

THE CHRISTIANIZATION OF THE
PELOPONNESE: THE CASE FOR STRATEGIC
CHANGE

ABSTRACT

The issue of the persistence of paganism is now quite well considered; however, it is only in recent times that the same concern, approached from another perspective, the multifaceted nature of the Christianization of the Peloponnese, has become the topic of detailed discussion. It is likely that Christianization in Achaia took place incrementally and with a variety of effects according to the location (Sweetman 2010). The processes of how this took place and under what circumstances remain to be discussed in detail. As a considered and active process, understanding methods of conversion should provide insights into the nature of society at the time, particularly in terms of communications. Church location reflects a range of choices made in terms of the conversion process and therefore is fundamental to analysing religious transformation. Such insights are important particularly given the dearth of historical sources for, and difficulties of refining church chronologies in the Peloponnese (Varalis 2001; Caraher 2003). In the case of the Late Antique Peloponnese, a great deal is known about many individual churches as a result of quite extensive excavation of a majority of them; particularly through the work of Pallas and Orlandos. This evidence, together with the results of a survey of all the known Late

Antique churches in the Peloponnese undertaken in 2012, allows a synthetic interpretation of all the material within the surrounding landscape to be possible.ⁱ While the precise chronologies may remain elusive, this present study shows how sociological theories of conversion processes can be applied to the topographic analysis of the late antique churches of the Peloponnese to help determine the nature of Christianization across the diachronic range. In this work I will present some new theories regarding processes and phases of conversion, and the implications of these in terms of understanding networks and society in the Late Antique Peloponnese.

INTRODUCTIONⁱⁱ

Epigraphic evidence indicates a steady growth of a Christian presence in the Peloponnese throughout the 4th century (Foschia 2009, 209-33), but the monumentalization of Christianity here is comparatively late. The relative lateness is seen in contrast with other places in the Empire, where, for example, churches are built in the early 4th century in Romeⁱⁱⁱ and Palestine.^{iv} The slightly later timing may be in part a consequence of the polytheistic agenda of Praetextatus, the 4th century governor of Achaia under Julian the Apostate.^v Saradi and Eliopoulos (2011, 263) suggest that paganism was more steadfast in the Greek provinces because of a combination of a number of factors, such as respect for cultural traditions, particularly in Athens, the presence of the Philosophical

Schools in Athens, the lack of monasteries with the exception of Thessaloniki, and a supposedly restricted role played by Athens and the Greek provinces in the Empire's network. Network connections are certainly impactful and on the basis of the topographic analysis it will be argued here that Christianization took place in three phases and networks were the conduits by which these processes occurred as well as being the overall framework which connected them.

The foundation of Christian churches in the 5th century is a visible impact of Christianization in the Peloponnese (Appendix 1). This is followed by the construction of over 160 churches during the following two centuries. By the end of the 7th century, almost every corner of the Peloponnese has a church and the widest distance between any two churches is only 50 km, which is the distance between Chotousa and Leontion and also Leontion and Panariti (Pl. 1). The reason for these gaps is the presence of the imposing Kyllini Mountains in between.^{vi} The significant numbers of excavated Late Antique churches in the Peloponnese provide a means of being able to establish a good understanding of the processes of Christianization. Church construction not only marks a significant change in terms of religion and conversion but it also reflects a range of choice made by different groups. Because Christianization methods had to be adaptable in accordance with existing communities in different

topographic contexts, a range of different processes is logical. These processes do not necessarily need to be tied to specific chronological boundaries. Instead, they can be sequential; and changes can take place in parallel, depending too on the existing circumstances. The variety of conversions according to time, space and place is further diversified through the approaches used. Methods of Christianization range from the subtle use of memory or social hierarchies to the more blatant promise of eternal salvation (Sweetman 2012). The practicalities of such conversion also depended to some degree on the already established communication links that existed in the 4th century communities (discussed in more detail below). Given the evidence for the continuation of polytheistic cult during the construction of the earliest churches, as well as the evidence for phased Christianization (Sweetman 2010; Foshcia 2008),^{vii} the focus here is on understanding diversity of the Christianization process across the Peloponnese.

Sociological studies have identified two key contexts for religious or social change: tension or strategic. There is general agreement that Christianity and polytheism co-existed (Gregory 1986), but even so, elements of Christianization have, in the past, been seen in terms of tension theory where change grows from overcoming unrest such as urban decline, sanctuary closure and even earthquakes.^{viii} While some of the few surviving historical sources for the period may

generally imply this, many of these had an agenda of proselytising through stories of victory over evil. Conversely, the archaeological evidence indicates more of a strategic pattern for Christianization which can be deliberate and/or emergent, with the construction of churches occurring while polytheistic cult appears to continue.

There is limited evidence for the extensive unrest that would provide a context for change through tension. In recent years work has shown that the extent of urban decline in the Late Antique period has been somewhat exaggerated and evidence of destruction and damage had been attributed far too quickly to earthquakes.^{ix} Rothaus (1996, 105-113) notes literary and archaeological evidence for three likely earthquakes in the second half of the 4th century but it is difficult to be precise about the extent of widespread urban damage in any case. Furthermore, some such as Gregory (1986, 233) argue that with the exception of Athens (Frantz 1965), pagan and Christian communities actually had little to do with each other. In the past, the fact that the Late Antique period was caught between the highs of the Roman and glories of the Byzantine meant that scholars also viewed the period through a lens of depressing decline rather than seeing it as a period of vibrant change.^x Rather than decline, in many cases it is more likely that the topography or even location of the city may have changed and often in positive ways (Sweetman 2004b using Knossos as an example). Moreover, in the

contexts of a fresh understanding of the Late Antique period,^{xi} it is possible to read the archaeological evidence in terms of strategic change and more specifically, emergent change through experimentation and progress, while not denying the elements of tension. The irony is that the more peaceful emergent view is less exceptional and therefore of little interest to historians of that period, and would not necessarily be recorded.

While recent work has focused on the persistence of paganism (Deligiannakis 2011, Saradi and Eliopoulos 2011, Foschia 2009, Brown 2006), here, through the application of sociological theory and network analysis to the topography of the churches some new theories regarding the Christianization of the Peloponnese are provided. The location of a church reflects choices made by and constraints on a variety of groups acting within the community. By examining the evidence for continuation of cult in various locations around the Peloponnese in conjunction with the analysis of the topography of the churches, a case will be made for a three-phased process of Christianization based on theories of strategic change.

ALTERNATIVE PERSPECTIVE:
CONVERSION AS STRATEGIC
CHANGE

Strategic change

If change is not born out of tension, within

organizational and social structures change is implemented through deliberate or emergent strategies (Mintzberg and Waters 1985, 257-72). Deliberate strategies are formed, implemented and realized through the intentions and purposeful agency of actors, normally from the top-down, with a view to gaining a preconceived set of results. Deliberate strategies are linear and assume no significant disruption once they are implemented. Emergent strategies by contrast, are those which are realized in the absence of deliberate intentions or purposeful agency of actors (ibid. 257). There is normally a process of interplay of a range of individuals and variables. It normally works from the bottom up and is non-linear and while there are disruptions and unpredictable events it is also more creative and there are often unintended outcomes (Mintzberg and Waters 1985; Mintzberg and Westley 1992). Crucially, Mintzberg and Waters (1985, 257) note that either purely deliberate or purely emergent strategies are rare; both processes contain elements of emergence and intention.

