CHAPTER 6

The Greek West: Temples and their Decoration

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Introduction

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, South Italy and Sicily became two of the destinations on the Grand Tour, the journey through France and Italy made by the young male members of the northern European aristocracy to complete their classical education (Wilton and Bignamini 1996; De Seta 2011). For many travelers, and for generations of artists and architects alike, temples like those at Paestum and Akragas were the best, if not the only, opportunity to have direct contact with Greek architecture, at a time when access to Greece was limited (Hellmann, Fraisse, and Cazalas 1982; Cometa 1999; Carlino 2009). This period thus marks the beginning of the fascination of modern scholarship with the temples of South Italy and Sicily (best exemplified for the nineteenth century by Hittorff and Zanth (1870) and Koldewey and Puchstein (1899), and for the twentieth century by Gruben ([1966] 2001). This consideration is fully justified by the prominent role played by these buildings in the monumental architecture of both regions throughout the Archaic and Classical periods, which made them into landmarks of the ancient and, ultimately, modern landscapes.

This prominence resulted from the fact that temples served as symbols of the wealth and power of the communities responsible for their construction (Burkert 1988). This fact becomes particularly transparent for the West in the words of Nikias in Thucydides (6.20), as part of the debate which took place in Athens before the Sicilian expedition, in 415 (Marconi 2007: 194–195; White 2011: 32). Besides this symbolic value, however, temples – along with rituals – were first and foremost critical agents in the construction of the cultural identity of the new communities in the West, strengthening their feeling of being at "home away from home," or *apoikia*, a term used by the Greeks to designate their settlements abroad of the Archaic period (Marconi 2007). In this role within the new communities, temples and rituals acted in the context of often delimited and elaborate sanctuary areas, which included a variety of other structures, especially sacrificial altars, porticoes, and dining halls (Pedley 2005). In our focus on temples and their architecture, we should not forget that the key to the full understanding of these structures includes their consideration within this larger ritual and built environment.

This essay outlines the history of temple architecture and decoration in South Italy (a region also referred to as Magna Graecia) and Sicily, from the foundation of the Greek settlements in the second half of the eighth century to the advent of Rome in the third century BCE. The number of monuments is considerable and the literature vast, so that any presentation of the material ought to be selective. This may have the advantage of offering a more effective idea of the development of one of the most significant forms of expression in the art and architecture of the western Greeks.

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The Geometric and Orientalizing Periods

The definition of sacred areas seems to have played a significant part in the planning of the new settlements, and to have done so from early on (Mertens 2006: 36–89). However, buildings do not seem to have played an important role in the first manifestations of cult practice, since the emphasis was laid upon ritual activity. According to the literary tradition, one of the first acts of the Chalkidian settlers of Naxos, the earliest foundation in Sicily, was setting up an altar to Apollo Archegetes (Thuc. 6.3). Yet the only evidence for a sacred building of the Geometric period in the entire West is an oikos at Syracuse dated to circa 710–700 BCE (Mertens 2006: 90; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 841), recently excavated in the Piazza Duomo, to the west of the fifth-century Doric temple. A simple shrine (6.00 × 9.20 m), it consists of one room; its location in one of the main cult areas points to a definition of the sacred spaces of Syracuse from the earliest stages of settlement.

Sacred architecture in the West begins only in the second half of the seventh century. Generally after two to three generations in the life of the new settlements, temples emerge as a prominent feature in the shaping of sanctuaries (Martin *et al.* 1980: 247). These spaces, which are variously located at the core, the periphery, or outside the urban areas, fulfilled important functions within the social life of the new communities (Alcock and Osborne 1994; de Polignac 1995; Malkin 1996). Urban sanctuaries were generally associated with the institutions and myths linked to the world of the new settlements' origins. Extra-urban sanctuaries sanctioned the possession of the surrounding territory and acted as boundaries with other Greek centers or the non-Greek populations while reinforcing the link between rural communities and urban centers.

In this early period, temples featured simple oikos plans. The cella had elongated proportions and its articulation could vary from a single room, to a combination of either pronaos and naos, or naos and adyton at the rear. The adyton was an inner chamber housing the cult image and ritual implements, and sometimes also votive offerings (Thalmann 1976; Hollinshead 1999). When the buildings were not made entirely of wood, the walls were made of mudbricks supported by low stone socles. Wood was used extensively, including for supports, the entablature, and the roof, protected with architectural terracottas from an early date.

The best representatives of this phase are Temple A at Himera, in Sicily, and the first temple at Contrada Marasà at Locri Epizephyrii, in South Italy. Temple A at Himera (625–600 BCE), located in the upper sanctuary and dedicated to Athena, was replaced in the sixth century by a larger structure (Temple B), which neatly incorporated its predecessor's foundations (Mertens 2006; 91–92; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007, 819–820). These indicate that Temple A (6.04 × 15.75 m) was an oikos, with a long naos and an adyton. Foundations were constructed of river pebbles; the rest of the walls were mudbrick lined with terracotta slabs. A terracotta sima with tubular waterspouts suggests the existence of pediments on both façades.

The first temple in the Sanctuary of Aphrodite at Contrada Marasà (610–600 BCE) was also an oikos (approximately 8.20 × 22.50 m at the toichobate). It was larger than that at Himera and had a more complex plan, consisting of a monostyle pronaos with two doors giving access to the naos, which was divided into two aisles by a central row of columns (Mertens 2006: 95–97; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 786–787). The walls were mudbrick, set on a stone socle and lined with terracotta slabs painted with meanders. Other terracotta plaques, decorated with disks and a scale-pattern, have been identified with metopes, although the corresponding triglyphs have not been found. The architectural terracottas include a geison revetment and a sima, and fragments of large disk akroteria have also been attributed to the roof.

Both temples at Himera and Locri provide evidence for the use of lining the mudbrick walls with terracotta slabs in this period. These terracottas appear to have been decorated with geometric patterns, with no evidence of figural decoration. Indeed, evidence for figural architectural decoration in the Greek west during the seventh century is scanty and limited to South Italy, consisting of antefixes decorated with female heads of Daedalic style (Winter 1993: 287). The architectural context of these antefixes remains unclear, but their typology is reminiscent of examples found in northwestern Greece.

