



THE ATHENS GREEK RELIGION SEMINAR, Tuesday January 21, 2020 at 15h, Swedish Institute at Athens

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The sanctuaries at Sounion. What do the finds tell us?

ABSTRACT

Since the only extensive excavations by V. Stais (1897-1915) at both sanctuaries at Sounion, serious questions have been raised on some of their structures, on the early cults and in particular on the numerous finds of which only a limited number of small-scale offerings had been published.

The 2015 publication on the sanctuaries at Sounion gives a historical overview of the site, provides a fresh insight of the early cults and a detailed illustrated Catalogue of the unpublished small finds which complements the discussion. The typological analysis and interpretation of the small finds however, raise more questions for research:

1. Does this material confirm the presence of an early hero cult, and if so, in which sanctuary?
2. Does it help answer whether cult activity had started simultaneously in both sanctuaries?
3. Do the finds elucidate the original purpose of the *bothros* in the Athena sanctuary with its 'unusually careful' construction?
4. Does this diverse material reveal the identity of the deities worshipped at the sanctuaries?

This paper will address the above questions.