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**Goddesses of Akragas: a study of terracotta votive figurines from Sicily**  
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## Chapter I

# Akragantine figurines and their context

### I.1 Introduction

Akragas<sup>1</sup> in Sicily lies at the crossroads between different worlds, both culturally and geographically. Attracted by its fertile soil and strategic location close to the sea, successive groups of people have settled at Akragas over the centuries, shaping the distinctive material culture of the area.

In the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE, numerous groups of people began to settle at Akragas next to its eponymous river. The Akragas river crosses the west side of the settlement and flows into the sea to the south. According to Thucydides, although the new polis established by the various settlers formed a political entity, it still lacked a shared identity. The mixture of peoples with diverging cultural identities had yet to be unified. The city, therefore, started to bridge differences by enhancing collective participation, and a new local identity was formed through social interaction, regulated by religious narratives. Whether this was an intentional process remains, however, a question.

The sharing of images in cultic expressions, involving recognisable forms, helped build social unity among people of different genders, social and cultural backgrounds. Integration and communication among people of different origins could be accomplished by the application of certain shapes and forms in the visual languages. The context in which they were used, most probably temples, makes clear that community-building was an important aspect of religion. Although we have no written records of religious narratives from Archaic Akragas, we are able to draw on evidence provided by the extensive remains of its material culture.

In order to better understand the social aspects of society at ancient Akragas, we need to examine its material culture. The material reflection of Akragantine religion is expressed on a personal level by dedications. On the basis of the hypothesis that these dedicated objects provide information on the considerations of their makers and users, this thesis provides an in depth analysis of their iconography and the technology used to create them. The choices made on specific details about the appearance of the figurines or the manner of their production give us an insight into the social structures of the society in which they were created and used. The implications of such choices are interpreted in order to reconstruct the possible geographical origin of the use of votives and their iconography by the inhabitants of Akragas, the organisation of their economy, and their religious customs.

Dedications of terracotta figurines have been found in large quantities at Akragas in sanctuaries and in fewer numbers in graves. The (approximately two hundred) figurines appear to have been produced over the course of about one hundred years, starting in the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE. The form and development of these statuettes provide us with information both on why they were created to look as they did

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1 Later the city was named Agrigentum, Girgenti and presently Agrigento, though the cities were not in precisely the same locations.

and also on the techniques employed in their production. This thesis, therefore, provides an in-depth analysis of both the iconography and the technology employed in the production of the terracotta dedicatory figurines of Akragas. The choice of Akragas for this study is not only because of its leading role among Sicilian city-states but also because of the survival of large numbers of figurines. Even when the context of these figurines is not precisely known, they can still help us to shed light on the form and production of votive material and, indirectly, on their meaning and function in society.

## I.2 State of research

### *I.2.a Identifying the figurine and the dedicants*

The first question about these figurines has always been its identity. Who is the figure depicted and what is its name? Traditionally the first reaction has been to turn to ancient texts. The result is frequently a somewhat simplistic attempt to identify the figurine or people mentioned in the literary sources using the cultural and religious background as a context. Such attempts ignore or deny the complexity of the archaeological material found on Sicily and overestimate the value of the ancient sources in providing objective, historical information.

The first section below addresses the work of archaeologists up to about 1960 in chronological order. Thereafter, more recent archaeological theory is discussed thematically rather than chronologically. This reflects the change in research methods: from a focus on textual sources to material-based investigation.

### *I.2.b Proving literature right by the archaeological material*

Christian S. Blinkenberg, a Danish archaeologist, excavated at Lindos, Rhodes and found in 1904 the Lindian Chronicle.<sup>2</sup> This inscribed stele contains a list of dedications by different persons and peoples and is dated to the first century BCE. As some objects were lost in the fire at the temple centuries earlier, they are partly reconstructed in the text. With its various mythological individuals as well as other references to Homeric descriptions, the account refers to a wide range of persons over a vast period of time. The text was read by Blinkenberg as a historical account of the religious ties of the Athena cult between Lindos and Gelas. His theory implies that all female terracottas are depictions of Athena, the goddess venerated at Lindos. Her cult would have been brought by the colonists from Lindos to Gelas and from there transferred to Akragas. Therefore,

2 He published the text in 1912 in *La Chronique du temple Lindien*, *Bulletin de de l'Académie royale des sciences et des lettres de Danemark*, p.317 – 467. A recent translation and comments have been published by Carolyn Higbie in 2003.

the adjective 'Lindia' is added to her name and the figurines are now known as 'Athena Lindia.'

This interpretation shows that Blinkenberg was facing a well-known problem in classical archaeology: the dichotomy between literary and material sources. For a long time, it was an accepted method to try to fit together texts and materials and to refer to literary sources as proof of historical reality, even when this meant that archaeological material was selected and interpreted according to that principle. Blinkenberg's theory was convincing for so long because it combined ancient literature with archaeological material. His theory was attractive and gained popularity, even in recent archaeological literature.<sup>3</sup> However, the role of archaeology is not to prove literary sources right, and while it sometimes does, there are often many inconsistencies, as there are also in this case.

Blinkenberg selected the archaeological material, looking only at statuettes from Gelas and Akragas, in order to support his argument for a Rhodian origin, while ignoring numerous similar figurines found at other locations in Sicily, dating from the same period.<sup>4</sup> Selected elements of material culture were used as a touchstone for classical literature in order to support his aim. Despite counter-arguments, many willingly accepted his thesis as it helped solve a question in the archaeology of colonisation: the relationship between the metropolis and the newly found polis.

### *I.2.b.i Cult transfer and a prototype reconstruction*

Blinkenberg's theory not only corroborated the account of the ancient authors on the origin of the migrants but stated also the continuation of religious practices, the transfer of cult. The state of dependency on the metropolis is shaped through religious practices and the metropolis would have claimed a contribution from the colonies.<sup>5</sup>

In the following paragraphs, his theory will be held up to the light. A related question is whether the implementation of new cultic features took place in specific locations that were already meaningful in a religious sense to the local people. Such sacred locations may have been marked in the landscape, such as springs, caves and hills. Plato wrote in his *Laws* that respect should be paid to earlier sacred sites in the new settlements, that the old gods would be continued to be venerated and that a temple would be erected for the local

3 Agreeing with Blinkenberg: Greco 2002, p.112 'Athena, although she was not called Lindia (...)'; De Miro 2000, p.101ff.; Canciani 1984, p.35f.; Orlandini 1968, p.25-8; Demargne 1984, p. 959f. nos.22-3; Byvanck-Quarles van Ufford 1940, p.54f. The information in the Archaeological Museum of Agrigento names Blinkenberg as well and suggests his interpretation.

4 Dewailly 1992, p.134ff.

5 See Shepherd 2000, p.59 on this subject regarding Brea and later Corinthian colonies.

patron.<sup>6</sup> The absence of earlier material of a specifically local character leaves the question unanswered archaeologically. And while the unplanned extra-urban sanctuaries<sup>7</sup> are an argument in favour, according to Malkin, it is generally not taken as being proven.<sup>8</sup> In addition, the findspots of several figurines are unknown and might have been scattered over an area or found in deposits in a single place. The majority of figurines come from cultic contexts and less frequently from burial contexts.

Another important aspect in the study of the figurines is the reconstruction of a specific prototype. The word ‘prototype’ means the object or objects that served as example for the patris. Thus, the figurines could be direct representations of another object, or stand on their own, inspired by, for example, a larger sculpture. When Blinkenberg carried out research at Lindos, his argumentation lacked evidence of the old *agalma*, the cult statue of Athena Lindia. The original statue is thought to have been destroyed by a fire in 690 BCE.<sup>9</sup> He uses three sources of information to reconstruct the statue: depictions of Athena from the same period; other, mostly later, Athena sanctuaries; and known characteristics from literature, even second or third hand. In that way, by comparing images,<sup>10</sup> he reconstructed Athena Lindia, based on the assumption that the dedications were small versions of the cult statue. It is this method that led him to Sicily, where he perceived the Archaic-styled figurines as a sort of derivative of the image from Lindos. The Lindian Chronicle is, besides Thucydides, another literary key in his argumentation: both Gelas and Akragas are mentioned in this text with a dedication to Athena Lindia. It would prove the continuation of the veneration of the same goddess, Athena Lindia, after colonists went from Rhodes to Sicily. In 1917 Blinkenberg writes ‘L’image d’Athana Lindia’ in which he argues for similarity in the iconography between these images and the lost *agalma* from Lindos.<sup>11</sup>

The idea that the specific image of the terracotta figurines was inspired by a prototype is shared by several researchers.<sup>12</sup> They are convinced that the typical characteristics must have been features of the cult image as well. Jung writes that he is not sure that the cult image of the 8<sup>th</sup> -7<sup>th</sup> century BCE had a straight dress and no arms,

but it is likely that the statue kept some traditions. It could be that the real-life dressing of the statue is reflected in the image of the terracotta figurine. The sitting position, however, he sees as not necessarily characteristics of the cult statue, because there are also standing figurines. Ritual dressing of a standing image would have been easier.<sup>13</sup> The discussion of the prototype for the coroplasts is in the first place one about whether the statue was standing or sitting. Blinkenberg argued for a seated pose even though the Lindian Chronicle had no mention of it. Jung and Zuntz state that the prototype must have been a standing figure.<sup>14</sup> Zuntz makes a distinction in her interpretation of the identity of the goddess in connection with the position: Demeter would be perhaps depicted seated and Persephone standing.<sup>15</sup> He sees a difference in facial expression as well: Demeter has a Ionian-styled, round and friendly face, which fits, therefore, Demeter’s character, while Persephone has “that narrow and severe face which characterizes the Goddess of Death.” Zuntz personal idea of a mother goddess and a chthonic one has perhaps made him ascribe a certain character to them. He admits that he has no antecedents for the identification by the facial expression of Persephone, nor does he give examples to show the differences between the faces. The heads were probably so often interchanged, because of the rather fast weathering of the expression in new generations of moulds. This repetitive use shows that there was no clear distinction between the two sorts of faces.

### *I.2.c Athena Lindia? Rhodian and Sicilian figurines compared*

The Lindian Chronicle lists the dedications for Athena Lindia from different cities and individuals in chronological order.<sup>16</sup> In two parts it describes the cult statue itself and its adornment. It mentions a dedication of eight shields and a golden diadem, στεφάνη, for the cult image.<sup>17</sup> Another diadem<sup>18</sup> is mentioned together with necklaces,

6 Plat. Laws 848d.

7 In my opinion they could be planned well outside the city, because there were locations with special features.

8 Malkin 1987, p.144-63.

9 Higbie 2003, p.7 writes that the ‘location of the Archaic statue base may still be possible to see.’

10 The goddess was also identified as Athena Polias, which opens the way to more comparisons. Higbie 2003, p.13: Just only late in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE.

