HERO CULTS IN THE CORINTHIAN AGORA

The excavations at Corinth, since their beginning nearly half a century ago, have brought to light important material for the cult history of the city. Some of this has been published in one form or another, but hitherto the religious aspects have been considered only incidentally in connection with particular objects or groups of objects. No attempt has been made to correlate the scattered bits of information into anything like a history of the religion of ancient Corinth. Before a comprehensive work of that kind is undertaken it seems desirable to deal with specific aspects of Greek cults.[1] It is the purpose of the present study to consider certain phases of the religious life of the city as reflected in the material remains from the excavations.

In dealing with a subject so many sided and so elusive as the history of Greek cults, and of Corinthian cults in particular, it is likely that the results will be as vague and baffling as Greek religion itself. It is in most cases impossible to detect the precise significance of a particular object and its relation to the cult in which it was employed.[2] This is, of course, largely due to our lack of detailed information in matters pertaining to these cults, but it is also true that the meaning attached to the cult objects by the ancients was anything but precise. It is essential to bear these limitations in mind, for however desirable it may appear from the student's point of view to classify and clarify, nothing will be gained by ignoring the essentially illogical and fortuitous in all matters pertaining to religion.

The difficulty in this instance is doubly great, because our information comes largely from the objects themselves. There are few inscriptions from Corinth that give us any information about religion prior to the Roman conquest, and even the documents from imperial times add very little beyond the names of certain deities or of their priests. Our chief source of written information is Pausanias, whose knowledge of the religious life of the city is largely limited to the time of the Roman colony. For the period before Mummius there are only casual references in the works of other writers, and our knowledge must come chiefly from the cult antiquities unearthed in the excavations.

In the preceding article by Gladys Davidson a unique deposit of votive terracottas is published, which will serve as a convenient point of departure for our study of the

[1] A recent study of this kind, leading to most interesting results, has been made by Robert L. Scranton, *Corinth*, I, ii, *Architecture*, pp. 149-165. See below, pp. 158-159.

[2] L. R. Farnell, *Greek Hero Cults and Ideas of Immortality*, p. 69, sums up the difficulties in the apt remark: "Nearly all our hypotheses on Greek mythology, unless pushed to absurdity, leave something unexplained."

hero cults and their relation to the worship of major gods at Corinth. Other deposits of related character will shed additional light on the cults involved.

Apart from those objects which in themselves appear to be devoid of religious significance, such as the lamps, the coins, the loom-weights, and certain single pieces like the tragic actor, etc., the terracottas from the deposit fall into five main groups: the reclining figures, the mounted figures, the shields, the stelai with snake and helmet, and the standing female figures. These five kinds of terracottas occur in sufficiently large numbers to make them typologically important and give significance to the deposit as a whole. For it is obvious that they must be considered, not merely as isolated dedications, but as a unified group of related objects connected with one of the cults of Corinth, and deriving their form from the religious rites and circumstances attendant upon the cult.

This is somewhat less obvious in the case of the standing figures, which belong to a ubiquitous class of figurines that continued to be made with slight variation for several centuries. The objects held in the hands can rarely be determined with certainty, and even when this is possible they do not shed much light on the cult problems at hand. The standing figures from the Corinth deposit are best interpreted either as priestesses connected with the cult, or as votaries bringing their gifts of offering for the sacrifice. Since they all wear a kind of polos, it is likely that they are intended to represent women officiating at some religious ceremony rather than mere worshipers.

The reclining figure, always male, likewise wears a polos. The only figure from the deposit of which the head is preserved has a beard,[3] and his face bears a resemblance to that of certain deities, especially of Zeus or Poseidon or Hades. In the case of the smaller terracottas the reclining figure is alone, but on the larger and better-made examples a woman is seated at the foot of the couch,[4] and frequently there is a large vase standing by her side. In one case a table with offerings stands in front of the couch.

The horse-and-rider reliefs may be related typologically to earlier terracottas, but the specimens from the deposit in the Stoa, and from two other deposits in the Agora, form a distinct class. There are certain variations in the pose of the horse; in some cases he is represented as galloping or prancing, in others as standing with all four feet on the ground or pawing the air as if eager to start. By contrast the riders

[3] See article by G. Davidson, p. 108, fig. 2, No. 4. In the case of the less elaborate examples of the same type, found elsewhere in Corinth, the figure is frequently beardless. On the marble reliefs (see below), which represent the same figure, he usually appears with a beard.

[4] The type is well known from other sites. Compare the terracottas from Tarentum, Arthur J. Evans, *J.H.S.*, VII, 1886, pp. 9, 21; Niels Breitenstein, *Catalogue of Terracottas in the Danish National Museum*, p. 41 and pl. 44, nos. 369-370, p. 66 and pl. 76, no. 630; Pierre Wuilleumier, *Tarente* (Paris, 1939), pl. XXVII, 2, 3, 5; Winter, *Die Typen der figürlichen Terrakotten*, I, pp. 203, 205. Of especial interest is a deposit of terracottas from Aitolia, K. A. Rhomaios, Δελτίον, VI, 1920-21, pp. 60-98 and figs. 19-23, and see below, p. 137, note 33.

all assume the same pose, which is anything but horseman-like. With the exception of a single specimen of poor workmanship, the riders are draped in a mantle which envelopes the right arm and hand and barely permits the left hand to emerge sufficiently to hold the reins. No weapons, either for hunting or fighting, are in evidence. So far as his pose and demeanor are concerned the rider might as well be sitting in a chair. He is hardly a horseman at all, merely a part of the horse's equipment.

The remaining two groups represent accessories. The stele supporting a helmet is a local Corinthian type of figurine, apparently unknown at other sites. It might stand for a trophy, or a turnpost in a stadium or hippodrome, but the snake, also present on some of the rider reliefs, gives it cult significance. There is greater variety among the shields, and the size and elaborate decoration of the larger shields make them particularly prominent. These form a category of their own. The smaller shields, on the other hand, are on a scale more in keeping with that of the other objects from the deposit. Their most interesting feature is the wreath and fillet, which are moulded and further accentuated in red paint. There is a slight variation in the rendering of the wreaths. The leaves in some instances resemble olive leaves; in others no leaves are indicated.

It is obvious that these figurines are closely related to the more elaborate hero-reliefs in marble, and before discussing the significance of the figures and the objects represented on the terracottas, it will be necessary to comment upon the salient features of the typical hero-reliefs. Several fragmentary examples have been found at Corinth, the best and largest of which has the lower half preserved [5] (Fig. 1). The important elements in this relief are: a reclining male, and a seated female figure, both draped, a nude boy (*οἰνοχόος*) standing in front of a tall krater, a table with viands, a snake rearing up beneath the table, and worshipers, large and small, with votive offerings—one leading a pig [6] toward an altar. The missing portions of the Corinth relief have been restored from a similar relief which is now in the Museum at Istanbul,[7] but is said to have come from the Dodecanese Islands. It has been dated in the early third century B.C. The reclining figure in this relief wears a low polos and holds a drinking horn in the right hand and a patera in the left. There is a striking similarity in the features of his head with the Corinth figurine in Davidson's figure 2, No. 4. In the background is a square frame, within which is the head of a horse in low relief. In view of the close similarity of the two reliefs, it is probable that the horse was represented on the Corinth relief as well. A very common feature in reliefs of this kind is the representation of armor at the upper edge of the back-

[5] F. P. Johnson, *Corinth*, IX, *Sculpture*, p. 126, no. 263; cf. also pp. 126-130, nos. 264-265, 269-271. I am indebted to Dr. A. Raubitschek for making the drawing for Figure 1.

[6] It is a strange fact that there are no pigs among the numerous terracotta figurines from Corinth, although these include specimens of most of the domesticated animals.

[7] E. Pfuhl, *Jahrbuch*, L, 1935, p. 57, fig. 19.

ground.[8] The shield, always circular, occurs most frequently, but helmet and cuirass, and less commonly the sword and the spear, are also found. It is clear that they are thought of as being suspended on the wall, whereas the horse is commonly seen through a square frame or window. Occasionally the horse appears against the background

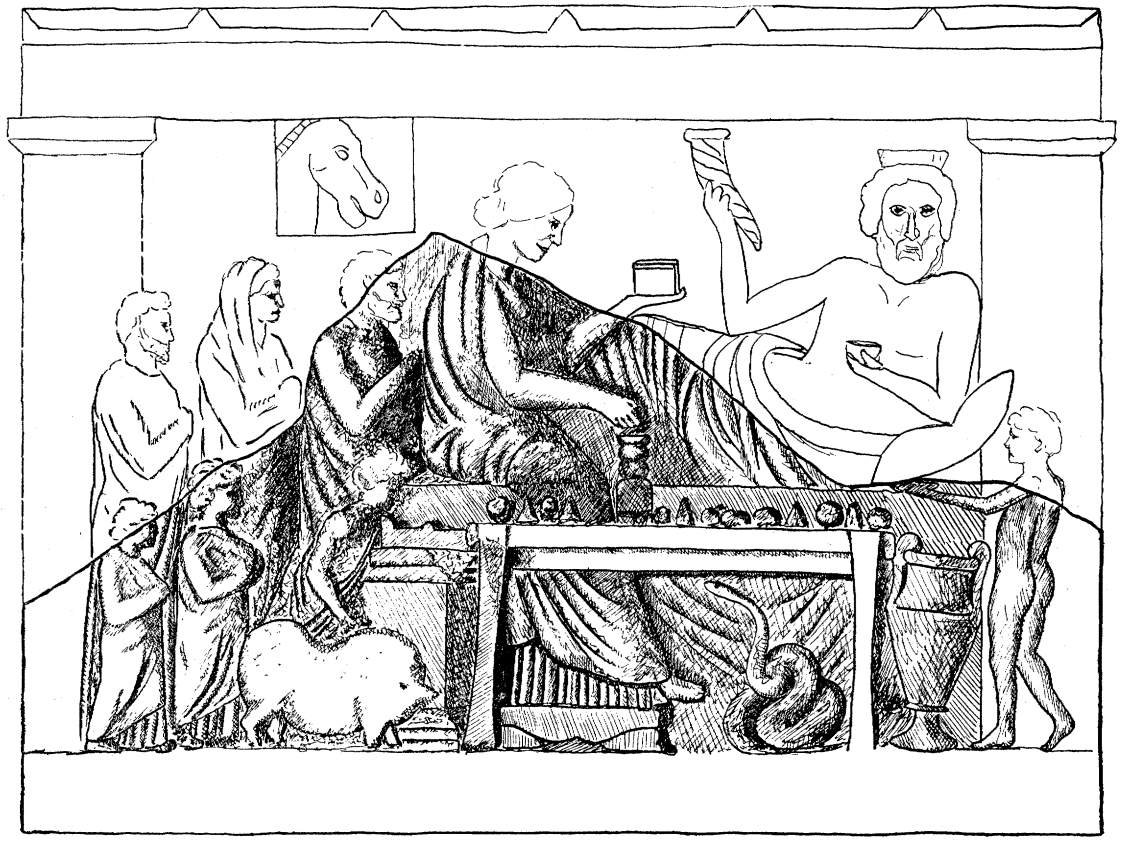

Fig. 1. Hero Relief from Corinth, Restored

without the window,[9] and in some instances he is represented as standing in front of the banquet scene.[10]

The most common feature, apart from the two main figures, is the presence of the snake, which is but rarely omitted in the common type of hero relief.

It is apparent that the elements represented separately by the terracottas from

[8] Cf. E. Pfuhl, *loc. cit.*, pp. 40, 41, 43, figs. 22, 23, 24. [9] E. Pfuhl, *loc. cit.*, p. 41, fig. 23.

[10] Roscher, *Lexikon, s. v.* Heros, fig. 10. One well-known terracotta relief from Tarentum, Percy Gardner, *Sculptured Tombs of Hellas*, p. 101, fig. 37, shows the horse standing behind the reclining figure, but the accidental proximity of the horse's mouth to the patera held out by the male figure should not be interpreted as an indication that the horse is participating in the feast. Cf. Percy Gardner, *op. cit.*, p. 97, fig. 30.

the deposit together constitute the essential features of the typical hero-relief. The male figure reclining on a couch and the woman seated beside him, the table with viands and the snake underneath, the krater for libations, the altar, the shield, the helmet, and the horse all belong together, and together they form the composite picture of some religious function represented on the marble reliefs. And if we have correctly identified the standing female figures as religious officials or as worshipers, the scene is practically complete. The chief difference is the omission of the cup-bearer, whose function is, however, implied by the krater.

