

ADDITIONAL NOTE ON THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE PROPERTY  
OF THE SALAMINIANS AT SOUNION

The Souniac Porthmos may be placed with reasonable assurance at the head of the little Bay of Sounion to the northwest of the Temple of Poseidon and the Phrourion. This is today the regular harbor of the fishing craft of the district and the refuge of passing boats which frequently take shelter here while awaiting the abatement of the northeast winds that sweep so violently past the other side of the peninsula. The rugged character of the north and south sides of the bay and the lowness of the middle part of the eastern side would suggest either the northeast or southeast corner as the most suitable site for a settlement which, from its very name, must obviously have adjoined the water. Thus situated, the place would have had the sea to its west (above, p. 71). To the east opens out no small area of arable land. At present the more level ground around the northeast angle of the bay is sown to grain. The sides of the hills which rise from the little coastal plain to east, northeast and southeast are today uncultivated but the depth of soil that overlies them and the remains of ancient terrace walls leave little doubt that the situation was otherwise in a more industrious age. The contours of the hills would permit of conveniently situated and gently wind-swept threshing floors.

Nor have we far to seek for a suitable site for the salt pans. Immediately to the east of the head of the bay, and separated from the water by a narrow neck of sand, is a flat-bottomed basin of irregular outline, *ca.* 155 paces from north to south, 45 paces from east to west. Its floor lies but a few centimetres above sea level and is crisp with the salty incrustation deposited by the natural capillary action of the sea water. It would seem quite possible that the process should have been controlled and hastened by human manipulation in antiquity and that the basin should then have served as a salt pan of the sort to be seen today at Anavyssos on this same coast a few miles to the west, at Messolonghi and elsewhere on the Greek shores.

Despite the proximity of the sea, fresh water is to be found in the district. The present inhabitants draw their drinking water from a well situated *ca.* 150 paces inland from the northeast corner of the bay.

Ancient habitation along the coast and along the foot of the nearby hills is sufficiently proved by the abundant potsherds. Ancient foundations, moreover, are visible in various parts. The most conspicuous belong to a building at the very southeastern corner of the harbor which was partially excavated by Professor Oikonomos in 1924 (*B.C.H.*, 47, 1923, p. 510; *J.H.S.*, 44, 1924, p. 274; *Arch. Anz.*, 1925, col. 314). The structure consisted of a square enclosure, *ca.* 32 metres to the side, colonnaded internally on all four sides, with four columns to the side. Cross walls forming series of rooms along three, possibly all four sides would seem to have been inserted subsequently. Near the

middle of the court is a large rectangular foundation for the support of a monument or altar. The original construction gives the impression of good Hellenistic work. Its plan would be suitable as that of a small market-place or Agora into which shops or storerooms were later incorporated. The sea has now encroached on the northwest corner of the structure. As designed, the building obviously adjoined a dock: a situation admirably suitable for the market-place of Sounion, which must have looked both to the hinterland and to the sea.

It is, perhaps, tempting to identify this building with the Agora of *I.G.*, II<sup>2</sup>, 1180 (referred to above, p. 55). That stone, however, was to have been set up in the Agora to which its text refers, and it is confidently supposed by its original editor to have stood in the region in which it was found, i.e., by the modern village of Agreleza, a half hour north of Sounion (A. Kordellas in *Ath. Mitt.*, XIX, 1894, pp. 241 ff.). It is equally tempting to see in the building by the water the Agora in Koile of the present inscriptions. In both texts (**1**, ll. 16 ff.; **2**, ll. 34 ff.) the Agora is listed along with the various other properties, all of which seem certainly to have been situated close to one another and in the region of Sounion. And the district in which the ruinous building lies might aptly be described as a *koile*, either by reason of the deep indentation in the coastline or because of its amphitheatre-like shape given by the hills that rise to east, south and north. Yet, without more evidence, it would probably be rash to dissociate the Koile of the inscriptions from the familiar urban deme.

Other ancient foundations are distinguishable to the north of the square building and to the east of the salt marsh. They include a terrace wall that runs in a northeast-southwest direction a distance of some 150 paces, and, between the terrace wall and the salt marsh, the remains of a long narrow building. The precise character of these remains and the possibility of associating them with the other pieces of property mentioned in the inscriptions could be established only by further excavation.

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