



Landscape and Religious Monumentalisation in Ancient Greece: The Sanctuary of Athena Alea in Tegea

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Abstract. Monumentalisation is an elaborate way of building memory in and through the landscape. Taking the sanctuary of Athena Alea in Tegea as an example, this paper focuses on two constants in the relationship between monumentalisation and memory in ancient Greece. Firstly, the interaction between the two reinforced the myth of the alleged perpetuity and statism of monuments, thus contributing to make identities more resilient and inflexible and to their understanding as essentialist realities. Secondly, this interaction was used as a way of legitimising the dominant ideology, helping to naturalise it and its expressions. All this is analysed through a specific example, namely, the sanctuary of Athena Alea in Tegea.

Key words: Monument; Mnemotopos; Greek Religion; Arkadia.

[esp] Paisaje y monumentalización religiosa en la Grecia antigua: el santuario de Atenea Alea en Tegea

Resumen. La monumentalización es una de las formas de construcción de la memoria a través del paisaje más empleadas en la Grecia antigua. Este artículo se centra en dos constantes en la relación entre monumentalización y memoria en la antigua Grecia. Primero, la interacción entre ambas fortalece el mito de la supuesta perennidad y estatismo de los monumentos, contribuyendo a hacer más férreas e inflexibles las identidades, apoyando su comprensión como realidades esencialistas. Segundo, dicha interacción se emplea como forma de legitimar la ideología dominante, ayudando a la naturalización de la misma y de sus expresiones. Todo ello se analiza a través de un ejemplo concreto, el del santuario de Atenea Alea en Tegea.

Palabras clave: monumento; mnemotopos; religión griega; Arcadia.

Summary: 1. Introduction. 2. Monumentalisation and memory: perpetuity and legitimation. 3. The sanctuary of Athena Alea in Tegea. 4. Conclusions. 5. Bibliographical references.

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1. Introduction²

Monumentalisation is an elaborate way of building memory in and through the landscape. Traditionally, large monumental buildings have been studied in an isolated fashion because they have been understood as particularly relevant landmarks in rather insignificant spaces over which they hold sway. However, monuments are not only isolated landmarks, but also ones that are embedded in a network of spatial and political relationships. Their study as relational nodes, as agents that create new spatial connections, as landscape builders, allows for focusing on and reviewing the role of ideologies in the creation of *póleis* and in their forms of territorial organisation.

In view of the abundance of monuments in very different societies, it can be claimed that they were symbolically profitable, despite the economic cost involved. Although it is true that ancient Greece was not as monumentalised as the Athenian paradigm may suggest, monumentalisation acquired an important dimension in many Greek *póleis*, especially in the religious realm. Even though this analysis focuses precisely on monumentalisation, it is important not to forget that there were many other ways of building memory and landscape which, albeit more difficult to detect, were as significant for the Greeks as monumentalisation itself. This is the case of the sacralisation of empty spaces, *témene* with no physical temples, *álsos* and so forth.³ In fact, not even Athens resorted solely to monumentalisation to build memory.

In this connection, neither did all Greek *póleis* or *éthne* proceed in the same way to fix memory, nor even did the same state always employ the same mechanisms, but rather adapted them to the context, circumstances and interests of the moment.⁴ However, traditional historiography has tended to ignore the differences or to heed only the political kind, generally taking Athens and Sparta as models and downplaying the rest of the identities making up the ancient Greek melting pot.⁵ It is precisely the importance attached to monumentalisation in modern cultures that has endorsed this approach, while only in recent decades have historians developed a specific interest in the different perceptual ways of building memory, one of which being through landscape.

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³ Apart from trees, namely, their essence, *álsos* could also feature altars, shrines, fountains and other architectural and/or urban elements, or not (Birge 1984, 1; Jacob 1993, 37). One way or another, they converted the landscape into a mythical memory (Jacob 1993, 34).

⁴ Regarding new approaches about the relations between landscape, monumentalisation and sanctuaries in other areas of ancient Greece, see Alcock 2002; Barringer – Hurwit 2005; Veronese 2006; Forbes 2007; Scheid – Polignac 2010; Queyrel 2012; Smith 2021 (especially 94-105).

⁵ A very significant example of the underestimation of the Arkadian capacity to create by itself is the case of bird figurines of archaic Arkadian metallurgy. A total of 25 bronze bird figurines have been found in the archaic Arkadian sanctuaries: 18 have been found in the sanctuary of Athena Alea in Tegea, 2 in Mavriki, 4 in Lousoi and 1 in Bassae. Those of Tegea and Mavriki have been classified as “diverse typology”, highlighting the so-called “Hahne vom Typ Tegea” group. Nine birds in the entire Peloponnese would be part of this group: 7 come from Tegea, 1 from the Heraion (Argos) and another from the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia (Voyatzis 1990, 147-148). Traditional historiography considered that the origin of the bronzes was mainly Argos and Sparta, even though almost 80% of the birds of the “Hahne vom Typ Tegea” group have their origin in Tegea and the existence of a very productive metallurgic workshop in the sanctuary of Athena Alea at least from the 8th century (Østby 1994a; 1994b, 62). In fact, many of the votive offerings offered to the goddess came from this workshop.

As each polis was unique and, accordingly, its monumentalisation varied greatly from that of others, this paper focuses on two constants in the relationship between monumentalisation and memory in ancient Greece, encountered in several spaces and at different times, adopting particular forms according to the context. Firstly, the interaction between monumentalisation and memory reinforced the myth of the alleged perpetuity and statism of monuments, thus contributing to strengthen apparently essential identities. Secondly, this interaction was used as an argument for legitimating the dominant ideology, thus helping to naturalise it and its expressions.

The chosen case study, the sanctuary of Athena Alea at Tegea, is especially significant for this study for two reasons. In the first place, Tegea is one of the best known and most powerful *póleis* in Arkadia, a territory traditionally understood as the cradle of very archaic traditions. However, when these supposedly ancestral traditions are analysed historically, we can see that they were built in very specific socio-political contexts that tend to use the reference to the past as a weight value. Thus, contextual analysis is especially important to investigate the mechanisms of conformation of ancestry through memory in Arkadia. In the second place, we have very diverse sources for the analysis of this sanctuary (archaeological, iconographic, literary, epigraphic...), although it has not been studied as much as other well-known Greek temples such as the Parthenon, Delphi, Olympia or the temple of Aphaia in Aegina. For all these reasons, it has become a very significant example of the Greek temples and of the monumentalisation in Greek areas that we could call peripheral (not in geographical location, but in the interest shown in them).

