ancient city, this worship seems to have included only

<sup>34</sup> Kourayos 2005, Kourayos 2006, and Kourayos 2018.

<sup>35</sup> Papadopoulou 2010–2013.

<sup>36</sup> Papadopoulou 2010–2013, 403–409.

Apollo Pythios, while Athena seems to have been the divinity most associated with the city's affairs. There were cult sites dedicated to Artemis alone in the countryside at Aspro Chorio and at the Cave of Antiparos. A cult was dedicated to Apollo at Koukounaries, but the details are unclear since the relevant materials remain unpublished. Outside the ancient city, Apollo and Artemis shared a sanctuary at the Delion and at Despotiko. As discussed presently, though the Parian Delion and the sanctuary on Despotiko housed cults of Apollo and Artemis, the relative presence of and interactions among these divinities appear to have differed significantly across these sites with respect to votive practices and even relations with Delos. The cults at these sanctuaries, therefore, were very different and answered to quite different needs.

## The Cults of Apollo and Artemis on Delos: Prerogatives and Networks

The birth of Apollo and Artemis on Delos is narrated in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* and Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo*. The focus of these mythological narratives is the birth of Apollo, to which is associated the birth of Artemis. Thus, she appears sometimes as a feminine double of her brother but at other times as an independent figure. In these narratives, Apollo is celebrated specifically as the recipient of elaborate songs and dances performed by Ionian seafarers who gather to celebrate him on Delos, and Artemis is a hunter who kills deer on Delos that provide the antlers used to construct the god's altar of the Horns (*keraton*), one of the most sacred places in the sanctuary.<sup>37</sup> In the mythological narratives about Delos, then, Apollo and Artemis appear together at times and at other times alone, and, in general, Artemis is less prominent than her brother.<sup>38</sup>

The prerogatives and networks implicit in the Delian cults of Apollo and Artemis in and around Paros naturally need to be considered in relation to their best-known sanctuaries on the island of Delos. The relevant mythological narratives are found in various literary genres – epic and lyric poetry, epigrams, orations, historical prose, philosophy, lexicography, and the writings of grammarians and scholiasts – that were produced over a period extending from the 7<sup>th</sup> century BCE to the 12<sup>th</sup> century CE.<sup>39</sup> The extent to which these diverse texts reflect the actual Delian cult is a complex issue that cannot be explored in detail here. The texts transmit information indirectly about a place that many of the authors never visited, and the information

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<sup>37</sup> Callimachus, *Hymn to Apollo* 60–62.

<sup>38</sup> Durvy 2021a and Durvy 2021b.

<sup>39</sup> For a complete catalogue, see Bruneau 1970, 6–56 and Durvy 2021a. See also Prost 2018.



reflects the prevailing culture of their times.<sup>40</sup> Nevertheless, it is possible to deduce some general information concerning the relationship between Apollo and Artemis from this heterogeneous material.

The cults on Mt Kynthos venerated deities whose areas of action were distinct from those of Apollo and Artemis. Hera, worshipped on the island since the Archaic period, like Artemis, looked after family affairs<sup>41</sup> but was a patron of marriage and received a number of dedications from both the Delians and visitors from abroad.<sup>42</sup> The nature of the cult of Zeus is more difficult to determine. Zeus and Athena seem to have been worshiped at this site during the 6<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>43</sup> and it is only during the Hellenistic period that permanent structures were built for the former god's cult there. There are no Archaic-period inscriptions to provide context, and the votive material from this era is fragmentary at best. Athena and Zeus seem to have been worshiped individually on Kynthos, however, the proximity of their cults reveals a connection between them. Athena, when worshipped in proximity to Zeus, is celebrated especially for her filial loyalty and associated power of influence over him.<sup>44</sup> The east slope of Mt Kynthos was also the site of a sanctuary dedicated to Artemis. The terrace and the structures of the north flank and the reliefs found on them belong to the Hellenistic period, while the altar most likely dates to the Classical period.<sup>45</sup> The character of the cult of Artemis at this sanctuary remains uncertain. Some scholars have associated this cult with Eileithyia, but only tentatively.<sup>46</sup> Whatever the case, this sanctuary of Artemis was located outside the main cultic area of Delos and away from the urban areas of the island. Artemis also had other cultic places in remote parts of Delos and its surroundings, such as an Artemision and a sanctuary on the island of Rhenea (formerly named Orthigia), that are mentioned in the accounts and inventories of Delos.<sup>47</sup>

The sanctuary of Apollo on the west coast of Delos also flourished from the Archaic period onwards (Fig. 4). The buildings in the sanctuary of Apollo, in its earliest phase, included Temple G (*GD* 40) and the Oikos of the Naxians (*GD* 6), beside which stood a colossal statue of the god (*GD* 9) that predated it. Scholars have

<sup>40</sup> Durvy 2021a, 31.