11 Kallimachos, fragm. 100, 4 (ed. Pfeiffer) was read by Blinkenberg 1917, p.8ff. for the identification of the pillar-shaped statuettes as Athana Lindia.

12 Albertocchi 2004, p.158.

13 Jung 1982, p.51.

14 Zuntz 1971, 138 n. 2. He writes that a standing wooden prototype was the original form of the Sicilian figurines. Zuntz 1971, 129. Jung 1982, 51-2 is convinced of a standing prototype because it would be easier to dress in clothes in a ritual and the various sitting/standing positions.

15 Jung criticizes the argumentation and gives examples of different exceptions. Jung 1982, p.244 n. 267.

16 The text should be seen in the light of “Greeks retrojecting later patterns into the past” Higbie 2003, p.227. It is glorifying the past and summing up the magnificence of the island inhabitants by also bringing up mythological persons, who aren’t even related to Rhodes directly. For a more detailed comment on the historicity of the Lindian Chronicle by Shepherd 2000, see below.

17 Part XXII. Dedicated by “those making an expedition with Kleoboulos against Lycia”, transl. by Higbie 2003, p.31. Kleoboulos was the tyrant of Lindos in the early 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE.

18 According to Blinkenberg this is the same object, but from two different traditions. Blinkenberg 1917, p.18.

ἄρμος, among other adornments.<sup>19</sup> The old cult image was not dressed up with the aegis and helmet or other war equipment.<sup>20</sup> The Sicilian terracotta statuettes were used by Blinkenberg to reconstruct the cult image of Athena Lindia.<sup>21</sup> The Lindian Chronicle reports that the Akragantines dedicated a *palladion* of Athena with ivory endings for their victory on Minoa.<sup>22</sup> Athena was given the epithet 'Patrooia', ancestral, by the Geloans.<sup>23</sup> The Sicilian terracottas would be smaller versions of the Athena Patrooia and therefore the Athena Lindia. He compares them mainly to characteristics mentioned in the Lindian Chronicle.<sup>24</sup> Especially the necklaces mentioned in the text remind him of the Sicilian figurines, which wear different objects on their chests.<sup>25</sup> Blinkenberg identifies the *stephane* as a high crown and equates it in this way with the typical headgear of the Sicilian terracottas, the polos.<sup>26</sup> However, he admits that there is not a single similar looking statuette from Rhodes that could argue in favour of this statement. From the Acropolis at Lindos, there are terracottas figurines of Athena from the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, with the aegis, helmet and gorgoneion, as well as a shield with a gorgoneion.<sup>27</sup> An armless 31cm high female figurine with two chains on her chest with a gorgoneion on the upper one, flanked by discs and, on the second, five glandiform pendants, is presented as the key. The figurine is much older than the Lindian ones and besides the gorgoneion iconographically incomparable.<sup>28</sup> The gorgoneion would be very surprising,

as no other is known from this period,<sup>29</sup> while all its other features make it a typical Akragantine figurine. The plain pectoral disc in a triple form on one cord is common. In another aspect, the figurines are very different: many Sicilian figurines are seated, while the Rhodian statuettes stand.<sup>30</sup> Because of the gorgoneion and the match with the description in the Lindian Chronicle, Blinkenberg identifies all Geloan and Akragantine female figurines as the main goddess of the colonies: Athena Lindia.<sup>31</sup> The arguments and reasoning for this identification are simply too weak. Much of the argumentation is based on the Lindian Chronicle, a text much later in date and clearly pursuing a different goal. However, he also sees the extensive pectorals with differently shaped pendants as a reflection of the real-life jewellery of the Lindian women, influenced by oriental, Cypriot and Phoenician styles.<sup>32</sup> The archaeological material discussed in chapter 2 supports this element of his theory.<sup>33</sup>

#### *1.2.d Other views on identification and origin*

Zuntz interprets the figurines as Demeter and Persephone, again with reference to the literary sources. 'Telines' he calls them, for their origin, which he finds in Herodotus, who states that Deinomenes, one of Gelas' founders had brought the first ancient images from the island of Telos. A new version would have been designed for the new sanctuary in Gelas, keeping the geometrically shaped bodies, but with Ionian faces. The cult of the chthonic deities would have become a public one after the goddesses saved the city and were linked to the ruling dynasty.<sup>34</sup> Hinz also sees a relation with the political situation and a role for the Deinomenids in spreading the cult of Demeter and Kore from Syrakousai and Gelas to its colony of Akragas and other parts of the Greek towns. Its introduction would have taken place in the 7<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE, while eventually they were turned into a pan-Sicilian symbol.<sup>35</sup> Hinz also states that there is no clear material of another cult previous to this one. Western Greek material dominates the archaeological records, even though there

19 Part XXXIV. Again it is from the spoils of a war, this time against Crete. This event is dated to the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE. Higbie 2003, p.128.

20 Blinkenberg 1917, p.18.

21 Blinkenberg 1917, p.13. Though he is the first to research the theory extensively, comparing Sicilian objects, he was not the first who thought the Athena Lindia cult had been spread to Gela by the colonisation and from there further to Akragas and Kamarina. Van Gelder 1900, p.316. This was however not based on the Lindian Chronicle or on the design of the Sicilian terracottas but on ancient authors. Polyb. 9.27.7; Diod. 13.90.20. In the same way Zeus Atabyrios was thought to have been brought by the colonists, directly from Rhodes. Van Gelder 1900, p.300; Polyb. 9.27.7.

22 From the Lindian Chronicle XXX it appears as if Akragas was a direct colony of Rhodes. According to Polybius 9.27-8 this was the case. Higbie 2003, p.119 supposes Akragas was founded by a Rhodian and Geloan together.

23 Part XXV. This title is not mentioned somewhere else, nor in Gela, nor in Rhodes Higbie 2003, p.106; Though Athena was venerated in Gela. Blinkenberg 1917, p.32 describes a pithos dedicated to Athena.

24 Blinkenberg 1917, p.32.

25 Blinkenberg 1917, 20. Blinkenberg 1917, p.35 suggests that the xoanon of Athena was decorated in this way.

26 The stephane does not necessarily need to be headgear, but could refer to a wreath, a common dedication.

27 Blinkenberg 1917, p.21ff.

28 Unfortunately this object from Akragas is lost and known only from a drawing and description. Blinkenberg's source is Kekulé

von Stradonitz 1884, p.17, fig. 22. Then the object was still part of a private collection. The gorgoneion would be very surprising as no other as such is known, while all other features of its appearance make it a typical Akragantine figurine. A triple disc pectoral is common, but with plain discs..

29 There is only one object from Akragas known to me with a similar face as a pendant: AG9107(250) is probably from the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE and marked by an Egyptian styled face with a small sun-disc flanked by snakes. Gorgoneia are, on the other hand, common in Sicily as pedimental decorations; they do not refer specifically to Athena, but are thought to be apotropaic.

30 Blinkenberg 1917, p.16f.

31 Blinkenberg 1917, p.31.

32 Blinkenberg 1917, p.32f.

33 See Section II.6.g-i.

34 Zuntz 1971, p.136-8.

35 Hinz 1998, p.21-5.

is proof of collective part celebration of the cult.<sup>36</sup> But she admits also that certain aspects or features of the local religious customs might have influenced the preference for a certain deity.<sup>37</sup>

Depending on her attributes and appearance, the figurines could be modified to depict a specific goddess. Martine Dewailly also accepts this thesis.<sup>38</sup> The interpretation of similar looking objects depends therefore also very much on the context<sup>39</sup>, as Marina Albertocchi made clear in her study of the Sicilian figurines.<sup>40</sup> The typical features of the figurines, archaeological arguments, and the question of identity are further discussed in chapter two.

### *1.2.e Oikist cult and cultural identity formation*

The starting date for the foundation of the colonies by the Greeks is 734 BCE, based on calculations from references to historical events by Thucydides.<sup>41</sup> It is probable that the island was already known and that trading posts had already been established. Early material, predating the official foundation, has been found at Gelas and Syracuse, among other cities, proving extensive contacts and probably settlement as early as the Iron Age.<sup>42</sup> Also, contacts with Bronze Age Greece and Phoenicians have been attested archaeologically. It is clear that when the newcomers arrived, this time with a different intention or in larger numbers, they did not find empty coasts. Because they claimed land for their colonies, their arrival caused the local inhabitants either to join them or to move further inland.

Seeking security and a stronger position on the trade routes, they formed larger settlements out of the smaller dispersed groups.<sup>43</sup> This development might have incited cultural exchange and hybridisation. The process of influencing took place probably in rapid form with these social organisations and its outcome, though in itself a continuous process without clear begin or end, was a culture with newly defined values and expressions of its own. Similarly, the Greeks who probably arrived from very different places and dispersed groups also joined forces to form a new society. They would have understood each other through common language and cultural traits. Such events

are indeed described as conscious actions in Greek literature. A unity was constructed with the poleis-model. The multiplicity of culturally different people might have led to the idea that a certain common ground had to be established to form a unity within, in opposition to, or at least different from, the world of the 'other.' This evolution must have given a strong impulse to the institutions of the poleis.

One such example is the oikist cult, which strengthened the cohesion within the polis, distinguishing itself from others outside the polis, by means of the focus on a founder-hero. There are two opinions on the role of the oikist cult in the relations between the mother-city and the colony. The first is claimed by Dunbabin and states that the oikist cult proves the strong political ties between the metropolis and the colony since they would be a continuation of the bond between both.<sup>44</sup> Malkin's opinion, which seems more likely to me, is that the oikist cult was created after the foundation in order to have religious independence and self-identity, as part of the state's self-definition.<sup>45</sup> A religious base was thus created for polis-chauvinism.<sup>46</sup> This base was supported and constantly renewed by festivities at the agora, at the oikist's tomb. Not only the polis as state but also individuals could dedicate expressions of piety to the oikist. This could imply that the oikist cult eased co-habitation and sharing values resulted in a peaceful process of shaping a new identity.<sup>47</sup> Dougherty gives an alternative view, a personal story of the oikist, and by doing so seems to confirm the above-described theory of the settlers as people leaving their home for personal reasons, searching for a new place to simply survive. She suggests that the oikist could have been an outcast or even a criminal in his hometown and was purified by his hero-cult. Old religious customs are replaced by completely new ones, which is a way to self-identify.<sup>48</sup>

Cultural distinctions may also have counted in the choice of these mythological or real leaders. Malkin claims that the strong dichotomy between Greek and others is an unnatural one, imposed by later developments of Hellenisation and projected wrongly onto an earlier period.<sup>49</sup> In chapter 2 and 3, this aspect of cultural identity and the expression of a harmonious society appears from the archaeological material connected with cultic expression. The politically Greek polis in Sicily, such as Akragas, certainly had a population comprised of mixed

36 Hinz 1998, p.20.

37 Hinz 1998, p.19-21.

38 Dewailly 1992, p.41. She studied the Selinuntine figurines extensively.

39 Also Hinz agrees, specifically for female deities. Hinz 1998, p.34.

40 Albertocchi 2004, p.160f. The title 'Athana Lindia' of this overview refers rather to the way these figurines are referred to, not to an interpretation as Athena.