Objections will be raised against the inclusion of the horse in this congeries of religious motives on the ground that in the terracottas he is invariably represented with the rider, whereas on the marble reliefs usually only the horse's head appears. Yet, there can hardly be any doubt that the horse-and-rider should be considered as part of the scene depicted in the reliefs. It is true that in the most common of these the horse appears in abbreviated form on the principle of *pars pro toto*, but this principle can be extended to include the rider as well.

The question arises as to the meaning intended to be conveyed by the various elements in the hero reliefs, and here no unanimity of opinion is to be expected.[11] It is possible, however, that the terracottas from the deposit will throw new light on this much debated problem, because they contain these elements in separate units and thus serve to focus the attention both on the individual aspect of each object and on the significance of the group as a whole. We need not suppose that each worshiper contributed a whole group of related figures, but whatever he brought had some independent meaning at the same time as it contained elements of collective significance.

It is not the purpose of this paper to discuss at length the various theories proposed in explanation of hero reliefs,[12] but merely to point to certain features which these reliefs have in common with the terracottas. Some of these seem to be significant, in view of what is known of Corinthian cults and their representations in minor arts.

We may safely proceed from the assumption that the deposit had some connection with a hero cult or with the cult of some chthonian deity, or with both. The presence

[11] The literature on this subject is so extensive that a complete list of references would constitute a lengthy article in itself. By far the most useful general discussion is that of Furtwängler in *Collection Sabouroff*, Introduction, pp. 15-40; but the articles by Eitrem in Pauly-Wissowa, *s.v.* Heros, and by F. Deneken in Roscher's *Lexikon, s.v.* Heros, are more comprehensive. Other important articles are: P. Foucart, " Le culte des héros chez les Grecs " in *Memoires de l'Institut National de France, Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, XLII, 1922, pp. 1-166; L. Malten, " Das Pferd im Totenglauben," *Jahrbuch*, XXIX, 1914, pp. 179-256; W. H. D. Rouse, *Greek Votive Offerings*, especially chapters I and IV; Jane Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, pp. 349-362; Percy Gardner, *Sculptured Tombs of Hellas*, chapter VII; K. A. Rhomaios, *Ath. Mitt.*, XXXIX, 1914, pp. 189-235; A. B. Cook, *Zeus*, II, pp. 1160 ff.

[12] These reliefs, once their contents had become more or less fixed, were used in a variety of cults. Consequently no general interpretation for the different figures can be given, since in each case this will depend on the hero or deity to whom the reliefs were dedicated.

of the snake, both on the rider reliefs and on the stele with the helmet, is sufficient proof of this fact. For on the symbolic meaning of the snake most authorities agree, however much they differ with regard to the significance of the other objects. The snake represents the soul of the dead,[13] and by an extension of this meaning it is used as a symbol indicating that the ceremony depicted on the relief is conceived of as taking place in the lower world or in connection with the worship of the powers beneath the earth.

The reclining male, if we may judge from the single preserved head, is regarded as a divine figure; and the polos, commonly worn by Hades-Pluto,[14] and later by Serapis, labels him as ruler in the realm of the dead. Likewise the woman, seated on the couch or on a separate throne at the foot of the couch, can be none other than the consort of the reclining deity. The table set with food in front of the pair and the krater belong to the accessories of the banquet. Around this divine pair, whatever name be applied to them, is centered the whole action depicted in the reliefs.

But according to a common interpretation the reclining figure represents the hero or the heroized dead,[15] and the woman seated beside him is his wife. In the most typical kind of reliefs this can hardly be correct.[16] It would limit the application to married men, and would seem to require that the wife, too, be represented among the dead. The alternative would be to regard the feast as taking place in the home of the deceased, in which case the dead in whose honor it is instituted must be thought of as participating with bodily presence. This would raise the problem, why the other members of the family do not participate. By exception a second reclining figure appears on the couch,[17] but in no case does the scene give the impression of repre-

[13] See Plutarch's *Lives, Kleomenes*, 39. A dissenting opinion is expressed by K. A. Rhomaios, *Ath. Mitt.*, XXXIX, 1914, pp. 213 ff., who sees in the snake a "Bild aller chthonischen Geister, zu denen auch die eigentlichen Heroen gerechnet werden müssen." Only in a secondary sense, under the influence of anthropomorphic conceptions, "sinkt die Schlange zum heiligen Tier der Götter und folglich auch der Heroen herab, denen in der Spätzeit bisweilen auch heroisierte Tote angeglichen werden."

[14] The polos is not in itself sufficient to establish the identity of a given figure (see Frickenhaus, *Tiryns*, I, pp. 68 f.), but when, as here, it is worn by a male figure who is the object of worship in a chthonian cult, this identification is justified. Cf. K. A. Rhomaios, *Ath. Mitt.*, XXXIX, 1914, p. 211; V. K. Müller, *Der Polos*, pp. 75 ff.

[15] Rouse, *op. cit.*, pp. 20 ff.; Percy Gardner, *J.H.S.*, V, 1884, pp. 130 f., *Sculptured Tombs of Hellas*, p. 88; Wolters, *Arch. Zeit.*, XL, 1882, pp. 300 ff.; E. Pfuhl, *Jahrbuch*, XX, 1905, pp. 138-155.

[16] See K. A. Rhomaios, *Ath. Mitt.*, XXXIX, 1914, pp. 209 ff.; A. A. Papagiannopoulos-Palaios, Πολέμων, I, 1929, pp. 241-248; Δελτίον, VI, 1920-21, pp. 88, 89. Furtwängler, *op. cit.*, pp. 30 f., shows that in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. the reliefs are dedicated either to chthonian deities like Hades or to heroes, not to the recently dead.

[17] L. Malten, "Das Pferd im Totenglauben," in *Jahrbuch*, XXIX, 1914, p. 220, fig. 14. Cf. description of family feast at Phigaleia in honor of heroes as described by Athenaios, IV, 149 C: *ὅταν δὲ τοῖς ἥρωσι θύωσι, βουθυσία μεγάλη γίνεται καὶ ἑστιῶνται πάντες μετὰ τῶν δούλων. οἱ δὲ παῖδες ἐν ταῖς ἑστιάσεσι μετὰ τῶν πατέρων ἐπὶ λίθων καθήμενοι γυμνοὶ συνδειπνοῦσιν.*

senting a family meal. Other figures on the reliefs are always pictured not as participating in the feast but as contributing to it with gifts and sacrificial victims. These, then, must be considered as the living members of the family, if, indeed, the reliefs have any relation to ceremonies in honor of the recently deceased.[18]

A common feature on hero reliefs is the presence of a dog, usually lying under the table. Many scholars see in him, as in practically all the other elements of the scene, a direct reference to the soul of the dead, or to death itself,[19] and Kerberos and Hekate are called to the witness stand to prove the case. This interpretation leads to some difficulties, and in the case of a dog peacefully gnawing a bone beneath the table [20] it approaches the grotesque. Among the pieces from the deposit no figures of dogs are preserved. In view of the fragmentary condition of the terracottas this might be accidental, although it is far more likely that the dog was not represented. On the preserved fragments of marble reliefs of this kind from Corinth the dog is likewise absent.[21]

On the common type of hero relief the dog may thus be regarded as part of the scene without cult significance. The presence of the horse raises a different problem. Manifestly he has no place in the interior of a house where the banquet is spread. To obviate the incongruity of his presence, only the head is shown, usually set within a casing, which may be regarded either as a window through which the head is seen from within, or as a frame added for the purpose of emphasizing the symbolic character of the animal in the scene.

Many theories, as a rule more erudite than convincing, have been offered in explanation of the prominence of the horse in the cult of the dead. Percy Gardner

[18] Cf. K. A. Rhomaios, *Ath. Mitt.*, XXXIX, 1914, pp. 208 ff. Furtwängler, *op. cit.*, pp. 35 ff., has shown that the reliefs dedicated to the dead are late adaptations, in which the original significance of the scene has become contaminated with the common elements of sepulchral stelai. On the other hand it cannot be denied that the reliefs incorporate the elements which had since earliest times been associated with the worship of the dead, and continued to be used on sepulchral monuments. A constant contamination of the two kinds of monuments and a confusion of the symbolic meaning of the various elements were the natural results of such a development. Cf. for example the beautiful grave stele from Tarentum (Domenico Zancani, *Boll. d'Arte*, VI, 1926, p. 17, fig. 1) which shows a young man, holding a pomegranate, who can only be intended to represent the deceased. In the background his armor: large circular shield, helmet, spear, and sword. A snake rears up in front, and above is a horse's head within a frame. The rocky eminence on the right can only be a representation of the tomb.

[19] See Malten, *loc. cit.*, pp. 236 f.; K. A. Rhomaios, *loc. cit.*, p. 216.

[20] Percy Gardner, *op. cit.*, pl. III; cf. p. 88, and *J.H.S.*, V, 1884, pp. 112 ff. It is not to be denied that figures of dogs as well as those of almost any animal may be used with symbolic significance, but this is usually not the case where they appear in their natural milieu. The difference in this respect between the dog and the snake is readily apparent.

[21] On a late Corinthian grave stele, utilizing the composition of the hero reliefs, the dog is present; A. Philadelpheus, Δελτίον, IV, 1918, Παρ. p. 7, fig. 10; B. D. Meritt, *Corinth*, VIII, i, *Greek Inscriptions*, no. 133.

points to the custom of burying animals in the tombs,[22] but this cannot have been a common practice in Greece itself.[23] The most extensive study on the subject is that of L. Malten,[24] whose conclusion is that the horse stands for death itself, and only in a secondary sense is used to represent the dead. But here, too, much of the evidence comes from legends and practices foreign to the Greeks.

It is obvious that no one theory will suffice to explain a phenomenon so widespread and at the same time so complex as the symbolic significance of the horse. Originally the religious motive must have been the most important, but the prominence of the horse in sepulchral art, and especially in hero reliefs, cannot be explained on the basis of religious beliefs alone. The sculptors, coroplasts and painters, who gave artistic expression to these beliefs, can have had only vague conceptions regarding the origin and significance of the various objects and symbols used in the cult. To them the outward manifestations of religious practices in local cults were the deciding factors in determining the contents of their artistic productions.

Whatever was the primary reason for associating the horse with the cult of the dead, it is more than likely that the funeral games, in which the horse race was the most important event, had much to do with the creation of the hero relief. And, like many other elements originating in a cult of the dead, the races became one of the essential features in the worship of heroes.[25] This interpretation will account for the presence of the window through which the horse's head usually appears. The whole scene—banquet, sacrifice, games—represents the celebration in honor of the hero.

In support of this explanation we may point to a series of reliefs in which mounted warriors appear in the background of the banqueting scene. A good example of this class is a relief from Teos in the Smyrna Museum,[26] which shows the usual arrangement, but has two figures reclining on a couch and a female figure seated at the foot. There are two *oinochooi* busy with the wine and a third servant arranging the food on the table, and certain accessories appear which are not found on the more typical reliefs of the fourth century. The background is closed off by a curtain stretched between the two antae enclosing the scene. Where the curtain sags down in the center are seen the upper parts of three armed horsemen in full gallop to the left. The large

[22] *J.H.S.*, V, 1884, p. 131; *Sculptured Tombs of Hellas*, pp. 83 ff.

[23] The funeral rites of Patroklos, which Homer describes, *Il.*, XXIII, 165-183, include the immolation of human victims as well as animals, among them the dog and the horse, but it is obvious that the poet was familiar with funeral customs which the Greeks in Greece did not practise. Bones of dogs and horses are not commonly, if ever, found in tombs in Greece proper.

[24] *Jahrbuch*, XXIX, 1914, pp. 179-256.

[25] There is, of course, no essential difference between the worship of the dead and hero worship, but since only a few of those who were honored by their families at the time of their death became recognized heroes, there is a practical distinction in the two kinds of worship. See Furtwängler, *op. cit.*, p. 19; M. P. Nilsson, *Gr. Feste*, p. 454.