2. Monumentalisation and memory: perpetuity and legitimation

Monumentalisation contributes to gain a better understanding of landscape and memory as stable, almost immutable, elements on many occasions, as if they were reminiscences of a past that can only be accessed through the repetition of traditions. It also helps to define, represent and locate those traditions, identifying what should be remembered and what should be forgotten. However, both landscape and memory are incredibly versatile and refer to the past only because this has a fluid relationship with the present.⁶

Neither is memory the past, nor even a recollection of bygone times, but a construction of the past from the present which is not verifiable, reliable or above suspicion, but built by forgetfulness, emotions, changes and desires always occurring in the present; it is what Jan Assmann called “mnemohistory”.⁷ Therefore, memory changes, as with the landscape in which it is expressed and which helps to shape it. However, the image that we have of both memory and landscape is all but fixed, as with the architecture and sculptures of monumentalisation.

The illusion of perpetuity is based on the simplistic comparison between materiality and landscape, which in turn is grounded in its biological-geological aspects and in monumentalisation itself.⁸ In point of fact, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between them. For example, it is normal for major geographical

⁶ Lowenthal 1979, 121-125.

⁷ Assmann 1997a, 9.

⁸ Bradley 1991b, 136-139; 2000; Rowlands – Tilley 2006, 511.

features (rivers, mountains, cliffs, etc.), often perceived as a common memory of the social landscape, to be considered as social monuments, because they are understood in a very similar way to the great temples: the existence of both, which are practically eternal and mainly serve to transport the past to the present and to preserve it unaltered in memory, is due to divine will.⁹ The mere fact that monuments stand out in the landscape is used as proof of this. In this way, the confusion between signifiers and meanings is aggravated: the monumentalised signifiers (Pierre Nora's "places of memory")¹⁰ try to fix meanings that are fluid by nature. It is a way of legitimising them through a physical and/or ideological fossilisation which is erroneously associated with monumentalisation, as if these meanings had always existed and their time and space could be isolated and kept pure forever.¹¹

In addition, monuments are active principles that are not limited to reflecting social relations passively, but which actively contribute to their production. Therefore, monuments create memory and landscape simultaneously, because they oblige people to relate to them, to adapt their body posture to surround, approach, contemplate or touch them. These processes create significant relationships with the rest of the elements of the environment that are altered by their existence. For all these reasons, monuments actively collaborate to legitimise the power that designed, built and appropriated them, which is possible because they conceal inequalities (or justify them) and reproduce the dominant discourses.¹²

This built memory that appears to be immutable is never virtuous or casual. On the contrary, the elites are strongly committed to managing these processes of understanding landscape through memory and often use monumentalisation as a catalyst that helps them to control the present, while building the past and designing the future. As Cornelius Holtorf asserts,¹³ political power is legitimised retrospectively while it is being immortalised prospectively. Indeed, political legitimisation is one of the pragmatic uses of a memory controlled by elites. Since the mere evocation of the term "memory" conjures up what remains unchanged over time, any element conforming it becomes apparently true and accurate, simply for being memory. However, many psychological, sociological and historical studies have shown that memories are human constructs, both at a cognitive (individual memory with a prospective nature) and social level (collective memory with a retrospective nature,¹⁴ which Assmann describes as "cultural memory").¹⁵

⁹ Lowenthal 1979, 121; Wiznura – Williamson 2018-2020, 77-82.

¹⁰ Pierre Nora argued that ancient societies had a more fluid understanding of time than contemporary ones and, therefore, that the fixation of memory that constitutes a place of memory was typical of industrial societies and their categorising concepts of time and space. However, I believe that Nora's concept can also be applied to an ancient Greece that normally modelled memory by stopping time and locating it. Although society thinks that it is only remembering the past, it is actually building it, as Holtorf (1997, 53) also contended even in the case of prehistoric societies.

¹¹ Connerton 1989; 2006; Bradley 1991a; 1991b; 1993, 91; Holtorf 1997; Nash 1997, 23-24; Nora 1997; Klein 2000; Alcock 2002, 28; Forbes 2007, 40-41; Chapman 2009, 13; Scheid – Polignac 2010, 433; Scarre 2011.

¹² Rowlands – Tilley 2006, 511.

¹³ Holtorf 1997, 47.

¹⁴ The term was already employed by Halbwachs (1925), who understood memory as a social construct and not as a personal physiological function.

¹⁵ Assmann 1997a.

Thus, a community legitimises the so-called “memory markers” (many of which are monumental landmarks or relevant geographical features) and endows them with contextual meanings, which always benefit the elites, but never the masses. This is yet another confirmation of their contextual and self-serving character, which is far removed from the supposedly ancestral nature that the elites defend. So, places of memory are not only reflections of power, but also contribute to build it and, more importantly, to underpin it because of their legitimising character.¹⁶ These memory markers represent the maximum expression of the construction of the past (although not its conservation) and of the feelings, sensations and emotions of a community. Through the conjunction of landscape and memory, a community reinforces its identity and its sense of belonging, because landscape and memory are powerful identity markers.¹⁷

Memory is often simply equated with time, but the strength of monumentalised memory markers lies precisely in the fact that it is both time and space. Memory does not only exist in an interrupted, idealised, reinvented and/or remembered time, but also in a space that contributes to create the “sense of place” characteristic of human landscapes. In the intertwining of the physical and the significant, a landscape is built as an emotional, atavistic and indisputable form of being in the world (and not only of being), closely linked to movement through space, which creates memory as well as landscape.¹⁸

In ancient Greece, temples were monuments par excellence, albeit not the only ones. They were replete with symbolism and ideology, which is why they are reminders of the power of a community and the decisions of its elites. Understanding monuments not only in the present, but also in the future, as mnemotechnical resources, reinforced the aristocratic ideology.¹⁹ The representation and exhibition of power through the monumentalisation of temples involved a process of “symbolic violence”, using the Bourdieuan term,²⁰ which implied maintaining a threatening climate of tension that served to legitimise the ideology of the elites, because it was they who created the need for monumentalising spaces and leveraged this to enhance their political power.²¹

In this process, temples triggered cultural codes of a sacred nature which contributed to develop the processes of territorialisation and hierarchy. In the Greek world, a certain relationship was perceived between social complexity and the monumentalisation of temples. Although this did not always exist, when it did, it did not have to be directly proportional. Moreover, the citizenry was participating increasingly more in the rituals performed at such temples, which became another useful form of social control.