<sup>41</sup> Plassart 1928. For the cult of Hera on Kynthos, see Pirenne-Delforge 2017.

<sup>42</sup> Pirenne-Delforge 2017.

<sup>43</sup> Bruneau/Ducat 2005, 285. Gallet de Santerre 1958 proposed that Athena was already worshipped on Mt Kynthos during the Archaic period; however, there is disagreement regarding whether the cult of the goddess existed in this early period.

<sup>44</sup> Neils 2001.

<sup>45</sup> Moretti 2021, 78–81.

<sup>46</sup> Demagel 1922, 83–93; Bruneau 1970, 191.

<sup>47</sup> The exact location of these sanctuaries at Rhenea involves complex topographical problems beyond the scope of this paper. The exact nature of the cult also remains to be determined, though exploration of the site resumed recently. For the most recent discussion of these problems, see Moretti 2021, 83–66.

suggested that the Oikos of the Naxians was the first temple dedicated to Apollo on Delos, but this remains only a hypothesis. It is possible that the Altar of the Horns (*keraton*), which was accompanied by a monumental structure only in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, became the focal point of the cult of Apollo on Delos.<sup>48</sup> A brief look at the topography of the sanctuary over time shows that Apollo received a succession of temples, such as the Porinos (*GD* 11), dated to the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE, the Athenian temple dedicated to him (*GD* 12), and his Delian temple (*GD* 13).<sup>49</sup>

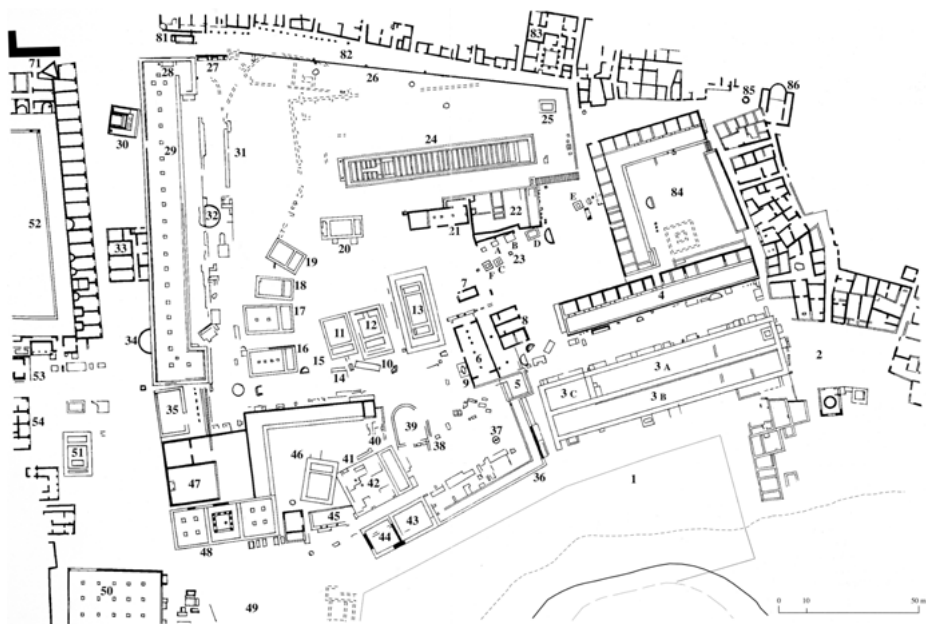


Fig. 4: Plan of the Sanctuary of Apollo on Delos. After Bruneau/Ducat 2005, plan I.