41 The chronology and foundation dates are believed to be fairly accurate. Nijboer 2006, p.256-8. For a more extensive description of Thucydides' account, see Section I.6.b.

42 Hodos points to the confusion on the use of the term 'Iron Age'. Here the period directly preceding the Phoenician and Greek foundations are meant, roughly from the mid ninth century BCE onwards.

43 Leighton 1999, p.238-9.

44 Dunbabin 1948, p.11.

45 Malkin 1987, p.189, 201-3; Shepherd 2000, p.57.

46 Malkin 1987, p.189. The oikist cult might also have been a strong political instrument used by the aristocracy of a city, like the Deinomenidai in Gela, who in this way sanctioned their power. Malkin 1987, p.250ff. and 259, n. 112.

47 Leschhorn 1984, p.45.

48 An example from South Italy of her theory is the veneration of Sirens as goddesses. Taylor 2014.

49 Malkin 2004.

cultural identities. While finding factual information is hard, the narratives of the Greeks give an insight into how Greeks conceptualized colonisation.<sup>50</sup>

The dates mentioned by Thucydides mark the start of the polis, the political entity of the city. There must have been a process of acculturation, integration, settling down, starting a life, trade and institutions, that would have taken several generations. It is even questionable whether the aim from the beginning was to start 'Greek' poleis. The number of immigrants would have been quite high and, though they would have come from different places, they would probably have gradually assumed a shared cultural identity, integrating with other peoples. The precise date of foundation or of the first settlers' arrival is not now possible to discern. There are also no contemporary inscriptions stating when exactly a certain event marked the creation of political institutions. Yet the development in technical and iconographical aspects of terracotta figurines gives a fine indication of a relative date for the process of cultural integration.

Snodgrass believes that the new settlements were strongly independent from early on, which only increased over the years and generations to follow. The groups of colonists would have had no other relationship with their birthplace in terms of power and control. The votives by some of these settlements in Olympia, for example, should not be seen as a fulfilment of a tribute to the religious ties with the homeland but were meant to show the wealth and the prosperity of the settlement.<sup>51</sup> The word 'colony' implies a provincial dependence, which does not do justice to the actual character of their relationship. Relations seem to have been based rather on political and *xenia* ties or newly formed bonds than by ethnic or cultural relations with their ancestors. Greekness is a concept introduced after the Archaic Period, by authors writing with the agenda of including the Sicilian settlements into a large political structure and profiting also in the east from Sicily's great wealth.

### *1.2.f Intermarriage and gender*

The question is if intermarriage in the earlier phases of settlement on Sicily caused stronger acculturation, while later new immigrants from Greece, like the supposed group from Rhodes that co-founded Akragas, strengthened numerically ascendancy of the home-town, influencing social customs, such as burial practices. The 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE fortification of native settlements indicates a deterioration of relations.<sup>52</sup> The cosmopolitanism of the citizens, combined with their different roots, led them to create their own identity markers and by doing so united them as citizens

50 Dougherty 1993, p.32.

51 Snodgrass 1994, p.9.

52 Leighton 1999, p.240.

of the same town, rather than as individuals with different socio-cultural origins.

Bintliff argues in the case of Thessalian Neolithic villages, on the basis of chaos-complexity theory, that the underlying reason for colonisation was social pressure. The fission of villages was desirable because the face-to-face level of 150-200 people was passed.<sup>53</sup> An important aspect of the network of villages that came into existence in this way is the exchange of marriage partners. This means of creating social cohesion is brought up by Perlès when she states that two features eased friction: land and marriages.<sup>54</sup> Both social features are materialised in ceramics. Communal dining served social cohesion and pottery was made in the first place for this reason. The second argument consists of small terracottas, mostly female figurines, which showcase the role of women in reproduction, in the sense of fertility as well as the exchange between villages. The latter set the relations between the communities of the region. It is argued for that on Sicily intermarriage between settlers and locals was not uncommon.<sup>55</sup> Thucydides mentions a dispute on land and marriage rights between Selinous and Segesta, which shows that in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE this played still a very important role in society, as it was, next to land, a reason to start a war.<sup>56</sup>

The role that intermarriage played in social cohesion among the inhabitants could be related to the myth of Persephone. Only in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE, the myth was further defined by several authors with additional details such as its location.<sup>57</sup> The narrative of this abduction/wedding must have been created based on certain customs. Likewise, the rape of Persephone seems to have been presented as a sort of sanctioning of intermarriage.<sup>58</sup>

Dougherty claims that in various literature in antiquity agricultural imagery is used to describe marriage as well as colonisation. Marriage would, for example, be compared with picking flowers or fruit. Persephone is picking flowers with her friends when she is abducted by Hades, symbolising that she herself is the flower picked by Hades. The partners in marriage, when seeing each other for the first time, would represent the confrontation with local people. Also, violence would be legitimised, as it served as a model for acculturation and integration, in order to make the 'land bear fruit'. Thus she explains that in several foundation stories, both colonial or not, marriage/abduction and rape are a recurrent motif. This

53 Bintliff 2007.

54 Perlès 2007, p.293.

55 Graham 2001, p.328.

56 Thuc. 6.6.2; Hall 2004, p.41.

57 Hinz 1998, p.27.

58 One statuette of a satyr abducting the 'figurine'-goddess indicates that such a narrative of kidnapping women existed prior to the precise story of Persephone. See no. 198 in the Catalogue.

depends highly on the association of women with land and agriculture as the symbiosis of the male part with nature and earth being female. From such a perspective, the veneration of specifically female deities on the agriculturally explored island of Sicily could be explained, though in general terms. It matches the popular veneration of Demeter and Persephone in the Classical Period, whose story is so strongly connected with agriculture and the seasons but also with the transition from girl to woman and from life to death.

### I.3 Aims and research questions

This research sets out to understand the terracotta figurine production in Akragas. Though Akragas is smaller than Selinous, this thesis aims to provide a similar overview of the material as Dewailly did for the figurines from Selinous.<sup>59</sup> As the research discussed above shows, the identification of the figurine has yet to be agreed upon. The question of her identity might depend on literary sources, but the study of her appearance could well reveal details on her attributes and function. Research into production techniques adds to this, as it helps us to understand the process of mass production and standardisation. One of the possibilities is thus that ‘the devil lies in the detail,’ that is that the identity might be defined by her appearance. Her identity might lie in her features, and is expressed through the specific outfit she is wearing in addition to the context of time and place. Related to this question is the modelling of figurines after a certain example. Was there a cult statue or does the appearance of the figurines reflect dress and adornment used in real life? Does the representation depict a human or a deity? Does standing or sitting, or wearing particular headgear specify her identity? Are they depicted as female and feminine?

If we turn away from the literature as the primary source of information, we must instead analyse the figurines themselves: how do they look precisely and how did this appearance come into being? With which other figurines and statuary can they be compared? In this way, a specific local Akragantine definition of the representation of the female figurine from this period (roughly the Archaic Period) can be defined. Albertocchi’s work offers a good overview of the dispersal of the terracotta category.<sup>60</sup> While her work frames the wider, mainly Sicilian, context, this thesis concentrates on the local character of the figurines and therefore does not exclude figurines without the pectoral pendants, but places them in the development and definition of typical characteristics.

The Catalogue places the figurines into distinct groups and describes their similarities with other terracottas, from Akragas and elsewhere. From this structuring, several

distinctive characteristics appear that help to answer the question of which characteristics can be seen to be local and which objects (and characteristics) are imported. These features help us to identify objects in several European museums, of which the context is no longer known, as being Sicilian or even specifically from Akragas.

By identifying the local features of the figurines, we can gain insight into the conscious decisions of the local coroplasts. We can then not only identify specific deviations from mould series and additional alterations by hand but also speculate on what such alterations imply. It is necessary to understand precisely how these figurines were created, as their material shape is the key to understanding their use and cultic value. Therefore, starting right at the beginning with the production process, practical questions need to be asked. Which material would have acted as the model, or *patrix*, for the first terracotta figurines in Akragas? How were the first moulds applied and how did the technique develop into a one of such scale and precision? The material and technical perspective is addressed in the third chapter. Where did the Akragantines find the clay? How was moulding applied? The tools and material necessary are reviewed and the quality of new generations in a mould series are scrutinised. In addition, the coroplastic work is analysed, including the investment of time, production costs, and the balance between quantity and quality. How could such large-scale production take place and what economic value did coroplastics have? Another practical question is their function and physical properties as a dedication: did they stand upright or were they hung up to be visible to passers-by? What would have been an ideal size to be carried from the workshop to the place of dedication? Where they positioned in groups or alone?

Indirectly in the same chapter, one of the methods for understanding the production technique, an archaeological experiment, is also tested in order to add to our understanding of the method of production and its wider social and economic implications.

This thesis aims not only to understand precisely what is being made (Chapter 2 and Catalogue) and how the production techniques evolved (Chapter 3) but also why the figurines were produced. It aims to reveal the political, social and religious context in which these figurines were made (Chapter 1) and, though much of that context is not easy to perceive, to gain an insight into the functioning of the society that produced and used them. By doing so, the appearance of the figurines and the techniques used to create them are placed in the wider context of Sicilian figurine production. The exchange of ideas on specific forms or tools and moulds defines Akragas in the overall development of Sicilian terracotta figurines. Akragas’ local characteristics are compared to regional and Mediterranean-wide developments in order to find

59 Dewailly 1992.

60 Albertocchi 2004.

the reasons for local variations and differences from other production centres.

The political and religious structures, as far as they are known from ancient literature, are used to interpret the relationship between the polis-wide institutions and personal dedications. One of the main questions is, in this regard, whether the political institutions would have obliged the people to take part in events strengthening community building and overcoming different identities (Chapter 1 and 2). This indirect question of identity, closely relates to the-up to-now most common idea of an imported cult and a Greek culturally dominated society, after their colonisation of several poleis. This research would like to pay specific attention to the cultural traits of other groups that might have been part of the same society.

By looking at the choices made in the rendering of the figurines, religious ideas can be inferred. The intricate designs reveal a society in which several traditions merged and were absorbed into a collective object of veneration. Questions about the figurines, therefore, range from practical issues to more complex issues concerning her identity, gender and cultic role. Through comparisons with real-life objects, terracotta dedications or iconography elsewhere questions about the identity of the coroplasts and the dedicants can be answered (Chapter 2). Part of this inquiry is the analysis of the local development of the figurines and the implications of the identified changes over time.