¹⁶ Barret 1994; Bradley 1987, 4; Lyon Crawford 2007, 38-39; Rowlands – Tilley 2006, 511; Tilley 2006, 27; Yoffee 2007, 1-2; Van Dyke 2008, 278-279.

¹⁷ Children – Nash 1997, 1; Holtorf 1997, 49 and 55-57; Lovell 1998; Ashmore – Knapp 1999, 160; Sheldrake 2001, 1-22; Bradley 2003, 222-225; Alcock – Van Dyke 2003, 5-6; Tilley 2006, 23-27; 2010, 38-40; Van Dyke 2008, 277-278; Chapman 2009, 10; Proietti 2012; Sierra 2022, 60-71.

¹⁸ Bradley 1987; 2000, 30; Berleant 1992, 4; Ingold 1995, 58, 66 and 76-77; Sheldrake 2001, 1-9; Thomas 2001, 172; 2008, 302; Tilley 2004, 1-31; 2006, 13-15; 2010, 25-40; Chapman 2009, 11.

¹⁹ Holtorf 1997, 47.

²⁰ Bourdieu 1971; 1977; 1979.

²¹ Cardete 2005a, 85-86.

In point of fact, it was the social complexity that the development of *póleis* entailed as of the mid-eighth century that drove the process of monumentalisation. Although it made itself particularly felt in the great extra-urban sanctuaries, it was also expressed in the increasingly greater number of large temples in the *ásty*. The design, construction, embellishment and maintenance of these great sanctuaries point to stratified societies with a nascent political and cultural identity capable of involving the members of *póleis* (and not only their citizens) in very expensive, highly hierarchical, long-term building projects. However, even the most modest temples (which were plentiful) entailed a community action by which civic identity was strengthened and everybody's place in it was established, since they were a very important manifestation of the existence of a group. And it was the first groups to be created that advocated for the need for temples, before designing them, obtaining the means to construct and embellish them and, finally, maintaining them. Accordingly, sanctuaries acted as binding forces, as vehicles for concealing conflicts, as exaltations of a divine order that was reflected in the landscape, and as builders of that landscape.

Considering what has been said about memory and its intertwining with sacred spaces, including temples, the union of both in a cultic or ritual context reinforced their role as traditional defenders of the status quo. Monuments became sources of legitimacy that fed off memory and landscape and made an enormous contribution to the processes of naturalising culture. Everything that seemed natural but was really a cultural construct, such as identity, ideology, customs or beliefs, contributed to a society whose members believed that they were living in the only way possible or, at least, in the only right way.

When these naturalised constructs are attacked from without or questioned from within, they are reinforced. Societies are under the impression that theirs is the only acceptable way of living. To demonstrate this, they exploit the past and the antiquity of their customs, which connects them with those allegedly ancestral essentialisms. If their ancestors followed certain mores and customs, it means that these are not reproachable, but rather expressions of divine will. Whoever opposes them poses a danger. Firstly, the members of a society assume that they are living as they have always done and in the only way possible to maintain peace and divine order. Secondly, practice (religious, civic, economic, social, etc.) evolves into memory, while the social norms established and/or maintained by the elites become divine mandates. No one in their right mind would confront the gods, and those who do, will be severely punished, so only reprobates dare to revolt against the established order.

These simplistic and self-serving principles are false because societies are constantly changing. Nonetheless, changes are frequently denied, and the greater that denial is, the more authoritarian the system of government and the more traditional social values will be. Thus, they are very useful for controlling the masses, which is why they have been extensively used by different cultures and at very different times. There is a huge personal and social capacity to remember things that have never existed (a custom that is claimed to be archaic, when it is nothing of the kind, but no more than something created a posteriori to justify a political decision, among other things), which becomes even greater if the memory created justifies the desired reality.

It is an expression of the so-called "confirmation bias", which not only affects the social body in general, but also the elites and even more so since it is they who are the most interested in imposing their criteria of whose goodness most of them are

convinced. When both memory and landscape are apparently fixed in space-time through a monument, they become the perfect tool for alleging that social inequalities are not only inevitable, but also necessary, that as the gods have endorsed them, they are immutable. The landscape is naturalised in the process, being transformed into a basically biological entity that can only change by divine design. That which is flexible and adaptable is ultimately understood as given and very difficult to change.

The relative physical perpetuity of monuments helps to defend this view: a great temple, for example, changes when it is being built, but once finished continues to do so very slowly, unless it is damaged or destroyed by war or a natural disaster, or rebuilt or modified. This apparent physical sclerosis of a monument (the signifier) is equated with a supposedly fixed essence (the signified), so that if one has hardly changed, the other should not have either. It is a fallacious but simple way of thinking to understand and, therefore, it is simple to assume that it will be a highly effective ideological weapon of power in almost any sphere. Indeed, it is particularly useful in the religious realm because the putative maintenance of a rite or a temple endorses the idea that beliefs do not change or do so at such a slow rate that this is almost imperceptible in the mid or short term.

To demonstrate the fallacy of this misleading comparison, it is necessary to conceive the landscape and all the elements that make it up (including monuments, of course) as a social construct and, therefore, as a cultural reality, not a natural one. This does not imply denying or questioning the biological or geological existence of trees, mountains or rivers or the ecosystems of which they form part, but accepting that without human beings there would still be trees, but no one would recognise them anthropologically or endow them with a conceptual existence. When studying the landscape in the field of the humanities, therefore, priority is given to its representative part, which largely modifies the meaning of the others, even when the signifiers remain unchanged.²²

To illustrate the ways in which Greek monumentalisation built memory and landscape and how both fed back into the idea of the perpetuation of religious symbols and traditions, the spotlight is placed here on one meaningful example, to wit, the sanctuary of Athena Alea in Tegea. Even though this great sanctuary had a long tradition supposedly rooted *in illo tempore*, it is still possible to establish the changes that it underwent over time and their political, economic, social, ideological and religious causes and consequences.

3. The sanctuary of Athena Alea in Tegea

The remains of the sanctuary of Athena Alea in Tegea are located 675 m above sea level to the southwest of the ancient city, in the modern-day village of Alea, on the Tegean plain of the river Alpheus, at a crossroads connecting Tegea with Corinth, Argos, Messenia, Elis, Mantinea and Orchomenus. Due to the lie of the land, its location meant that it was relatively easy to cross the river Alpheus (modern-day Sarandapotamos), in the vicinity of the sanctuary (**Fig. 1**).²³

²² Schama 1995, 61; Thomas 1996, 65-66; Cardete 2005a, 2; Meier 2006, 19.