[26] Ernst Pfuhl, *Jahrbuch*, XX, 1905, p. 123, fig. 20; and *Jahrbuch*, L, 1935, p. 13, fig. 2.

circular shields are particularly prominent. Since the horsemen are represented as seen at a distance they are much smaller than the main figures in the foreground. In view of the fact that there are three men on horseback and only two on the couch, the two groups cannot be intended to represent the heroes, or deities, engaged in different functions. It is reasonable to suppose that the mounted figures are here conceived of as participating in a race in honor of the two reclining males,[27] be they gods or heroes or heroized dead, for whom the feast is spread in the foreground.[28]

In a recent study of the relief in Smyrna Otto Walter [29] has identified the three riders as kouretes or korybantes, but this interpretation leads to grave difficulties. Both kouretes and korybantes are divine attendants attached to specific deities and usually associated with the birth of the divine child, either Zeus or Dionysos. Their function on the hero reliefs would be anything but obvious. Moreover, as Walter himself points out, they do not appear as knights in other instances where their identification is beyond doubt.[30]

However the type originated, the three riders on the hero relief in Smyrna probably refer to the same thing as the horse's head in the window, which can hardly be considered a symbol of the kouretes. The essential thing is the horse, not the warrior. For the origin of this conception we must now consider another relief from Corinth of special importance for the present inquiry.

A small unpublished fragment of marble [31] in the epigraphical collection at Corinth preserves part of a relief, in which there is a bearded man reclining on a couch and part of a draped figure on the left with some object held in the hand. The rest is broken away, but what remains is sufficient to show that we have to do with a common type of hero feast. Above the relief was a dedicatory inscription in letters of the late fourth or early third century B.C., preserving the name [Z]ευξίππωι.[32] The

[27] Furtwängler, *op. cit.*, p. 34, explains the mounted warriors as participants in the funeral procession. This interpretation is rejected by E. Pfuhl, *Jahrbuch*, XX, 1905, p. 151, who sees in them a reference to " das wilde Heer, das draussen vorbeizieht."

[28] There are other reliefs of a similar type, but in none of these is the action so clearly indicated. Cf. Pfuhl, *Jahrbuch*, XX, 1905, p. 126, fig. 21; and cf. coin of Bizya illustrated by Percy Gardner, *Sculptured Tombs of Hellas*, p. 92, fig. 34.

[29] *Jahreshefte*, XXXI, 1938, pp. 53-80.

[30] Less serious, yet important enough to be considered, is the shape of their shields. According to Dionysios of Halikarnassos, *Roman Antiquities*, II, 70, 3, the shield of the kouretes was the Thracian type of oblong shape, whereas the warriors in all the reliefs shown in Walter's article carry very prominent circular shields. On coins of Asia Minor, showing the three kouretes surrounding the divine child, the shape of the shield is predominantly circular. See A. B. Cook, *Zeus*, I, pp. 151 ff., figs. 121-129.

[31] Inventory of Inscriptions, No. 1024. Height, 0.13 m.; width, 0.215 m.; thickness, 0.06 m.; height of letters, 0.014 m. A photograph of this fragment is, unfortunately, not obtainable under present conditions.

[32] The zeta is not preserved, and it would be epigraphically possible to read Εὐξίππωι, but no such name seems to be known, although the feminine form Εὐξίππη occurs.

relief was dedicated to some hero named Zeuxippos, or to a deity with such a cult name. In either case, the meaning of the name is significant, since it points to an equine element in the cult. The conclusion reached on the basis of the terracottas and sculptured representations, that the rider reliefs and the hero feasts belong together,[33] is thus confirmed by the inscription.

Nor is this an isolated dedication to Zeuxippos. A similar relief in Trieste, in a better state of preservation, carries a dedicatory inscription to Zeuxippos and Basileia.[34] This relief, which was once in the church of St. Elias in Athens, is probably to be connected with some cult in Attica.

In mythology we hear of Zeuxippos in connection with early legends of Athens and Sikyon. He succeeded Phaistos as king of Sikyon and was in turn followed by Hippolytos, a grandson of Phaistos, in whose reign Sikyon came under the sway of Mycenae. All this belongs to the pre-Dorian history of the city. It is significant that Zeuxippos, who was unrelated to the royal line of Sikyon, is given a place in the history of the city between two descendants of Herakles. For to judge from his parentage—he was the son of Apollo and the nymph Syllis—one gets the impression that he was no mortal man but a god. Moreover, Zeuxippos had a feminine counterpart, Zeuxippe, who also figures in Sikyonian and Attic legend. She appears in Pausanias[35] as the daughter of Lamedon and the wife of Sikyon, eponymous hero of the city, who had come to Sikyon, previously called Aigialeia, from Attika. Other writers state that she was the mother of Erechtheus and of Boutes. Corinth enters the legend through Korinthos, eponymous hero of the city, whom the Corinthians fathered upon Zeus. But his human father was Marathon, and Sikyon was his brother. Zeuxippe thus becomes the sister-in-law of the eponymous hero of Corinth.

The important fact to be gathered from these legends is the association of the horse and of horse taming with the deities and heroes of the myths. These ideas are inherent in the names of Zeuxippos and Zeuxippe. Some significance may lie in the fact that Zeuxippos, harnesser of the horse, was succeeded by a king with a name of the opposite meaning, Hippolytos, who lost the kingdom to a foreign power. The feminine counterpart of Hippolytos is Hippolyte, queen of the mounted female warriors, the Amazons. Her connection is with Athens and with Thebes, for she was

[33] In the case of certain late tomb monuments, the two kinds of reliefs appear together on the same stone: cf. Collart and Devambez, *B.C.H.*, LV, 1931, p. 177, fig. 4. A deposit of terracottas from a sanctuary in Aitolia contains numerous examples of the reclining figure with a woman seated on the couch, but no rider reliefs. Some of the figurines from the deposit appear to be importations from Corinth, and the types at any rate are mostly of Corinthian origin. The deposit indicates the worship of a divine pair, and an inscription is interpreted by the excavator as pointing to a female equine deity who gave her name to a fountain. See K. A. Rhomaios, Δελτίον, VI, 1920-21, pp. 66 ff.

[34] Furtwängler, *op. cit.*, p. 31; Malten, *loc. cit.*, p. 187, fig. 7; *I.G.*, II², 4645. The inscription reads: ----σιος τῶι Ζευ⟨ξ⟩ίππωι καὶ τεῖ Βασι⟨λ⟩είαι.

[35] Pausanias, II, 6, 5-7.

the mother of Antiope, or according to other sources, Antiope and Hippolyte were different names for the same person. But in Pausanias' account the legend of Antiope is also connected with Sikyon. Famed throughout Greece for her beauty, she was carried off to Sikyon by Epopeus, father of Marathon and grandfather of the eponymous heroes, Sikyon and Korinthos. Epopeus came originally from Thessaly, the reputed home of the horse. After his death Antiope was restored to Thebes by Lamedon, the father of Zeuxippe, and on the way she gave birth to the twins Zethos and Amphion, "lords of the white steeds." [36]

On the Attic relief in Trieste the woman who appears with Zeuxippos is called Basileia, a name of general meaning, but implying chthonian cult significance. She has with good reason been identified with Basile, who was worshiped in Athens in association with certain other male deities.[37] On the well-known relief from Phaleron [38] in the Athens Museum, she is being carried off in a four-horse chariot by her youthful ravisher Echelos, whose sanctuary was connected with the Hippodrome.[39] The ancients, whether rightly or wrongly, derived the name Echelos from the word for swamp (ἔχω + ἕλος), a suitable appellation for a hero whose shrine was situated in the marshy ground along the outflow of the Ilissos into the Bay of Phaleron. The importance of the relief for the purpose of the present inquiry is the relation of Basile to a hero associated with the horse races in the Hippodrome. The analogous relation of Basileia to another hero, Zeuxippos, whose name implies the harnessing of the horse, can hardly be accidental. It is not unlikely that the Corinth relief, like that in Trieste, was dedicated both to Basileia and to Zeuxippos, but this must remain a conjecture.

[36] Euripides, *Herakles*, line 29.

[37] The divergent views on the identity of Basileia are discussed by A. B. Cook, *Zeus*, III, pp. 60 ff.; cf. Albert Klinz, Ἱερὸς Γάμος, pp. 26-27.

[38] This relief has most recently been studied by Otto Walter, Ἀρχ. Ἐφ., 1937, pp. 97-119, who suggests very plausibly that it may refer to the legend relating to the founding of the Panathenaic chariot races. The name inscribed above the female figure appears as ΙΑΣΙΛΗ, and Walter admits that this may be the correct form. It seems preferable, however, since no such name is otherwise known, to assume that the first letter is an unfinished beta. This explanation seems justified in view of the other errors on the relief. In inscribing the name of Hermes the stonecutter added two unnecessary iotas, one before the name and another between the rho and the mu. For comment on these strokes and on the rough breathing at the beginning of the name see Walter, *loc. cit.*, p. 113.

[39] *Etym. Mag., s. vv.* Ἔχελος and Ἐνεχελιδώ. The cult of Echelos was probably connected with that of Poseidon Hippodromios; see William S. Ferguson, *Hesperia*, VII, 1938, pp. 5 and 25 ff. The association of the latter with heroes of navigation, Nausithoos-Nauseiros and Phaiax, need not imply that Hippodromios was merely a descriptive epithet, as Ferguson assumes, *loc. cit.*, p. 25, note 5. Such titles, even when derived from cult practices, do not imply a rigid departmentalization of the god's functions. In the cult at Kolonos, for example, to which Ferguson refers, Poseidon was primarily god of the horse; but there too he was worshiped under the cult names Γαιήοχος and Πόντιος as well as Ἵππιος, and he was associated with Athena, harnesser of the horse and builder of the first vessel. See below, p. 139, note 41.

It is somewhat of a surprise to discover evidence in Corinth for the cult of Zeuxippos, a hero who, according to legend, was at home in Attica and in Sikyon. But the functions over which he presided, as indicated by his name, are those usually assigned to Poseidon, who was supreme in the Corinthia. It is a strange paradox that at Corinth, one of the most active earthquake centers in Greece, there are but slight traces of the cult of Poseidon the Earthshaker.[40] As such he was honored in Athens, where earthquakes are rarely violent, in Lakonia, in some of the Aegean islands, and elsewhere. At Corinth he appears as god of the sea and of the horse, and his associations are with Athena Hippia-Chalinitis and with Bellerophon, the horse-tamer par excellence.[41] The latter may have been a foreigner, at home in the east, who had acquired legitimacy as a Greek hero by being fathered upon Aiolos, the son of the horse-god, Poseidon.[42]

At the Isthmos there was a very ancient cult of Poseidon in conjunction with that of Palaimon. Poseidon was there honored as the god of the sea, and Amphitrite was his divine consort. But even there his connection with the Hippodrome and the equine elements in his cult were very prominent. On the terracotta tablets from Penteskouphia, which probably refer to the Isthmian cult of Poseidon, he appears holding his sea emblem, the trident, and riding horseback or in a chariot, either alone or accompanied by Amphitrite.

The functions implied in the name Zeuxippos [43] are exactly those suggested by the epithets of Poseidon at Corinth, such as **Δαμαῖος** and **Ἵππιος**. Moreover, the cult names given by the Corinthians to Athena, **Χαλινῖτις**, **Ἱππία**, and perhaps **Δαμάσιππος**,[44] have similar meanings, and the two deities were worshiped together. The mythological explanation for these names was furnished by the legend of Bellerophon and the harnessing of Pegasos, but the origin is probably to be sought in some primitive theriomorphic conception of the deities, or at least in religious practices in which the horse was prominent.

[40] In Pindar's *Olymp.*, XIII, 116, Poseidon bears the epithet **Γεάοχος**, but his association is with Athena Hippia; and his function, like that of the goddess, is with the horse. The name **Γαιήοχος** was so commonly connected with cults in which the equine element was prominent, that the lexicographers derived the word from *ὀχέομαι* (*ὁ ὑπὸ τῆς γῆς ὀχούμενος*, Hesychios, *s. v.* **Γαιήοχος**). See M. P. Nilsson, *Gr. Feste*, pp. 64 ff. Earthquakes, on the other hand, were believed to be set in motion by waves in the depth of the sea; cf. Cook, *Zeus*, III, pp. 18 f.