As the two strategies are not mutually exclusive it is possible to have a combination of deliberate and emergent strategies, or unconnected strategies. For example, actors within a larger structure who may be following emergent patterns simply because they do not necessarily have to explain their actions (ibid). This is a crucial point when it comes to the study of the Christianization of the Peloponnese, which had to be a fluid

process. As Hunt (1993, 143) notes, while there may have been laws from the Imperial centres, the way in which these laws were interpreted or the extent to which they were adhered to, was as multifarious as there were individuals. For example, Theodosius may have decreed a ban on sacrifice in CE 381 and closure of temples in CE 393; but it is clear from epigraphic evidence that cultic practice persisted in many locations in the Peloponnese, including Epidavros (Sweetman 2010). In the Peloponnese, it is evident that there was no singularly structured, top-down, organized process, but rather a combination of both strategies. Essentially, the fluidity seen in the conversion of the Peloponnese can be understood in terms of interplay between deliberate and emergent change.

In strategic change, different environments and processes are identifiable, such as complexity, social movement and tipping point. In many respects these three aspects are inter-linked. Complexity is defined as having elements of self-organization, set agendas and is 'the domain between linearly determined order and indeterminate chaos' (Byrne 1998, 1). Anderson (1999, 216) also notes the combined elements of order and chaos evolution in complexity theory. Complex organizations are made up of groups of diverse formation which are well networked. Complexity theory identifies a process of sharing ideas used to initiate change and it is manifested through adaptive behaviour where the change is quickly taken

on. Change in complex groups is manifested quickly in part because of the multiple contacts complex groups have, but also because they are used to sharing ideas. The complex groups will have both external and internal connections acting as a conduit for change. Complexity includes elements of deliberate change and therefore may have elements of top-down organization. Once change has taken place in these complex groups it can then spread through processes such as social movement and tipping point. Diani and Bison (2004, 282) define social movement as 'networks of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups, or associations, engaged in a political or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity'. Social movement represents a second phase because the sharing of ideas is based on common groups/associations rather than the more diverse make-up of groups associated with complexity. Social movements try to identify with elements that are culturally meaningful like existing symbols. Change as a result of tipping point can only occur once other processes have already taken hold. Tipping point refers to the situation where something new and irreversible takes hold when there was little prior sign of that phenomenon. It is therefore indicative of a change that is more laboured and is dependent on already having a critical mass of change in proximate groups. In more detail, these three phases can be elucidated within an overall idea of an incremental and multidirectional conversion

process.

Networks are the vehicle by which social movement evolves and they are defined through shared information and ideas, can be understood in multiple ways (Castells 1996). In contemporary studies they can be naturally arising or engineered, and may be virtual or biological (D'Souza et al 2007, 6112-7). For the purposes of this study the concentration is on social networks including information and commercial connections. Van Dijk (2005) argues that networks shape a society's organization, and can be mediated by individuals, groups or organizations. In this respect, it is possible to see how the three different phases of Christianization may have spread through networks of different groups or individuals. For example, the first phase of deliberate change likely came from outside the Peloponnese as part of an organized process. Highly connected loci are known as hubs, and they are not always the large cities that we already know exerted power; they can be religious centres or even regions such as the northeast Peloponnese (Castells 1996). Underpinning networks is the idea that wide scale communication between hubs or nodes will create further nodes; and this process is known as phase transition (Chen and D'Souza 2011, 1). While work on network analysis in the disciplines of maths and physics is ongoing and constantly being refined, particularly in terms of understanding the behaviour of elements and factors within networks such as giant components and phase

transition, it is only recently that the theory has begun to be applied to the study of archaeology (Brughmans 2010 and Knappett 2011) and religion more specifically (Collar 2013). Furthermore, there is still some development needed in refining empirical evidence for network analysis to evidence from areas such as the social sciences (Filkov 2009). While this is acknowledged, for religious change in antiquity, Collar, Bowden and Rutherford (2009) have successfully shown how network analysis can be applied to the spread of religious ideas and practices of different periods in the Greco-Roman world. For present society, Berryman (1999, 21-34) applied network theory to religion in Latin American to explain the prevalence of Pentecostal, to the detriment of Catholic, churches. For the Late Antique period, network analysis allows us to further understand how the deliberate and emergent strategies work revealing phases of Christianization in which people and places play a range of roles. The three processes of change outlined above can be recognised in the different topographic contexts of the Late Antique churches which help to elucidate the phased Christianization of the Peloponnese in spite of problems of the evidence such as limitations of the type of archaeological data, issues with dates for both church-foundation and temple abandonment.

PROBLEMS OF EVIDENCE

There is a dearth of literary sources relating

directly to the Late Antique Peloponnese, and textual evidence comes from brief references to the area in general historical accounts such as those by non-Christians, such as Libanius and Zosimus, secular historians such as Procopius, as well as Christian historians and chroniclers such as Eusebius and Theophanes.^{xii} There is some useful textual material such as, evidence of issues of territory and diocese as discussed in Hierokles' 6th *Synekdemos* and the Acts of the Ecumenical councils,^{xiii} as well as of course, the Theodosian code (Hunt 1993).

In terms of material indications, while religious architecture and graves still make up most of the physical evidence, finds of domestic material are increasing significantly with a focus on urban contexts, but with rural data also on the rise. In terms of the urban material, the on-going excavations at Argos, for example at Kallergi Street and in particular on Papanikoli Street (*AR ID* 1440 and *AR ID* 1438) have revealed extensive evidence for the Late Antique city, and some good analysis of a domestic nature has been undertaken by Oikonomou-Laniado (2003, 59-75). Work at Messene has allowed detailed discussions of the Late Antique city and its hinterland.^{xiv} In Sparta, the excavations at Alcman and Lysander streets have also revealed pockets of the Late Antique city.^{xv} When many of the more recent excavations and surveys are fully published, they should significantly enhance the study of the Late Antique Peloponnese. This was certainly the case with the

Palestinian material as discussed by Bar (2008, 275-98). He noted that it was commonly believed that Palestine underwent swift Christianization and that everyone had converted by the mid-5th century. However, with more urban and rural excavations it became clear that these views had to be revised to allow for a much more nuanced process. While domestic evidence will be referred to here, the focus will be on churches and associated features.