The Early and Middle Archaic Periods

In Sicily, the transition into the sixth century is marked by some continuity, best shown by Temple H (600–590 BCE) at Naxos, an oikos with a low socle of polygonal masonry supporting mudbrick walls lined with terracotta plaques painted with figures (Mertens 2006: 128; Pflug 2006; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 828). These terracotta plaques were necessary for protecting the mudbricks, which were used in areas that lacked good building stone, mainly in Chalkidian settlements.

Elsewhere, where good limestone was available, mudbricks were quickly replaced with ashlars. A case in point is Selinous, where the first quarter of the sixth century saw the construction of a series of oikoi with the elevations entirely of stone, like the Temple Triolo N, south of the Sanctuary of Malophoros (Mertens 2006: 99–101; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 831–832, 837–838; Marconi 2007: 77–82). Two significant features of temples built at Selinous in this period are the lack of a frieze and the adoption of a very simple geison. As for the first, it may be noted that although traditional narratives about the development of early Greek architectural sculpture tend to credit the western Greeks with the "invention" of carved metopes because of the consistent use of this form of decoration beginning in the middle of the sixth century (Ridgway 1993: 333–356), the introduction of the Doric frieze in this region took place relatively late. At Selinous the early adoption of the Doric frieze was associated with Temple M (10.90 × 25.75 m), a simple in antis building with pronaos, naos and adyton, dated to circa 560 BCE (Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 838–839; Marconi 2007: 83–84; Zoppi 2009).

The erection of the Apollonion at Syracuse (circa 580 BCE), on the northern tip of Ortygia, marked a major turning point in temple architecture in the West by introducing the stone colonnade (Figure 6.1; Mertens 2006: 104–111; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 839–841; Marconi 2007: 38–50). An inscription carved on the stylobate expressed the pride of its builders, by mentioning the dedication to

Figure 6.1 Syracuse, Apollonion. *Source*: C. Marconi.

Apollo along with the name of the person ("Kleo[…]es") variously regarded as the architect or, more likely, the contractor or supervisor or the donor who provided the funds.

The Apollonion was ambitious both in size (21.50 × 54.90 m) and plan, consisting of a peristyle of 6 × 17 columns, including a double colonnade across the front and a cella articulated into a deep pronaos distyle in antis, a long naos divided into three aisles by a double-storied colonnade, and a shallow adyton. The columns are the most striking feature. Made of the same local limestone as the rest of the temple, their shafts are monolithic. Particularly remarkable are the squat proportions of those of the peristyle, about four times the lower diameter. This, combined with the narrowness of the spacing, meant that the Doric capitals with their bulging echinuses and thick abaci almost touched each other, and the triglyphs above could not be regularly placed on axis with the columns and the center of the interaxials. The resulting, incongruous effect of the colonnade is an eloquent testimony to the anxieties of the architect, facing the task of erecting the first peripteral temple in the region. Some of the architectural terracottas are preserved, featuring the combination of separately made geison revetment and simas, painted with geometric and floral patterns that will become a signature of Archaic temples in the west (Winter 1993: 273–288).

The figural decoration included a more than life-size group of horse and rider on the apex of one pediment, winged creatures as corner akroteria, and a plaque with the gorgoneion in the tympanum. This figural decoration had a great impact in the region. Horse and rider akroteria were popular in both Sicily and South Italy, throughout the sixth and fifth centuries (Danner 1996; Marconi 2007: 45–48; Ciurcina 2011: 409–412). Featuring male figures wearing a short chiton and boots, riding either black or white horses, these akroteria have also been identified with the Dioskouroi, making their epiphany and lending their protection to buildings. However, since these riders were generally placed on the façades individually, not in pairs, and since, in Athens, there is a documented hero called *epitegios*, "on the roof," who is clearly distinct from the Dioskouroi, it is safer to leave the question of the identification of these riders open. The prominence given to this type of decoration on temples in the west is hardly missed and is best linked with the long-standing equestrian and cavalry tradition so characteristic of the Greek settlements in this region. No less important, throughout the sixth century, were pedimental gorgoneia (Danner 2000; Marconi 2007: 214–222). Scholarship on Greek temple decoration has traditionally assigned an apotropaic function to these monstrous figures, directed against supernatural attacks or would-be-sacrilegious actions by humans. One may notice, in turning the attention to worshippers, that anxiety, fear, and terror were central to the experience of the sacred in Greek culture. From this point of view, the function of these pedimental gorgoneia may be regarded as a strategy to transform their viewers, increasing their sense of *mysterium tremendum* upon their encounter with the sacred.

The Apollonion inspired a generation of peripteral temples built in Sicily over the next few decades: Syracuse (Olympieion), Megara Hyblaia (Temple A), and Gela (Temple B) (Mertens 2006: 111–112; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 813, 824, 843; Marconi 2007: 50–60). Last in this series of buildings is Temple Y at Selinous (560–550 BCE), whose original location remains unknown (Mertens 2006: 115–118; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 832; Marconi 2007: 84–126). Like the Apollonion, the columns of Temple Y were monolithic and had squat proportions, but the triglyphs were now aligned with the axis of the columns and the center of the interaxials below. Temple Y is associated with the earliest known set of carved metopes in the west. These reliefs, traditionally known as "small metopes," can be divided into two groups, and it remains uncertain whether they all decorated the same building. To the first group belong the metopes featuring a sphinx, the rape of Europa, three goddesses (who defy an exact identification), and the Delian Triad, (with Apollo playing the kithara and reaching for his mother Leto and sister Artemis). The two metopes of the second group feature, respectively, a frontal chariot with two goddesses, most likely Hera and Athena, and the fight between Herakles and the Cretan Bull or Acheloös. These metopes introduce the combination of divine and mythological figures that will be characteristic of carved metopes at Selinous throughout the early Classical period. Interestingly, the Delian Triad was worshipped at Megara Nisaia, one of Selinous' two mother-cities.