The temples of Artemis (*GD* 46, 7<sup>th</sup> century BCE) and Leto (*GD* 53, c. 540 BCE) were located near the sanctuary of Apollo, but it is difficult to ascertain whether they were included in the same cultic area. In later times, these sanctuaries were clearly separate.<sup>50</sup> The sanctuary of Artemis was associated with the tombs of the Hyperborean virgins which Herodotus claims to have seen (3.34). The Artemision occupied the northwest part of the sanctuary of Apollo, represented by three successive

<sup>48</sup> The *keraton* was identified as Building *GD* 39. See Tsakos 1999; Étienne 1991, Étienne 1992 and Étienne 2002; and Bruneau/Fraisse 2002. On the problem of the identification of the early temple of Apollo, see Gallet de Santerre 1959, 91; Courbin 1995.

<sup>49</sup> Scott 2013, 48–49; Étienne 2018, 25–30.

<sup>50</sup> Bruneau/Ducat 2005, 67–77, 222–223; Moretti 2021.

structures, Building Ac (Bronze Age), Artemision E (Archaic), and Artemision D (Hellenistic).<sup>51</sup> Associated with Building Ac (and found within the cella of Artemision D) was a deposit of various precious objects dating from the Mycenaean period through the late 8<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>52</sup> Given the clear function of Artemision D as a cult building, the discovery of these Bronze and Early Iron Age artefacts have led scholars to wonder whether Building Ac also served a religious purpose related to Artemis. Though the monumental proportions of Building Ac distinguish it from the common dwellings of the period, it differs significantly from known cult buildings of the Late Bronze Age and may thus have served as a residence for a member of the elite. The treasury found in the foundations, likewise, was not necessarily associated with a cult celebrated in the Bronze Age since the heirlooms may have been handed down from one generation to the next.<sup>53</sup> Whatever the case, Artemision E was inserted into the structure that succeeded it, namely, Artemision D. The date of this structure is still subject to debate; the 7<sup>th</sup> century has been proposed, but it may, in fact, have been built slightly earlier, as Bruneau and Ducat noted.<sup>54</sup> The sanctuary of Artemis also has an altar dating to the third quarter of the 6<sup>th</sup> century.

This brief presentation of the topography of the cults of Apollo and Artemis shows that both divinities were worshipped on the main plain of Delos at adjacent cult sites. Apollo also received various temples on the main plain of Delos, while Artemis had only one (*GD* 46). Conversely, while there was no cult of Apollo beyond the main plain of Delos, Artemis had cultic sites on the outskirts of Delos, such as on Mt Kynthos, and even off its shores on Rhenea, as mentioned. The sanctuaries of Apollo and Artemis located on the main plain of Delos show affinities beyond their topographical proximity. In terms of cult practices, both gods received dedications of a number of kouroi and korai statues in marble.<sup>55</sup> The cult statue of Apollo, and the one dedicated to Artemis, were, according to Pausanias (9.35.3), made by Tektaios and Angelion.<sup>56</sup> The Delian inventories show a few communal dedications to Apollo and Artemis together (along with occasional dual dedications to Artemis and Leto).<sup>57</sup> When worshipped together, Apollo and Artemis were associated with human and animal fecundity and the maturation of young people.

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51 Bruneau 1970, 171–267; Bruneau/Ducat 2005, 207–209; Moretti 2012; Moretti/Fraisse/Llinas 2021.

52 Gallet de Santerre/Tréheux 1947.

53 Mazarakis-Ainian 1997, 182; Bruneau/Ducat 2005, 208.

54 Bruneau/Ducat 2005, 209.

55 Hermay 2021, 138–140.

56 Durvy/Moretti 2021, 125, note 52; Hermay 2021, 137–143; Prêtre 2012, 178–179; Marcadé 1969, 210–211.

57 For the dedication to Artemis in the Delian inventories, see Durvy/Moretti 2021 and Sarrazanas 2021.

Despite these similarities, the occasional common dedications, and the proximity of the two sanctuaries, the cults of Apollo and Artemis were clearly distinct in that these gods were worshipped in separate temples, with separate altars, and, especially noteworthy, at separate festivals.<sup>58</sup> The distinction between Apollo and Artemis is also apparent in the composition of the groups that venerated them. Recent investigations of the inventories show that the names of the dedicants, while rarely mentioned, include both male and female names in most cases.<sup>59</sup> Being a virgin herself, Artemis was thought to protect young women, accompanying them until marriage. Literary sources attest to this function of the goddess on Delos, though few dedications in the inventories or deposits have been directly associated with it.<sup>60</sup>