Another issue with understanding Christianization stems from problems with secure chronologies; dates for when temples go out of use and the foundation dates of many of the Peloponnesian churches. Evidence for temples becoming disused and suffering from natural decay, particularly as the focus of investment changed, is extremely difficult to identify and date, in terms of the archaeological evidence in the Greek provinces (Saradi and Eliopoulos 2011, 264). Identifiable 4th century destructions were often attributed to historical events (general and specific) such as Christian demolition, seismic activity or Gothic invasions (ibid; Rothaus 1996, 105-113). While pockets of isolated attacks by particularly zealous communities or individuals cannot be ruled out, in many cases temples or shrines may have been already abandoned for decades prior to the Christians, or even to the Goths, just as they may have continued to be used during the early periods of the Christianization of Greece. For example, the

temples of Zeus at Olympia, the Temple of Athena Alea, the Temple of Apollo at Corinth (Pl. 2) and that of Asklepius at Epidavros are likely to have been still standing until the 6th century CE when their superstructures were brought down, supposedly by earthquakes (Spawforth 2006, 154; 160; 162; 165). Furthermore, the long held belief that temples were often automatically converted into Christian churches has also been successfully challenged for most provinces such as Egypt and Achaia (Dijkstra 2011, 392; Gregort 1986; Foschia 2009; Sweetman 2010). Saradi (2008, 113) suggests that there were some temple destructions, some temple-conversions and some level of continuation of pre-Christian religions. Yet, from the analysis of the data presented here, it seems that when temple conversion did occur, it was part of a particular phase of the Christianization process undertaken once the earliest churches had already been constructed.

Of the 160 known churches, 90 have proposed dates. Of the 70 undated ones, many are only identified through evidence of re-used architectural remains, or through survey, or remain unexcavated. Of the 90 dated churches, their chronologies for the most part are not very secure, although broad dates are possible. This is in part due to the nature of their survival, often under more recent constructions, for example, Ag. Andreas in Alyka in the Mani (Pl. 3), or because of difficult excavation circumstances like rescue excavation. Where dates are

postulated, this is regularly done on the basis of associated material culture, primarily sculptural elements, mosaics, or less often, lamps. Some churches have been dated on the basis of stylistic form, in terms of the layout or architectural style of the church, for example the polygonal form on the exterior of the apse of the church on the Sanctuary of Apollo on the Aspis in Argos dated to the 6th century (Oikonomou-Laniado 2003, 11). Others may be dated through material found in associated mortuary contexts such as coins or belt buckles, for example, Agia Mariana in Ano Epidavros (possibly 7th or 8th century) (Oikonomou 1989, 303-12). With the increasing focus on re-evaluation of the material and excavations and on-going study of Late Antique pottery chronologies,^{xvi} it is hoped that church chronologies may be better defined in the future.

Persistence of paganism

Notions of 'persistence of paganism' are often seen in terms of an opposition against the apparently one-directional and uncompromising forces of Christian conversion. This is understandable in light of the nature of many of the surviving sources, which record events from a Christian perspective, often in a specifically Christian ideological manner to promote the new religion (Bagnall 1988, 25-32; Kuznetsova 2000, 125-32). From the Christian viewpoint, it was better to record stories of success, particularly in the face of opposition, rather than straightforward records of the

conversion process (Ricoeur 2007, 81-2). It was essential for the Christians to create a history where elements of Christian eschatology, such as hope, could work. There are problems with this notion of a clear-cut replacement of pagan cult practice with Christianity and while there were many enthusiasts, the adoption of Christianity was not always a conscious or a welcome choice (Fowden 1990, 344-5). Some suggest that the placement of a church close to existing sanctuaries was a challenge to pagan communities (Gregory 1986, 237). This can also be read not necessarily in terms of pressure but in some cases as subtle encouragement (Sweetman *forthcoming*).

The tenacity of paganism in Achaia is well known, with evidence from a range of sources, public and private, from epigraphy, cult buildings, statuary as well as funerary forms (Rothaus 2000, 32-8; Foschia 2009, Saradi and Eliopoulos 2011). It is seen at all social levels, from the Emperor Julian, Praetextatus and his wife Paulina being initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries to the retention of pre-Christian burial practices across the social spectrum. Even after Valentinian and Valens had succeeded Jovian (who followed Julian), Praetextatus continued to be able to exert some influence in favour of pagan rites when he successfully appealed to Valentinian to have an exemption so that Achaia could persist with nocturnal sacrifices even after they were prohibited in 364 (Saradi and Eliopoulos 2011, 282). Such retention of

pre-Christian practices may be due in some respects to practicalities and therefore, may not be so unusual, and perhaps an especially pagan governor may not have made such a key difference. Something similar is also seen outside of Achaia in the Aegean Islands (Deligiannakis 2011, 311-46) as well as in provinces such as North Africa (Sears 2011, 229-62). Various situations have been observed in Anatolia where there seems to be a change in the way pre-Christian religious practice is undertaken in terms of a move from the public (temple) to private (domestic) contexts, and this can also be seen in Egypt (Talloen and Vercauteren 2011, 347-288 ; Bagnall 1988, 285-96). Bar (2008, 275-98) argues that because most of Palestine's population was located in rural rather than urban areas, the processes of Christianization took significantly longer here and were more varied than in the cities.

It is possible to see that there is a continuation of pre-Christian religious elements in private life, for example in personal jewellery and lamps.^{xvii} In certain contexts there is a pragmatism involved in the use of certain types of object. The continued use of jewellery with pagan imagery is understandable in terms of the value of the object. Saradi and Eliopoulos (2011, 287) have noted the evidence from the Cave at Vari where Christian lamps were found in the context of pagan worship, which they believe simply indicates availability rather a religious statement. Stirling's work (2008, 89-161) on

the nine statuettes depicting a variety of Olympian gods in a Corinthian house is indicative of the perpetuation of pre-Christian cult practice in private contexts during the Late Antique period, and a similar situation was identified in the excavations of the 4th century large urban *domus* in Messene (Themelis 2010, 100-101). In terms of burial practices, in some cases Christian and non-Christian burial customs are found together, for example in Corinth's North Cemetery (Sanders 2005, fn 1; Saradi and Eliopoulos 2011). There are also mixed epigraphic habits, such as the Christian cross with a curse, with several examples from Corinth and Argos.^{xviii}

In the public realm, a portrait head found on the Athenian Acropolis slopes is depicted in a priestly form with a tall diadem and strophion and has been dated to the late 4th century (Pl. 4), and there are two taurobolic altars from Attica in the National Museum which have been dated to the end of the 4th century (CE 360-70 and CE 387) (Pl. 5). Both these altars indicate that the taurobolium was still performed in Athens until at least the end of the 4th century. For the study of the Peloponnese, the Altar dedicated by Archelaus notes that he was resident in Argos where he had been initiated into local cults (Saradi and Eliopoulos 2011, 287). Epigraphic data reveals strong evidence for continuation of polytheistic cult (Foschia 2009, 215-7). As well as the concern for the upkeep of existing sanctuary sites, inscriptions indicate continued cult practice in various forms at different

sanctuaries, such as Kenchreai and Corinth, and also at international sanctuaries like Epidavros and Olympia (Nilsson 1945, 63-9; Foschia 2009, 215-7; Sweetman 2010, 208-9). Although more difficult to assess, it is likely that many smaller shrines and sanctuaries, particularly in rural contexts, would also have continued in parallel with the foundation of the earliest churches.^{xix} This certainly seems to be the case in Palestine, where a more even focus of archaeological work in urban and rural areas has been undertaken (Bar 2008, 276). To expand on what Caseau (2004, 105-6) noted, the roots of Christianity were in rural areas but they are the last to show physical manifestations of this. While it is argued below that this is in part to do with religious and more general conservatism, it is also a result of processes of strategic change.