The next peripteral temple at Selinous was of larger proportions and dominated the main urban sanctuary. The beginning of the construction of Temple C (23.93 × 63.76 m) may be placed at about 540

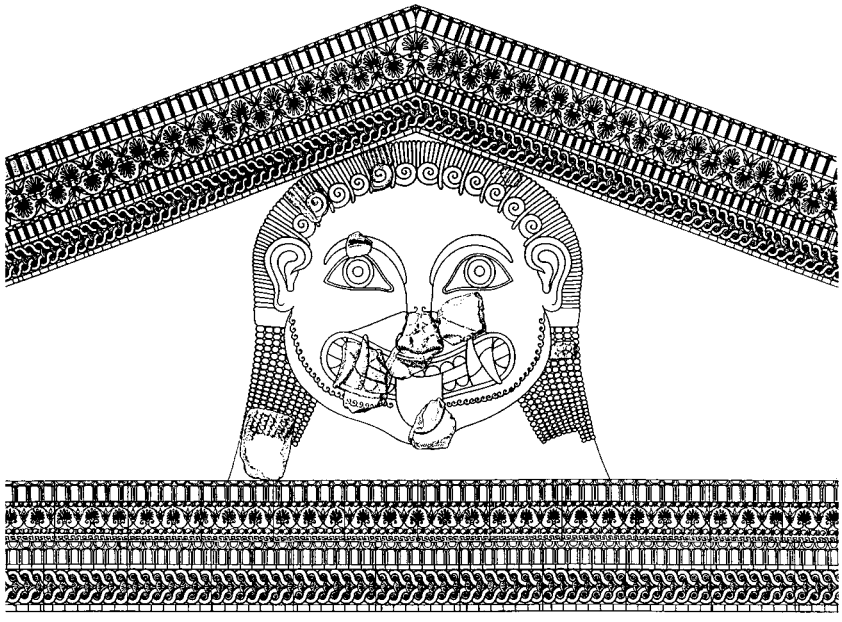

Figure 6.2 Selinous, Temple C, pedimental gorgoneion, after Gàbrici 1935. *Source*: C. Marconi.

BCE, but its completion apparently took decades, dating to about 510 BCE, as indicated by the style of its carved metopes (Mertens 2006: 119–125; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 830–831; Marconi 2007: 127–184). Some elements are reminiscent of the Apollonion at Syracuse, including the peristyle of 6 × 17 columns, with a double colonnade across the front; in addition, the spacing of the columns was wider on the fronts than the flanks. In Temple C, however, the columns were more slender and higher, and the entablature was considerably lighter. Furthermore, the triglyphs were accurately placed on axis with the columns and the centers of the interaxials below. Two elements of the plan particularly distinguish Temple C from the Apollonion: the deep ptera and the long cella consisting of a sequence of closed pronaos, naos without columns, and adyton. Both features are characteristic of temples built at Selinous in the following decades and have been explained through association with ritual practice. Thus, the large ptera have prompted the suggestion that the space between the cella and peristyle may have been used for processions, and the lack of interior columns in the naos has led to the proposal that on the same festive occasion, worshippers entered the cella and reached the front of the adyton. The presence of a large altar in front of Temple C reminds us that, in terms of cult practice, the main use of this building was as a house of the god and as a backdrop for ritual practice performed in the open-air.

Besides a rich apparatus of architectural terracottas on the roof, Temple C featured figural decoration: large gorgoneia filled the pediments (Figure 6.2), winged creatures stood as corner akroteria, and carved metopes adorned the main front. These metopes, executed in high relief, are only partially preserved. Best known is one of the panels that was originally placed above the central intercolumniation, featuring the arrival of Apollo on his chariot, welcomed by Leto and Artemis; next, above the intercolumniation to the right, were Perseus decapitating Medusa in the presence of Athena, and Herakles carrying the Kerkopes upside-down on a pole; finally, the metope at the corner featured Orestes killing Clytemnestra. This is the same combination of divine and heroic characters seen on the "small metopes." Particularly notable is the presence of the temple's divinity at the center of the frieze, on axis with the door and the cult statue, as if making his epiphany to the community gathered around the altar. Also significant is the grouping of these figures. The north section of the frieze were all Dorian heroes par excellence, with Perseus, Herakles, and Orestes, which would have been a kind of genealogy in stone for a Dorian community like Selinous.

As in Sicily, the transition into the sixth century was marked in South Italy by continuity with the past. Particularly notable is a series of relief friezes for the decoration of the geison revetment of small buildings (Mertens-Horn 1992; Marconi 2007: 14–16; for the function, cf. Osanna 2011). At Metapontum, one frieze features the departure of a warrior; another shows a religious procession. Fragments of friezes depicting the same procession come from Siris and Francavilla near Sybaris, pointing to a wide circulation of molds. This tradition of terracotta friezes, for which the Cyclades may have provided the inspiration, came to an end with the rise of monumental architecture.

The earliest peripteral stone temple was the so-called Temple of Poseidon at Taras (circa 570 BCE), of which little is known (Mertens 2006: 129–130; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 801). The limited knowledge of the stone architecture from Sybaris makes it hard to assess the contribution of this city to the development of monumental architecture in this region (Mertens 2006, 135–136; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007, 799–800). Significant evidence is available instead from two other Achaean settlements, Metapontum and Poseidonia (Paestum).

Before the middle of the sixth century, Metapontum started investing considerably in monumental stone temples (Mertens 2006: 136–138, 149–155; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 791–792). Two large peripterals were planned in the main urban sanctuary with stone imported from the area of Taras: Temple A I (approximately 23.20 × 46.40 m), perhaps dedicated to Hera, construction of which began circa 570–560 BCE, and Temple BI (approximately 19.85 × 38.30 m), dedicated to Apollo, erected a few years later. For some reason, the construction of the two temples was interrupted at different stages. Shortly afterwards, a second attempt met with success. On the site of the incomplete Temple A I, Temple A II (540–530 BCE) was the largest (20.55 × 49.82 m) in the sanctuary; it had a peripteral plan of 8 × 17 columns, with a double row of columns across the front and two rows of columns in the naos, similar to the Apollonion in Syracuse. Unlike the Apollonion, the cella did not have an adyton at the rear, or an opisthodomos. The Doric entablature displays interesting features, including the lack of a taenia with regulae and guttae. A dedicatory inscription on the architrave, partly preserved, mentions the person responsible for the construction, who invoked protection "for himself and his family" (*autoi kai genei*). Rather than a dedication of a tyrant, this text seems to be pointing to one of the local aristocratic families, suggesting a connection between the emergence of monumental temple architecture in the region with the rise to power of families comparable to the aristocratic *gene* of mainland Greece. These families fostered the construction of temples as a means of enhancing their command of the power of the sacred and thus their prestige and social standing. The Temple of Apollo B II (530 BCE) retained the central colonnade inside the cella and the peripteral plan of its predecessor, which now consisted of 7 × 15 columns (19.85 × 41.60 m at the foundations). Except for the columns on the main front, and the first two on the flanks, the peristyle consisted of half columns attached to a continuous wall.