²³ Ødegård – Klempe 2014; Østby 2014c, 16-17.



Figure 1. Temple of Athena Alea in Tegea; view from the E (author's photography).

The sanctuary is much older than the temple. Although, in light of the present state of the research, it is difficult to venture a precise date, the available evidence suggests that it is likely to have existed at least since the tenth century.²⁴ The sanctuary has yielded exceptional votive offerings, including pottery from the Mycenaean, Proto-geometric, Geometric, Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic periods, as well as bronze pieces, some of which date back to before the end of the seventh century, when the first monumental temple was built.²⁵

Despite being smaller, the size of the first buildings was still considerable. For example, Building 1, from the Late Geometric period, might have measured 4 x 12 m. In the second half of the eighth century, the site was further developed.²⁶ After a fire in 680-670, the archaic temple was built at the end of the seventh century (ca. 625-600), whose dimensions were already similar to those of its classical counterparts (48.50 x 16 m)²⁷ corresponding to the first monumentalisation of the area.²⁸ The

²⁴ Voyatzis 2004, 188-190; Østby 2014a, 13 and 18-19.

²⁵ Voyatzis 1990, 28 and 62-102; 2004, 192-193; Hammond 1998; Nordquist 2013; Østby 2014a.

²⁶ Voyatzis 2004, 190-191; Østby 2014a, 19-20.

²⁷ Østby 2014a, 23-50; 2014b, 317.

²⁸ I am referring to the exhaustive interdisciplinary analysis (with the participation of archaeologists, geologists, engineers, botanists, architects, historians and philologists) led by the Norwegian Institute in Athens, whose conclusions were published in two very complete volumes edited by Erik Østby (*Tegea I* and *Tegea II*) in 2014. In these volumes there is a detailed breakdown of the archaeological data pertaining to the sanctuary.

archaic temple was seriously damaged by another fire in 395-394,²⁹ after which it was rebuilt in ca. 370-338.³⁰ There is no full consensus on the authorship of Scopas, although it is generally accepted that he was the architect responsible for its last reconstruction.³¹

The fourth-century monument was a Doric temple built of Doliana marble, with an amphiprostyle structure. The stylobate, measuring 49.56 x 19.19 m, supported a Doric colonnade of 6 x 14 columns.³² The *cella* featured a marble statue of Athena³³ and seven Corinthian columns on either side of the walls. The main entrance, with a ramp, was located on the east side, while there was a smaller door in the north wall (**Fig. 2**).

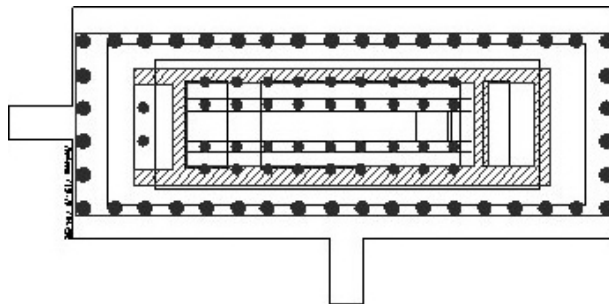


Figure 2. Plan of the Classical temple of Athena Alea in Tegea.

In other words, long before becoming a monumental temple, it was a non-monumentalised sanctuary, a meeting point for generations of people of diverse cultures who inhabited the territory of Tegea before the polis was built. The change to which the construction of a great temple gave rise was a ground-breaking development that completely modified the community's relationship with the surroundings and, consequently, the landscape and the memory associated with it. Nevertheless, the awareness of its sacredness served as a continuum, as if its expression had not changed and if memory were only a recollection and not a construct.

At the end of the seventh century or at the beginning of the sixth century, Tegea was founded as a polis by the synoecism of nine villages,³⁴ although it began to be developed at the end of the sixth century.³⁵ It is no coincidence that the polis came

²⁹ Paus. 8.45.4.

³⁰ Voyatzis 2004, 193-194; Østby 2014b, 341-346; Pakkanen 2014, 369.

³¹ Stewart 1977; Østby 2014b, 346-348.

³² Østby 2014b, 317-318.

³³ According to Pausanias (8.46.1-2 and 4), the original statue of the goddess was transferred to Rome by Augustus in commemoration of the victory over Marcus Antonius' allies, who included not only the Tegeans, but also all the Arcadians except for the Mantineians (Paus. 8.8.12). The statue that Pausanias saw had been sculpted by Scopas in Pentelic marble. It was flanked by two other statues by the same author, one of Hygeia and the other of Asclepius (Paus. 8.47.1).

³⁴ Paus. 8.45.1; Str. 8.3.2. Voyatzis 1990, 11.

³⁵ Østby 2014c, 16. There is no consensus on this matter, since the Tegean synoecism has been dated to very different moments: the seventh century (Callmer 1943, 67-70); 479-478 (Burelli 1995, 94); 478-473 (Moggi

into being while the sanctuary was being monumentalised. This foundation was motivated by the armed clashes with Sparta, the sworn enemy of many Arkadian *póleis*.

Relations between Sparta and Tegea were always complicated, especially during the Archaic period, since they were always at loggerheads, as evidenced by a decade of armed clashes (ca. 560-550),³⁶ the Battle of Dipaea in ca. 470-469,³⁷ the transfer of the bones of Orestes from Tegea to Sparta following the instructions of a Delphic oracle,³⁸ the alliance between Cleomenes and Arkadian contingents, among which Tegea stood out,³⁹ and the Tegean tendency to welcome Spartan deserters.⁴⁰ Obviously, it was no accident that it was precisely during the Archaic period when the sanctuary began to be monumentalised, which would always be associated with the political developments of the polis.

The new polis led to far-reaching changes in the perceptive and physical layout of the landscape, with the building of a large temple in an area that had previously been sacred, without there having been any need to highlight this through its monumentalisation. That is the reason why Aleus was traditionally held to be the founder of the temple⁴¹ and the artifice of the synoecism.⁴² Aleus was responsible for building and expressing civic memory by linking it to the territory and the monumentalised temple in a way that was supposed to be permanent and that guaranteed its antiquity: the polis was allegedly founded three generations before the Trojan War, in which Agapenor, the great-grandson of Aleus, had fought.