Although cultural developments are often understood in terms of a linear sequence, this is not always the case, because multiple kinds of change occurring in diverse locations at different rates and with discrete outcomes are common.^{xx} This is clearly seen in the various burial traditions and mixed contexts for pagan and Christian personal objects. Even a reading of the Edict of Theodosius suggests only some closures, and some investment continuing in sanctuary sites (Hunt 1993, 144 & Sweetman 2010, 209). Analysis of the churches and the Christianization process indicates a cultural lag, where processes of change are not syncretised with each other (Ogburn and Nimkoff 1947). In this respect,

individuals and groups form their own histories, in which the timing of changes or hiatuses or continuations do not correspond (Ricoeur 2007, 186). While on the one hand there was a proselytizing state religion, the strength of centuries of religious practice and respect for cultural tradition had to be accommodated. On a simple level this may be seen in the adoption of architectural and artistic forms that were already meaningful. For example, images of Orpheus become interpreted as the good shepherd in Christian contexts, or the general image of bounty (*xenia*) becomes an image of paradise in life after death particularly in a mortuary context (Kourkoutidou-Nicolaidou 1997, 130-1). There are, as noted above, some elements of practicality too: artistic knowledge, skill, and tools cannot be made obsolete overnight. Invariably, there will be continuation of craftspeople and particular elements; but it is how they are used by an individual that makes them meaningful. An enduring example of this may be the inclusion of coins with the corpse, often on the mouth or chest, a pre-Christian tradition to provide the deceased with the means of paying Charon sustained into the 6th century (ibid). The multiple actors with roles in the Christianization process, from the state to the proletariat and with clergy and elite in between, even without introducing other variables such as location and period, mean that degrees of Christianization are bound to be distinctive across the Empire and within provinces. While there are clearly elements of resistance

at certain times and locations, when viewed from another perspective, it is possible to see that the Christianization process was adapted according to a variety of existing situations, periods and driving forces.

Rather than viewing Christianization in the more traditional light of a top-down or imperial, deliberate, sometimes violent and unilateral process of conversion, as somewhat indicated in the written sources, through the archaeological evidence it is possible to see an organic and somewhat relaxed process which emerges incrementally over 150 years after the churches are constructed. There is much more evidence for continuity, religious co-existence at single sites and regionalism than previously assumed. This view is contrary to the more sensationalist one of destruction and disruption which is of far more interest to historians in late antiquity and indeed the contemporary public (Lavan 2011, xv). To explain the alternative view we can draw on theories of strategic change which means that the extent of phasing and regionalization is not obscured by the difficulties of not yet having a firm range of absolute dates for the foundation of many of the churches.

THE LATE ANTIQUE PELOPONNESE:

TOPOGRAPHY OF THE CHURCHES

Topography of the Late Antique churches

The form, function and chronology of churches has been discussed in light of the use of space of the church by Varalis (2001), Caraher (2003), and Sweetman (2010), and

this data will not be revisited in detail here.^{xxi}

The focus of evidence will be on the topography. While the dates of the churches are difficult to define closely, broad chronologies (5th, 6th, 7th centuries) allow the elaboration of the application of sociological conversion theories (Appendix 1). As has already been noted, the earliest churches (mostly 5th century) are found in the ports of the north eastern part of the Peloponnese (Kenchreai, Kiato and Hermione),^{xxii} and at the sanctuaries of Epidauros, Nemea and Olympia. The Lechaion basilica was originally thought to date to the mid-5th century too (Pallas 1959 & Pallas 1966, 159, 166–167) but more recent work on the ceramics indicates a later date, probably in the 6th century for the foundation of the church (*pers comm.* G. Sanders). The majority of churches are dated to the 6th century (Sikyon Temple, Scoutela in Corinth, Geraki Krini and Filiatra). The latest Basilica-type churches have been identified at Agia Marina (Ano Epidavros), Provantion (Tegea) and Skyllountia and may date to the 7th century.^{xxiii} These are all triple-apsed churches and may be related to other triple-apsed churches: for example, the Acropolis Basilica, Sparta (Pl. 6), Tigani and Agia Sofia, Korone.

The overall distribution shows a widespread occupation of the Peloponnese with a strong inclination for coastal locations (Pallas 1977, 5) (Pl. 1). It is difficult to be precise about the change in occupation of the area from the Roman to Late Antique period because of

inconsistency in the evidence, and problems in assessing just when pre-Christian cult sites went out of use in the rural context. While there may have been depopulation of some of the Hellenistic urban spaces in the Roman period, there is still good evidence from Pausanias to suggest continuation of cult at some locations, for example at Zarax (Gerakas) and Gortys (Alcock 1993, 207-8). Moreover, it does seem likely that there was a wider occupation of the Peloponnese in the Late Antique period than there had been in the Roman; and this is particularly marked through the return to Hellenistic sites which had gone out of use in the Roman period such as Kiato and Longas.^{xxiv} Although many of the churches are constructed in cities or sanctuaries that have been in continuous use throughout the Roman period, and in several cases earlier, a few of the churches have been constructed in locations where there is no evidence, as yet, for previous Roman use, for example, Nemea Evangelistra, Panariti (Corinthia), Sophikon and Tiryns (Sweetman 2010).

In terms of the topographic contexts, the Late Antique churches of the Peloponnese can be divided according to those that appear in five different, although not necessarily mutually exclusive, locations (Appendix 1). These are: ports (24), towns (14), sanctuaries (14), mountain tops (20; and this includes 6 by water), by water (14, 9 of which are on a low hill). Altogether 20 churches are located by water.

By applying theories of strategic change to the topographic data of the late antique churches, it is possible to illustrate three phases of conversion in the Peloponnese, the mechanics of which are in turn visible through network analysis. The data is presented within groups according to the six regions of the Peloponnese to show how the three phases work on a micro level. However, it is important to remember that these are contemporary political boundaries, and communication links may just as easily have been with cities or ports in other regions and provinces. The analysis of the findings at a macro level is presented following the discussion of the six regions.