A few years after Metapontum, Poseidonia (Paestum) made a similar decision to invest in monumental stone temple architecture. Two temples of Hera were planned around the same years (550–540 BCE), in the southern urban sanctuary (the so-called Basilica) and the extra-urban sanctuary at the Foce del Sele respectively.

The temple at Foce del Sele (approximately 17.80 × 34.50 m at the foundations), planned as a peripteral with 6 × 12 columns, was left unfinished (Mertens 2006: 138–140; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 798–799; Marconi 2007: 200–202; Greco *et al.* 2010: 39–42). Its Doric frieze, composed of triglyphs and sculpted metopes, was partly carved: 38 metopes have been preserved. Carved in high relief, finished to varying degrees, they feature one of the most significant gatherings of mythological representations in Archaic Greek temple decoration. This emphasis on myth reminds us that sanctuaries were important places for poetic performances on the occasion of festivals, including the Greek west. The narrative revolved around a variety of characters and events. A large number of the metopes are related to the deeds of Herakles: the battle with the centaurs, wrestling with the Nemean lion, the delivery of the Erymanthian boar, the dispute with Apollo over the Delphic tripod, carrying the Kerkopes, and the fight with Antaeus. Another series of reliefs reference the Trojan War and its aftermath: Achilles ambushing Troilos, the suicide of Ajax, Clytemnestra trying to prevent Orestes from killing Aegisthus. Other subjects include Apollo and Artemis shooting Tityos and the punishment of Sisyphus. Evidently, the rationale behind the organization of mythological scenes was not thematic unity but instead association and accumulation, as can also be seen in contemporary poetry and vase painting.

The construction of the Basilica (22.95 × 52.71 m) was more successful, although the building took a long time to complete, from after the middle of the sixth century until 520–510 BCE (Mertens 2006: 140–149; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 796–797). The temple is a peripteral with 9 × 18 columns, the wide ptera conferring the plan an almost pseudodipteral arrangement. The cella features a tristyle in antis pronaos, a naos divided into two naves by a central row of columns, and an adyton. This articulation of the cella came after a series of changes in plan, which included a different configuration of the back chamber, originally conceived as an opisthodomos. These changes have prompted the speculation that the ptera and the interior of the cella were both used for processions. Once again, the large sacrificial altar set in front of the Basilica suggests that this temple mainly served as a backdrop for large ceremonies in the open air. The columns of the Basilica are notable for their strong tapering and pronounced entasis. Also remarkable is the luscious floral decoration of the capitals, originally painted with vivid colors. The Basilica featured richly polychrome architectural terracottas, including a "baldachino" sima with lively lion heads (Mertens-Horn 1988: 133–134). It is most likely that these were the only figural decoration of the building.

The Late Archaic Period

The late Archaic period saw the same interest in temple architecture of the preceding decades. Literary sources and material culture point to the relations of both Sicily and South Italy with East Greece, which are reflected in the adoption of the Ionic order (Mertens 2006: 241–253; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 348–352). In Sicily, Selinous was in the forefront in the development of Doric temple architecture. There was the construction of two new temples: Temple F (24.37 × 61.88 m) on the eastern hill and Temple D (23.63 × 55.96 m) in the main urban sanctuary, elaborated on the model established by Temple C (Mertens 2006: 227–231; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 831–832, 835). Cultic reasons may be behind the decision to retain the deep ptera and the long naos without columns, with the adyton at its end. Yet the plan shows an interest in a better coordination between cella and colonnade, and for clearer relations between fronts and flanks, with the latter being shortened. Along similar lines, in the design of the elevation, a better articulation was sought of both the columns and the entablature. Temple F – generally dated to about 520 BCE but certainly finished only in about 490 BCE, judging from the style of its carved metopes – features the presence of screens that were used to close the intercolumniations, except for the center of the main east front. It is likely that the function of these screens was connected with cult practice, reminiscent of the Temple of Apollo B II at Metapontum, where closed ptera allowed a space for votive offerings.

Another significant feature of Temple F was the introduction of a limestone sima with lion-head waterspouts, which replaced earlier terracotta examples. The temple is best known for the carved metopes that decorated its main east front, featuring the gigantomachy, with each relief featuring a duel between one divinity and their opponent (Marconi 1995). The subject of the gigantomachy was popular in architectural sculpture at the time, including at the Megarian Treasury at Olympia, which commemorated a victory at war against Corinth. Likewise, the gigantomachy of Temple F may have alluded to contemporary military events.

Located directly to the north of Temple F, Temple G though designed in the same years conformed to a wholly different standard (Mertens 2006: 231–236; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 835–836). The building, with its pseudodipteral plan of 8 × 17 columns, was of gigantic proportions (about 49.97 × 109.12 m), paralleling the dipteroi of East Greece and the Olympieion at Athens. In particular, the hypaethral naos with a naiskos at the end is reminiscent of Didyma. A large portion of Temple G was completed within about forty years (520–480 BCE), during which time the construction progressed westwards, introducing significant changes in the design. Although the temple was in use from rather early on in its construction, the structure was still unfinished when Selinous fell to the Carthaginians in 409.

At Akragas, the early fifth century saw the introduction of the peripteral plan, with Temple A (25.33 × 67 m) assigned, but on insufficient evidence, to Herakles (Mertens 2006: 236–239; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 803). Second in size only to the Olympieion, the building is in a prominent location

near to Gate IV. The plan, with a colonnade of 6 × 15 columns, features a number of innovative characteristics, such as the opisthodomos, the corner contraction, and interior staircases. Similarities with the entablature of Temple F at Selinous suggest some degree of interaction between the two centers.

The diffusion of the Ionic order in Sicily is manifested in the construction of a series of buildings of this order at various sites, including Gela, Catania, and Syracuse. This diffusion is indicative of the degree of internationalism reached by many centers towards the close of the sixth century, although it is difficult to pinpoint specific sources of influence. For one source we do have evidence: there is a plausible connection between Samos and the Ionic Temple at Syracuse (510–500 BCE; 22.60 × 55.90 m) in style and date, since Samian masons may have left their island after the death of Polycrates and ventured to find work at Syracuse (Mertens 2006: 244–247; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 842–843). Ionic features were also introduced in buildings of the Doric order, like the Temple of Aphrodite at Akrai (19.10 × 40.40 m) a peripteral of 6 × 13 columns, whose triglyphs featured a rich decoration, including a spiral frieze on their capitals and palmettes topping their femors (Mertens 2006: 249–250; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 811).