While Artemis received some dedications that obviously functioned as a form of elite display (e.g., the statue of Nikandre dedicated by the Naxians- 630 BCE),<sup>61</sup> Apollo received far more dedications of expensive items such as marble statues and cult buildings. An island network developed around his cult that included participants from across the southern Aegean,<sup>62</sup> serving to strengthen social bonds as well as providing a useful forum for elite competition for prestige.<sup>63</sup> This is the context for the monumentalisation of the god's sanctuary under the sponsorship of the most powerful maritime communities of the time. Thus, the Naxians built the aforementioned Oikos and erected the colossal statue of Apollo and also honoured the god with the famous Terrace of the Lions.<sup>64</sup> Throughout the Archaic period, the Samians made further investments in the cult of Apollo, and their tyrant Polycrates made the unusual dedication of the island of Rhenea to Delian Apollo (Thucydides 1.13.6, 3.104.2). The Athenian tyrant Peisistratos also exhibited interest in Delos by carrying out purifications of the island.<sup>65</sup> Paros established a prominent presence on Delos only in the Late Archaic period, but the dedications made by the Naxians there far exceeded those made by the Parians, in both number and extravagance.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Sarrazanas 2021, 93.

<sup>59</sup> Sarrazanas 2021, 97; Prêtre 2002, 246; Constantakopoulou 2017, 198–200.

<sup>60</sup> Durvy 2021a, 41–42.

<sup>61</sup> Bruneau/Ducat 2005, 86.

<sup>62</sup> Constantakopoulou 2007, 61–136; Earle 2010.

<sup>63</sup> Earle 2010.

<sup>64</sup> On the function of the Oikos of the Naxians, see Courby 1921, 238; Mazarakis-Ainian 1997, 180–181; Bruneau/Fraisse 2002, 70.

<sup>65</sup> Chankowski 2008, 14–15.

<sup>66</sup> Prost 2014, 50–51.

## The Worship of Apollo and Artemis at the Two Parian Sanctuaries: Delion and Despotiko

Turning now to the Parian sanctuaries at the Delion and at Despotiko where Apollo and Artemis were worshiped, we will encounter several cultic characteristics that were already noticeable at the sanctuary of Delos. At both sanctuaries, Apollo and Artemis are worshipped in proximity but with cults that seem to be independent and there is always a preponderance of one of the divinities. Just like at Delos, there are differences in the votive practices and the public who worship at each sanctuary.

Let's begin the discussion with the Parian Delion on Paroikia, located outside the ancient city of Paros (present-day Paroika), which housed cults that have many connections, not only with the cult of Apollo and Artemis on Delos, but also with other Delian divinities (Fig. 2). This sanctuary was excavated during the 19<sup>th</sup> century by Rubensohn. Obsidian knives discovered in the area reveal that the site was frequented as early as the Neolithic period; similar objects have also been found on Mount Kynthos, on Delos. On Delos, ceramics appeared during the Bronze Age after a long hiatus; another gap occurred between the Bronze and Geometric eras.<sup>67</sup> For the Parian Delion, on the other hand, the break was even longer as the earliest ceramic evidence dates to the Early Geometric Period, when indisputable evidence surfaced of an effective cult practice.<sup>68</sup> Several vases and ostraca belonging to Parian groups date to this early era, with some pieces coming from Naxos. The cult on this Delion began around a natural stone protuberance at the centre of the sanctuary that functioned as an altar. It is difficult to tell precisely when the rock began to serve this purpose. At some point (now impossible to determine), the natural rock underwent modifications; its surface was partly smoothed and slabs of marble, of which only a few survive today, were arranged around it.<sup>69</sup> It is also impossible to say whether, at this altar, only Apollo or Artemis or both together were worshipped. The construction of this altar made with plaques of marble around a natural rock, the top of which was intentionally left protruding, showing the rough surface, gives it a crude look that is, in some ways reminiscent of the mythical altar of the Horns on Delos. Thus, with caution, one could suggest that the altar was dedicated to Apollo. Furthermore, when a temple was built to Artemis, a new altar was constructed (the old altar with the rock protuberance was not removed and continued to be used).<sup>70</sup> The existence of the two altars may have helped to keep the cult of the two divinities separate. The configuration on

<sup>67</sup> Plassart 1928, 11–144; Gallet de Santerre 1958, 19–30; Bruneau/Ducat 2005, 285.

<sup>68</sup> Detoratu 2003–2009.

<sup>69</sup> Rubensohn 1962, 5–7; Ohnesorg 2005, 31. For the role of natural stone in the cult of Apollo, see Angliker 2020b.