Taken together, this thesis aims to interpret the statuettes' use and meaning within the context of a multicultural society.

#### **I.4 Method and archaeological theory**

A parallel to the method of inferring religious beliefs from their material expression, though with a different scope, can be found in Bakhuizen's horizon concept: by reviewing myths he attempts to see how the early Greeks may have experienced the unknown land of Sicily. He looks for the traces of their views as preserved in myths, topography, and onomastics.<sup>61</sup> 'Horizon' indicates here the line separating us from an unknown world. In the perception of Greek mythology, these far lands were both a place of danger as well as a place of agricultural plenty. The difference between the 'here' and 'there' was the unfamiliarity with the world beyond the horizon.<sup>62</sup> These mythological stories and rituals are known to us through non-contemporary literature and material culture.

A second method applied in this thesis attempts to reconstruct thoughts and ideas by looking at objects. This methodology might be originally based on Christopher

Hawkes' 'Ladder of inference' theory, which is still found in recent literature on archaeological theory but with a remark on the supposed contrast to 'hard' and 'soft' information. Artefacts, the material objects themselves, give in a more direct way information on their physical appearance and their production, while the consequent rungs of the ladder, social-economical aspects and religious or political thoughts, are much harder inferences to make.<sup>63</sup> The direct information of the first rung of the ladder is gained by scrutinising research on the figurines, which indirectly reveals information on the people who made and used them. Production and techniques would be less individual from a technical perspective, as the figurines are mould-made. To what extent this applies to the Akragantine terracotta figurines, which, on the one hand, were individual dedications and, on the other, part of a collective act of votive giving, will be addressed as well. Though the implications of such material analysis remain hypothetical, the physical level of research might provide more direct, but also not always unequivocal information. The dichotomy between material and meaning is, however, a theoretical one. While anchored in material, information can be still conveyed through the use of symbols and shapes. Material expression involves several sorts of information, which are in itself cultural. This study does not deny that other sorts of information, next to the physical can be gained. On the contrary, symbols function as referent and meaning, as explained well by Robb's article 'The Archaeology of Symbols'. The symbols function as lego bricks, receiving meaning in their combination and the interaction.<sup>64</sup> Aspects of regional and local but as well personal aspects of figurine use return in current conceptual frameworks for studying prehistoric figurines. Many themes of analysis could be applied to the figurines from later periods as well. These approaches uncover identity, contacts and reciprocal communication. The Akragantine figurines offer an insight in local, Sicilian, contacts, in the wider Mediterranean through stylistic and material research. The personal decisions that shaped these figurines should not be overlooked. The Akragantine figurines are therefore treated here also in their application as personal expressions, votives, formed by individual choices.

The aim is to review the inhabitants' perception and conceptualisation of movement, exchange and integration. The newly formed society addressed new circumstances, from landscapes to people from diverse cultures, by means of religion. They expressed their integration into a new land and society through cultic practices. The cultic material is not just an expression of rituals, beliefs in the afterlife, and transformation, but it is also a means

61 Bakhuizen 1988.

62 The story of Odysseus' encounter with the cyclopes and their stacks of milk and cheese is exemplary. See Section I.6.

63 Hawkes 1954, p.155-168.

64 Belcher and Croucher 2016, p.43-8; Nijboer 1998, p.11; Robb 1998.

of materializing the non-physical world through the use of objects. The discussion of the materiality of objects is thus seen as directly entangled with social aspects. The physical process from collecting the raw materials to forming the objects and eventually handling the votives in its ascribed meta-physical facets, is therefore key in understanding meaning and use of these figurines. Their becoming as tactile objects gives them agency. By categorising the figurines, the conceptualisation of the body over time is related to its material form. The extent to which corporeality of these objects, their embodiment, is dictated by the material is therefore an important part of this research.

### **I.5 Research structure**

Different aspects of the Akragantine figurines are discussed and analysed in four chapters. The second part of this chapter presents an overview of the political and social context in which Akragas developed and a review of the literature upon which we depend for much of our information. Much of the (partially mythological) information on the foundation of Akragas comes to us through ancient literature. While nineteenth-century archaeological research tried to match the material culture with Greek and Roman literary sources, more recent scientific research has provided a counterbalance, as well as additional nuance and depth, to these sources. The literature is reviewed thematically, examining the socio-economic background of what is usually called ‘a colony’, the political structures and connections with the metropolis, the role that religion and mythology played in the formation of a polis, and how terracotta objects functioned as an expression of devotion, and how they conveyed a reflection of the intentions of the individual dedicant.

The second chapter examines the iconography of the figurines, and how their evolving appearance reflects the changing preferences for specific forms, which can often be related to the cultural origins of the coroplasts or dedicants. The choice of a specific form tells us something about the function and meaning of these objects, as well as their role in the dedication. In order to review the implications of the appearance of the figurines, this chapter provides a thematic analysis of four distinct aspects of the figurines: the shape of the body, the face, the dress, and the furniture. This detailed investigation indirectly reveals a view of several other aspects of social-economic life in Akragas, including welfare, and allusions to metallurgy. The discussion includes comparisons with terracottas from other Sicilian towns, as well as looking at iconographic influences from additional Greek, Etruscan, and Phoenician material. To provide more context on certain details of the figurines’ appearance, the chapter also discusses other archaeological finds from Akragas helping us to understand the customs of the inhabitants

of Akragas. Each of the four parts of the chapter includes a discussion of overarching questions, such as the representation of real-life dress and adornment. Special attention is paid to gender: Why do the majority of representations appear to be female, and how is their gender expressed? A second, related question concerns the specific identity of the person represented and her cult. The development of the iconographic characteristics of the Akragantine figurines is explored, along with interactions with the nearby cities of Selinous and Gelas. The implications of the identified similarities and differences provide a basis for the following chapter, which looks at the organisation and development of the local coroplastic production.

The third chapter explores the technical aspects of the production of terracotta figurines at Akragas. Looking at the practical elements of production not only provides us with important information on production techniques, tools and methods but it also assists with the iconographic analysis of the figurines by enabling us to assess the meaning of specific variations and alterations. The introduction of moulds had a marked impact on several aspects of the figurines’ appearance, and the use of moulds increased the options for serial production, significantly affecting the way in which objects were produced.

The technical aspects of the figurines were investigated both by carefully examining the figurines themselves, but also by using an archaeological experiment in which two moulds, created from two different figurines, were used to help reconstruct the different acts and processes required in the *chaîne d’opératoire* (operational sequence of production). The focus of this analysis was once again the local production of the objects at Akragas, although comparisons are made with Gelas and Selinous.

By analysing the raw material used to produce the figurines – clay – potential locations of production are identified. The material features of the clay found near Akragas were tested for plasticity, colour after firing, and fineness in order to identify which clays had been used for the local figurines and to assign the figurines to possible workshops. Practical questions regarding the find spots, tempering with other materials, additional hand-modelling, and reworking was also addressed by archaeological experiment.

The fourth chapter presents the results of these combined methods of inquiry. An overview is provided for the development of figurines in six distinct groups. The stylistically and technically connected groups are further categorised according to the presence of certain features: chair/throne, polos/veil, fibula shape, and pendant types. Together with the catalogue provided at the end, these results form a functional tool for interpreting the figurines in the context of daily life in the polis, and specifically their use as part of the cultic practice and religious observance.

The approximately two hundred figurines from Akragas are catalogued at the end of the thesis. Each figurine is described and ascribed a place in the coroplastic development identified in the preceding chapters, based on their place in the chronological, stylistic and technical order.

## I.6 Greek historiography on Sicily – some general remarks

The different aspects of the society in which the figurines appear, as we know it from authors in antiquity, is the subject of the second part of this introductory chapter. As sources of information, the literature is divided into two groups.<sup>65</sup> The first category is of mythological nature, providing information of ethnographic value. This part includes Homer in Section I.6.a and Pindar in the description of the religious setting in I.6.d, who mention Sicily and Akragas' rulers in their poetry. There is special attention for Sicily in mythology for it might have been a factor in the decision-making of the settlers. The second category is one of a literary historical nature, such as Thucydides and Herodotus, whose accounts will be discussed in the following Section I.6.b-d. The discussion moves from providing a more general idea of Sicily to the political context of Gelas and Akragas to more specific questions on the social and religious setting. The discussion begins with the general perception of the Greeks through their stories about Sicily as a place far away, where the sun rises.

### I.6.a Mythical past

Fitting well with Bakhuizen's<sup>66</sup> horizon concept is Homer's influence on the perception of Sicily by the Greeks. The island was inhabited by the Laestrygonians and Cyclopes. Thucydides<sup>67</sup> makes this reference to Od. 9-10.<sup>68</sup> He mentions these mythical figures, as they are known for their barbaric reception of Odysseus and his men. In doing so, he seems to clarify the distinction between a non-Hellenic past and the 'new order.' On the other hand, he does not refer to the culture of any of these people. Odysseus is only implicitly mentioned as it would have been obvious to his readers.<sup>69</sup> The whole island was probably well known for being the place of some of Odysseus' adventures. The land of the Cyclops as Odysseus comes across it, is described by Homer as very suitable for agriculture and keeping sheep. Yet its present

inhabitants do not exploit it fully. This vision on 'the other world' was in this case seen as *olbia*, prosperous, the land of the plenty, specifically in the agricultural domain, but with inhabitants to be feared.<sup>70</sup> Odysseus' adventure forms a close parallel to the experiences of the migrants, an association probably made by those from Thucydides' time as well.<sup>71</sup>

Another reason for Thucydides to refer to Odysseus might be to establish the idea of a preceding Greek presence. The latter being an argument for invasion and occupation of land. This argument is more political and used as well for the story of the refugees from the destroyed Troy. One explanation of this phenomenon is to see the historical accounts of the foundation as a reflection of the time in which they were written. The stories and traditions described come from an oral tradition. They are mentioned here with a clear actual intention of justifying colonisation. In this view, it is interesting to see to what extent the parallel stretches, not only regarding the situation on Sicily but also regarding the places of origin of the newcomers.

From Homer itself, it appears that Sicily was known as *Sikanie*, an older name.<sup>72</sup> A female servant is mentioned as being Sicilian.<sup>73</sup> It is remarkable that Sicily appears in association with slavery.<sup>74</sup> This comment refers to Sicily as a place where slaves were kept, probably in Homer's own time, the eighth or seventh century BCE. The Sicilian origin of slaves is probable as Linear B texts refer several times to slaves. The only archaeological connection, however, between these places in this time period is a Sicilian amber bead that was found in a tholos grave in Vayenas Pylos.<sup>75</sup>

### I.6.b Political setting

Our main sources of information on the political course of events leading to the settlements on Sicily are Greek literary sources. This colonisation is a process which is nowadays perceived in various ways but was described by the Greeks as *oikisis*. The resulting settlement is called *apoikia* which means literally: a faraway, *apo*, house/housing, *oikia*.<sup>76</sup> Greek authors in antiquity who

65 Antonaccio 2007, p.208-9. The third category consists of archaeological material.

66 See Section I.4.

67 Thucydides starts his description of the inhabitants of Sicily in Book 6.2 with this note.

68 And maybe to Hesiod as well, and to Euripides' play *Kyklops*. Pindar and Bacchylides do not situate them on Sicily. For an overview of possible references, see Hornblower 2008, p.264ff.