In South Italy, Metapontum and Poseidonia (Paestum) maintained a leading role in architectural development. At Metapontum, the extra-urban Temple of Hera, known as Tavole Palatine (16.13 × 33.24 m), featured a roof similar to that of the Basilica, which allows for its dating to about 520–500 BCE (Mertens 2006: 216–217; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 793; Sonntagbauer 2009; Lazzarini 2010). The peripteral plan with 6 × 12 columns is consistent with the tendency of this period to shorten the flanks of the temple, and another new feature is the placement of the cella at the center of the colonnade. Other elements reference the local tradition, like the entablature, similar to that of the Temple of Apollo A II.

The late Archaic period saw two major projects at Poseidonia (Paestum). One was the Temple of Hera II at Foce del Sele (16.84 × 37.08 m), built around 500–490 BCE, partly on top of the unfinished predecessor (Mertens 2006: 220–222; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 798–799; Greco *et al.* 2010: 45–49). Restored with a peristyle of 8 × 17/13 columns, the new temple featured remarkably wide ptera, particularly on the main east front. The cella presented the canonical sequence of pronaos in antis, naos, and adyton. In accordance with the local tradition, the Doric entablature replaced the combination of taenia, regula, and guttae, and the mutules with kymatia, while the front had carved metopes featuring a ritual dance, a subject experimented with a few years earlier on a frieze from Sybaris.

Dating to the same years, the Temple of Athena (14.54 × 32.88 m) in the north urban sanctuary represents a significant step forward (Figure 6.3; Mertens 2006: 222–227; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 794; Sonntagbauer 2009). This building references the local tradition in the strong entasis of its columns and the bulging echinuses of its capitals. Also in keeping with the local tradition are the extraordinary rich Ionic and Lesbian kymatia replacing the combination of taenia, regula, and guttae, and the mutules. A novelty for stone temple architecture is the non-mutular geison with coffers, a solution anticipated in the entablature of the altar of Temple A II at Metapontum. This new stone geison made terracotta revetments unnecessary, and the sima with lion-head waterspouts was now made of sandstone (Mertens-Horn 1988: 116–118). Remarkably, in this building, the emphasis on ornamentation was not matched by a comparable interest in figural decoration.

Particularly significant are the innovations in the plan of the Temple of Athena, which was conceived as a *hekatompedon* (110 feet of 32.8 cm). Consistent with the period are the peristyle of 6 × 13 columns and the use of the same interaxial for both fronts and flanks. Also notable are the narrow ptera on the back and flanks, in contrast with the deep pteron on the main, east, front. The latter gave access to an elaborate pronaos of the Ionic order, prostyle tetrastyle and two columns deep. Steps at the entrance of the pronaos and the naos gave access to the main chamber, which lacks an adyton. Interior staircases in the cella on either side of the door from the pronaos, originally leading to the attic (with one probably intended for ascending, the other for descending), represent an important feature, which is first met in this temple and will become a signature of Greek temple architecture in the west during the fifth century (Miles 1998–1999). The function of these staircases has been intensely debated, and proposals include ready access to the attic and roof for maintenance; the use of the attic for storage of votive or ritual objects; or the use of the attic as a ritual space, including for the enactment of epiphanies for worshippers gathered in the pronaos (see Chapter 15). The frequency, prominence, and elaboration of interior staircases in temples in both regions are strongly suggestive of a ritual function.

Figure 6.3 Paestum, Temple of Athena. *Source*: C. Marconi.

The Early Classical Period

The early Classical period marks a moment of flourishing in the history of Greek Sicily, which was connected with the rise to power, from 491 to 465 BCE, of two influential ruling dynasties, the Deinomenids at Gela and later Syracuse, and the Emmenids at Akragas, in close kinship relations. The two moments of greatest of glory for the Emmenids and Deinomenids were their joint victory (480 BCE) against the Carthaginians at Himera and the naval victory (474 BCE) of Hieron I at Cumae against the Etruscans. Both families were generous promoters of art and culture, and their patronage extended to temple architecture.

The Olympieion (Temple B) at Akragas would best exemplify this connection, if the building – lacking an archaeological dating – were to be connected with the rise to power of Theron (488 BCE), as argued by more recent scholarship (Mertens 2006: 261–266; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 804). With its gigantic size (52.740 × 110.095 m), the Olympieion clearly emulated Temple G at Selinous. Built on massive foundations and rising on five steps, the temple featured a peristyle of 7 × 14 supports formed of semi-columns on the outside and pilasters inside, connected with screen walls. These screen walls finds parallels in Temple B II at Metapontum, and one is also reminded of Temple F at Selinous. The cella of the Olympieion featured walls articulated with square piers, which corresponded to the pilasters of the peristyle, and comprised a short pronaos without columns, a long naos, and an opisthodomos. Since the width of the flank ptera corresponded to that of the cella, the plan of the interior came close to a three-aisled division, similar to the naos of Temple G. As at its predecessor at Selinous, the ptera were covered with pitched roofs, and the naos was unroofed. Both foundations and steps are built of ashlars of the same dimensions. Everything in the Olympieion appears to have been planned carefully and systematically, from the quarrying of the stone to its transportation, dressing, and installation. This may have streamlined the process of the construction of the temple, which was probably finished, although not as quickly as often assumed, judging from the style

of the lion-head waterspouts of the sima, which may be assigned to the second half of the fifth century (Mertens-Horn 1988: 109–111).

In addition to the sima, the building made considerable use of figural decoration. According to one reading of the text of Diodorus Siculus (13.82.4), the east pediment featured the gigantomachy and the west pediment the Ilioupersis, for which evidence is scanty (Danner 2001: 25–28). Particularly significant are the Atlantes, which were positioned on the exterior and assisted in carrying the entablature. These gigantic sculptures represent the main novelty in the design of the temple, and the earliest occurrence of male supports in Greek architecture. On our building, they were clearly conceived as depictions of Atlas, the Titan, who, as punishment for revolting against the gods, was forced by Olympian Zeus to support the heavens on his shoulders. This imagery would have provided not only a good metaphor for the victory over the Carthaginians by the coalition led by the Emmenids and Deinomenids but also an ominous message directed to the local opponents of Theron's rule (Marconi 1997; Vonderstein 2000). A monumental altar in front of the Olympieion, the largest in the Greek world at the time, must have represented the focus of large ceremonies.