[41] At Athens, too, Athena Hippia and Poseidon **Γαιήοχος** were associated; see Sophokles, *Oid. Kol.*, lines 1070-73: *οἳ τὰν Ἱππίαν | τιμῶσιν Ἀθάναν | καὶ τὸν πόντιον Γαιάοχον | Ῥέας φίλον υἱόν.* Cf. Ailios Aristeides, *Athena*, 20: *μετέχει [ἡ Ἀθηνᾶ] δὲ καὶ τῷ Ποσειδῶνι τῶν ἔργων τῷ τε Ἱππίῳ καὶ τῷ Ποντίῳ, πρώτη μὲν τὸν χαλινὸν εὑροῦσα, πηξαμένη δὲ τὴν πρώτην ναῦν.*

[42] See L. Malten, *Jahrbuch*, XL, 1925, pp. 121-160. In the *Iliad*, VI, 155, Bellerophon is the son of Glaukos, whose father Sisyphos was the son of Aiolos.

[43] Zeuxippos belongs to the same class of functional cult names as Taraxippos, a hero whose grave was shown in the Hippodrome at Olympia, and who was also worshipped at Isthmia. Such cults are likely to be of comparatively late date. An illuminating discussion of their origin is found in L. R. Farnell, *Greek Hero Cults and Ideas of Immortality*, chapter IV, pp. 71-94.

[44] Odelberg, *Sacra Corinthia*, etc., p. 28, note 8.

At Corinth Athena, the horse-tamer, was also worshiped as Athena Hellotis, and an annual festival, the Hellotia, was celebrated in her honor. From a scholion on Pindar,[45] which is our chief source of information on the festival, we learn that it was in the nature of a purification and expiation, and that a torch race was held in honor of the goddess. The aetiological explanation for these rites is furnished by the myth of Hellotis and her sisters, who were the daughters of Timandros. Two versions of this story are preserved in the scholion. In the first of these we hear of four daughters, Hellotis, Eurytione, Chryse, and Kotyto. When the city fell into the hands of the invaders Hellotis seized her youngest sister Chryse, entered the temple of Athena, and there threw herself and her sister into the fire. In the other version the two sisters Eurytione and Hellotis together with a boy perished in the flames of the temple when the Dorians destroyed the city. A famine, which followed as a punishment for the crime, was averted at the advice of Apollo by the institution of expiatory rites for the sisters and by the founding of a shrine to Athena Hellotis.

It cannot be doubted that the legend arose as an explanation for the peculiar rites associated with the cult at Corinth. Both versions of the story connect the crime against the girls with the temple of Athena. Which temple this was is not specified, and we are left to infer that it was the famous temple of Athena Chalinitis which Pausanias saw close to the theater. This may be inferred also from the etymological explanation offered by the scholiast which connects the harnessing of Pegasos with the legend of Hellotis.

Hellotis was at home in Crete, especially at Gortyn, where she was identified with Europa. But if the cult came from Crete to Corinth, and there became merged with the Athena cult, it may seem surprising that the male attendant became Poseidon rather than Zeus. The explanation is not far to seek. If we accept the view that Poseidon was originally a specialized form of Zeus,[46] it follows that the role played by Zeus in the Europa myth could at another time, or in a different locality, have been attributed to Poseidon.[47] Not only does the ride over the sea present Zeus in an incongruously intimate relation to Poseidon's own element, but the theriomorphic aspect of the myth connects Europa with the animal commonly associated with the cult of

[45] Pindar, *Ol.*, XIII, 56, and *Etym. Magn., s. v.* Ἑλλωτίς. See discussions by Odelberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-30; and M. P. Nilsson, *Griechische Feste*, pp. 94-96; and especially A. Lesky, "Hellos-Hellotis," in *Wiener Studien*, XLV, 1926-7, pp. 152-173; XLVI, 1928, pp. 48-67, 107-129.

[46] This thesis is convincingly developed by A. B. Cook in several articles and in his *Zeus*, especially in vol. II, pp. 582 ff., and III, p. 20. On a fragment of a Corinthian pinax (*Ant. Denkm.*, II, 6, pl. 29, 13) Zeus appears together with Poseidon, riding in a chariot. Both hold the reins of the horses. Cf. Athenaios, II, 42 a, quoting Theophrastos, who says that there was a sanctuary in Caria to Zenoposeidon, a god combining the attributes of Zeus and Poseidon.

[47] The myth of Europa, like that of Hellotis, doubtless reflects an early stage in religious evolution. See Axel Persson, "Legende und Mythos in ihrem Verhältnis zu Bild und Gleichnis im vorgeschichtlichen Griechenland," in ΔΡΑΓΜΑ, *Martino P. Nilsson dedicatum*, pp. 379-401; and cf. Malten, *Jahrbuch*, XLIII, 1928, pp. 125 f.; Albert Klinz, Ἱερὸς Γάμος, pp. 9-13.

Poseidon. The white bull, *ἀργιμήτας ταῦρος*,[48] who wooed Europa and carried her over the waves to Crete we meet again at Corinth—as a victim sacrificed to Poseidon Damaios,[49] whose function is the taming of the horse.

At Marathon, where Athena bore the same epithet, Hellotia was explained as deriving from *ἕλος*, the Marathonian swamp.[50] Mention has already been made of the fact that the Athenians also derived the name of Echelos, the hero of the Hippodrome, from the same word. This may be of no significance, and the explanation in either case is generally regarded as based on false etymology. The fact remains, however, that Athena Hellotis in Corinth was the horse-tamer goddess, who was otherwise distinguished by the epithets Chalinitis and Hippia. Hence the name Hellotis at Corinth was explained as deriving from *ἑλών*, because Bellerophon with her aid caught and harnessed the winged Pegasos. Etymologists will dismiss such explanations as of no value; but to students of Greek cults they are not without significance, for while trying to explain these terms on the basis of mythology and ritual the ancient lexicographers gave important information with regard to the cults of the deities concerned. I can see no reason in this case for rejecting the information given by the scholiast that Athena Hellotis and Athena Hippia were considered identical, although the cult doubtless had a dual origin.

The aetiological myth connects the cult of Hellotis at Corinth with the Dorian invasion. Does this indicate an early date for the beginning of the cult and the institution of the Hellotia as a public festival? I do not think it does. The historical event around which the myth centers has nothing to do with the origin of the cult. The myth, at whatever time it assumed the form recorded by the scholiast, was not a new creation. It was made up of old legends which were refashioned and combined with tales of different localities, so as to fit the practices it was intended to explain. It is obvious that such a process would introduce elements which had no connection with Corinth or with the particular cult there associated with the myth.

Three important facts may be gathered from the ancient references to the cult of Hellotis: (a) the rites were in the nature of a purification and expiation, originating in a cult of the dead; (b) a torch race was held at the annual festival; and (c) the Corinthians associated the festival with the worship of horse-taming Athena.

In our discussion of the terracotta deposit it was pointed out that the nature of

[48] Or is Hesychios right in explaining this word as meaning "quick-witted"? On the white-ground kylix in Munich from the Aphaia temple the bull on which Europa rides is painted black, no doubt, as Cook remarks (*Zeus*, I, p. 526 and pl. XXXII), "for aesthetic rather than religious reasons." In the myth of the Cretan bull as related by Apollodoros (III, i, 1-4), the animal first appeared to Minos as a sacrifice to Poseidon. See A. B. Cook, *op. cit.*, I, p. 464.

[49] Pindar, *Ol.*, XIII, 99.

[50] The appearance of the comparatively rare epithet Hellotis in the cult of Athena both at Corinth and at Marathon, points to a cult connection between Attica and Corinth, paralleled by the myth of the eponymous heroes of the two cities.

the figurines and their similarity to the hero reliefs indicate that they had some connection with a hero cult or with deities associated with such a cult. Furthermore, the equine element indicated by the prominence of the horse and the name Zeuxippos

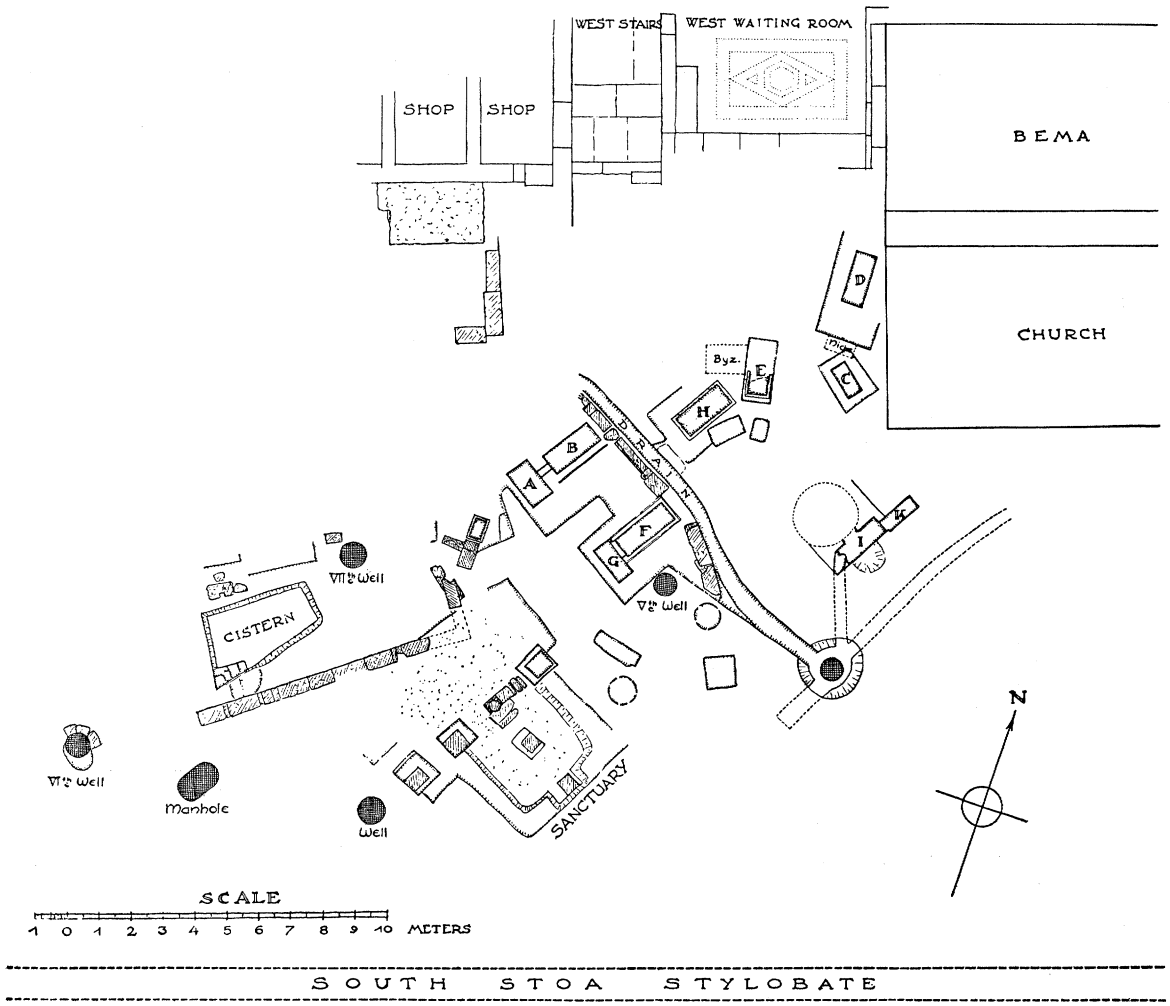

Fig. 2. Cemetery and Chthonian Shrine in the Corinthian Agora
(From *A.J.A.*, XLI, 1937, pl. XIII, 2)

points to a connection with Poseidon Hippios and Athena Hippia. Now we find that Athena in this same aspect of her worship was also called Hellotis and that the festival Hellotia was celebrated in her honor.

It would be reasonable to assume that equestrian contests, perhaps chariot races, played a prominent role in the festival of such deities. If, as seems likely, the cult of the dead became associated with the cult of the two horse deities, this would offer

further explanation for the importance of the horse motive. Its prominence among the cult objects would be an allusion to the races that formed part of the funeral ceremonies and of festivals held in honor of the dead and of the deities in the underworld. Such celebrations are not to be thought of in connection with the organized contests of Panhellenic character at the Isthmia, but would be of purely local significance and celebrated at Corinth itself.