Tegea is just one of many examples of the monumentalisation of temples, associated with the founding of *póleis*, in Greece. Just as the unadorned sanctuary had functioned as a community symbol, so too did the monumentalised temple, albeit in a different manner, becoming more complex in tandem with the society that it represented. It is true that not every polis used monumentalisation to indicate its complexity, although it was a common resource in the Archaic and Classical periods. In fact, it can be claimed that the more complex a society is, the greater the possibility (although not necessarily the probability) that it will resort to monumentalisation.⁴³

The building of a great temple entailed taming the environment, controlling and reorganising natural spaces, a transgression of the previous order to establish another that immediately became the only one possible. This new social order was upheld by invented traditions that shaped social memory in a more robust way than personal remembrances, because they were endorsed by ancestors, the gods and rituals. As a matter of fact, it was the community, organised hierarchically according to the rules established by its elites, that collaborated in the construction, embellishment and maintenance of a temple as a ritualised mnemotopos. It was supposedly rescued

1976, 135; Jost 1998, 270); 464-459 (Demand 1990, 66). Nor is there any agreement on the polis' urban development or the relationship between the two (see Cardete 2005b).

³⁶ Hdt. 1.66. See García Quintela 1989.

³⁷ Hdt. 9.35.2.

³⁸ Hdt. 1.66; Paus. 3.3.6-7 and 11.10. Nafissi 2014. For the transfer of the bones of Orestes as an act of building memory through landscape, see Bakke 2008, 247-253.

³⁹ Hdt. 6.74-75 and 9.37.4.

⁴⁰ Hdt. 6.72 and 9.37.4.

⁴¹ Paus. 8.45.4.

⁴² Paus. 8.45.1.

⁴³ Cardete 2005a, 83-87.

from the past to exist simultaneously in the past and in the present. Its authority was indisputable because of its divine nature and the power of its physical presence, which became a key element of the landscape of a polis, as if it had always existed.

Although the temple of Athena Alea was not located in the city centre, but at a distance of about 1 km further north,⁴⁴ ignoring it was physically impossible in the Classical period. By the mid-fourth century, the size of its stylobate had increased to 49.56 x 19.19 m and the columns were now ca. 9.5 m high, when fourth-century temples were smaller (normally 10 or 12 m wide).⁴⁵ As the row of walls was ca. 2-5 m wide,⁴⁶ the temple was the main axis of the layout of the polis and the organisation of its landscape.

The temple played a role in the centripetal and centrifugal relationship between the city centre and the extra-urban sanctuaries. As already noted, it was not centric and might have even been located outside the city walls, albeit close to them.⁴⁷ This begs the question of whether or not it might have been an extra-urban sanctuary. Considering that it was only 1 km away from the agora and that its exact location with respect to the walls is still a controversial issue since Bérard's studies in 1892,⁴⁸ I am of the mind that the temple of Athena Alea should be considered as an urban sanctuary. Even claiming that it was peri-urban, as proposed by Ødegård and Klempe, and Østby,⁴⁹ seems excessive because what is important about a sanctuary is not the distance separating it from one point or another, but how it is perceived. In this respect, it is evident (Østby himself recognises this)⁵⁰ that the temple of Athena Alea was a fulcrum for the civic community that clearly defined citizenship from the *ásty* (although it was not at its centre).

Besides that of Athena Alea, there were other urban temples dedicated to Athena Poliatis, Artemis Hegemone, Hermes Aepytus, Demeter, Kore Carpophora, Zeus Klarios, Paphian Aphrodite and Eileithyia.⁵¹ It is important to recall the direct connection with other prominent places in the ideological, religious and also urban landscape of Tegea, such as the theatre, which was only 1.25 km further to the northeast, at Palai Episkopi, or the *siádion*, also in the vicinity of the temple.⁵²

The most important extra-urban sanctuaries included the altar of Pan and Zeus Lykaios on the border with Laconia (according to Pausanias,⁵³ the sanctuaries of Artemis Limnatis and Artemis Cnaceatis were also to be found in this area);⁵⁴ the tomb of Orestes and the sanctuary of Pan between Tegea and Thyrea;⁵⁵ the temple of Asclepius and the sanctuary of Pythian Apollo; the sanctuary of Demeter and that of

⁴⁴ Ødegård 2005, 215; Ødegård – Klempe 2014, 33.

⁴⁵ The stylobates of only a few temples of the same period were wider than 19 m: Apollo at Delphi, Zeus at Nemea, Apollo at Thebes and the tholos at Epidauros (Østby 2014b, 317).

⁴⁶ Ødegård – Klempe 2014, 33.

⁴⁷ Ødegård 2005, 215; Ødegård – Klempe 2014, 33; Østby 2014c, 11.

⁴⁸ It should also be taken into account that the walls did not exist in the Archaic period or during much of the Classical period, since they date from around the beginning of the fourth century, like those of Mantinea and Messene (Bérard 1892; Ødegård – Klempe 2014, 32).

⁴⁹ Ødegård – Klempe 2014, 33; Østby 2014c, 16.

⁵⁰ Østby 2014c, 16.

⁵¹ Jost 1985, 151-156. Paus 8.45-49.1 and 8.53.7-9.

⁵² Ødegård 2005, 211-213; 2010; Ødegård – Klempe 2014; Østby 2014c, 20.

⁵³ Paus. 8.53.11.

⁵⁴ Jost 1985, 159-161; Voyatzis 1990, 29; Winter 1991, 215-217; Brulotte 1995, 66-69.

⁵⁵ Paus. 8.54.4.

Dionysus Mystes on the road from Tegea to Argos;⁵⁶ and the sanctuaries of Telephus and Pan on Mount Parthenion.⁵⁷

It should be borne in mind that a sanctuary did not only include a temple. As to that of Athena Alea, it covered 13,000-18,000 m² (ca. 90 x 150-200 m). Although smaller than the huge sanctuaries, such as that of Zeus at Olympia (ca. 160 x 200 m) and that of Apollo at Delphi (ca. 150 x 200 m), it was still large and similar in size to the sanctuary at Nemea (ca. 90 x 140 m).⁵⁸ It had extensive pastures,⁵⁹ a fountain,⁶⁰ several votive deposits⁶¹ and a very productive metal workshop.⁶² Moreover, it was not only the goddess' home, but also a bank,⁶³ a place of asylum⁶⁴ and the venue of the Tegean games.⁶⁵

The impressive re-monumentalisation of the temple in the mid-fourth century, in the aftermath of the fire in 395-394, included elements that were adapted to the needs of a consolidated polis, in a world in which the form of states was changing and alliances and interrelations were more important than ever.