Two temples displaying similar features have been traditionally connected with the victory at Himera, although they both lack an archaeological dating. The first building is the so-called Temple of Victory at Himera, probably dedicated to Athena and considered to be a thank-offering erected near to the battlefield (Mertens 2006: 266–268; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 819; Zoppi 2010). The design of this building (22.46 × 55.91 m) shows the influence of Temple A (Herakles) at Akragas, including the cella articulated into pronaos, naos, and opisthodomos, and the interior staircases. The peristyle of 6 × 14 columns is unusually long, and the design relates to an interest in retaining deep ptera on both fronts. This emphasis on the fronts contributed the double corner contraction, the effect of which was to widen the central intercolumniation. Of the figural decoration, which included pedimental sculptures (Bonacasa 2005), the best known are the remarkably large lion-head waterspouts of the simas. There are two different renderings of the animals, of which one is more aggressive than the other (Mertens-Horn 1988: 95–100). The style of these lion heads suggests, among other things, that the workshop responsible for this building came from Akragas.

The so-called Temple of Athena at Syracuse, dated to the same year as the Temple of Victory at Himera (480 BCE), is still relatively well preserved, owing to its later transformation into a Christian church (Mertens 2006: 268–273; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 841–842). The building, a peripteral of 6 × 14 columns (22.20 × 55.45 m), features the now canonical articulation of the cella into naos, with a pronaos and opisthodomos distyle in antis, and its dimensions are closely similar to the Temple at Himera, but with an almost perfect ratio of 2 : 5 between fronts and flanks. The temple also features the same double corner contraction. The adoption of a smaller unit of measurement, along with some stylistic differences, including smaller lion-head waterspouts for the marble sima, suggests that it was built by a different workshop than the temple at Himera (Mertens-Horn 1988; 100–103). A marble Nike has been tentatively restored as a corner akroterion (Danner 1997: 40–41). Literary sources mention a golden shield on the main pediment, as well as magnificent doors, with gold and ivory decorations. In addition, in the Hellenistic period, paintings were on display in the cella.

Close in date to the buildings at Himera and Syracuse is the Temple of Athena (Temple C) (470 BCE) on the acropolis of Gela, which is smaller (approximately 19.50 × 49.10 m) but of similar design (Mertens 2006: 274–276; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 813–814). Because, starting in the Middle Ages, it was quarried for building material, the building is poorly preserved. The recent discovery of the remains of its high quality marble roof, including floral akroteria, roof tiles, and sima, points to the activity of masons from the Cyclades (Heiden 1998), whose presence in South Italy around the same years also has been suggested (Rocco 2010).

The Temple of Hera at Selinous (25.308 × 67.749 m) dates to some years later (460–450 BCE), and conforms only in part to the new trends (Mertens 2006: 279–283; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 833–835). The temple is a peripteral of 6 × 15 columns, whose unusual length reflects the decision to retain the adyton at the end of the naos, in addition to the opisthodomos. Characteristic features of the period are the cella neatly fitted into the peristyle and the adoption of the same interaxial on both fronts and flanks. These display the same, simple corner contraction. On the east front, a staircase, limited to the three central intercolumniations, leads into the cella. Six additional steps led into the

naos, and three more to the adyton, in which the seated cult statue of the goddess was further protected by a baldachin-like structure.

The temple is archaeologically dated to 460–450 BCE, which closely corresponds to the early Classical style of its carved metopes, decorating the friezes of pronaos and opisthodomos (Marconi 1994). Of the original 12 reliefs, made of local limestone, with inserts in Parian marble for exposed female skin, four are well preserved: those depicting the *hieros gamos* of Zeus and Hera (not Hades and Persephone, as wrongly suggested by Østby (2009: 162–163)), the punishment of Aktaion by Artemis, the Amazonomachy of Herakles, and Athena killing the Giant Enkelados. A fifth relief, now considerably worn, featured Apollo chasing a nymph, and there are enough fragments to restore a sixth metope with the Kalydonian boar hunt. (The existence of this sixth relief disproves the speculation by Junker (2003) that all 12 metopes would have featured deities.) In continuity with the Archaic period, at Selinous the display of the pantheon of the city was as important as the mythological narrative. The *hieros gamos* played a prominent role in festivals of Hera in the Greek world, and the metope featuring this subject, placed at the center of the east frieze, raises interesting considerations about the interaction between architectural sculpture and ritual. In general, it is evident that the emphasis of these metopes was on the celebration of Hera as the protector of the city and of marriages.

In South Italy, the influence of the Temples at Himera and Syracuse is apparent in the design of the Temple of Hera (470 BCE) at Cape Lacinium, near Croton, of comparable dimensions (22.18 × 55.61 m) (Mertens 2006: 276–278; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 779–780; Rocco 2008 and 2009). This building made considerable use of marble, including the roof, part of the entablature, and the pedimental sculptures (Belli Pasqua 2008, 2009, 2010). Two generations later, it featured paintings by Zeuxis (De Angelis 2005). The interest in marble akroteria in South Italy is further attested for Temple C at Metapontum, which was rebuilt during this period, with a simple in antis plan, carefully incorporating its Archaic predecessor (Mertens 2006: 278; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 790–791).

The best-preserved temple of this period in the west is the so-called Temple of Poseidon at Paestum (generally assigned to Hera, or, as an alternative, to either Zeus or Apollo, but always on insufficient evidence), in the southern urban sanctuary (Figure 6.4; Mertens 2006: 283–295; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and

Figure 6.4 Paestum, So-called Temple of Poseidon. *Source*: C. Marconi.

Rocco 2007: 797; Rocco 2008). This building has often been compared with the Temple of Zeus at Olympia, mainly owing to the presence of two double-storied rows of columns in the naos, and this comparison has suggested a dating to 460–450 BCE. The plan (24.289 × 60.008 m) consists of a peristyle of 6 × 14 columns, surrounding a cella articulated into a naos divided into three aisles, with a pronaos and opisthodomos distyle in antis. Interior staircases were planned, but only the north one was completed.