69 Thuc. 6.2.3.

70 Bakhuizen 1988, p.10f.

71 Dover notes that "as early as the Hesiodic poems we find indications that the peoples and places of Od. 9-10 were regarded as having existed in the central and western Mediterranean, and this was taken for granted by Thucydides' time" Dover 1965, p.5. There is some evidence that in the 5<sup>th</sup> century Odysseus' adventure was situated on Sicily in different literature. See Hornblower 1996, p.181 and 264ff.

72 Also spelled as: Sicania. Od. 24.307.

73 She assists Laertes, Odysseus' father in Od. 24.211, 366, 389.

74 When the suitors tell Telemachus to ship the guests to Sicily in Od. 20.383.

75 Leighton 1999, p.186.

76 Antonaccio 2007, p.204. 'Colony' derives from the Latin 'colonia' the verb 'colo': to cultivate land; but also to honour the gods, from which the word 'cult(us)' derives.

commented on these events and the thoughts of modern-day researchers will be examined in the light of present archaeological and historical research.

#### I.6.b.i The perception of ancient authors

Though the actual events preceded the written documentation by at least a hundred years, the ancient authors present an image of how the settlements of the migration waves were perceived and what they thought was important to mention. Although their information is mixed with their view on the course of history and its implications for their own time, it does not exclude them from being valuable sources. The earliest of the Greek authors on the colonisation of Sicily is Thucydides. His work from the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE is very important for the relative dating of the several Greek foundations and our information on the political circumstances on Sicily in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE. His account of the events in Book 6, Herodotus Book 7 of and some information on later changes in Diodorus Siculus' Book 13 are our main sources.

Their information is discussed here extensively because they are our earliest literary sources on colonisation, specifically Thucydides, as he took a specific interest in political development. Herodotus is of interest because he comments on the cult at Akragas. He had a good knowledge of the migration as well, information he acquired from the servants of Apollo at Delphi. Those who intended to emigrate would have first come for advice to Delphi.<sup>77</sup> For his information on Sicily, he would have also relied on the information within the network of *poleis*, when he resided in Thurii, on the South coast of mainland Italy.<sup>78</sup>

The cultural baggage of these authors is to be seen as the perspective from which they wrote. An example is a specific similarity in the description of the Persian expedition to Greece and the Athenian expedition to Sicily by Herodotus and Thucydides. The subject of identity must be read in this light. Herodotus notes that Athens is seeking allies with the agenda of domination over them. Thucydides presents Euphemus, an Athenian, warning for similar ambitions from the side of Syracuse.<sup>79</sup> This background of the Sicilian Expedition, echoing the events of the Persian War sheds light on Sicilian identity, as it was shaped by a common enemy. Reconstructing the sociology of the period before that one, the Archaic Period is reflected from events nearer to these authors. In a similar way, Diodorus Siculus, as late as the first century BCE, relies for some of his information on Timaeus, 345-250 BCE, maybe via Ephorus, and quotes him.<sup>80</sup> Diodorus gives in Book 13 an extensive account of

the political involvement of Athens and describes Akragas in detail, as well as the siege of the city by the Carthaginians. Though these political developments are later than our period of interest, the description of the city itself and its environment is relevant.

#### I.6.b.ii Sicily in the account of Thucydides

Thucydides, who lived from 460-400 BCE<sup>81</sup>, wrote an extensive account and is seen as a relatively reliable.<sup>82</sup> When archaeological evidence is scanty or missing it is therefore his account that is generally believed to be true.<sup>83</sup> Another reason his account is perceived to be accurate is because of his source, Antiochus of Syracuse.<sup>84</sup> This author is known for his accuracy<sup>85</sup> and wrote a *History of Sicily*, which included the early years up to his own time, 424 BCE. Antiochus' work, which only survived in fragments, could have had direct sources from the Archaic period as he was from Syracuse. His detailed account for a description of the settlement on Sicily is also used by Herodotus, who lived from 485 to about 420 BCE. Whether their view on historiography and reconstruction would have been taken from Antiochus of Syracuse is a point of discussion.<sup>86</sup>

Thucydides' description of Sicily in Book 6.2-5 is called 'Sikelika,' the Sicilian matters. The reason for Thucydides to write so extensively on this subject seems to be to provide a background to his actual subject, political developments that took place much later in time. It is suggested that Thucydides dwells on both Attica and Sicily as the political connections between Athens and Sicily are the reason for the failure of the Athenian expedition to gain power on Sicily in 415-3 BCE.<sup>87</sup> Nicias, one of the Athenian generals compares the Sicilian Expedition with colonisation in his second speech to the Athenian assembly:

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81 In 424 BCE, he was banished from Athens as a *strategos*, a general, of a lost war. He might have travelled to Sicily or even lived there for a short while to seek information. His wealth gave him the chance to spend time on travelling and writing. It is difficult to trace where he travelled and stayed exactly, but he does sometimes mention the situation at his own time, which shows he had a good knowledge of the place in question, for example Amphipolis in Book 4.103. 5 Hornblower 1996, p.22.

82 This is not just what he states himself Thuc. I 1.3 but also according to modern scholars. Hornblower 2008, p.274; Morakis 2011, p.466f.; Greenwood 2006, p.3ff.; for the chronology Nijboer 2006.

83 This is the case with Thucydides' description in 6.2.6 of the Phoenicians withdrawing into three cities with the arrival of the Greeks. Leighton 1999, p.222, 227.

84 See for more bibliographical information on this theory as well as on Antiochus of Syracuse, Morakis 2011, p.463 n. 18.

85 Though not all scholars agree on that and there is discussion on what sources he used. See for a short overview of opinions and bibliography Morakis 2011, p.464ff.

86 Marincola 2007, p.191-3.

87 Alonso-Núñez 2000, p.65f.

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77 Hornblower 2002, p.378.

78 Forsdyke 2002, p.548.

79 Thuc. 6.86.

80 Diod. 13. 81.4-84.6.

“πόλιν τε νομίσαι χρῆ ἐν ἀλλοφύλοις καὶ πολεμίοις οἰκιοῦντας λέναι (...)”

“It is, in fact, as you must believe, a city that we are going forth to found amid alien and hostile peoples.”<sup>88</sup>

Both ventures are comparable in magnitude and strength, but also imply Athens' agenda.<sup>89</sup> The motivation for these undertakings is described in the first book: adventure, money, and power.<sup>90</sup> The land hunger as a reason for migration is advocated by Thucydides but proven very unlikely by archaeologists.<sup>91</sup> Thucydides' perspective is a reflection on his own times.<sup>92</sup> The Greeks are described as if the institutions and structures of his own time already existed, while the absence of archaeological material disproves this. Culturally non-Greek people are recognized as being different, but the focus is not on their differences from each other, but in contrast to the Greeks, who did not exist yet in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE as a single defined cultural group. The reality was likely more culturally fused than it appears when reading literary sources. The ethnic mixture is reflected in some names of the leaders.<sup>93</sup> Thucydides' perspective on Hellenisation lacks the reciprocal influences among those colonists themselves but notices a difference among the Greeks. He makes a distinction between Dorians and Ionians, which is another example of Thucydides' perspective from his own time. This division is based on kinship, *syngeneia*, and plays a large role in political decisions. The rhetorics of *syngeneia* were used in order to form allies, to ask for help or even to justify the invasion.<sup>94</sup> Thucydides mentions sometimes the background of the founders of the cities by adding the note of 'Doric customs'<sup>95</sup> or the city of origin.<sup>96</sup> The latter would be an argument that the undertaking of the emigration would be a personal enterprise of the founders.<sup>97</sup>

The character of the encounter between the migrating people and those who already lived in the area of destination might not always have been as hostile as the above citation suggests. This is shown by a counterargument, an anecdote told by Thucydides in which the Sikel king, Hyblon, gave land to a group

of Megarians, who honoured him with the name of the city, Hyblaia. However, from the archaeological records, it appears that local settlements were destroyed by Selinous at the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century BCE. Cultural identity or ethnicity might not have been barriers to friendly relations.

In the case of another settlement, Thucydides mentions that the language changed because of the number of people from Syracuse who settled with the Chalcidians. Their laws, however, remained Chalcidian.<sup>98</sup> This example makes clear that a parallel is made between the different origins of the migrants and the social-political structures of the *poleis*. It appears from Thucydides' account that by his time local people were outnumbered by the culturally Greek, other cultures would have been overruled by the Greek expansion and land claims. This perspective might have been very different in the earlier Archaic Period and from the time of the archaeological material analysed in this thesis (Chapters 2 and 3).

### I.6.b.iii The foundation of Gelas and Akragas

Akragas and Gelas are connected in ancient literature as two towns in a political setting of *metropolis* and *apoikia*. We can therefore expect this relationship to have some bearing on our interpretation and understanding of the figurines of Akragas.

#### I.6.b.iii.1 Gelas

Gelas was the first city to be founded on the south coast of the island, in 688 BCE.<sup>99</sup> Its coastline with the mouth of the river Gelas was suitable for ancient shipping. The flat-topped hill overlooking the surroundings explains the choice of site.<sup>100</sup> Thucydides writes in Book 6.4.3:

“Γέλαν δὲ Ἀντίφημος ἐκ Ῥόδου καὶ Ἐντιμος ἐκ Κρήτης ἐποίκους ἀγαγόντες κοινή ἔκτισαν, καὶ τῆ μὲν πόλει ἀπὸ τοῦ Γέλα ποταμοῦ τοῦνομα ἐγένετο, τὸ δὲ χωρίον οὐ νῦν ἡ πόλις ἐστὶ καὶ ὁ πρῶτον ἐτειχίσθη Λίνδιον καλεῖται.”

88 Thuc. 6.23.2, translation by C.F. Smith 1921, p.227.

89 Alonso-Núñez 2000, p.70; Avery 1973, p.8-13..

90 Thuc. 6.24. 3; Kallet 2002, p.25-7.

91 Yntema 2000, p.4.

92 Yntema 2000, p.43-4.

93 Hodos 2006, p.92f.

94 Bolmarcich 2010.

95 Thuc. 6.4.4 on Gela.

96 According to Morakis ethnic denominations like Chalcidian colonists in Thuc. 6.3.1 does not imply the polis Chalcis, but just says something about the origin of the people. Morakis 2011, p.467f.