Corinthia

35 churches are known from the Corinthia, and 10 of these come from the city of Corinth itself, with a second concentration around Sikyon. At Corinth it is possible to see an incremental spread of the churches from the suburbs, cemeteries and sanctuaries to within the old city walls. The Late Antique wall that surrounded Corinth was considerably smaller than its Classical predecessor, and it did not enclose the Amphitheatre on the east or the Anaploga Villa on the west (Gregory 1979, 278). Gregory (1982, 52) observed that from the Roman to Late Antique period, activity increased on the east of the city and decreased on the west. There was some continuation of use of Roman cemeteries, for example at the North Cemetery and its Late Antique section

to the south at Cheliotoumilou and at Kodratos to the east of here (Sanders 2005, fig. 16.1). The first churches built at Corinth, likely in the early 6th century, were in the areas of the Roman cemeteries (Kodratos) (Stikas 1962, 51-6) and suburbs, (Kraneion) (Pallas 1976) and Skoutelas (Pallas 1955) and were located well outside the city walls.^{xxv} Gregory (1982, 53) suggested that there were no burials within the Late Antique walls until the 6th or 7th century; and Sanders (2005, 428) noted the evidence for sub-adult burials in Gaza amphorae dating to the 6th or 7th century in the Panagia field. Only one basilica constructed within the city walls has definitely been identified, and it is located to the northeast of the Apollo Temple on Temple Hill (Pl. 2), and is dated stratigraphically to the late 6th century (Robinson 1976, 222). If Sanders (2005, fig. 16.1) is correct in his reconstruction of the Late Antique city wall as running to the east of the Agora, this would mean that there were no churches within the city walls at Corinth.

The evidence is not quite as clear for Sikyon, although with ongoing work there is great promise for the future. Here, in addition to the church overlying the temple, a second city centre church has been identified through geophysical survey.^{xxvi} Although the dates for both these churches are difficult to define, it is likely that the church at Sikyon's port, Kiato, predates both (Orlandos 1954). Many of the churches are constructed in already thriving towns like Kenchreai and Cleonai

(Scranton, Shaw & Ibrahim 1978; *AR ID* 2076); and others are built in areas that are located close to a town, though not directly in the pre-existing Roman town. For example, the hilltop church at Almyri is likely to have been constructed on the Hellenistic site rather than on the Roman site which occupied the coastal plain (Wiseman 1978, 58). The church at Tenea, visible on a hilltop, is likely to have been located near or in the cemetery area of the Roman town, although more work on the area is needed before the topography of the Roman town can be defined (*ibid.* 93). More work is also needed at other sites such as Sofiko where there are tantalizing remains of fortification walls on Mt. Tsalikas to the NE of the modern town (*ibid.* 127). Although two churches have been identified, much less is known about the preceding period other than the walls and graves in the area around Agia Paraskevi. While the two Sofiko churches are visible on a hill and on a likely coastal route, their precise relationship to the Roman town is impossible to say. The church at Kenchreai, which may have a late 4th century date, incorporates the Sanctuary of Isis and is situated along at least one Roman road that runs NE-SW along the shore line (Scranton, Shaw and Ibrahim 1978, Plans B & C; fig. 25). The location of this early church in a highly visible location in a busy port is well within the expectation in terms of the Christianization of the Peloponnese. However, the reuse of the pre-existing temple is a feature that is seen more commonly in later stages of Christianization in the

Peloponnese, at least when a significant number of churches have already been built, for example Cleonai. The late 5th-6th century Basilica at Cleonai is located on an earlier temple in the centre of the Classical-Hellenistic town on an important route, according to the excavators (*AR ID* 2076). On-going survey and excavation work there is clarifying the diachronic nature of the urban core and hinterland, including locating parts of the city wall in the north and in the east, and remains indicating Late Antique and Early Byzantine farms (*AR ID* 4126). In terms of rural sites, survey work in the area around Sikyon has revealed a significant number of churches (for example at Poulitsa Litharia tou Rakka, Poulitsa Patima, Lalioti, Panariti (Pl. 7) (Lolos 2011, SP-30, SP-31, SP-22, HS-95. Other churches in the area include at Nemea Evangelistra (Pl. 8) (Miller 1990), Panagitsa, Pellene Zougra and Zougra Senterina (Orlandos 1931), Bozikas and Melissi (Lolos 2011, SP-26 and HS-143), but they are all more difficult to discuss in terms of their pre-Christian context because of lack of archaeological excavation to date. In all cases, however, it is clear that they are in highly visible locations (for example, Melissi by the coast, Pellene high in the Kyllini Mountains, and Panariti in areas of great natural beauty). The church at Panariti in fact may be at the site of an earlier temple, but this is by no means certain (Lolos 2011, 479).

Overall, in the Corinthia, the earliest churches are located in coastal locations and they are

likely hubs (Kenchreai and Kiato).^{xxvii} Given its location within the sanctuary, the 5th century church at Nemea is also likely to have been constructed at a hub. The topographic evidence indicates therefore that these churches were constructed as part of the complexity process and likely include elements of deliberate strategy and belong to the earliest conversion phase in this region and likely the Peloponnese. The location of churches in the suburbs of Corinth and Sikyon indicates construction through social movement orchestrated through their network connections with the port and sanctuary hubs therefore, the second Christianization phase. The construction of churches in the centre of towns like Corinth and Cleonai on existing temples is part of the second phase of urban Christianization, and, as already noted, can be equated more with the tipping point process. Tipping point helps explain the location of the rural and in some cases, village churches of Almyri, Sophikon East, Chilimodi, Bozikas, Lalioti, Panatiri, Pellene and Nemea Evangelistria.

Argolid

Some 34 churches have been identified in the Argolid. Eleven of the churches are located in Argos.^{xxviii} There is a second concentration in the area of Ano Epidavros (Oikonomou 1989, 303-12). The earliest churches here have been identified at the ports of Hermione (late 4th-5th century) and the sanctuary of Asclepius at Epidavros (5th century) (Stikas 1956, 179-84; Asimakopoulou-Atzaka 1987, no. 10) and

Lakomata at Troizen (late 5th century) . These are then followed by the majority of churches in suburban or urban locations such as Argos, Ano Epidavros, Methana, (Mee and Forbes 1997) Hermione (promontory), Palaia Epidavros (Gregory 1982, 53), Spetses (Sotiriou 1937), as well as at other sanctuary sites such as Troizen (Ag. Soteri) and Apollo Maletas (Epidavros). Finally, there is a small number of rural examples at Methana, New Tiryns (Oikonomou 1989b, 63), Lykeria (Asimakopoulou-Atzaka 1987, no. 15) and Kephalaria (Oikonomou-Laniado 2003, 15) which are located on mountains or beside water (Pl. 9). It is clear that a city wall was constructed around Argos in the Late Antique period, but its date and line are not yet known (Banaka-Dimaki *et al* 1998, 330). It has been postulated that the southern extent is now marked by the line of the modern Messenias-Arkadias road; the west side would have run just below the line of the Larissa and the north side to the west of the Aspis. The eastern extent is not as clear, although some would suggest that this followed the line of the Kserias river (Varalis *pers comm.*). As with other cities, there are two phases of church construction seen in Argos as a result of social movement and then tipping point. The earliest churches are likely those in the suburbs, particularly at major routes such as the Messenias street church, the church on Danos, which is likely to be beside the Eileithuian Gate and in existing cemeteries such as, Alike in the north, and Paliopyrgo (if it is a church) in the south (Banaka-Dimaki *et*

al 1998, 333). These highly visible locations would have had a range of network connections. Once a number of these churches were in use a critical mass would have been reached whereby change in the city centre would have been the next natural process. This is marked by the construction of the church in Baths A to the east of the Agora.^{xxix} Oikonomou-Landiou suggests that three churches were constructed in the late 5th to early 6th century with the Apollo Sanctuary Basilica, Alike and the Baths A Basilica all being built later. Varalis, however, suggests that of these three churches, at Danos (Lymberi Plot), Danos and Seferis (Gargassoula Plot) and Messenias (Florou Plot), only the Messenias one can be as early as the late 5th, with the other two dating to the 6th century (Varalis 2001, nos. 57, 56, 55 respectively). It is interesting to note that the earliest of the churches (at Messenias) has a baptistery associated, and is likely to have been just to the north of a major route into the city.