<sup>70</sup> Rubensohn 1962, 1–53; Ohnesorg 1991.

Delos is analogous, where cults for Apollo and Artemis were performed separately. Whatever the case, a temple was built on the northwest side of the sanctuary around the late 6<sup>th</sup>/early 5<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE. This temple, which is the most ancient canonical Doric temple in the Cyclades, is a small structure measuring 9.50 x 6m and featuring a cella and pronaos with two columns on the porch. A colossal cult statue of Artemis was placed inside the temple (Fig. 5). A cult statue of Apollo was not found among the remains, but may have been made of perishable materials, in which case it would have disappeared without a trace. Another possibility is that no statue of Apollo was dedicated at all in the sanctuary. In any case, the colossal statue of Artemis placed in a relatively small temple would have somehow overshadowed the cult statue of Apollo if there was indeed one there.



**Fig. 5:** The colossal statue of Artemis. Courtesy of Yannis Kourayos.

When the temple was constructed, a collection of votives was placed beneath the cella. The items included vases, offering tables, clay statues (mostly of the seated-goddess type), items believed to be apotropaic, such as seals, jewellery, fibulas, proto-mes, grotesque masks. The items do not reveal any specific prerogatives of the deities as most of them can also be found at other Cycladic sanctuaries. Nevertheless, these

items indicate a strong presence of female participants.<sup>71</sup> Objects such as the protomes are clearly linked with a cult practice related to rituals conducted by young girls before marriage and were important for the maintenance and cohesion of the civic society of Paros.<sup>72</sup> These functions have parallel in the functions of the cult of the Hyperborean virgins within the sanctuary of Artemis on Delos. Also noticeable at the Delion on Paros is the limited presence of *kouroi*, which indicates a cult with little emphasis on elite, male competitions. A small number of *korai*, however, were dedicated at the sanctuary, thus revealing the civic prerogatives of the goddess. The small number of marble statues found at this Delion reveals that this cult was not performed by elite groups competing to demonstrate their social status. The cult therefore has few links with the competitive environments of elites in international settings and seems to be focused mainly on the social and civic activities of the local population of Paros. As we will soon see, the elite competitions were mainly held at Despotiko. The materials from the Delion on Paros (e.g. the cult statuary, the protomes) demonstrate an emphasis on the cult of Artemis, and an orientation toward feminine concerns.

The emphasis on family ties can also be read in the unusual presence of an inscription mentioning Athena Kynthia (*IG* XII.5 210), which has intrigued scholars, helping to reinforce a cult centred on female affairs and family activities with a strong local character. As we saw earlier in this paper, the cults on Kynthos had a strong local character and Athena was worshiped there in connection with Zeus, for whom she played the role of faithful daughter and trusted adviser. One inscription found at Paroikia also mentions a dedication to Artemis and Leto, once more reinforcing the divine prerogative toward family ties.<sup>73</sup>

Simply put, despite all the gaps and uncertainties, the cults performed at the Delion on Paroikia were focused on the worship of Artemis Delia. The cult here focused on practices of essentially local character, centred on the feminine sphere and on family ties. These last characteristics reverberate throughout the divine network of this sanctuary in pairs of gods with close familial links: Artemis-Apollo, Athena Kynthia and Zeus Kynthios (this last one not mentioned in the inscriptions, but supposedly subtended as a pair with Athena Kynthia) and Leto-Artemis. The emphasis on the cult of Artemis and on the feminine sphere in many ways reflects the cult of Artemis on Delos at the sanctuary of Apollo.

Looking now to the evidence at the Delia of Despotiko, we can see that the cult performed there presents differences with the Delion on Paroikia. Here, although Artemis is probably present, the goddess is much less prominent. Furthermore, there is another network of divinities and, as we will see, Apollo covers different areas of competence, and does not act as patron of the families. Ongoing

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<sup>71</sup> Rubensohn 1962.

<sup>72</sup> Korayos/Angliker 2021.