Fig. 3. Chthonian Shrine in the Agora

We must now turn to the excavations at Corinth in order to discover, if possible, what further traces have been left by the cults whose existence is vouched for by the terracottas and marble reliefs as well as by literary testimonies. In one of the recent campaigns in the Corinthian Agora a late Geometric cemetery was discovered beneath the buildings and streets of later times. A remarkable feature of this burial ground is a shrine containing an altar and a niche that may have held a small cult image (Figs. 2 and 3). That this chapel had some direct connection with the cemetery is likely enough from its position in relation to the graves, and the strange arrangement

of the columns, which were sunk below the floor level, would befit a cult place of chthonian character.[51] The lower part of the shrine was cut out of virgin soil, and was thus essentially subterranean. Bones of sheep and pigs, found in a layer of ash on the floor near the altar, give evidence of sacrifice.

The underground shrine with its altar recalls the circumstances of the Roman festival Consualia, at which sacrifices were offered on a subterranean altar to Consus, identified with the Greek Poseidon Seisichthon. The name Consus was said to have been given to him " because he holds the earth," ὅτι τὴν γῆν ὁ θεὸς ἔχει, which is really the meaning of Poseidon's epithet Γαιήοχος. Horse races in honor of Equestrian Neptune constituted an important feature of the Consualia. Here, too, a dual origin of the cult is indicated, for Dionysios of Halikarnassos states [52] that the underground altar, which remained concealed except at the festival, was erected, not to Poseidon, but to a certain divinity whose name could not be uttered, apparently an equivalent of Hades. The high antiquity of the Roman cult is attested by the fact that its institution was ascribed to Romulus.

The suggestion comes near to hand that the altar at Corinth, perhaps the whole shrine, was buried in earth and uncovered once a year at the time of the festival. This would admirably explain the provisional and unfinished appearance of the structure. Since it has no walls or foundations for walls, except in front where there are individual foundations for the columns, it is difficult to imagine how it could have been roofed. Yet, despite the fact that it was obviously in use for a long time, the cuttings in the soft rock were sharp and unweathered at the time of discovery.

The chapel does not appear to be earlier than the sixth century, and its construction seems to coincide with the latest evidence of burial in the cemetery.[53] It is probable that religious observances of a general nature took place in the cemetery from the time when the first interments were made, at least as early as the eighth century B.C. At that time the area must have lain outside the limits of the public square. At some later period, possibly in the time of the tyrants, it became necessary to extend the Agora and then the cemetery had to be abandoned. This would have been considered an infringement upon the domains of the dead and their divine patrons, for which compensation had to be made. The construction of the chapel, which would

[51] The chapel is described by C. H. Morgan, *A.J.A.*, XLI, 1937, pp. 543-546, pls. XIII, XIV. Where the cult of a hero expressed itself in sacrifices at his grave, it was customary to let the blood of the victim flow into a hole in the ground so as to come into direct contact with the hero's bones. See M. P. Nilsson, *History of Greek Religion*, p. 250. The same sense of physical actuality as the expression of religious belief is manifested in the subterranean character of the shrine in the Corinthian Agora.

[52] *Ant. Rom.*, II, 31, 2-3. Cf. Livy, I, 9, 6. See also articles *s. v.* Consualia, in Pauly-Wissowa, *R.E.*, and in Daremberg et Saglio, *Dictionnaire des antiquités.*

[53] Most of the graves found undisturbed were of earlier date, but one sarcophagus contained vases of the early sixth century; cf. C. H. Morgan, *loc. cit.*, p. 543, note 1.

raise the importance of the cult, may have been intended to placate the spirits and avert disaster from the city.[54]

There is evidence for a continuation of the cult over a long period, at least till the beginning of the fourth century, when a new reorganization of the Agora took place. Beyond that point all further traces are lost. The sanctuary in its original form was then abandoned and covered up, but it is not impossible that the cult was perpetuated in some form until the destruction of Corinth by Mummius. When the Roman colony was established under Caesar the cemetery together with the sanctuary was again buried under a fill of rubbish, thrown in to raise the Agora level before a new pavement was laid down.

This tantalizing bit of evidence for a cult of the dead in the center of the city may have some connection with another surprising discovery at the eastern end of the Agora. Buried deep beneath a fill of late Hellenistic and Roman date was found a well preserved starting line for a race track (Figs. 4 and 5), and at a slightly lower level is a similar starting line with a different orientation.[55] To the south of the race-tracks is an irregular semicircle (Figs. 4 and 6) which appears to have served as the support for a grandstand. A water channel is cut into the retaining wall of the semicircle, and at one point the water flowed through a clearing basin (Fig. 6 *b*) in which was discovered a deposit of terracottas (Fig. 7) similar to those found in the South Stoa.

In the rear of the semicircle and close to its eastern edge stood a prominent monument, which in its last phase is of Roman date.[56] In the center was a circular column with a lower diameter of 2.15 m., supported upon a rough foundation. Only the lowest drum is left in place, but pieces of a second drum were found built into a modern garden wall in the vicinity. The foundation for the column was hidden by a circular socle, *ca.* 9 m. in diameter, which is lined with orthostates resting on a moulded base. Within the orthostates was a filling of rubble and re-used material, but most of that had been removed during one of the alterations that appear to have been made from time to time.

The later of the two starting lines has been tentatively dated in the third century B.C. and the earlier one in the fourth century. Since no detailed study has yet been made the evidence for these dates is not conclusive, but one point of evidence is offered by the terracotta deposit referred to above (Fig. 7). The pieces are of exactly the same kind as the terracottas from the deposit in the South Stoa. The lower date, indicated by the coins, is the first decade after the middle of the third century.

[54] Cf. scholion on Euripides' *Medeia*, line 1381: ἀσεβὲς γὰρ τὸ ἀνορύττειν τάφους. There are many instances of temples being built to atone for offence to some divine power, and such compensatory or expiatory acts were often enjoined by the Delphian oracle.

[55] A brief description appears in the excavation report by C. H. Morgan, *A.J.A.*, XLI, 1937, pp. 549-551, pls. XV-XVIII.

[56] See *A.J.A.*, XXXVII, 1933, p. 554, and pl. XLI, 1.

An interesting feature is the clear evidence of wheel traffic in the hard surface of the race track. The ruts curve significantly close to the later starting line, indicating that the vehicles followed a given course which was determined by the arrangement in the race course. It was observed by the excavators that the retaining wall of the

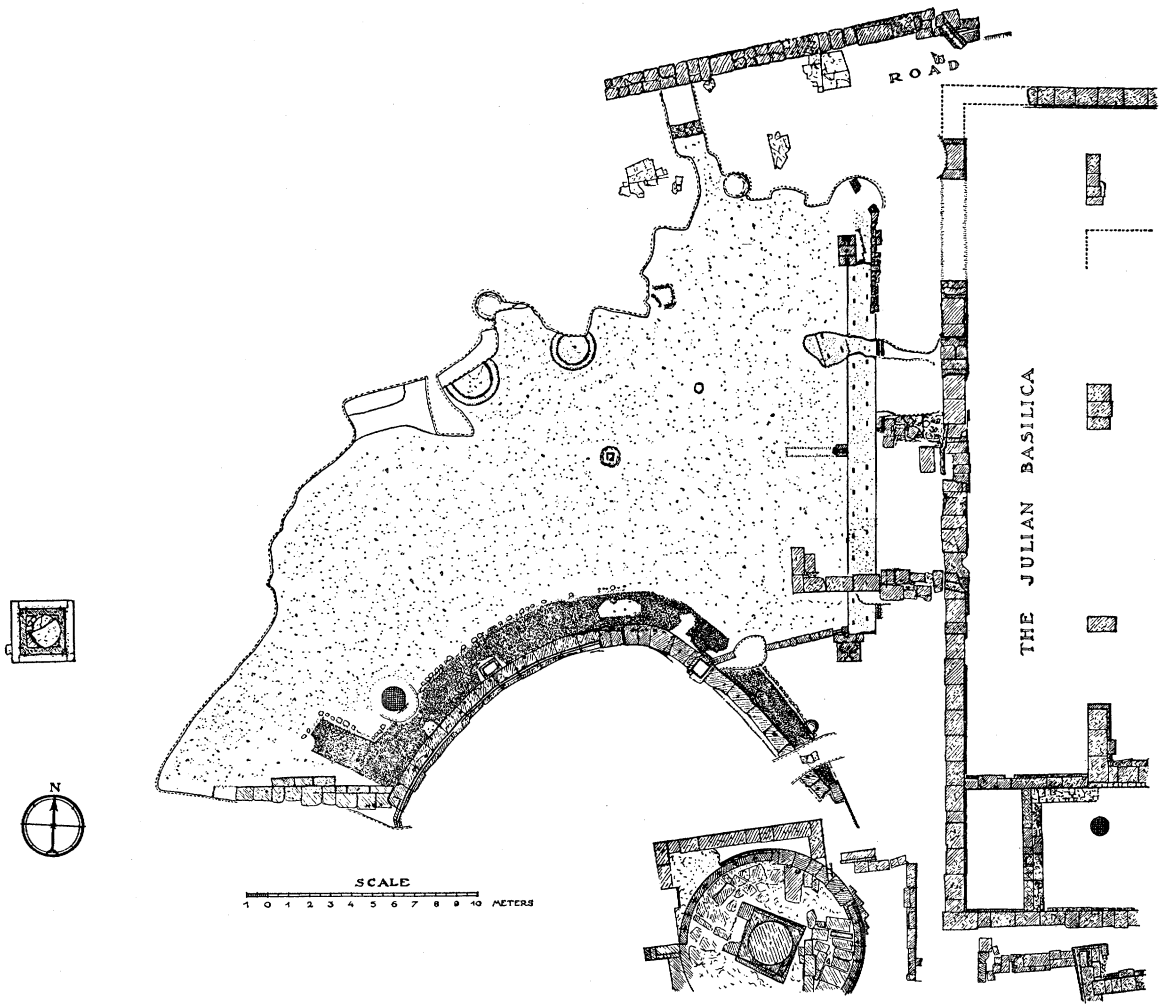

Fig. 4. Race Track and "Grandstand" at Corinth
(From *A.J.A.*, XLI, 1937, pl. XVI)

grandstand, where this juts out farthest into the area of the track, had been cut back slightly to prevent the crowding of the southernmost competitor. It seems more likely that this was done by or for the chariots which had to negotiate a turn at this critical point.

It is highly improbable that the wheel ruts at this point of the city were caused through ordinary traffic, even if it were conceivable that the Agora was open to wheel

Fig. 5. Starting Lines of Race Track

Fig. 6. "Grandstand" with Water Channel and Tank;
Roman Columnar Monument in Left Center

traffic in the Greek period. The curve described directly at the center of the starting line seems to indicate that chariot races of one kind or another took place in the area otherwise used for foot races.[57] There was a similar arrangement at Elis, where the agora served as training ground for horses and was actually called Hippodrome. This was, according to Pausanias, an ancient type of market place (*τρόπῳ δὲ πεποίηται*

Fig. 7. Terracotta Figurines from Deposit in Tank

τῷ ἀρχαιοτέρῳ, VI, xxiv, 2) with colonnades separated by streets. No traces of the Hippodrome were recognized in the excavations of the Austrian Archaeological Institute, which were not carried beyond the exploratory stage. It is possible that the Greek agora at Corinth, which in Pausanias' time lay buried under the Roman market, was of the same general type as the agora at Elis.

[57] The wheel marks, faintly visible in Figure 5 to the left of *b*, are not mentioned in the excavation report, which was written directly after the close of the excavation. They became prominent only after rain had washed the excavation and dissolved the earth trodden down onto the hard metal of the race track. If the Agora seems too small to accommodate horse races, it may be pointed out that contests with four-horse chariots were held on festival days in a very restricted area on the Capitoline Hill in Rome. See Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, XXVII, 45.

This peculiar location of a combined race track and Hippodrome in the center of the city seems to require special motivation, and it is tempting to connect the games with the funeral cult centered about the shrine in the cemetery on the south side of the Agora. It is highly probable that the torch race at the festival of Athena Hellotis took place in the race track of the Agora, and even the disposition of the footrests in the starting lines may be explained as implying that the contestants held a torch in the right hand at the start of the race.[58] There may have been other contests at the Hellotia besides the torch races, and from the wheel marks we may conclude that chariot races were held either at the same festival or in connection with some other local celebration.