The church at Troizen (Lakomata) may be early in the church construction sequence with a late 5th century date as it is possible that at over 1km away from the ancient city centre, it was located on the outskirts of the city; and there also appear to have been some Roman graves found in this area. The only example of a direct reuse of a temple is found at the Sanctuary of Apollo in Argos (6th century), and possibly at the promontory at Hermione. At Argos, the temple reuse example is typical

of a later phase of urban Christianization.

In the Argolid, the choice of location for the earliest churches at Epidavros and the port of Hermione, both hubs, indicate evidence for Christianization through processes of complexity. Change then occurs in the most visible areas of suburban locations through social movement and then in the town centres and later rural areas through tipping point. Thus far, not enough work has been done in the environs of Ano Epidavros to assess the nature of the city, and only one of the churches, Agia Marina has been the focus of in-depth excavation (Oikonomou 1989a). It is argued later, however, that its development may relate to its location on a route.

Arcadia

Both the Argolid and Corinthia have been the focus of intensive archaeological work including survey work which has certainly helped to swell the figures in rural or less accessible areas. Although the Asea survey (Forsén and Forsén 2003) has made a significant contribution, the publication of the Megalopolis survey and several excavations in key areas such as Tegea^{xxx} and areas around Orchemenos will help provide more detail concerning Roman to Late Antique occupation in the region. The largest Arcadian cities were Tegea and Mantinea, with Megalopolis as a smaller, secondary level city (Roy 2010).^{xxxii} Of the 17 churches identified in Arcadia, the only significant concentration is at Tegea with four or five (Asimakopoulou-

Atzaka 1987, nos. 15, 20, 21).^{xxxii} The identification of the church at Alea is still doubtful, and there are a further two mid-6th century churches at the nearby site of Pallantion (Østby 1983, 118-120 and De Franciscis 1995, 30-52). The churches in the other large cities of Megalopolis and Mantinea are not securely identified (Konte 1985, 107-10). Other urban churches have been excavated at Chotousa (Kaphyai) (late 5th/early 6th) (ibid. 118) and Orchemenos (unpublished); and as with Tegea and Pallantion they are likely to have been founded originally partly through network links with locations in the Corinthia and Argolid. In fact, it is likely in the Late Antique period that Arcadia continued to be quite prosperous and self-sufficient and in some respects, relatively isolated, given its central location as it had been in the Roman period (Roy 2010).^{xxxiii} It is not surprising given the lack of external network connections that there is little evidence of churches being constructed through processes of deliberate strategies in Arcadia.^{xxxiv} This shows a general topographic progression, as there the coastline of Arcadia is not well connected with the interior, and there are no panhellenic sanctuaries in the region. Instead the churches at Tegea and other urban locations are likely to have been constructed through processes of social movement as a result of network connections with other hubs of the Peloponnese, such as sanctuaries and other towns. Settlement patterns in the Roman period were dominated by a system of 14

large *poleis*, 3 smaller ones (Aliphera, Lykosoura and Pallantion), and very little opportunity to break away from this system (Roy 2010, 60). The small number of Late Antique rural churches that have been found in Arcadia may indicate the persistence of such settlement patterns; and many of the *poleis* have evidence for churches, including those at Lykosoura (Leonardos 1896, 93-126) and Pallantion. A number of *poleis* well occupied in the Roman period do not yet have evidence for Late Antique churches such as Aliphera, Kynaitha, Psophis or Alea. Late Antique rural churches have been identified at Phalasai, Kato Doliana and Astros Moni Loukou (the latter two sites both unpublished). In all cases the churches are located in stunning places on heights such as Agios Ioannis (Moutsopoulou 1956), Kato Meligous Kastraki, Moni Loukou, or beside water like Kato Doliana and Thelpoussa (ibid). Unfortunately, in all of these cases as the sites are identified through the reuse of Late Antique architectural fragments, it is difficult to discuss this even in relative terms chronologically. As yet, it is not possible to identify the urban development of churches in Tegea, although given the work of Bakke and the Norwegian team (<http://org.uib.no/tegea/index.shtml>), it seems tantalizingly close. The dates of the Agora church and that of Thyrsou are possibly 5th or 6th century. The church identified at the Agora in Tegea may have been close to a Sanctuary of Apollo, but publication of the excavations is needed to

confirm this. Furthermore, the debate about whether or not there was a Late Antique church above the Temple Alea is ongoing (Østby 1983). The church at the lower Sanctuary of Asklepius at Gortys is constructed on the edge of the sanctuary (Metzger 1951, 132). Although little is known about it, its busy location would indicate that it was founded relatively early in the process of Christianization in Arcadia through complexity processes. As Chotousa has been excavated relatively recently, there was good evidence for an earlier temple below the church (Jost 1985, 109-13).

Lakonia

Thus far some 27 churches are known from the Laconia region, and coastal locations are most popular. Concentrations of churches are found at Sparta (Raftopoulou 1998, 125-40), Gerakas (Wace and Hasluck 1908-9, 158-76), Geraki (Xyngopoulos 1937, 108-14), Gytheio (Asimakopoulou-Atzaka 1987, no. 44, Bakourou 1983, 98), and Kypriassos (Drandakis 1979, 215-25); and some even as little as 50 m apart, for example, three 6th century churches at Molaoi (Etzéoglou 1988, 99-107). While it is possible that some earlier churches may be identified at Sparta or Gytheion, the earliest known church from the Laconia region is Agios Petros at Kypriassos-Kainepolis (mid-late 5th). The next earliest seems to be one from Sparta town, Odos Kleombrotou (5th – 6th century), which lies outside the walls in a cemetery area (Raftopoulou 1998, fn. 4). Like Argos, Sparta

seems to have flourished in the 4th century, with evidence now for an abundance of mosaics from the 3rd and 4th centuries, as well as bath houses and the theatre repairs as noted above (Panayotopoulou 1998). Five Late Antique churches are now known. The Late Antique walls surrounded the acropolis; and thus far only one Late Antique church, the Acropolis Basilica (Pl. 6), has been identified with certainty from within the walls (Sweetman 2008, 331-43). The Acropolis Basilica is likely to have been constructed in the 6th century (Sweetman and Katsara 2002). There are indications of at least three other churches in the suburbs: one in the area of the Roman cemetery (Triakosion St), which runs along the southern base of the Acropolis. Other Roman cemeteries have been identified on the edge of the urban space in the area of Magoulitsa in the southwest, which also contained Late Antique period burials, and Mousga in the north (Raftopoulou 1998, 136). The church at Kleombrotou also has a Late Antique cemetery associated with it; and more recent work in the nearby street of Gortsologou has indicated evidence for an earlier Roman cemetery (AR 1997-8, 37 and AR 2002-03, 29).