The temple is so well preserved that it is still possible to detect a series of architectural refinements. These include a simple corner contraction on the fronts and a double corner contraction on the flanks; the upward curvature of the stylobate, on both fronts and flanks; the entasis; and the inclination towards the center of the columns on the fronts. Interestingly, for all this sophistication in design, the dimensions at the stylobate do not correspond to any clear numeric proportion, nor do they correspond to exact multiples of feet. In addition, the interaxials on the fronts are slightly shorter than those on the flanks, an archaic feature that goes along with the thickening of the columns on the fronts and the tapering of the triglyphs. Another interesting feature is the irregularities in the rhythm of the frieze and columns, including the displacement of the triglyphs with respect to the column axes, and of the regulae and mutules with respect to the triglyph axes. The exceptional state of preservation of the building makes it possible to detect all these irregularities, which may have been more widespread than it is generally assumed. The temple did not feature akroteria, pedimental sculptures, or carved metopes, and the use of figural decoration was confined to the lion-head waterspouts of the sima, carved of Cycladic marble.

Contrary to the situation in Sicily, in South Italy the Ionic order flourished during this period. A case in point is the Ionic Temple (Temple D, 470–450 BCE) at Metapontum, in the northern sector of the urban sanctuary (Mertens 2006: 296–302; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 792–793). The temple (15.70 × 39.26 m) is poorly preserved, but the remains of the elevation have suggested a restoration as a pseudodipteral of 8 × 20 columns, with the cella neatly fitted into the colonnade, and consisting of a deep closed pronaos followed by a naos. The profiles of the bases of the columns somewhat resemble the Samian type, whereas the capitals are loosely reminiscent of the Ephesian type. The differences between the two temples are significant enough, however, to exclude the conjecture that the temple was built by masons from East Greece. A notable feature is the presence of a frieze decorated with palmettes and lotus flowers, placed between the architrave and the dentils, a design unusual for the Ionic order at such an early date. Also of interest is the adoption, upon the stone geison, of a terracotta sima, featuring gorgoneia antefixes, another reference to the Archaic tradition in which the building appears to have been rooted.

Another important building of the Ionic order built in South Italy during this period is the Temple of Aphrodite at Contrada Marasà in Locri Epizephyrii (Mertens 2006: 305–309; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 786–787). Poorly preserved, the restoration of both plan and elevation of this temple have been intensely debated. The same goes for the figural apparatus, to which once belonged marble statues featuring the Dioskouroi dismounting from their horses (Costabile 1995; Danner 1997: 63–68), which are best regarded as a later addition to the gables.

The High Classical Period

The later part of the early Classical and the high Classical Periods saw a considerable investment in temple construction on the part of Akragas, a city that, according to literary sources, achieved a considerable level of material prosperity in these years (Diod. Sic. 13.81.4–5), mainly through the export of olives and wine to Carthage (Mertens 2006: 381–399; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 805–808; White 2011). The number of peripteral temples built in this city between 460 and 406 BCE – the year that saw the attack by the Carthaginians – is staggering. The series was probably opened by the Temple of Athena (Temple E) on the acropolis (460 BCE, approximately 15.10 × 34.70 m). Construction of temples then continued in succession following the broad ring of the city walls: Temple D (so-called Temple of Hera Lacinia), placed in a conspicuous position at the eastern edge of the ridge bordering the city to its south (460–450 BCE, 16.94 × 38.13 m); Temple L, in the Sanctuary of the Chthonic Deities, at the opposite west end of the same ridge (460–450 BCE, 21.20 × 44.60 m); in the next generation with Temple F (so-called Temple of Concord), near to the center of the ridge

Figure 6.5 Akragas, Temple of Concord. *Source*: C. Marconi.

(Figure 6.5; 450–440 BCE, 16.925 × 39.42 m); Temple I (so-called Temple of the Dioskouroi), in the Sanctuary of the Chthonic Deities (450 BCE, 16.43 × 33.99 m at the stereobate); and finally Temple G (so-called Temple of Hephaistos), located in the southwestern corner of the city and unfinished (410–406 BCE, 17.25 × 39.43 m).

The state of preservation of all these temples is uneven, from nearly complete in the case of the Temple of Concord, which was reused as a Christian church in the Middle Ages (Carlino 2011), to rather poor in the case of Temple L, which was systematically pillaged of its blocks. Overall, a degree of uniformity is apparent, in terms of size and plan, and a common idea appears to have informed the design: namely, a conscious reaction to the Olympieion. In contrast with the colossus of the age of Theron, this new generation of temples is characterized by understated dimensions, which translate into peristyles of 6 × 13 columns; by uniform plans, with the cella increasingly better fitted into the colonnade, and articulated into naos without interior supports, with pronaos and opisthodomos distyle in antis, and interior staircases; and finally, by canonical elevations, characterized by the lack of figural decoration, with the exception of the lion-head waterspouts of the sima. Some have connected this contrast in design with the Olympieion, and the general uniformity of the temples of this new generation with the advent of the democratic government in Akragas, after the collapse of the Emmenid rule (see especially Höcker 1993; Mertens 2006: 381–382). According to this theory, the similarities between the various buildings would have allowed for better public control, and each new project could have more easily been subject to discussion in a public assembly. Our knowledge, however, of the government of Akragas in these years is fairly limited, and we have to consider that the use of the term *demokratia* by ancient authors was rather elastic, and it does not warrant an equation with the radical Athenian democracy.

The trends in temple architecture at work in Akragas, notably the tendency towards understated dimensions and the avoidance of figural decoration, find an important parallel at Selinous. Here the southern urban sanctuary underwent a major renovation around the middle of the fifth century, including the expansion of the temenos area towards the west and the construction of two peripteral

buildings, known as Temple O (19.10 × 44.20 m) and Temple A (16.13 × 40.31 m) (Mertens 2006: 400–404; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 833). Both temples were planned with a colonnade of 6 × 14 columns, and with a cella featuring a pronaos, naos, adyton, and a short opisthodomos, along with interior staircases of helical – rather than the more common rectilinear – plan in Temple A. While the construction of Temple O may have never reached above the level of the foundations, Temple A was completed within a few years. This building bears the same proportions as the Temple of Concord, and a combination of single corner contraction on the flanks and double corner contraction on the fronts that comes close to the Temple of Hera Lacinia. The temple featured lion-head waterspouts, but the lack of any other figural decoration, in a center like Selinous, is notable (Mertens-Horn 1988, 104–105), and it conforms to the tendency of architects in Sicily during the high Classical period to reduce drastically the use of architectural sculpture (an exception are the terracotta akroteria added to Temple B at Himera circa BCE 450: Gasparri 2011).