The moment chosen to resume the monumentalisation of a temple that had always been conceived for its visual impact was no coincidence. In Greece as a whole, but especially in Arkadia, the fourth century was a convulsive period in which traditional alliances were broken or attenuated and new powers struggled for control over ever-larger territories. The transcendental development that shook the foundations of the political order in Arkadia during the Classical period was the foundation of Megalopolis (ca. 370-369), which began to develop shortly before the reconstruction of the temple of Athena Alea. Moreover, the strained relations between Tegea and Sparta after the Battle of Leuctra (371) should not be forgotten.

As to the relations between Tegea and Sparta, these can be best described as conflictive, as already observed. Although neither had they ever really trusted one another nor had they ever respected the treaties between them for long, the antagonism between them gradually waned as of the mid-sixth century, when the alliance established in the so-called "Staatsverträge No. 112"⁶⁶ led to the implementation of a policy in which there were more agreements than disagreements and which remained in force until the mid-fourth century. It was generally linked to the politics of confrontations between Tegea itself and Mantinea.⁶⁷ In the new context emerging

⁵⁶ Paus. 8.54.5.

⁵⁷ Paus. 8.54.6.

⁵⁸ Østby 2014c, 16.

⁵⁹ Bérard 1889; Guarducci 1952; Jost 1985, 382; Jameson 1988, 104; Isager 1992, 16; Chandezon 2003, 33-40; Cardete 2016, 105-106. The archaic sanctuary was enclosed to the south, west and north by the river, making it a suitable area for animal husbandry because of the abundance of water, while, at the same time, being very prone to flooding. A change in the hydrological situation in the Classical period resolved this problem (Ødegård 2005, 211-212; Ødegård – Klempe 2014, 29-35).

⁶⁰ Paus. 8.47.4. Østby 2014a, 19; 2014c, 16.

⁶¹ Voyatzis 1990, 28; Nordquist 2013.

⁶² Østby 1994a; 1994b.

⁶³ *IG V* 2.159; *IPArk* 1.

⁶⁴ Paus 3.5.6.

⁶⁵ *IG V* 2.3 and 39-41; *IPArk* 2; Paus. 8.47.4.

⁶⁶ According to Nielsen (2002, 188), this treaty formed the bedrock of the Peloponnesian League. Sparta and Tegea agreed that the latter would no longer allow the Messenians to flee from the former to settle in its territory, as had been the case hitherto.

⁶⁷ Burelli 1995, 112; Nielsen 1996, 89; Forsén 2000, 52-53; Bakke 2008, 57-58.

at the end of the Peloponnesian War and from the geopolitical reorganisation of Greece and, specifically after the Spartan defeat at the Battle of Leuctra, Tegea was plunged into a bloody civil war between pro- and anti-Spartans, both with long traditions and strong support. Finally, it was the anti-Spartans, supported by Mantinea, who took control of the situation,⁶⁸ with Tegea siding with them by supporting the Arkadian Confederacy, even though it meant brokering a pact with Mantinea.⁶⁹ The alliance would end up disintegrating and it would be Mantinea itself that would ally with Sparta, alongside which it fought at the Battle of Mantinea in 362.

Regarding the Megalopolitan synoecism and what it meant for Tegea, it is necessary to remember that there are two different versions of it – those offered by Diodorus⁷⁰ and Pausanias⁷¹ – as to both the date when it occurred and the number and identity of the communities that were involved. Diodorus holds that Megalopolis was formed by a synoecism of 20 communities of the Parrhasian and Mainalian tribes, dating the event to between 368 and 367, shortly after the “Tearless battle”. Whereas, for his part, Pausanias mentions the union of 41 communities belonging to seven different political groups, united following the Argive system and led by 10 *oikistai* from Tegea, Mantinea, Kleitor and the Parrhasian and Mainalian tribes, a process that he dates to between 371 and 370. So, the two great Arkadian-Spartan battles of the period, Leuctra (which relieved Spartan pressure on the Arkadian *póleis* and gave enormous power to Tegea) and “Tearless” (which allowed Sparta to regain lost ground), took place in 371 and 368-367, respectively.⁷²

Without going into specific details about the exact date of the foundation, and even starting from the earliest one offered by Pausanias (371-370), synoecism was a complex process from beginning to end which was not resolved in a few months or years, but involved a far-reaching political, social, demographic and territorial reorganisation of the south-western Arkadian borderlands as a whole. In fact, if synoecism is understood as a process, it can be appreciated why Diodorus offers an account of the original plan, which possibly only included the Mainalians and the Parrhasians. On the contrary, Pausanias transmits the so-called “Megalopolitan tradition”,⁷³ that is, the desires of an expansionist Megalopolis. The new polis attempted to continue to develop at the expense of the surrounding communities: Pallantio, Asea and Dipaea of the Mainalian tribe; Alipheira and Gortyna of the Kynourian tribe; and Methydrion, Teuthis and Theisoa of the Orchomenian *syntéleia*. Despite the fact that Megalopolis was not always successful, it developed a triumphant discourse.

The foundation of Megalopolis triggered a powerful political earthquake in Arkadia which seriously affected Tegea. This is so because Mantinea and Tegea had been the traditional Arkadian powers which now found themselves being challenged by a third agent of change who it would have been dangerous to underestimate. Both *póleis* had

⁶⁸ X. *HG* 6.5.5-10.

⁶⁹ Tsiolis 2018, 165.

⁷⁰ D.S. 15.72.4 and 15.94.1-3.

⁷¹ Paus. 8.27.2.

⁷² D.S. 15.72.4; *FGrH* 239 F 73. See also Dušanić 1970, 319; Sealey 1976, 435; Hornblower 1990; Roy 2000, 308; Moggi – Osanna 2003, 421.