The majority of churches, from the urban Spartan examples to the rural Tigani are traditionally dated to the 6th century. In comparison with some in the northeast Peloponnese this is relatively late; but even the earliest evidence for a bishop is no earlier than the middle of the 5th century (Cartledge

and Spawforth 2002, 213). In the ports of Neapolis, Vromontas, Kypriassos (Drandakis 1979), the churches are visible from land as well as sea. In towns such as Sparta, the churches are located either on the Acropolis, in a cemetery, or by an earlier sanctuary (on a hill too by the Discouri or Aphrodite Morpho). The more gentle-phased approach mediated through use of memory is indicated by the lack of encroachment on sanctuaries (such as Artemis Orthia or Apollo at Amyclae).^{xxxv} Chronological indications are that ports were the earliest to have churches and then the suburbs of Sparta. Gytheio however, is problematic in this respect as the churches excavated here appear to date to the 6th century. It may simply reflect an archaeological bias or perhaps networks were operating in a different way at this point. The early church building in the ports suggests that church construction in this region were instigated externally and deliberately, rather than emerging from within the Peloponnese. After the constructions at Geraki, Molaoi, and Alike represent a more emergent phase defined by social movement. Further emergence is seen in the third phase, where rural examples of Apidea (6th century) (Etzéoglou 1988, 99-107), Konditsa (Etzéoglou 1973, 283-9) and Zaraphona are constructed as a consequence of tipping point. In rural areas as expected, the churches' locations are highly connected; Apidea, Konditsa and Zaraphona, they are located beside water sources; and as will be argued, Apidea is also on a route. Other than the

possible Spartan examples, only two sanctuaries in Lakonia have been identified as having Late Antique churches either built on or immediately beside temples there: Kypraisos and Phoiniki. The church has not been excavated at Phoiniki, and the cult has not been identified at Kyprassios; but it is interesting that the cult at the Sanctuary of Apollo Hyperteleatas at Phoiniki continued up to CE 395. The date of the church remains tantalizingly buried. It is possible that the sanctuary of the Mother of the gods at ancient Akriai (Kokkinia & Kastraki) continued in use into the Christian period, but there is no evidence for a church there. There are several sanctuary sites which do not have a later church presence.

Messenia

Twelve churches have been identified in Messenia. A small concentration (two) is known from Messene (Themelis 2002b, 21-45); but otherwise the main cluster is in the southern tip of the peninsula around Korone and Methone (Stampoltzis 1976-8, 268-70; Asimakopoulou-Atzaka 1987, no. 52). At Messene, the church to the southeast of the theatre has been excavated, is dated to the late 6th century and is constructed on top of an earlier building (Themelis 2007, 40-1; Themelis 2008, 28-34). However, as Tsvikis (*pers. comm.*) has pointed out, there was a significant amount of destruction debris on which the foundations of the church were built. The church at Messene also lies outside the proposed line of the west stoa, which is

likely to have bordered the Messene temple on the west (Themelis 2007, fig. 1). While the churches at Methone have not survived well nor have they been well-dated, the church at Agia Sofia at Korone is likely to date to the 6th century, based on close parallels with the Acropolis Basilica, Sparta (Sweetman 2008, 340) (Pl. 6). Also in the peninsula, the location of Chryssokelaria (Papathansopoulos 1969, 145) is indicative of a hub and the church may therefore belong to the complexity phase and therefore relatively early in Messenia. The evidence of the imported material suggests that the region of Messenia was quite prosperous in the Roman period and well-connected, particularly through the port of Kyparissi (Themelis 2010, 89-110). As yet, there is no evidence for churches located at Kyparissi, but there is a church just to the south of Filiatra at Agia Kyriake which may have become a busier port in the Late Antique period (Asimakopoulou-Atzaka 1987, no. 53) and this too then is likely to belong to the first and deliberate phase of Christianization in the area. The churches at Messene and Korone are likely to be part of the second phase because of their urban context (and this is also supported by the later date of Agia Sofia, Korone of 6th century). Because of the actual occupation of the same site as the temple, the Longas Basilica (Lambropoulou 2000, 95-108), is likely to belong to a later phase of Christianization. Few rural churches in Messenia have been identified as yet, which is probably a reflection of the archaeological focus thus far in the

region. Based on a study of the routes, the concentration of churches around the east and south coast of the Messenian peninsula is understandable. It is peculiar, that as yet a Late Antique church has not been identified at Pylos, or along the coast to the north.

Elis

Seven churches have so far been identified in the Elis region, and there are no examples of multiple churches at single locations. The example at Olympia appears to be the only church whose building can be defined through deliberate processes, particularly given its location on the edge of the sanctuary (Adler et al 1897). The churches at Elis (if it is actually a church) (Yialouris 1965, 211-3) and Phigaleia (which is currently being excavated), may be the result of social movement; and the rural churches, such as at Skyllountia (Lambropoulou 2000, 95-108)^{xxxvi} and Anilion (Yialouris 1964, 178), are clearly visible with their hilltop locations, and in the case of Anilion, proximity to water. The church at Skyllountia has a triple-apse arrangement on the east; and Dr Athanasoulis (*pers comm.*) suggests this may actually be a feature of churches belonging to the 7th or even 8th century, with further examples at Agia Marina and Provantiou (Tegea).

Achaia

19 churches have been recognised in the Achaia region, 11 of which are located in Patras or its suburbs (Moutzali 1991, 259-64). There are no other significant concentrations

of churches in the region. It is likely the churches at Aigio (Asimakopoulou-Atzaka 1987, no. 22), Kato Rotikia (*ibid.* no. 29), Skioessa (Pantelidou 1982, 163) and Tritaia (Mastrokostas 1976-8, 370-80) are a result of network contacts with Patras and Kato Achaia (Moutzali 1990, 150). Change in these areas can be defined as social movement and belonging to the second phase. At Tritaia, the only definite Achaean example of the construction of the church on or near a temple,^{xxxvii} is likely to be part of a later Christianization phase and it is dated to the 6th – 7th century. The church at Agios Andreas in Patras is located just to the northeast of the oracular fountain of Demeter and it has been dated to the 6th century. The church at Leontion (Pl. 10) (Mastrokostas 1976-8) marks a position of high visibility, but is also certainly located in what was urban space although the occupation dates of the earlier settlement are not yet known. Platanovrysi (Moutzali 1987, 190) may mark the location of a route through Achaia.

The nature of the topographic change in the city of Patras from the Roman to Late Antique is difficult to define with great detail, although Moutzali (1991, 259) indicates that there was little change between the location of the Roman and Late Antique cities. With regard to the Roman cemeteries on the south and north, the churches are all found well within these areas; and it is possible that the Late Antique city occupied the upper parts of the modern city rather than the lower coastal

side of the modern city centre which was covered by swamps.^{xxxviii} Dekoulakou (1976, 102-3) excavated the remains of a late 3rd century Christian cemetery in the centre of the older Roman town, which indicates that the topography and extent of the city was already changing at this point (Lambropoulou 2000, 97). Application of theories of strategic change indicates that the churches identified in the area of the lower town, in some cases just along the city wall (eg Vlachou), are likely to be the earliest churches in the construction sequence in Patras.