The conjecture connecting the race course with the chapel in the cemetery and with a cult of the dead is further confirmed by the information that the festival of the Hellotia was in the nature of a purification. If the supposition is justified that the chapel was constructed and the cult instituted to give satisfaction to the spirits of the dead for the encroachment upon their domain, it is obvious that the area had to be purified before it could be turned over to secular use. Such acts of purification are, in the nature of religious evolution, likely to be annually observed in connection with hero cults and as such become joined to festivals of the gods. In similar instances the hero, or the lesser of the two divinities, usually receives an initiatory sacrifice at the festival of the major god, and it has been suggested [59] that this probably took place at the Hellotia at Corinth.

The two purifying elements that entered into purification rites were fire and water, and the sacrifice of a pig is frequently prescribed. It is tempting to see in the torch race an original purification rite by fire,[60] and the fact that the race took place in the Agora, i. e., in the area polluted by the graves, would be in keeping with such an explanation.[61] At Athens, too, where a torch race formed part of the Panathenaia,

[58] See Morgan, *loc. cit.*, p. 549.

[59] M. P. Nilsson, *Gr. Feste*, p. 95.

[60] For the significance of the torch in funeral rites, see J. C. Lawson, *Modern Greek Folklore and Ancient Greek Religion*, p. 505. The torch race shows that the celebration took place at night, which is in keeping with the funeral character of the cult. Sacrifices to heroes were commonly held at night; see Eitrem, Pauly-Wissowa, *R.E., s. v.* Heros, col. 1125. The torch race at the Panathenaia (A. Mommsen, *Feste*, p. 106) relates to the need for artificial illumination, because the festival was held during the dark of the moon (*τρίτη φθίνοντος*).

[61] That the origin of the torch race is to be sought in the realm of cult rather than in that of sport has been pointed out by many writers on the subject. See N. Wecklein, " Der Fackelwettlauf," *Hermes*, VII, 1873, pp. 446 f.; E. N. Gardiner, *Athletics of the Ancient World*, pp. 142, 143. Cf. A. Martin in Daremberg and Saglio, *Dictionnaire des antiquités*, III, ii, 913 f.; L. Deubner, *Attische Feste*, p. 230. Purification rites were frequently connected with torch races (cf. the relighting of the fires at Plataia after the war with the Persians, Plutarch, *Aristeides*, XX; and the fire rites on the island of Lemnos, which were also in the nature of an expiation for the crime committed by the women, N. Wecklein, *loc. cit.*, pp. 447 f.), but in such cases it is usually the fire that has to be cleansed from pollution; cf. L. Deubner, *op. cit.*, pp. 211 ff. The torch itself seems to have been endowed with purificatory significance, especially in the Eleusinian mysteries; cf. Deubner, *op. cit.*,

the route followed by the contestants apparently led through the Agora.[62] We are not specifically told by the scholiast that water was used in the purificatory rites, but this may be taken for granted.[63] And if we are justified in our conjecture that the torch race at the festival took place in the race course of the Agora, there is interesting material evidence to show that water played a prominent role in the celebration. This is furnished by the deposit of terracotta figurines discovered in a water tank at the edge of the race track. These are similar to the terracottas found in the South Stoa, but unlike those they show unmistakable signs of burning, a further indication of the use of fire at the festival. Having passed through this most rigorous process of purification, the terracottas were deposited in the tank where they were exposed to the lustral qualities of water.

Nor was this water of an ordinary kind, but was doubtless regarded as possessing specific properties of sacral value. It was brought to the race course from a southerly direction, and then by a round-about way to the opposite side of the Agora. After passing through the tank the channel ran along the east edge of the starting line to its north end, and from there it skirted the northern edge of the Agora and finally emptied into a square basin near the Triglyph Terrace. This basin appears to be the last version of the Sacred Fountain, which for two or more centuries had continued to operate as an essential part of the cult apparatus belonging to the small apsidal temple to the north of the fountain. With regard to the date and function of the basin I quote a passage written several years before the discovery of the race track.[64]

> After the Old Spring had thus been buried, water still continued to be required in this spot. It was brought from a great distance in a well constructed stone conduit, lined with cement and covered chiefly by stone slabs; and almost directly over the ancient reservoir, but more than 7 feet higher in level, a small square basin was built. From this basin jars could be filled and carried straight to the door of the shrine across the buried spring and triglyphon. This last period, in which other water was substituted for that of the Old Spring, beginning perhaps about the middle of the third century B.C., continued till the Roman conquest and the destruction of the city in 146 B.C.

Since no detailed study of the Sacred Fountain with its accessories has yet been published, this general description must suffice for the purpose of the present study.

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p. 78; M. P. Nilsson, *Gr. Feste*, pp. 360 ff. Torches also belong to the cult apparatus of the Eumenides (Deubner, *op. cit.*, p. 214) and of other chthonian deities (Nilsson, *op. cit.*, p. 395, 2; p. 396, 4). In Hellenistic times there were torch races connected with the celebration of the Epitaphia and the Theseia at Athens. See also J. R. Sitlington Sterrett, *A.J.P.*, XXII, 1901, pp. 393-419.

[62] Pauly-Wissowa, *R.E.*, *s. v.* Λαμπαδηδρομία.

[63] The joint use of fire and water in such ceremonies is very common. Both were used by Odysseus in cleansing his house after the slaying of the suitors. Here the pragmatic and ritualistic uses of the two elements are combined. At Plataia, the fires polluted by the presence of the Persians were extinguished and pure fire was brought from Delphi. The runner who brought the fire was cleansed by lustral rites, and the tombstones of the dead were ritually purified with water every year. Cf. note 61.

[64] Rhys Carpenter, *A Guide to the Excavations of Ancient Corinth*, first edition, 1928, pp. 28-29.

It is interesting to note that the proposed date of the channel, based on a study of the Sacred Spring, is approximately the same as that suggested for the second starting line. It is clear that the channel with its basins belongs to the last alteration of the race track before the Roman period, and the terracotta deposits indicate that this took place before the middle of the third century. If we are justified in concluding that the water served some ritual purpose, we must assume that it was brought in some other way, perhaps carried in pitchers, during the period of the first race track. The construction of the channel would indicate that a more abundant supply was required, perhaps for practical use, in the second period, but the same water would also fill the needs of religious observances.[65]

Regarding the function served by the Sacred Fountain and the deity or deities worshiped in the apsidal temple several theories have been propounded which need not be discussed here. It is sufficient to enumerate them, in the order in which they have appeared in publication. The temple has been regarded as the seat of an oracle presided over by an unnamed deity;[66] as a cult place of Dionysos, in which water was used in the performance of a wine miracle;[67] as a shrine of some chthonian deity, perhaps Ge, preceding Apollo, in which water may have served a variety of purposes;[68] as a sanctuary of Zeus Chthonios;[69] and, most recently, the whole complex has been explained as serving the joint cult of Dionysos and Apollo in which wine was used to inspire utterances of prophecy.[70]

Where so much uncertainty prevails it would be futile to propose new candidates for the cult. And yet, the evidence implicit in the material remains leads inevitably from the race track to the fountain. If there is any basis for the information resulting from the present inquiry into the cult associated with Athena and Poseidon in the Corinthian Agora, we are forced to conclude that the heroes and deities of this cult had something to do with the cult centering about the Sacred Fountain. And this conclusion does not necessarily conflict with any or all of the theories already proposed. The water, which at one point in the Agora was used to cleanse from pollution the worshipers and their gifts in the cult of one pair of deities, could at another point—if miraculously re-inforced with wine—endow the priests of some other gods with prophetic power. Gods, and heroes, like their present day exponents, could cooperate as well as disagree.

[65] There would be no conflict in such combined use of the water. Most fountains sacred to the gods served the practical needs of every day life. In some cases, as at Argos (Kallimachos, Hymn V, *On the Bath of Pallas*, 45 ff.), water was temporarily withdrawn from secular use at the time of a festival.

[66] *Art and Archaeology*, XIV, 1922, p. 194; *A Guide to Ancient Corinth*, 3rd ed., p. 61.

[67] C. Bonner, *A.J.A.*, XXXIII, 1929, pp. 368-375.

[68] S. Eitrem, *Serta Rudbergiana*, 1931, p. 23; *Phil. Woch.*, LI, 1931, col. 765.

[69] J. de Waele, *Gnomon*, VIII, 1932, pp. 366-367; *Phil. Woch.*, LIII, 1933, cols. 111-112.

[70] G. W. Elderkin, *Hesperia*, X, 1941, pp. 125-132.

A welcome confirmation of the interpretation offered here comes from a vase discovered in a well at the western end of the Agora.[71] On an oinochoe of Corinthian manufacture are drawn in outline technique the figures of two runners in vigorous motion (Fig. 8). Each carries a vase, held in such a way as to indicate that it is filled

Fig. 8. Corinthian Vase with Figures in Torch-and-Pitcher Race

with some liquid. One is a kantharos, the other an oinochoe. One of the runners holds a lighted torch. A heavy cloak partly conceals the figures, and the exact position of their arms is not clear. For our purpose the action of the two men and the objects held in their hands are the important features of the scene. Here we have a picture

[71] R. Stillwell, *A.J.A.*, XL, 1936, p. 42, fig. 20; M. Z. Pease, *Hesperia*, VI, 1937, pp. 310-312, no. 235, fig. 40. The suggestion offered by Humfry Payne (see M. Z. Pease, *loc. cit.*) that an obstacle race, the equivalent of our egg-and-spoon race, is depicted, may be correct, but such a race could well have originated within the frame-work of religious practices. The intermixture of gaity and reverence in religious observances, baffling as it is to the more solemnly inclined western Europeans, was as characteristic of the ancient as it is of the modern Greeks. Cf. M. P. Nilsson, *Greek Popular Religion*, pp. 40, 100-101.

of a torch race of a very peculiar type,[72] in which not only the torch but liquid of some kind played a part in the contest. The shapes of the two vases, it is true, are suggestive of wine rather than of water, but there is no reason to believe that their use was restricted to one kind of liquid or to a particular function. That the race in which the two men engage has ritualistic significance is indicated not only by the objects in their hands but also by the strikingly prominent fillet worn by the younger of the two. We cannot wish for a better illustration of purification rites, such as we are led by other considerations to believe took place at the festival of Hellotis in the Corinthian Agora.

The action depicted on the Corinth vase is analogous to the *ἀμφιφορίτης ἀγών* at the festival of Apollo in Aigina.[73] Here the contestants placed on their shoulders earthen vessels filled with water from the spring Asopis and ran a race "in imitation of heroes," *φιλονεικοῦντες κατὰ μίμησιν τῶν ἡρώων*. Nilsson compares this performance with the torch race and points to the expiatory and purificatory use of water in sepulchral rites and hero cults. The race with water jars in Aigina, like the combined pitcher-and-torch race at Corinth, appears to have originated from the common practices at funeral celebrations.

During the interval of a century, between the destruction of the city under Mummius and its rebuilding by Caesar, many of the lesser sanctuaries fell into decay and some of them may have been abandoned.[74] But religious beliefs lie too deeply rooted in the human consciousness to disappear during the course of three generations, and the cult is likely to have been revived in some form after the rebuilding of the city, even if its original nature and significance was no longer apparent.

When the Corinthian Agora was made over to conform to Roman tastes and requirements, the race course and the grandstand became buried beneath a deep layer of earth, and a new market, paved with marble slabs, was created. Rows of shops fronted by splendid marble colonnades lined the market on all sides, and a similar row of buildings bisected it from east to west. At the eastern end of the central complex a conspicuous monument arose, the remains of which have been described above (p. 145). A picture of this monument, preserved on coins of Corinth

[72] It is obvious that the scene on the Corinth vase does not represent a common form of torch race. Representations of such races on Attic vases follow, for the most part, a particular pattern, so much so that the suggestion has been made that most scenes of that kind draw from a common source of inspiration. For a brief discussion of the torch race and the important bibliography see Robinson and Freeman, *C.V.A., U.S.A.*, Fasc. 6, pp. 34-35, pls. XLVII, XLVIII.

[73] See *Etym. Mag., s. v. ἀμφιφορίτης*, and cf. M. P. Nilsson, *Gr. Feste*, pp. 172 f.