⁷³ Hejnic 1961.

to form ambivalent alliances and to implement offensive policies, depending on their interests at each moment. This partly explains why the temple was intentionally built along archaic lines: the main characteristics of the temple of Zeus in Olympia were copied; it followed an archaic Doric design, more than a fourth-century one; the stylobate was unusually long and, as Bakke has pointed out,⁷⁴ parts of the temple that had survived the fire were purposely reused, and not only to prevent resources from going to waste, but also because of its intentional use as a mnemonic landmark, as a way of making the past present and visible. The same goes for votive offerings.⁷⁵ Following his passion for religion and tradition,⁷⁶ Pausanias singles out three in particular: the skin of the Calydonian boar,⁷⁷ the chains of the Lacedaemonian prisoners,⁷⁸ and the shield of Marpessa.⁷⁹ All of them claim the importance of a successful warrior tradition endorsed by the gods. Therefore, resorting to archaisms that were out of tune with the prevailing fashions helped to return to the past and to offer greater security in a difficult present. It was a way of heightening the power of the landscape as a tool for constructing memory. Some physical elements from the past were maintained and their meanings did not seem to have changed.

Tegea's relations with Megalopolis were established especially through the Arkadian Confederacy, a process close, but not equivalent, to the foundation of Megalopolis. Both took place at roughly the same time, ca. 371-368, and for similar reasons: to join forces against Sparta, the traditional enemy of the vast majority of Arkadians. With its discourse, Megalopolis tried to enhance its own importance and that of the Confederacy. Although the Arkadian Confederacy was not really a pan-Arkadian federal organisation, but only one that united most of southern Arkadia,⁸⁰ it had a very broad scope in Arkadian regional politics and, of course, in Tegea. Indeed, the founders of the Confederacy were Megalopolis,⁸¹ Tegea,⁸² Mantinea,⁸³ Kleitor,⁸⁴ the Parrhasian communities⁸⁵ and the Mainalian tribe.⁸⁶

⁷⁴ Bakke 2008, 71-74.

⁷⁵ Moreno Leoni 2018, 142-148.

⁷⁶ Pausanias' passion for antiquity, especially for ancient cults, is the reason why Arkadia occupies a central place in his *Periegesis*. The stereotyped image of Arkadia in the second century AD included what Pausanias was looking for: an allegedly remote and isolated place, epicentre of exotic and apparently ancestral traditions, myths, cults, and rites, which was at the same time a savageness land and a paradise. This was an ideal image for allowing the Periegete to display his passion for connecting with the past, disregarding change, and exalting permanence (Cardete forthcoming a).

⁷⁷ Paus. 8.47.2. The link with Heracles and the Heraclidae is one of the resources of ancestry used by Pausanias (in Arkadia specifically in 8.22.4, 8.24.2, 8.31.3, 8.32.3-4, 8.35.2, 8.37.1, 8.45.3, 8.47.4, 8.53.9).

⁷⁸ Paus. 8.47.2, 8.48.4-6. According to Pausanias, the chains came from the Spartan campaign led by Charillus against Tegea (see also Paus. 3.2.5, 3.7.3). Herodotus (1.66) emphasised the importance of the chains, mentioned by the oracle of Delphi. We do not know if the battle was a historical event or a mythical elaboration (Moreno Leoni 2018, 146), but it is sure that it built memory when it was named.

⁷⁹ Paus. 8.48.5. According to Pausanias (8.48.5-6), Marpessa/Choera led a group of women who bravely faced Charillus and the Spartans. That is why in Tegea there was a female cult to Ares Gynaecothoenas.

⁸⁰ X. *HG* 7.4.36.

⁸¹ *IG* V 2.1.23.

⁸² *IG* V 2.1.10.

⁸³ *IG* V 2.1.34.

⁸⁴ *IG* V 2.1.52.

⁸⁵ D.S. 15.72.4; *IG* V 2.2.6; Paus. 8.27.4.

⁸⁶ *IG* V 2.1.16. When the Arkadian Confederacy was founded, it is highly likely that the Parrhasian and Mainalian tribes were about to merge with Megalopolis or even that they had already been absorbed, albeit maintaining a

Historians have speculated about who ruled the destinies of the Arkadian Confederacy. The prominent role of Megalopolis is not in doubt, even if it was not its promoter.⁸⁷ However, the importance of Tegea and Mantinea and the benefits of the alliance were also very significant. In fact, Xenophon himself refers to the importance of Tegea in the management of the Confederacy,⁸⁸ while Philarchos' decree appeared in Tegea (it is the only well-preserved decree of the Confederacy, dated to ca. 366-363). Even the decoration of the altar of the temple of Athena Alea (the birthplace of Zeus in Arkadia, on Mount Lykaion) has been considered as an indication of Tegea's attempt to place itself on the same pan-Arkadian footing as Megalopolis. It might have been a way of countering the discourse that converted Megalopolis into the rightful heir to Parrhasian traditions.⁸⁹ It is not for nothing that Mount Lykaion was directly visible from the north side of the sanctuary of Athena Alea. Indeed, the fact that it offered views of two of the most important sacred mountains in Arkadia – Mount Parthenion, consecrated to Pan and Hermes, and Mount Lykaion, the birthplace of Zeus – was no accident.⁹⁰

Against this political backdrop, confrontations and alliances followed one another, while it was very important for Tegea to demonstrate its power and to possess powerful identity symbols, such as the temple of Athena Alea which had been the religious centre of the city for centuries. Rebuilding it from the ashes was a way of conveying a message of strength and divine support to allies and enemies, alike. It is even possible, as Jost and Østby have suggested,⁹¹ that Tegea's attempt to turn the temple of Athena Alea into a pan-Arkadian alternative to Mount Lykaion, controlled by Megalopolis, was a way of furthering its ruling ambitions.

In fact, the investment in monumentalisation after victories and defeats was a constant of the Greek *póleis*, because it was a way of building and/or reinforcing civic identity using traditions anchored in social memory. In Athens, for example, the classical temple of Athena Nike was built atop the Acropolis in ca. 426-420, when the Peloponnesian War was not going at all well for Athens, while the Arkadian temple of Apollo Bassitas was monumentalised and embellished following the rhythms of the war between Phigaleia and Sparta.⁹²

The iconographic programme designed by Scopas responded to a dual need characteristic of the end of Classicism: on the one hand, the maintenance of civic identity at a moment when the polis lost its traditional independence and autonomy; and, on the other, the attempt to weave a broader network of political relations beyond the polis. Hence, Scopas combined local themes (the victory of Marpessa over Sparta, the feats of Cepheus, son of Aleus, and the hunting down and killing of

certain degree of autonomy. Shortly after its foundation, more *póleis* and communities joined the Confederacy: Lepreon (*JG* V 2.1.20), Kynouria (*JG* V 2.1.40), Orchomenos (*JG* V 2.1.46), Heraea (*JG* V 2.1.58) and Thelpusa (*JG* V 2.1.64). It is also more than likely that they were joined later on by Stymphalos (*X. HG* 7.3.1), Lasion (*X. HG* 7.4.12), Eua (Steph. Byz. v. Eua = Teopompos *FGrH* 115 F 61), Eutaea (*X. HG* 6.5.12) and Pallantio (*D.S.* 15.59.3).