<sup>73</sup> Matthaïou/Kourayos 1992–1998, 438; *SEG* 48.1139.

archaeological research has so far brought to light 23 buildings. Recently, on the uninhabited islet Tsimintiri, east of Despotiko, 8 buildings were discovered that probably served as storage rooms. A round structure, 16m in diameter, may have served as a dance floor.<sup>74</sup> The buildings date to the Archaic period and belonged to Despotiko which was connected to Tsimintiri by a narrow isthmus (Fig. 7). As at the Delion on the island of Paros, the earliest cult on the sanctuary at Despotiko dates to the Geometric period and is evidenced by drinking vases, burnt and unburnt animal bones, a small quantity of seashells and clay figurines.<sup>75</sup>



**Fig. 6:** Aerial View of the Sanctuary of Apollo on Despotiko. Courtesy of Yannis Kourayos.

But the peak of the sanctuary is placed in the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE, when a temenos protected by three gates was gradually erected. Its most prominent feature is Building A, which has been identified as the main cult structure. Building A is comprised of the temple, which has been identified as its north side (rooms A1–A2) (560–550 BCE) and included a forecourt, and the *hestiatorion*, which has been identified as its south side (rooms A3, A4, A5) (540–530 BCE) and was fronted by a corridor of Doric columns. A votive deposit with a wide variety of finds was discovered in room A1, including terracotta figurines, different types of Corinthian vases, vases in the form of animals, seals, gold items, bronze fibula, various objects

<sup>74</sup> Kourayos 2018; Kourayos 2012; Angliker 2021.

<sup>75</sup> For the Geometric period at Despotiko, see Kourayos/Alexandridou/Papajanni/Draganits 2017 and Alexandridou 2019; for the figurines, see Kourayos/Angliker 2021.





Fig. 7: Aerial View of buildings of the islet of Tsimintiri. Courtesy of Yannis Kourayos.

from Egypt, Syria and Cyprus, ivory objects, beads, agricultural tools such as iron sickles and double-axe heads, and weapons.

The deposit from Room A1 includes a fine female terracotta statue. The figure was made by hand and is preserved only from the waist up (height 25cm). The fine characteristic of this statuette and the careful way in which it was placed on the votive deposit suggests that it may have been the cultic idol of the temple. Again, in building A (room A2), a statue base was found that is comparable to the statue base of the cult statue of Artemis from the Delion on Paros (500–490 BCE). The features of the torso on a female statue, which was discovered incorporated into an animal pen at Despotiko built by pastors in contemporary times, allows us to connect it to the aforementioned base. The torso clearly shows a draped woman with her leg forward, and though smaller, resembles the colossal cult statue of Artemis from the Delion on Paros.

Other cultic buildings in Despotiko comprised the main altar of the sanctuary standing at the exact centre of the temenos, right across from the temple. Two marble *bothroi* – one inside the *hestiatorion*'s *prostoon*, the other, bearing the inscription *Hestia Isthmia*, before the temple's stylobate – served cult purposes as well.

At the north end of the temenos stood Building Δ (520–525 BCE), a temple-shaped edifice related to cult activities. Building E (6<sup>th</sup> century BCE) and the so-called "Connecting Building" stood outside but nearly touching the temenos. A mere few metres south of the temenos was the South Complex, which was built over earlier structures. Evidence so far indicates that the South Complex, built around the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE, did not serve a cultic purpose, but rather catered to the everyday needs of the priests and visitors. Beyond the temenos, the area extending

down to the coast was occupied by at least eight buildings and a tower also dated to the middle of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE. Finally, we must not forget to mention the most splendid dedications to the sanctuary, the archaic sculptures. Excavation has revealed more than 85 fragments of Archaic *kouroi* and *korai*, as well as many fragments of statue bases.

The great number of buildings on Despotiko already points to a massive and grandiose investment at this sanctuary, which would have required significant involvement of the elites.

Though the absence of inscriptions on Despotiko indicates that this was not a panhellenic sanctuary, the elites who sponsored it were deeply involved in maritime affairs and entrepreneurial activity throughout the Aegean. Furthermore, Despotiko possessed a large bay suitable for many ships, and had a great potential impact on international maritime business. Therefore, even if the sanctuary at Despotiko was built exclusively by Parians, its impact resonates in a much larger context.