[74] In the case of Medeia's children Pausanias, II, iii, 7, states specifically that the sacrifices in their honor were no longer performed after the destruction under Mummius, although the tomb and the image of Terror still remained. But from Aelian, *Var. Hist.*, V, 21, we get the contradictory information that the cult continued: *μέχρι τοῦ νῦν ἐναγίζουσι τοῖς παισὶ Κορίνθιοι*. It is, of course, possible that the cult declined in the brief interval between the periods of the two writers. See R. L. Scranton, *Corinth* I, ii, *Architecture*, p. 164.

Fig. 9. Coin of Lucius Verus, Showing Columnar Monument

from the period of the Antonine emperors, may contain a possible allusion to the once important races in honor of the dead and their horse-taming patron deities. One of these coins (Fig. 9) is figured in the *Numismatic Commentary on Pausanias* by Imhoof-Blumer and Gardner.[75] A tall column, tapering somewhat toward the top, is surmounted by a nude male figure holding a spear or scepter, perhaps the statue of an emperor in the guise of a god. At the base is a parapet divided into panels, and on either side are a horse and rider facing away from the column. The monument has been interpreted as part of a stadium or hippodrome. Its features fit remarkably well the remains of the columnar structure with its spreading socle at the east end of the Agora, and the horses would be suitable emblems of a monument the significance of which may hark back to pre-Roman contests in honor of gods and heroes of the underworld.

In this connection another Roman monument sheds further light upon the survival of earlier cults into Roman times. There is a fountain[76] at the south edge of the Agora which may possibly have some connection with the cult whose history we have attempted to trace. It is built over the ruined shops of the South Stoa, a little to the east of the paved Roman roadway which has been called the Kenchrean Road. If this fountain had a predecessor, it must have been situated in some other place. It is obvious from its construction that it could not have served as a public fountain, and the architectural features (Fig. 10) point to its use in connection with some cult.

The fountain proper consisted of a large basin, in the front and rear of which water flowed over parapets in a series of cascades. To the right and left of the basin was a small room with a shelf in the rear. The conjecture made by R. Stillwell that these rooms may have served as small shrines is highly plausible. It may be further suggested that the two bases which flank

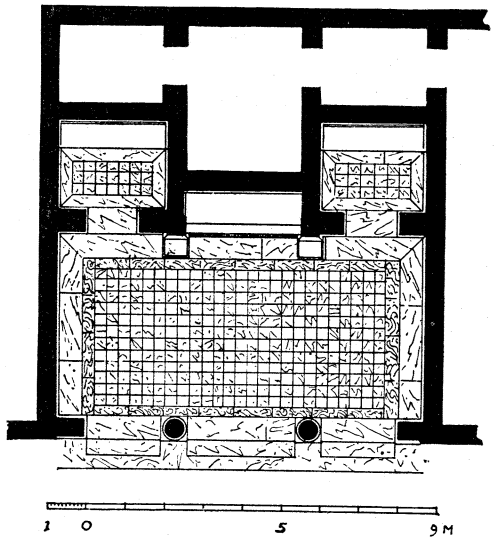

Fig. 10. Roman Fountain with Double Shrine in South Stoa
(From *A.J.A.*, XL, 1936, p. 32, fig. 10)

[75] *J.H.S.*, VI, 1885, p. 64 and pl. LI: C, Corinth, XLVIII.

[76] A preliminary architectural description of the fountain was published by R. Stillwell, *A.J.A.*, XL, 1936, pp. 31-39, and pls. I and II.

the fountain may have held statues of the deities worshiped in the shrines. The most important indication that the fountain served some religious purpose is furnished by the terracotta simas from the roof of the building[77] (Fig. 11). They have in the center a spout in the form of a lion's head, and on either side a human head in relief. On the left is a bearded, male head, and on the right a youthful head, probably female. There are two varieties of the latter. In one the hair is gathered in a bun at the top

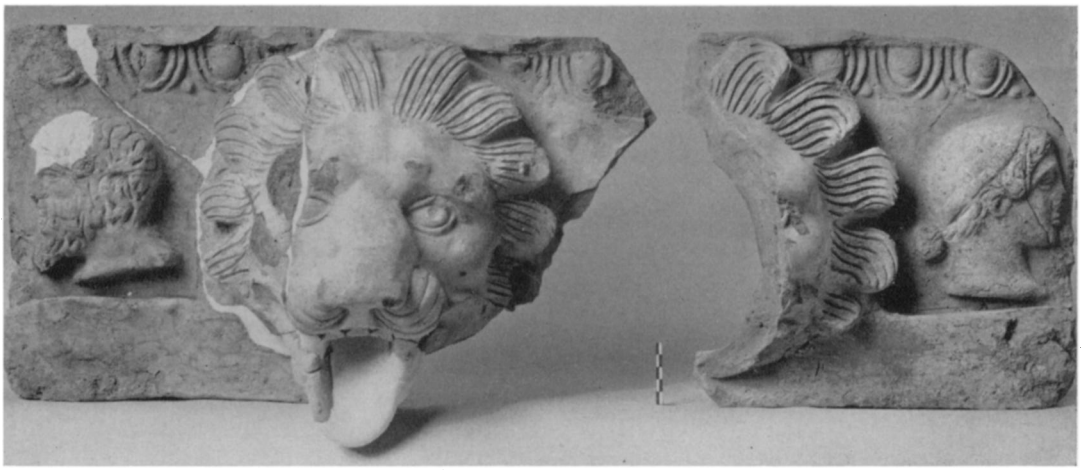

Fig. 11. Fragments of Sima with Heads of Deities in Relief

of the head, in the other there is a similar bun at the neck. In both varieties a fillet is worn. The two heads face away from the spout in the center, so that on two adjoining sections of sima the male and female heads would have confronted each other.

What names should be applied to these figures? Although no attributes are indicated, it goes without saying that they cannot be ordinary mortals, and it is highly probable that they are intended to represent the deities whose cult was connected with the fountain.[78] The architectural plan points to a dual cult and the same is indicated

[77] Scattered fragments of these simas came from a restricted area along the southeastern section of the South Stoa, but by far the largest number came from the débris of the fountain. See Broneer, *A.J.A.*, XXXVII, 1933, pp. 562, 563, fig. 7; XXXIX, 1935, pp. 58, 59, figs. 4 and 5.

[78] A comparable indication on the sima of the deity worshiped in the building is found on the temple of Artemis at Epidauros, which has dog's head instead of lion's head spouts. It was a common practice in Roman times to indicate on the terracotta roofing the nature of the building. Roof tiles stamped with the word ΣΚΑΝΟΘΗΚΑΣ have been found in the theaters at Megalopolis and Sparta. The Metroon in Athens was likewise labeled by stamped tiles. At Corinth have been found antefixes and simas bearing the stamp ΑΦΡΟΔΕΙΣΙΟΥ, which has been interpreted as the name of a maker; see Hill and King, *Corinth*, IV, i, *Decorated Architectural Terracottas*, pp. 16, 36. But in view of the recent discovery of a temple of Aphrodite in the Agora, C. H. Morgan, *A J.A.*, XLIII, 1939, p. 265, it seems more likely that the stamp gives the name of the temple. The use of plastic representations of deities on simas is more common in Italy than in Greece. See N. Breitenstein, *Cat. Terracottas in the Dan. Nat. Mus.*, p. 96, and pl. 124, no. 916.

by the two heads on the simas.[79] It may be the same divine pair, whose cult was practised in the Agora in pre-Roman times, and the connection with the fountain strengthens this conjecture. But in the multitudinous changes which the cult underwent throughout the centuries it may be questioned how much was retained in its original form beyond the bare names, or whether even these remained unchanged. And if the heads on the sima were deliberately made without distinguishing labels, it is preferable that their anonymity should be respected.

In the evolution of the cult whose history I have attempted to trace with the help of the monuments and the meager literary references preserved to us two factors are of prime importance. In the first place the hero cult practised in Hellenistic times appears to have originated in a cult of the dead; and, secondly, this cult was somehow joined to the worship of Athena Hellotis and Poseidon. The first point requires no elaboration. There is no fundamental distinction between a hero cult and the common veneration accorded the dead,[80] except in the relative importance of the worshiped and in the number of worshipers. It is more difficult to understand how a cult of this kind became associated with Athena, the horse-tamer, and how Hellotis, a Cretan goddess, had intruded herself into Corinthian mythology. The simplest explanation may be the correct one. With the gradual disappearance of the physical objects around which the cult originated, the origin and meaning of the religious observances fell into oblivion. At this stage the aetiological myth was formulated in explanation of the cult rites, and in this way the foreign goddess was introduced.

It is futile to speculate on the reason why the myth took this particular form. It may have been composed by priests in charge of the cult or by some poet or local bard. The names and characters in the myth were not picked at random, but neither is it necessary to suppose that they were chosen after profound deliberation. Hellotis is obviously a foreigner at Corinth and the same is true of Kotyto, another of the daughters of Timandros who was at home in Thrace and was there associated with Artemis. The motive of the self-sacrificing maiden is a common one in popular beliefs, and it was here appropriately applied as an explanation for the use of fire at the festival. Hellotis, elsewhere—except at Marathon—identified with Europa and through her connected with the worship of Hera, at Corinth became associated with Athena Chalinitis. The incongruity in the association of the two cults was left for the etymologists to explain.

In view of the probable connection of the race track and the various contests with the hero cult in the Agora certain features of the terracotta deposit and the hero reliefs acquire special significance. Chief among these is the prominence of the circular

[79] A dual cult is also indicated at the Sacred Fountain, cf. *A Guide to Ancient Corinth,* 3rd ed., p. 50, and G. Elderkin, *Hesperia,* X, 1941, p. 129.

[80] Cf. Furtwängler, *Collection Sabouroff,* Introduction, p. 19; Eitrem, Pauly-Wissowa, *R.E., s. v.* Heros, col. 1126; and see above, note 25.

shield. Shields were frequently used as dedications both in sanctuaries of the gods and in the cults of the dead,[81] and in some cases these represented the prizes distributed to victors at the festivals of gods and heroes.[82] At Delos, for example, a shield was given to the leader of the torch race, and the circular "Argive shield" is frequently mentioned in the lists of victories.[83] Such instances would justify the conjecture that the shields from the deposit may have been dedicated on the occasion of victories won in the contests that were held in the Corinthian Agora, and this view receives additional confirmation from the presence of the wreath on all the examples of the smaller type of shields.[84] The fact that the festival, at which the torch races were run, was joined to the worship of Athena might be considered as further reason for the prominence of the circular shield.[85] At Argos, for example, where the shield played a prominent role in the cult of Hera, a sacred shield, reputed to have belonged to Diomedes, was ritually cleansed in the waters of Inachos together with the image of Athena.[86]

Other representations of armor, though less prominent than the shields, may also be explained as referring to the contests held at the festivals. This is especially true of the helmet on the snake stele. The stele itself may be nothing more than a support for the helmet, but it may also have been thought of as the terminus in the race track or palaestra. It is commonly represented on red-figured vases depicting athletic contests.[87] It may be questioned whether any profound religious significance was attached to it, but the presence of the snake is symbolic of the sepulchral and chthonian character of the cult. A similar stele, without the helmet, is found on terra-

[81] Paul Wolters, *Jahrbuch*, XIV, 1899, pp. 118 ff. Votive shields have been found in other terracotta deposits at Corinth, notably in the small sanctuaries, "stelai enclosures," in the Potters' Quarter; cf. Agnes Newhall, *A.J.A.*, XXXV, 1931, pp. 27-28, pls. I and II.

[82] W. H. D. Rouse, *Greek Votive Offerings*, p. 183.

[83] *I.G.*, II^2, 3145; 3162, 3169/70; I. R. Arnold, "The Shield of Argos," *A.J.A.*, XLI, 1937, pp. 436-440.

[84] The wreath is a common device on shields figured on vases (see G. H. Chase, "The Shield Devices of the Greeks," *Harvard Studies*, XIII, 1902, p. 127), but the fact that it is invariably found on the small shields from the deposit would seem to lift it out of the class of devices "chosen purely from individual fancy or caprice."