This is also apparent in the case of the temples at Segesta, the Elymian center in western Sicily, which in the second half of the fifth century entertained considerable relations with both Selinous and Athens. A first Doric peripteral temple (approximately 28 × 56 m) was built around the middle of the fifth century at Contrada Mango, on the south slope of the acropolis (Mertens 2006: 408–410; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 830). On the basis of the few blocks visible today, it features similarities with Temples E and A at Selinous, and it has been credited to a workshop from this city. Far more imposing, and considerably better preserved, is the large Unfinished Temple (23.13 × 58.05 m), whose construction came to a halt at the stage when the cella would have been built (Mertens 2006: 410–416; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 830). The temple is thus limited to the outer colonnade of 6 × 14 columns. The incomplete nature of the temple is also manifested by the numerous bosses and the unfluted columns. This is the only peripteral temple built in Sicily in the second half of the fifth century with a size comparable to the temples of the early Classical period, which speaks to the ambition of its non-Greek patrons. Several elements in the design, however, conform to high Classical standards, including the cella planned with pronaos, naos, and opisthodomos neatly fitted into the colonnade, and the use of double corner contraction. Particularly notable is the use of the 2 : 3 ratio for the proportioning of the entablature, which has been compared with Athenian temple architecture of the high Classical period, inferring a direct knowledge. The lack of finishing of the temple at Segesta has been explained through an association with the beginning of the war launched by the Carthaginians in Sicily in 409 BCE, which brought to an end the economic prosperity and cultural flourishing of many Greek centers in the island.

The stagnation in Sicily after the end of the high Classical period had already been experienced in South Italy during the second half of the fifth century. In this area only two temples date to the period under consideration: a poorly preserved Ionic temple at Hipponion (18.10 × 27.50 m) of the end of the fifth century, the last temple built in this order in the west (Mertens 2006: 418–419; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 785–786); a Doric temple at Kaulonia (16.37 × 38.39 m) in the sanctuary at Punta Stilo (Mertens 2006: 416–418; Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco 2007: 783). This last building, which replaced an Archaic predecessor, features a series of elements typical of Sicilian architecture, and it has also been credited to a workshop from Syracuse (Gullini 1983: 314). However, a connection with the early Classical Temple of Hera at Cape Laciniun is preferable, also on account of its similar roof of Parian marble, which may have included akroteria in the form of sphinxes supporting riders (Parra 2010).

The Late Classical and Hellenistic Periods

Between 409 and 405 BCE, the Carthaginians invaded Sicily for the second time, taking and sacking several Greek cities, namely Selinous, Himera, Akragas, Gela, and Kamarina. According to literary sources, in some cases, the Carthaginians avoided destroying temples (Selinous), but in others, after plundering them, they did not hesitate to set them on fire (Himera, Akragas). The effects of the Carthaginian invasion on the temples of the conquered cities still await systematic investigation, but the more far-reaching impact on temple architecture was the military and political instability, depopulation,

and economic depression prompted on the island by this traumatic event. In monumental architecture, the interest in fortifications overshadowed temple architecture, and one has to wait until the second half of the fourth century, thanks to the revival in the age of Timoleon (344–337 BCE), for the construction of new houses of the gods. By this time, as best revealed by the Temple of Asklepios at Akragas (10.7 × 21.7 m) (De Miro 2003) and Temple B at Selinous (4.47 × 8.58 m) (Marconi 2008), buildings were understated in their size and articulation, in comparison with their predecessors of the Archaic and Classical periods, if one only considers their distyle in antis or prostyle arrangements.

The temples of the Classical period were still an important source of inspiration, as seen in the two engaged half-columns on the back and the interior staircases of the Asklepieion. Nonetheless, the designers of this generation of new temples were interested in innovation, as best indicated by the addition of a podium to Temple B. The reduced investment in new buildings is in part explained by the number of temples already populating many of the sites, which were more than sufficient for the now smaller communities. These buildings must have also required a fair amount of maintenance, and significant interventions are documented in some cases, such as Temple I at Akragas. An exception to this trend towards understatement in temple architecture may be found in Syracuse under Hieron II, who built an Olympieion in the agora, which was admired in some ancient sources (Campagna 2004; Lehmler 2005). The construction of a new temple at Taormina, the only temple on the island of the late Classical and Hellenistic periods surrounded by a colonnade, may provide further testimony of this interest in more monumental forms at the time of Hieron II (Correa Morales 2000: 209–210).

South Italy presents a situation similar to Sicily during this period. Some sanctuaries, such as those of Hera Lacinia and Hera at the Foce del Sele, saw new constructions, including *katagogia*, *hestiatoria*, or stoas. New temples, however, were rare. Leaving aside structures whose dating to this period remains controversial (e.g., at Heraclea and Canosa), particularly notable was the replacement (dating to the early third century) of the early Archaic temple with a stone building within the Sanctuary of Apollo Alaios near Croton (Mertens 1993). The plan of this new structure closely followed that of its predecessor, including the central colonnade, dividing the cella into two aisles. This must have reinforced the sense of antiquity of the cult and the continuity of ritual practice.

This last instance speaks to the significance of the monumental temples of the Archaic and Classical period among the western Greeks, and their role in shaping not only the built environment of sanctuaries but also the experience of the sacred. This made temples into more than simple symbols of wealth and power; instead, they were critical factors of the cultural identity of the communities responsible for their construction.

FURTHER READING

For western Greek architecture in general, the books by Mertens (2006) and Lippolis, Livadiotti, and Rocco (2007) are very useful. See also the studies of individual buildings listed below in the references. For architectural sculpture, see Danner 1997, Ridgway 1999 and Marconi 1994 and 2007; on roof decoration, Mertens-Horn 1988, Winter 1993. For study of social and political considerations that shaped the placement of sanctuaries with the territories of the cities, see the essays in Alcock and Osborne 1994, de Polignac 1995, Malkin 1996, and the essays in Hellström and Alroth 1996.

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