To a far greater extent than the Delion on Paros, the sanctuary at Despotiko exposes the power of the Parian elite, which is particularly conspicuous in the construction of the sanctuary's two main cultic buildings: buildings D and A, both erected during the Archaic period when Paros was involved in the profitable commerce of marble (second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE). This is also the period that saw the gradual erection of a temenos as well as the most important sacred building of the sanctuary, Building A (Fig. 3). This magnificent building was a temple, partially built in marble with five rooms, including a *hestiatorion*. The presence of this *hestiatorion* indicates that feasting was a very important part of the cult of Apollo. The drinking cups found in Building A and Building D testify of the importance of feasting within the celebrations practiced at Despotiko. The political character of the cult of Apollo on Delos is also suggested by the 85 fragments of Archaic *kouroi* and *korai*, as well as many statue bases. Their presence is associated with an exhibition of elite power and is directly related to the political affairs of Parian society.<sup>76</sup>

Turning now to Artemis, her presence at Despotiko is less prominent. To begin with, while for the cult of Apollo numerous vases with graffiti featuring the god's were found at several locations on the sanctuary, no inscription of any kind mentions Artemis at Despotiko. However, the fine Daedalic clay statue (680 BCE) found in the votive deposit may have been a dedication to her, as well as, probably, a marble statue. The deposit also revealed a number of clay protomes and female seated statuettes; these items, however, are far less numerous than those found at the Delion on Paros. At Despotiko, Artemis still has a fundamental role as patron of young girls of a marrying age. The deities of Kynthos also do not appear at Despotiko and there is nothing linking the cult with Leto. On the other hand, in the Late Classical period,

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<sup>76</sup> Kourayos 2012.

the cult of Hestia with the epithet *Isthmia* appears at a sanctuary on a dedicatory inscription carved on a *bothros* placed in front of room A1.<sup>77</sup> The cult of Hestia was already known on Paros, where she had received a temple, her veneration being deeply linked with the political life of Parian society.<sup>78</sup>

In conclusion, the sanctuary of Apollo on Despotiko is focused on a cult of Apollo associated with elite competition and with the maritime life of the Parians. The focus on these activities aligns with similar configurations of the cult on Delos itself. At Despotiko, the network of divinities included the cult of Hestia, which played a major role in Parian civic society. Although the sanctuaries at Paroikia and Despotiko were both inaugurated as *Delia*, a closer examination of their votive practices, building layouts and topography, and network of divinities, reveals slightly different cults, each focused on specific aspects of the Delian divinities. In this way, the existence of two *Delia* inaugurated by the same society makes perfect sense.

## Conclusion

The analysis presented here accounts for some of the complexities of the polytheistic system and its local manifestations by comparing and contrasting the cult practices at two Parian sanctuaries where Apollo and Artemis were worshipped in proximity and similar cults on the island of Delos. The gods occupied several cult sites on the island, but only at the Delion on Paros and the sanctuary on Despotiko was the worship of the two so proximate. The study of Delian divinities (i.e., those whose cults were native to the island of Delos) reveals the intricacies of the relationships between the Delian pantheon and the cults of Apollo and Artemis. The archaeological inventories and the Delian mythological tradition alike indicate that Apollo and Artemis, when worshipped together, functioned as patrons of family ties. However, most of the cult activity directed toward these gods saw them venerated independently at separate sanctuaries where they were honoured with separate offerings and festivals. Their prerogatives also covered different areas of influence: Apollo patronised maritime affairs and political life while Artemis had a more locally-oriented cult emphasising the female experience (specifically, offering protection to young women preparing for marriage).

These subtle differences between the cults of Apollo *Delios* and Artemis *Delia* are well exemplified at the two independent Delian sanctuaries erected by the Parians. Specifically, at the Delion at Paroikia, Artemis was the dominant figure. Her cult, oriented toward land-based activities, was rich in female representation,

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77 For the Hestia *Isthmia bothros*, see Kourayos 2012, 122–123, figs. 43–44; Kourayos/Angliker/Daifa/Tully 2018, 115, Fig. 2.

78 For the cult of Hestia on Paros, see Kourayos/Angliker/Daifa/Tully 2018, 145.

functional (i.e., apotropaic), and designed to appeal to a modest local clientele, and its Delian resonances were strong. At the sanctuary at Despotiko, Apollo was the dominant figure, with a cult oriented toward maritime activity and characterised by rich monumentalisation and dedications of *kouroi* that served as a showcase for the Parian elite whose livelihood and prestige derived from maritime trade. Here, no direct reference to Delos is observable, though the wealth of the dedications is suggestive of the intense elite competition associated with the cult of Apollo on Delos.<sup>79</sup>

## Abbreviations

- IG *Inscriptiones Graecae*, Berlin, 1873–.  
 SEG *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*, Leiden, 1923–.

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