97 Morakis 2011, p.467f.

Such a decision by the individual founders could have had very personal reasons. According to Dougherty, this was often the

case. It was not the larger goals, such as a quest for arable land or political movements that were the first impulses for emigration, but rather more personal stories, like a murderer who had to start over anew. Dougherty 1993, n. 14.

98 Thuc. 6.5.1. Hornblower rightly points to the difference between this verb, 'prevailed' and the *nomima* of Gela, which are 'given.' The latter suggest a single moment, while the first implies a longer period. Hornblower 2008, p.291.

99 This is calculated as forty-five years after Syracuse, which was founded in 733 BCE. On the order of the foundation of the cities as it appears from the archaeological material, see Hall 2008, p.409. He concludes that the archaeological material is in accordance with Thucydides and it is therefore correct to say that Gela was founded some time after the earliest colonies and before Selinous.

100 Graham 1982, p.163ff.

“In the forty-fifth year after the settlement of Syracuse, Gela was founded by Antiphemus from Rhodes and Entimus from Crete, who together led out the colony. The city got its name from the river Gela, but the place where the acropolis now is and which was the first to be fortified is called Lindii.”<sup>101</sup>

Thucydides mentions the name of a preceding settlement, Lindioi. This reference to the inhabitants of Lindos, a city on Rhodes, raises the question of how many Cretans and Rhodians were present and whether their arrival happened at the same time.<sup>102</sup> Gelas might have been a re-foundation of the earlier Lindioi.<sup>103</sup> Another possibility is that this was the second phase of the building programme. The first phase could have been just a walled citadel with extra-mural sanctuaries to the east.<sup>104</sup> The small sanctuary on the other side of the river Bitalemi was built before the 7<sup>th</sup> century BCE ended. The reference to a Rhodian name and the fact that archaeological material reveals a presence before the Thucydian date of 689 BCE would lend support to the two-stage view.<sup>105</sup> However, the predating material is not Rhodian, but Corinthian. Several other scenarios are possible: the materials could indicate a Greek trading post or the popular Corinthian vases could have been owned by local inhabitants. The older pots could have been brought by the colonists of Gelas as relics or heirlooms. In fact, neither the literary nor the archaeological sources either confirm or exclude an earlier phase of habitation at Gelas.<sup>106</sup> Was the name changed because Lindioi would only point to the Rhodians, while the actual situation was a populace from various origins?

The new city was named ‘Gelas’ after the river, as Thucydides describes it. Naming after a notable landmark is common among colonies.<sup>107</sup> There are two explanations for the name. The first is explained by Stephanus of Byzantium: it would derive from ‘gelu,’ ‘ice’ in the language of the Sikeloï, which is related to Latin.<sup>108</sup> Another etymology might be even older, as Aristophanes refers to it:<sup>109</sup> Gelas is derived from the verb *gelaw*, to laugh, as there is a story that Antiphemos, as well as his brother, laughed when the oracle told him he would found a city. Such an

explanation is typical for the stories on foundations.<sup>110</sup> The first etymology, however, sounds more reasonable, as it could be linked to the river.

According to Thucydides, Gelas was founded by both Rhodians and Cretans.<sup>111</sup> Morakis believes that here and in some other similar cases the word *ἐκ* only gives the place of origin for the founders themselves. It is true that the denomination of place is specifically for the founders, without implying an initiative from the polis.<sup>112</sup> Also in the differing origins of the colonists, Morakis sees an argument for the private enterprises of the foundation.<sup>113</sup> However the relationship between *apoikia* and *metropolis* occurred from the beginning and they were aware of their identity, he claims.<sup>114</sup> In my opinion, the new name of the settlement, Gelas, which replaced ‘Lindioi’ is a counter-argument.<sup>115</sup>

The name-giving of settlements usually refers to the topology showing a relation to the direct environment, more often than to a cultural tie with the mother city.<sup>116</sup> The later connection with some other cities, if it can be proven archaeologically, could be very well based on political motives. Such a connection could be even invented with the use of mythology. As in the example above, a common aspect like Odysseus’ adventures could come in handy politically. The description of the Cretans joining the foundation is only tenuously supported by some scant archaeological material.<sup>117</sup> The stories on Cretans like Minos and Daedalus, as well as the bronze bull of Phalaris, might have no basis in reality.<sup>118</sup> The interpretation of the story, mentioned by Pausanias,<sup>119</sup> of Antiphemos, who looted a statue, possibly a *xoanon*, made by Daedalus from Omphake, could stem from the wish to control the cult and claim the land, symbolised by the object.<sup>120</sup> The reason attention is paid to Gelas here is not just because it is the metropolis of Akragas, but because the figurines, that will be discussed in the following chapters, are thought to have been inspired by objects from Lindos, the city on Rhodes where the first settlers of Gelas originated. If the statue had such a strong symbolic meaning, that could imply that this affected the perception of smaller terracotta figurines, as a reflection of the cult image.

101 Thuc. 6.4.3, translation by C.F. Smith 1921, p.189.

102 See Section I.2.b and II.6.e.ii.

103 Some find a signal of the difference with other descriptions by Thucydides in his use of the verb ‘to found’ ‘*ktizein*’ and the substantive ‘founders’ ‘*epoikoi*’, instead of ‘*oiktizein*’ and ‘*apoikoi*’. Wentker 1956, p.129-39. This opinion seems however outdated. For a short overview of the discussion, see Leschhorn 1984, p.48.

104 Boardman 1999, p.178.

105 For the specific findings dating from the Late Geometric and Early Protocorinthian see chapter 2.

106 Morakis 2011, p.471-3.

107 Bakhuizen 1988, p.19.

108 Tribulato 2012, p.135; Dover 1965, p.8.

109 Ach. 606.

110 Leschhorn 1984, p.44.

111 On the myth of simultaneous sent oikists, see Leschhorn 1984, p.44.

112 Morakis 2011, p.470.

113 Morakis 2011, p.473.

114 While some arguments would hold for the connection with Rhodes from early on, these do not include Megara Nisaea and Corinth, as Morakis does. Morakis 2011, p.473-7.

115 Nor is there agreement on his other statement regarding the cult of Athena Lindia. Morakis 2011, p.477, n.98.

116 An exception, for example, is Megara Hyblaea, founded by Megara.

117 For some heads of Cretan origin, See Section II.5.c.i.

118 Adornato 2012a, p.484.

119 Pausanias 8.46.2; 9.40.3-4.

120 Morris 1991, p.197-200.

### I.6.b.iii.2 Herodotus on Gelas

Herodotus describes in Book 7.153.63 the embassy to Gelon of Syrakousai, sent by the Greek alliances in order to convince him to join against Xerxes. In this context, he digresses on the history of Gelon to describe an ancestor of Gelon, who would have joined in founding Gelas.<sup>121</sup> Though not explicitly mentioned by his name, we know it was Deinomenes.<sup>122</sup> This is a clear example of alternative history being used to praise the Deinomenides for their lineage.<sup>123</sup> Herodotus mentions that he was from Telos and that he became a resident. He then states that he was not left behind when the foundation took place. The order of telling of the history implies that he already lived there when Anthipehmos and the Lindians of Rhodes founded Gelas. Or, and that seems more probable, that they arrived together, implying that the official foundation took place later and involved a role for Deinomenes.<sup>124</sup> One of the founders from his genealogy gave Gelon, the later tyrant, certain rights. This genealogical anchoring of his power also has a religious component.<sup>125</sup> One of the descendants, Telines, won the office of the priesthood of the chthonic deities.<sup>126</sup> The latter statement, together with the interpretation of these deities as Demeter and Persephone, had a major effect on the interpretation of religion at Gelas and Akragas.

### I.6.b.iii.3 Akragas

The first time that Akragas is mentioned in Thucydides is in Book 5.4.6 when Phaiax defeated the Kamarinaians and Akragantines, both Dorian cities. The same Phaiax would also have taken Lokri on the Italian mainland. This is mentioned here because the archaeological record shows an iconographic link with Lokroi/Locri as well.<sup>127</sup>

Akragas was founded one hundred and eight years after Gelas, by Gelas, according to Thucydides.<sup>128</sup> Together with Pindar's Olympian Ode 2,<sup>129</sup> which speaks of a round number, the year 580 BCE is usually attested. The site was certainly visited before because of pottery from the late seventh and early sixth century BCE at a cemetery

in Montelusa and because S. Biagio, a rock at Akragas, is thought to have been used as a sanctuary.<sup>130</sup>

Thucydides mentioned two oikists. Was one Cretan and the other Rhodian, as with the foundation of Gelas?<sup>131</sup> Thucydides comments on the foundation of Akragas that a Geloan colony received Geloan customs. The comment on Geloan customs makes one Geloan and one Rhodian oikist possible.<sup>132</sup> Polybius,<sup>133</sup> who points to the specific topography of Akragas as well in Book 9.27, states that Akragas was founded by Rhodians. It, therefore, would have the same deities honoured with temples and the same appellation as there.<sup>134</sup> Also Thucydides together with later authors, names Geloans as the founders first.<sup>135</sup> The arguments for a Rhodian cult are weak.<sup>136</sup> When comparing both descriptions of the foundations of the two cities, the order differs slightly.

“ἔτεσι δὲ ἐγγύτατα ὀκτῶ καὶ ἑκατὸν μετὰ τὴν σφετέραν οἴκισιν Γελῶν Ἀκράγαντα ᾤκισαν, τὴν μὲν πόλιν ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἀκράγαντος ποταμοῦ ὀνομάσαντες, οἰκιστὰς δὲ ποιήσαντες Ἀριστόνουν καὶ Πυστίλον, νόμιμα δὲ τὰ Γελῶν δόντες.”

“Just about one hundred and eight years after their own foundation, the Geloans colonized Acragas; and they named the city after the river Acragas, making Aristonous and Pystilus founders, and giving it the institutions of the Geloans.”<sup>137</sup>

In the case of Gelas, the city as object of the sentence is mentioned first, then the oikists with name and place of origin and then the date followed by the explanation of the name and the *nomina*. In the case of Akragas, the date comes first, because it is very soon,<sup>138</sup> followed by the Geloans as subject and Akragas as object of the sentence. It is only after the eponymy that then the founders are named. Thucydides mentions that the Aristonous and

121 Grethlein 2006.

122 Xenagoras, a 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE author from Rhodes mentions him in his *Chronoi* 240 F 15.

123 Leschhorn 1984, p.44.

124 Deinomedes is also mentioned in the Byzantine lexicon *Etymologicum Magnum* 225.1, Gela. Other sources mention different names, see Hall 2008, p.399 and n. 51.

125 For the Deinomenids of Gela/Syracuse and the Emmenids of Akragas, see Miller 1970, p.49ff.

126 The two goddesses, Demeter and Kore/Persephone are alluded to here, according to a scholiast on Pindar P. 2.27b. Morgan 2015, p.24 n. 1.