⁸⁷ In relation to the discussion about who promoted the Arkadian Confederacy, see Cardete 2005a, 151-156; forthcoming b; Roy 2005, 262-263; Nielsen 2015, 257-258; Tsiolis 2017, 165-167.

⁸⁸ *X. HG* 6.5.6.

⁸⁹ Picard 1933; Jost 1985, 47; Moggi – Osanna 2003, 506-507; Østby 2014c, 19.

⁹⁰ Østby 2014a, 18.

⁹¹ Jost 2010, 266-269; Østby 2014b, 345.

⁹² Cardete 2005a, 87-109; 2016, 193-202.

the Calydonian Boar, all depicted in the east frieze of the temple) with those linked to foreign relations (for example, the popularity of Telephus as a Tegean hero sculpted in the west frieze of the temple,⁹³ which probably indicates connections with Athens,⁹⁴ where he was an important hero).⁹⁵ In this way, the use of the mythical past contributes to the consolidation of political authority and the construction of civic identity, inscribing it in the collective memory.⁹⁶

Thus, the temple of Athena Alea served as a centre for harnessing the basic aspects necessary for developing the polis, such as a civic identity, governed by the elites and transformed into a tradition by expressing the designs of the gods in the landscape.⁹⁷ The temple would have acted as a new mnemotopos, apparently fixed in the landscape but incredibly flexible because it was not a landmark, but a node. It would have served to transmit a hypothetically ancestral memory, like the materials with which it was built (excellent Doliana marble).

4. Conclusions

Monumentalisation underpins its immense power generating ideologies in the interrelation between memory and landscape. As networks of meaning sustained in everyday experience, landscapes are built by a memory understood not as a generator of traditions, but as a force legitimising them, as evidence of their existence *in illo tempore*. It is precisely in the interrelation between the experience of a landscape (of which monumentalisation forms a substantial part) and the memory of that landscape in which the status quo is legitimised.⁹⁸

Ancient Greece is a good example of these ideas, especially because of the sanctuaries and the temples that were fairly commonplace in its landscapes. The

⁹³ It is no coincidence that Mount Parthenion, visually connected with the temple of Athena Alea, was the mythological place where Telephus was exposed (Østby 2014c, 11).

⁹⁴ Pretzler 1999, 115.

⁹⁵ Stewart (1977, 66-67) also highlighted the similarities between the Athenian and the Tegean Athena. He considered that the reason behind these similarities had to do with the relations between both *póleis*: both goddesses were armed, representing the victory of their *póleis* celebrated in local festivals, closely linked to Zeus, in which foreigners were allowed to compete. Zeus appears, in the Athenian case, on the east pediment of the Parthenon and, in the Tegean case, in the centre of the altar of Athena Alea. Certainly, these characteristics of Athena were very widespread but, as to Tegea, much less noticeable before the beginning of the sixth century, when ex-votos of the sanctuary portray an Athena more linked to the female world (fertility, weaving, caregiving and asylum) than to warfare (Voyatzis 1990, 62-251; 1998, 138-141; Hammond 1998). It was an Athena more influenced by Alea, the previous local deity combined with her as a title, although Athena continued to be independently worshipped as a goddess (*IG V 2.262*).

⁹⁶ Queyrel 2012, 81.

⁹⁷ Cardete 2005a, 86.

⁹⁸ Van Dyke 2008, 277. Although memory frequently legitimises power, it is impossible to ignore the fact that it is also a valuable asset for organising dissent (Sheldrake 2001, 266; Connerton 2006, 317), as Milan Kundera beautifully expressed it in *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting* (1980, 3): “The struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting”. In this century there are many communities, associations and even established political parties that leverage memory (its recovery, vindication, exaltation, maintenance, etc.) as a weapon for confronting dictatorial regimes, armed groups, or collective amnesias (the memory of the Holocaust, the memory of the FARC’s victims, the Historical Memory Act passed in Spain in 2007, the memories recently unearthed by Ukraine in its confrontation with Russia, etc.). Whether it is used to underpin power or to fight against it, memory remains a cultural construct that is considered to be unalterable without being so.

sense of belonging was driven by the relationship that the Greeks established with their surroundings and mediated by memory and remembered experiences which took the shape of epiphanies. In turn, landscape had a huge influence on shaping traditions and customs, the primordial basis of the development of memories.

Given the importance that memory has in constructing landscapes and the role of the latter as active and fluid creators of memory for societies, the points at which both intertwine are innumerable, depending on the contexts, needs and interests of the society in question. The perception of the spatial, temporal and contextual permanence of both through monumentalisation and the use of memory and landscape to legitimise and naturalise the dominant ideologies embodied in great monuments were two omnipresent constants in the ancient Greek world and which made tradition a dual category: at a conscious level, it was tantamount to stability; at an unconscious level, it was characterised by change and adaptation. Stability is something of which to be proud because, although it is often a mirage, it is believed and makes an important contribution to political legitimation. On the contrary, changes are concealed and ignored. As a matter of fact, most societies tend to associate traditions with the past (and not with a reinvented present)⁹⁹ and, through monumentalisation, strike a balance between materiality and landscape, between signifier and meaning.

Therefore, the relationship between monumentalisation and memory triggers a chain of events, emotions, gestures, and decisions that seems to flow harmoniously from the most remote time that a community can imagine up until the present day. As shown by the temple of Athena Alea in Tegea, however, it is fraught with conflicts, omissions, and inequality in the present.

The sanctuary and the temple of Athena Alea first served to legitimise the foundation of the polis of Tegea and, later on, to justify its political, economic, social, ideological and religious development in its complex relations with the other Arkadian and Greek *póleis*. Their value as mnemotopos was partly rooted in their apparent statism. Nevertheless, that statism was a fallacy, for the temple and the sanctuary changed, adapting to the needs of the polis, and were increasingly monumentalised, although they were perceived as the physical confirmation of a social memory that could not be either visually or ideologically ignored. The temple of Athena Alea thus represented the triumph of ideology by making it appear that it was a natural product, a desire of the gods, rather than a modifiable cultural construct.

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⁹⁹ Hobsbawn 2003.

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