[85] Shields are common among the dedications to Athena on the Athenian Acropolis and at other sanctuaries of the same goddess. Cf. Hetty Goldman, *Festchrift für James Loeb*, pp. 67-72. On coins of Corinth a figure of Athena appears, either holding the shield or with the shield leaning against her side; cf. Imhoof-Blumer and Gardner, *Num. Comm., J.H.S.*, VI, 1885, pl. LII: E, XCI, XCII, XCIII. In one instance she confronts a seated figure of Poseidon, *ibid.*, pl. LI: D, LV. Cf. Odelberg, *Sacra Corinthia*, p. 26. A partly preserved painting of a similar figure with the shield was found in the Odeion, Broneer, *Corinth*, X, *The Odeum*, p. 63, fig. 40 and pl. XIV.

[86] This primitive Argive custom, described by Kallimachos (Hymn V, xi, 35), seems to me to disprove the contention of M. P. Nilsson (*Minoan-Mycenaean Religion*, pp. 349 ff.) that the shield was not regarded among the Greeks as an object of cult.

[87] E. N. Gardiner, *Athletics of the Ancient World*, figs. 88, 97, 99, 144, 188, 210.

cotta reliefs from Tarentum,[88] which have other features in common with the Corinth figurines. The large circular shield, too prominent to be explained as accessory without cult significance, the snake crawling up a stele, and the figure of a horse in association with a male divinity or hero and his female partner, are characteristic of the deposits both at Corinth and Tarentum. The similarity in this case is of particular importance, in view of the prominence of Poseidon and of his son Taras in the cult history of Tarentum.

It is a matter of interest for the religious history of Corinth that the principal elements in the cult of Athena Hellotis are duplicated in another Corinthian cult, that of Hera Akraia. Medeia, whose children had a monument near the fountain of Glauke, became intimately associated with the indigenous cult of the goddess.[89] In one version of the legend the Corinthian women, in order to free themselves from the domination of Medeia, who was a foreigner, laid a plot against her and her fourteen children. The latter, seven boys and seven girls, took refuge in the temple of Hera, and there were slain upon the altar. The pollution of the sanctuary brought a pestilence upon the city, which was expiated by special sacrifices and with the dedication of seven boys and seven girls of distinguished families who spent a year in the temple of Hera. The more familiar story is that of Euripides, in which there are only two children, both boys, who were put to death by Medeia after they had brought the poisoned robe to Glauke. To quench the fire Glauke threw herself into the fountain which bore her name as a consequence of the event. This, too, is clearly an aetiological myth, probably based upon the practice of throwing terracotta images into the fountain. And the myth seems to indicate that these figures were first burned and then plunged into the water.

The elements common to both cults are: pollution caused by a crime against children;[90] expiation and purification through fire and water; an annual festival instituted for the observance of these rites; and the funereal character of the celebrations. A significant feature of the myths relating to the two cults is that in each case a subordinate female deity or heroine is joined to the worship of a major goddess. One is an outright foreigner, the other has little if any cult connections with Corinth.[91] Such myths are usually explained as originating from a contamination of foreign

[88] See Renato Bartoccini, *Notizie degli Scavi*, XII, 1936, pp. 151-171, and especially figs. 64, 65, 69-79. Cf. the column on the tomb of Epaminondas, Pausanias, VIII, 11, 8.

[89] Our information about the Hera-Medeia cult comes chiefly from a scholion on Euripides' *Medeia*, 264, and from Pausanias, II, 3, 11. An interesting study of the cult in connection with the topography of Corinth has recently been made by Robert Scranton in *Corinth*, I, ii, *Architecture*, pp. 149-165. See also Nilsson, *Gr. Feste*, pp. 57-61; J. G. O'Neill, *Anc. Corinth*, pp. 104-107.

[90] The same motive: outrage against a child (Apsyrtos), and pollution followed by calamity averted through expiation, we meet again in the story of the Argonauts where, too, Medeia is the slayer. Nilsson, *Gr. Feste*, p. 59, has pointed out that the chief characters in the Hera-Medeia cult at Corinth are the children and Hera Akraia. Medeia herself played hardly any role in the cult.

[91] For the connection of Medeia with Corinth see Lesky, Pauly-Wissowa, *R.E.*, *s.v.* Medeia, col. 44; Nilsson, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

elements of worship with native religious practices. It is always the more crude and inhuman rites that are regarded as foreign. May it not be that in some instances the opposite is the case, or that the two types of rites merely point to different stages of religious evolution or to a distinction in the religious practices observed by different strata of society?

There can be no doubt that Hellotis was a foreigner in Corinth, but the myth points to an indigenous cult which somehow had become associated with Athena. The name Hellotis was merely borrowed from without and introduced into the legends of the city. For there is nothing in the Corinth cult that suggests any connection with the Hellotis cult at Gortyn, except that both appear to have originated in cults of the dead.[92] A similar development seems to have resulted in the cult of Medeia's children. Whereas the mother, for all her adventures in Corinth, played a very minor role in the cults of the city, the cult of the children appears to have been at home there.[93] The crude observances in their honor: the cutting of the hair and the wearing of black robes, are simple funeral rites raised to the status of cult practices and attached to one of the major shrines of Corinth.

The two cults, of Hera and Medeia and of Athena-Hellotis, are so similar, both as regards their respective aetiological myths, and the functions served by fire and apparently also by water, that both may have originated in the same primitive rite. Both are specialized forms of cults of the dead.[94] In one the element of mourning is the most prominent, in the other the celebrations attendant upon the funeral and the annual contests held in commemoration of the deceased.

There is, however, one important difference in the two cults. In the case of the Hellotia, the festival was called after the foreign deity whose name became an epithet of Athena. In the other case it was the major goddess who gave the name to the celebration. For it appears from a scholion on Euripides' Medeia [95] that the festival was called Akraia, an epithet of Hera. This would indicate that the Hellotia originated as an independent festival, later joined to the cult of Athena, whereas the Akraia was from the very beginning connected with the worship of Hera.

[92] This is denied by some scholars, who regard the festivals both at Corinth and at Gortyn as consisting primarily of fertility rites. See M. P. Nilsson, *Gr. Feste*, p. 96; A. Lesky, *Wiener Studien*, XLV, 1926, p. 170. While this is doubtless the more prominent aspect of the Cretan festival, there is nothing in the Corinthian Hellotia to suggest such an explanation. Even at Gortyn, where the bones of Hellotis are said to have been carried about in a huge wreath, the funeral element is not absent. There is in reality no antithesis in the two points of view, since fertility rites and the worship of the dead are often joined in the same cult.

[93] Cf. Nilsson, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

[94] Graves, apparently dating from the same period as that of most of the graves in the Agora, have been found in the area later occupied by the Odeion, which was close to the monument of Medeia's children. See Broneer, *Corinth*, X, *The Odeum*, pp. 10-11.

[95] *Medeia*, 1379: Ἀκραῖα πένθιμος ἑορτὴ παρὰ Κορινθίοις. See also Lesky in Pauly-Wissowa, *R.E.*, *s.v.* Medeia, col. 44, and cf. M. P. Nilsson, *Gr. Feste*, p. 58, note 3, where the scholiast is quoted as giving the name Ἡραῖα to the festival.

It would be useless to pretend that the present study is anything more than an attempt to interpret hypothetically some material data from the excavations at Corinth in the light of certain known cults of the city. To those who are satisfied with nothing short of conclusive proof and unambiguous statements concerning the nature of the cults the results will seem meager indeed. But if our purpose is to gain a better insight into the intricate pattern of ritual and belief which we call Greek religion, such a ramble among the scenes and objects that once formed an integral part of this pattern is not without value.

To recapitulate the chief points in the discussion, if it will not render the picture any clearer, may at least serve the purpose of emphasizing the inner coherence of the religious ideas which have found their expression in the objects and the myths upon which the study is based. Among the material objects the terracotta figurines from the deposit in the Stoa and the marble reliefs to which they are related give us the most comprehensive picture of the cults in the Hellenistic period when they appear to have reached their greatest prominence. From the contents of this illustrative material we learn that a hero, or a pair of heroes, were the objects of veneration. This would suggest that the cult took its origin from a cult of the dead.

Furthermore, the prevalence of the horse-and-rider motive and the name Zeuxippos indicate that the horse played an important role in the cult. In accordance with the common trend of development in Greek religion we should expect a cult of this kind to be merged with the worship of one or more of the major deities, and the choice must fall upon those gods whose functions correspond most closely to those of the hero or heroes in question. The sepulchral character of the cult and, more especially, the equine element point to its connection with the worship of Poseidon Hippios and Athena Hippia.

That such a merger had taken place is clearly indicated by the festival of Hellotia, the name of which is derived from Hellotis, a cult name of Athena, associated by the Corinthians with the legend of Bellerophon and Pegasos. At this festival there were purification rites by fire, and probably by water, and a torch race formed an important feature of the celebration. Such practices are likely to have originated in a cult of the dead, as is also shown by the legend of the sisters who were burned to death in the temple of Athena. In this way we may trace the connection between the hero cult and the cult of the goddess. The male companion can be none other than Poseidon, who was worshiped at Corinth since earliest times as god of the horse.

In the excavations of the Corinthian Agora we find further evidence of these cults in the existence of a small subterranean funeral chapel constructed at the edge of an early cemetery. The encroachment of the civic section upon the consecrated area would have been regarded as a curtailment of the prerogatives belonging to the dead, and the desire to placate the spirits for this inconvenience added to the customary rites instituted for the dead would sufficiently explain the origin of the cult in the Agora. The games, especially the torch race, originally part of the funeral celebra-

tions, would acquire additional significance as purification rites and in course of time become annual events attached to an already existing festival of Athena and Poseidon. These contests, celebrated in the area at one time occupied by the graves, have left evidence of their existence in the race track and hippodrome situated in the very center of the ancient city.[96]

With the gradual disappearance of the physical objects around which the cult came into existence, the original reason for the festival would fade into oblivion. This is the stage at which the legends would be composed in explanation of the ceremonies attendant upon the cult. Tales of native gods and heroes were combined with myths of foreign origin and woven together into a variegated fabric in which the cult practices, no longer understood, became effectively enveloped and adorned. Through such a process new elements were introduced, totally foreign to the original conception, and these in turn would give rise to a variety of observances which had no part in the original celebrations.

The continuity of the cult was certainly interrupted through the destruction of the city at the hands of the Romans, and only vague recollections can have remained at the time of the rebuilding. But many of the new settlers were doubtless descendants of the original population,[97] and these may well have brought back with them some of the religious life of the Greek city which had been perpetuated by the refugees on foreign soil. Moreover, the more important temples were probably not altogether abandoned, and there are reasons to believe that a few settlers began to move in shortly after the destruction.[98] In this way it is possible to account for the survival of some of the early cult practices, and the reflection of their continued existence may be traced among the remains from the Roman city. These remains, far more difficult to interpret than the objects from the Greek period, show the final stage in the evolution and decline of the hero cults in the Corinthian Agora.

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[96] The analogy of the Roman Consualia has been pointed out above. The identity of the male deities, Poseidon Hippios at Corinth and Equestrian Neptune at Rome, the physical relation of the subterranean altar with the race track and hippodrome, and the chthonian character of the celebrations are striking points of similarity in the two cults. To this may be added that at Rome too, as at Corinth, a female deity, Ops Consiva, goddess of wealth and of the underworld, was associated with the male god (see G. Rhode, Pauly-Wissowa, *R.E.*, *s.v.* Ops, col. 750). The comparison is significant in view of the legendary relation of the Corinthian Bacchiads with the Tarquinii of Rome. For it was Tarquinius Priscus, the son of Demaratos, to whom tradition ascribed the institution of the great games and the original foundation of the Circus Maximus in which the shrine of Consus was situated.

[97] Strabo, VIII, 381, states that most of the colonists belonged to the class of freedmen, ἐποίκους πέμψαντος τοῦ ἀπελευθερικοῦ γένους πλείστους, and doubtless many of these were Greeks of Corinthian stock. Cf. Allen B. West, *Corinth*, VIII, ii, *Latin Inscriptions*, pp. 89, 108; O. Broneer, *Corinth*, IV, ii, *Terracotta Lamps*, p. 98; Katharine M. Edwards, *Corinth*, VI, *Coins*, p. 6.

[98] Cf. J. de Waele, *A.J.A.*, XXXV, 1931, pp. 410-411; J. M. Harris, *Hesperia*, X, 1941, p. 158.