127 See Section II.6.h.i and II.7.b.

128 Thuc. 6.4.4.

129 Akragas is mentioned because about one hundred years after its foundation, Theron, its leader, won the chariot race in Olympia. The Olympian Ode is written in honor of him.

130 Boardman 1999, p.187-8; Dunbabin 1948, p.307.

131 Thuc. 4.4.3 stresses there fact that two different groups co-founded Gela by adding the adjective κοινῆ, ‘together.’ Translation by C.F. Smith 1921, p.189.

132 Dunbabin 1948, p.310.

133 A Greek historian who wrote contemporary history on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> century. BCE.

134 A temple of Athena and of Zeus Atabyrius.

135 Pol. 9.27.7.

136 See Section I.2.c.

137 Thuc. 6.4.4, translation by C.F. Smith 1921, p.189.

138 108 years after Gelas itself.

Pystilos were ‘made’ the founders.<sup>139</sup> It sounds more as if they were chosen as the leaders of the venture than that each of them had led the people from respectively Gelas and Rhodes to Akragas. It seems to have been an old custom that when a new city was founded someone from the original metropolis had to come and join the foundation.<sup>140</sup> This explains why a colonist from Rhodes was requested by Gelas to found Akragas. No help was needed nor is it necessary to suppose a new influx of people from Rhodes at that moment. It seems more likely that the prosperous settlements attracted people constantly from different places. Such can be read into Thucydides’ account of the foundation of Zankle, directly following the description of Akragas. The city was founded by pirates, but later many joined them and lived there together. The latter is expressed by the word “ξυγκατενειμαντο,” translated as “shared the land with them.”<sup>141</sup> This is interesting but still does not make a multicultural society, as they are all from Euboea.

The question, however, is, what these *nomima* customs or institutions meant exactly and in our case whether there is an implication on religion or cult. Hornblower writes that besides a religious calendar and festivals, a legal system is meant, though it is early for that.<sup>142</sup> Though the word could be used more generally and applies to customs and a certain way of living/speaking/ dressing etc., like the above-mentioned case of Himera, the verb it comes with here, ‘to give,’ does not seem to refer to the cultural sphere. As Thucydides points out Gelas had Dorian *nomima*, and Akragas Geloan.<sup>143</sup> The participle of the verb ‘to give’ is striking, the more because in Thuc. 6.5.1. the *nomima* of Himera ‘prevailed.’<sup>144</sup> It does not only makes a difference time-wise but implies an imposition as well. If Thucydides thinks it is worth noting that *nomima* prevailed, it is implied that other options would have been open as well. He states that the language was a mixture. This is a clear

139 According to Leschhorn and others, the historicity of the names of the founders is beyond doubt. For references see Leschhorn 1984, p.46 n. 2. The historicity of ‘Entimos’ would be proven because it appears only two times more. One is a Cretan and one a Rhodian. See Bérard 1957, p.230 n. 3. The names of the two founders are peculiar. ‘Entimos’ means ‘honoured’ or ‘honourable,’ while Antiphemos could mean ‘he whose name is uttered (by the oracle) equally’. The names might be titular. It appears from the above literary evidence that the Cretans played a minor role in the city. The Rhodians might have outnumbered them and had already a previous settlement on the same spot. Was Antiphemos, the obvious leader, passed by the oracle, which pointed to Entimos as the founder, and therefore ‘honoured’? It remains speculative, but the names do not seem coincidental.

140 Thuc. 1.24.2.

141 Thuc. 6.4.5, translation by C.F. Smith 1921, p.189.

142 Hornblower 2008, p.291.

143 Malkin 2011, p.74-5, 190.

144 Thuc. 6.5.1 ἐκράτησεν, translation by C.F. Smith 1921, p.191, on Himera, the subcolony of Zankle.

case in which Thucydides refers to acculturation. Malkin writes that there was no need for citizens of the city to take part in an unfamiliar cult for a deity-with-local-epithet with whom the citizen had nothing in common.<sup>145</sup> But it is argued here that migrants recognised local deities, such as for example personifications of local water resources in their polytheistic worldview, which did not limit the number nor the dwellings of deities.<sup>146</sup>

There is a political link between the oikist and the institutions. While Thucydides mentions them in relation to ethnic groups or birthplaces, it does not say much on the actual origins of the inhabitants. Oikists are likely to be a state-regulated matter, while the actual pluriform religion also contains ‘bottom-up’ personal aspects. Dedications like the terracotta figurines, as a pledge for individual wishes, seem to belong to the last category.

#### I.6.b.iii.4 Herodotus on Theron of Akragas

Herodotus does not comment on the foundation of Akragas but mentions Akragas’ leader, Theron, cooperating with Gelon of Gelas in a military unity.<sup>147</sup> Carthaginians saw their chance in the west, now the Greeks were fighting with the Persians in the East.<sup>148</sup> Interestingly, several other peoples from Corsica, Liguria and the Iberian peninsula are mentioned as having joined forces with the Carthaginians. Theron and Gelon won the battle at Himera, according to Herodotus on the same day as the Persians were defeated at Salamis.<sup>149</sup>

#### I.6.c Social and economic setting

##### I.6.c.i Diversity among the inhabitants of Sicily

Researchers nowadays rightly remark that groups of people do not have a uniform identity and even individuals can have multiple identities.<sup>150</sup> Regarding the diversity among Greeks themselves, exposure to other cultures might have made them aware of kinship and shared values.<sup>151</sup> Though being from different cities and with various traditions and backgrounds, they must have realised they shared a linguistic, historical, geological and artistic common ground. Having a shared enemy, ought to help define their own cultural values. Thucydides seems to speak from that perspective in the citation above, but without a strong self-other dichotomy and the idea of Greek cultural unity. Identification in opposition and by antithesis is not yet found in Thucydides, probably because of the

145 Malkin 2011, p.190.

146 More on the religious setting, see section I.6.d.

147 Hdt. 7.165.

148 Hdt. 7.165.

149 This was in 480 BCE.

150 Lomas 2004.

151 Antonaccio 2007, p.201.

pluriformity among the founding groups themselves. The different waves of migrants were of different origins, like for example in Gelas, which, according to Thucydides, was a cooperative effort between Rhodians and Cretans. Apparently, they could overcome differences, not as ‘Greeks’ at first but with a new shared identity, in this case, Geloan. The archaeological material might indicate further to what extent these roots played a role. It seems likely that these older cultural identities were maintained for a while, but for not much longer than one or two generations. The ways in which this was expressed might have varied and not always have resulted in material patterns. Among the shared social customs, which serve as markers for cultural identity, religious festivals played an important role.<sup>152</sup> These local events, particularly cultic expression, would serve polis community-building.<sup>153</sup>

The local people Thucydides mentions in 6.2 consist of Sikans, Sikels,<sup>154</sup> and Elymians. The Sikans, who would originally have been Iberians, would have inhabited the western part of Sicily.<sup>155</sup> It would have been in this period that the name of the island changed from Thrinakie<sup>156</sup> to Sikania. By referring to this name ‘Thrinakie,’ Thucydides continues to refer to the Homeric age. Later and living in the north-east part of the island are the Sikels, according to Thucydides. For both peoples, there is no clear marker of their origin. The Sikels, together with a sub-group, the Elymians, are perceived as being Italian in origin and speaking an Italic language.<sup>157</sup> The Elymians are described, in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE Greek literature, as being allied with the Phoenicians.<sup>158</sup> Whether they are likewise originally of eastern origin, remains unclear.<sup>159</sup> They would have escaped from burning Troy, just like the Phocians, who first arrived on the Libyan coast.<sup>160</sup> These ethnical compartments of Sicily should be treated carefully, as Thucydides’ description does not recognise cultural overlap. A geographical boundary

152 Hall 1997, p.37-40.

153 See Section I.8.c for oikist cult.

154 Other spellings are Sicanians and Sicels.

155 Hornblower 2008, p.267 notices that while Thucydides might have heard of Sikans, they saw themselves as autochthones and he prefers to stick to the mythological version. On the archaeological evidence of ethnic and cultural different groups living on Sicily in this period, see chapter 2.

156 The name ‘Thrinakie’ is mentioned in Od. 11.107 and 12.127 and referred to in 12.261, where the cattle of Helios are located on the island as well. The name later changed to ‘Trinakria’ and indicates the shape of the island, with three coasts. The symbol of a three-legged wheel, which is found on coins from Syracuse, would point to this name. Hornblower 2008, p.268.

157 Leighton 1999, p.221.

158 Thuc. 6.2.6.

159 Hodos 2009, p.224. Sikels seems to have been Greek-speaking people, who first lived on the mainland of Italy. The Elymians are those who escaped from burning Troy. Phocians as well, but they first arrived on the Libyan coast according to Thuc. 6.2.2-4.

160 Thuc. 6.2.2-4.

between the three groups of Thucydides description has never been established by archaeological material.<sup>161</sup> Archaeological traces of movement show that many inhabitants of the island are not all originally from Sicily as well and immigrants themselves from earlier migrations.<sup>162</sup> The wide variety of cultural traditions in the Iron Age makes it very difficult to distinguish with certainty between these groups. Partly because inscriptions dating from the time of the colonisation itself are absent.<sup>163</sup> The island has a history of immigrants and the first contact with ‘Greeks’ must have been in the Late Mycenaean period. The renewed contact of settlers from the 8<sup>th</sup> century BCE would have had often both a mercantile and agrarian interest.<sup>164</sup> The difference with the later colonists is mostly a numerical one.

Regardless of their origins, the inhabitants of the island before and during the migration waves are nevertheless called ‘locals’ in this thesis, even though these ‘locals’ may themselves have been the children of immigrants, even of Greek or Phoenician origin, in addition to indigenous peoples. There must have been all sorts of migrants for various reasons and at several moments in time. The word ‘local’ distinguishes them from the newcomers who introduced another social and economic framework, possibly the same as the founders of the cities, who had more political and expansive aims than other predecessors. This adjective is understood thus to refer to the collective and probably diverse people living on Sicily when larger migration waves took place.<sup>165</sup>

### I.6.c.ii Phoenicians

Thucydides 6.2.6 speaks of ‘many Greeks’<sup>166</sup>, arriving over the sea and forcing the Phoenicians who were spread over the whole island,<sup>167</sup> back into three cities, namely Panormus, Soloeis, and the island Motya. This suggests that other peoples had already been forced to move inland at an earlier stage. It also implies that the settlement of Sicily by the Phoenicians was roughly contemporary with the Greek colonisation, while it is much more likely that the Phoenicians have arrived on the island earlier.<sup>168</sup> Thucydides specifies in the same text the reason for the Phoenicians to choose Sicily: they traded goods with the Sikels from their *emporion*.<sup>169</sup> This remark does not specify the difference in habitation, but the Phoenicians have, as a result, often been seen as just traders, while Greeks were seen as more

161 Hodos 2006, p.93.

162 Leighton 1999, p.220f.

163 Leighton 1999, p.215-7, 221.

164 Leighton 1999, p.224.

165 Leighton 1999, p.192 and chapter 6.

166 “οἱ Ἕλληνες πολλοί.”

167 “περὶ πᾶσαν μὲν τὴν Σικελίαν.”

168 Hodos 2004.

169 Thuc. 6.6.2 “ἐμπορίας ἔνεκεν τῆς πρὸς τοὺς Σικελούς.”

permanent residents.<sup>170</sup> The role of the Phoenicians on the island has been seen as focused on trade only. According to the traditional view, based on Thucydides' note, the Phoenicians were a closed community specialised in trading goods between East and West, without much interaction with local people. This would have changed only with the arrival of the Greeks, who are presented as the bearers of culture and civilisation. Kistler, with the model of ULF, presents a different perspective on the motives and actions of the Greeks and Phoenicians and their interaction with local people. He shows that contacts are not dominated by ethnicity, but in the first place by the motivation for such relations.<sup>171</sup> The motivation for the Phoenicians to head westwards was the shortage of raw material, specifically metals.<sup>172</sup> But in the case of Pithekoussai, it might have been shared interest that made them joint ventures in co-founding and cooperating, around 800BCE, as is suggested by both literary and archaeological sources.<sup>173</sup> In the traditional view, the Greeks came after the Phoenicians. Some believe that Thucydides' account of the Phoenicians' withdrawal seems to fit with the archaeological material from Motya.<sup>174</sup> The relation between Phoenicians and local people was according to Leighton less hostile in character than with the land-claiming Greeks. The Phoenicians concentrated on trade<sup>175</sup> and by these three cities kept the most important routes open. The trading network of the Phoenicians was vast and for a stopover, Sicily was well located.<sup>176</sup> While there is quite some material that points to Phoenician presence, the most popular Phoenician form of pottery remains scanty. The majority of the local people seemed to adopt Greek cultural traditions rather than Phoenician ones, whatever their political relations were, according to Leighton.<sup>177</sup> One reason might be that the Phoenicians gained less attention in the scientific records and their culture has no 'Thucydides' of its own. Yet in the last decades of research, the Phoenicians have come to be recognised as settlers as well. Unlike Spain, where metal resources attracted the Phoenicians, Sicily was mainly interesting for farming purposes.<sup>178</sup> It is thought that contacts with the Phoenicians were very early.

170 The Phoenicians would have been fewer in number, but the text does not indicate such a difference either. Also it has been stated that little was found near Syracuse that points to the Phoenicians. References in Hornblower 2008, p.271f. Such is not just an argumentum ex silentio, but could also indicate that Phoenician material was just not recognised as such.

171 Kistler 2014.

172 De Angelis 2003b, p.120f.

173 Brandherm 2006, p.3 and n. 11.

174 Leighton 1999, p.228.

175 See for an overview of researchers who claimed so, but opposed to his meaning of Whittaker 1974.

176 De Angelis 2003b, p.115.

177 Leighton 1999, p.232.

178 Whittaker 1974, p.64.

The so-called 'Reshep' from Selinunte,<sup>179</sup> a bronze figurine depicting a smiting Syrio-Canaanite god, dates from the 13<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> century BCE. This object shows overseas contact but does not confirm statements on pre-colonisation.<sup>180</sup> Hard evidence of city-states is lacking from other places, besides the ones mentioned by Thucydides.<sup>181</sup> If we try to broaden the focus, we see that there are interesting parallels between Phoenician and Akragantine material culture. In the next chapter, more attention will be paid to this.

### I.6.c.iii Prosperity of Akragas

Diodorus is a Roman author who wrote in Greek and originated from Sicily.<sup>182</sup> He mentions the prosperity of Akragas gained through the exchange of wine and olive oil with Carthage. Not only the crops are mentioned, but the trade in itself with Libya is what "accumulated fortunes of unbelievable size."<sup>183</sup> The last sentence of this paragraph mentions the numerous signs of this wealth, still remaining.<sup>184</sup> It is possible that one of the means of exchange was the silver that is mentioned elsewhere by Diodorus as being mined by the Phoenicians in Iberia and their source of prosperity. He writes that thanks to this trade the Phoenicians found colonies on Sicily and at other places (Diod. Sic. 5. 35).

### I.6.d Religious setting

#### I.6.d.i Demeter and Persephone on Sicily

While Thucydides focusses in his description on Sicily on the political events, including the oikist cult, Herodotus pays more attention to the religion of the island. The latter names the chthonic deities in Book 7.153. It is Pindar who is the earliest literary source of a specific cult on Sicily. He mentions Demeter and Persephone in several instances and even Akragas as Persephone's seat.<sup>185</sup> Sicily, in general, was given to her as a wedding gift by Zeus, he recounts.<sup>186</sup> Very influential in the discussion of the Sicilian religion are besides Pindar, Diodorus Siculus and Plutarchus, who in their accounts stress the special relation of Sicily with the cult of Demeter and Kore/Persephone.<sup>187</sup> Its popularity had increased when it took on a more official, state-related

179 Another name is the 'Melqart of Sciacca.'

180 Aubet 1993, p.202.

181 Whittaker 1974, p.65.

182 Hence 'Siculus' is added to his name. He lived from 90-30 BCE.

183 Diod. Sic. 13.81.5, "(...) πλοῦτον οὐσίας ἀπίστους τοῖς μεγέθεισιν ἐκέκτηντο." translation by C. H. Oldfather 1950, p.351. De Angelis 2016, p.285.

184 Diod. Sic. 13.81.5: "πολλὰ δὲ τοῦ πλοῦτου παρ' αὐτοῖς διαμένει σημεῖα", "Of this wealth there remain among them many evidences". Translation by C. H. Oldfather 1950, p.351.

185 Pind. P. 12.2-3. This ode was written on Midas for winning the flute-playing contest in 490 BCE.

186 Pind. N. I 20. Also Bacchylides mentions Demeter. B. Ep.3.1-2.

187 Friesen, Schowalter, Walters (eds.) 2010, p.223 ff.

function in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE.<sup>188</sup> Epigraphic evidence is likewise not earlier than this century and often refers only indirectly or through epitheta to the goddesses, such as Malophoros.<sup>189</sup> Such resulted in the interpretation of many depicted female deities on Sicily as Demeter and Kore/Persephone, in case her name was not explicitly mentioned elsewhere. Such a forced identification is problematic, because of the diversity of archaeological material and the fact that they are mother and daughter and thus two different persons. Still, there are also reasons to assume Demeter, as the goddess of agriculture, as the first to address on an island where prosperity comes forth from the fertile soils.

#### I.6.d.ii Temple building and politics

Phalaris was the first tyrant of Akragas, from about ten years after its foundation 570 to 554 BCE. He would have been overthrown by Telemachos, whose grandson is another famous ruler, about a century later, Theron.<sup>190</sup> Aenesidamus, Theron's father, is mentioned by Pindarus.<sup>191</sup> He defeated together with his son-in-law, Gelon of Syrakousai, the Carthaginians at the Battle of Himera in 480 BCE.<sup>192</sup> They formed a power block together with Selinous. There is a theory that it would have been for this victory that a Hieron built an extra-mural temple for the two goddesses in Syracuse.<sup>193</sup>

#### I.6.e Conclusions on the ancient literary sources

The literary sources provide information on mainly the political events. They are to be regarded as a secondary source of information if religious subjects are discussed. Not only were they written long after the actual events, but they also present their information from a Greek perspective. Nevertheless, they are valuable sources of information on aspects that are not directly expressed by the archaeological material and provide us with important information on the political developments in the society and organisation of several of its social aspects. It is Thucydides' account of the historical events that gives us most insight in a rather structural and factual way and his work is seen as being quite accurate. His description of the foundations of Gelas and Akragas is therefore used as the context for this research.

In addition to the Greek groups, local people were involved in the foundation and daily life of new cities, such as in the case of Megara Hyblaea. Phoenicians are also said to have been living in the same spots and were forced away by the arrival of the Greeks (Thuc. 6.2.6.). The influence of

the Phoenicians on several aspects of life may have been larger than we tend to assume. Another reason for this is that the settlements of the Phoenicians have often been regarded as just trading posts, even though Thucydides described them as living there (Thuc. 6.2.6.). It is likely that the numbers of Greek migrants were higher than those of other ethnicities, and that this resulted in a culturally strong Greek influx. The 'many Greeks,' as Thucydides described them, were probably the result of migration waves that also resulted in the foundation of Akragas, just about a century after Gelas was founded. State regulated, polis-wide cults, such as the oikist veneration, might have strengthened a polis-identity.

The area was inhabited by numerous people from the migrations waves from the eastern Mediterranean. Leaders of individual groups among those migrants might have been appointed as official *oikist*, founder, in order to set up an organizational structure of such expeditions. Such a system was kept by the *nomina*, institutions, and eventually sanctioned by the *oikist* cults. These political settings would have been particularly necessary because the migrants came from different places. Cooperation between such groups is shown by the double oikist and the description of Zankle, in which different groups of settlers merged at a later moment than the original foundation (Thuc. 6.4.5). The ties between Sicilian *poleis* and their mother-cities are summed up as if they were close relations since the first settlers arrived, but the colonies might have been independent in aspects of society other than politics.

The ancient historical literature does not give much more information on religious expression for the Archaic Period but focusses on the political developments of that time. It is Pindar who connects the island at an early stage with the veneration of Demeter and Persephone (Pind. P. 12.2-3 and N. 1 20). Poetry serves a different goal and it is questionable whether archaeological material should be interpreted in the light of poetry. Herodotus mentions the chthonic deities, but this remark probably concerns the Classical Period (Hdt. 7.153).

The independence of the Sicilian cities was likely founded on their strong economies. The prosperity of Akragas specifically has become almost mythological. The fertile soil and availability of sulphur as fertilizer ensured an enormous agricultural surplus. The resulting wine and olive oil were traded with the Phoenicians, according to Diodorus Siculus (Diod. Sic. 13.81.5). The exchanged materials or luxury goods that the Akragantines were able to afford might have contained metal in raw form as well as finely worked objects. It is also Diodorus who mentions the silver trade of the Phoenicians on the Iberian peninsula. In the second chapter, the role of metal in Akragantine society, specifically in the cultic sphere, will be described along with the extensive archaeological evidence.

188 For an overview of the Roman authors, see Hinz 1998, p.19, n. 5.

189 Dewailly 1992; Hinz 1998, p.32-3.

190 His reign was 488-472/473 BCE.

191 Pind. Ol. 3. The dynasty is called the Emmenidae.

192 Hdt. 7.166.

193 But that is only part of the theory. See Bennett 2002.