STRATEGIC CHANGE AND

NETWORKS IN THE PELOPONNESE

The value of the application of strategic change theory is that it explains the diversity of archaeological evidence, allowing an interpretation of a very fluid Christianization in terms of the processes undertaken on and by various elements of the population, at a range of different times, and in a multiplicity of places. Christianization must have been adaptable, drawing on the familiar in terms of location, architecture, art and indeed community memory and tradition for it to work.

Complexity

The different groups that make up complex communities would not necessarily have a shared identity but they would be familiar with and open to new ideas and are normally found in highly accessible and connected areas. Hubs such as busy ports and edges of

sanctuaries fulfil these criteria particularly as both locations would be highly networked both internally and externally to the Peloponnese to enable sharing of ideas. The ports of Corinth, Kenchreai and Kiato and sanctuaries of Epidavros and Olympia were among the most active in Greece, and in the Mediterranean with an international milieu. It is likely that this, the earliest phase of conversion would have had a sizeable input from higher church and state officials, and would have entailed planning and deliberate strategies. The decision to construct churches in these locations was successful in Christianization because the regular circulation of people would have enabled and spread the change. As is expected of change in complex groups, there are clear elements of emergent patterns and at these early locations, in each case there is evidence for continuation of pre-Christian cult and there is little sign of the rampant destruction of the sites indicated in the sources. The choice of location draws on shared traditions of use which is also part of the emergent process. The non-intrusive positioning of the building outside the temenos wall, along with the evidence for continued cult, is clear indication of the practice of both religions contemporaneously at this site. Altogether this is indicative of the desire to subtly encourage visitors, through siting the church in a visible location, such as by the propylon of the sanctuary at Epidaurus; and also by making the architecture impressive and a matter of curiosity in the first instance. The location of

the churches in highly visible areas, particularly at the sanctuaries, is also a statement of confidence on the part of the Christians, which is further extended when evidence of an absence of wide-scale temple destruction is included. With the exception of Olympia, these earliest churches all have baptisteries associated with them, which is to be expected, given their founding role in the conversion process. In the case of Olympia, given the location of the church so close to the river Kladeos, it is tempting to suggest that baptism may have taken place here. Furthermore, since these early churches are located in the north eastern part of the Peloponnese, it can also be assumed that pre-Christian cult was continuing in sanctuaries in other areas of the Peloponnese.

Social Movement

The evidence of topography of the Peloponnesian churches indicates that the second phase of Christianization can be seen in construction of churches in the suburbs of major cities, particularly those close to ports or sanctuaries where churches are already present. Following the initial deliberate strategy, the topography of the churches indicates that the emergent process takes hold. Through processes of social movement, the next churches that are built are in locations that have shared network connections with the original church locations and importantly shared community identities with some of the groups in the complex communities. For example church building

spreads from Kenchreai (and possibly Lechaion) to Corinth and from Kiato to Sikyon, Epidavros to Ano Epidavros; and in the south, once Gytheio and Filiatra have had their first churches, they are joined by towns such as Molaoi, Sparta and Messene (see Appendix 1)). This shows that ideas spread as one would have expected from the original sites due to their network connections and shared cultural elements. In many respects this was the most active phase on the part of provincial population, rather than the top tier as discussed above. Word spread fast; and through the machinations of the network society there was an urban swell of demand to be connected with the religion, which is clearly accompanied by political and financial success. It is worth stressing, that in most, if not all, urban centres in the Peloponnese, the churches located in the centre of the urban spaces were not part of this second phase process (discussed in more detail below).

As Talloen and Vercauteren (2011, 352) point out, the sacred landscape was fundamental for social order and as such, when Christianity became the state religion, there was a sense that this would also provide social structure. Furthermore, Fowden (1990, 344) suggests that society as constituted would work ‘catalytically’ on its emergent religious systems. Relevant factors in social movement include such aspects as striving to have what others already have; and this can be seen in the evidence of the church buildings themselves. In many respects, investment in

church buildings is a return to what the elites of the Roman past were already well familiar with and in this way are drawing on a shared cultural past. Such investment may have allowed privileges of position in public processions, as it had in the past, as well as within church structures. The church at this point was solidifying its connection with power and money, in part through inheritance of land from the faithful, and also through the appropriation of sanctuary land (Angold and Whitby 2008, 571-82). There are much broader issues relating to consolidation of the power of the church and individuals, such as the roles of bishops and urban elites. A range of religious events would have secured the interest of the population in the church, such as the promotion of miracles, and the promise of everlasting life (Brown 1992). In terms of more direct involvement in secular social structures, the church used the formation of laws,^{xxxix} control of networks, patronage, as well as benevolence towards the lower echelons of society, and philanthropy (Brown 1992, 152; Miller 2009, 621-9). A further factor may have been promotion of the 'Good Life' as noted by Maguire (1999, 253-4) through images of abundance in the realms of living and dead, secular and the church. All of this is perceptible, and articulated through the processes of social movement. Church officials may have particularly sought conversions of the elite, not just because of the potential for land and investment, but also because this is likely to have inspired others to want to belong. In this respect, a range of

investments, in churches, buildings, mosaics and other interior décor, may have become more available to wider society (Bowden 2001, 62; Sweetman forthcoming). There were still other ways in which the church was able to maintain social order. Elites may have been enticed through preferential treatment in the church space, in life and in death (in terms of the location of burials in relation to the church building). Examples of this may be seen in the KMF basilica in Knossos where large tombs were located within the temenos along the east-west axis of the church in line with the entrance (Sweetman 2005, 367; fig. 3). Visitors could not help but associate the tomb and its individuals with the church. Regarding participation-encouragement, many of these elements can be read as forms of social exclusivity, where those who have standing in the public sphere already belong, and those who do not, now want to belong. It is likely that the church would have pandered to this desire through the use of tiered space within the church for elite and connected groups (McCutcheon 1999). To a degree, the design of the church building overall would have helped facilitate this (for example, in the Acropolis Basilica, Sparta)(Pl.10) (Sweetman and Katsara 2002, 429-68). On the inside, different levels of proximity to the clergy and the ritual performance might have been one way to enable expression of social stratification (Sweetman 2010). Presumably, the same can be said for sight-lines too, where uninterrupted views might have had more merit (Yasin 2012, 248-80). This is interesting

in terms of the interior layouts of churches where, when reconstructed, sight-lines are much more obvious. This evidence shows, somewhat counter-intuitively, that views of the bema from the galleries and narthexes appear to be better than those from the side aisles. For some of the catechumens in the narthex, particularly if it had a tribelon, it seems they would have had rather privileged views; and this might be more indicative of social rather than religious status.^{x1} The church building overall would have been an impressive, imposing and highly visible building, decorated for the most part with lavish interior décor; yet the absence of interior visibility from outside would have intensified a sense of secrecy, and would have stimulated interest on the part of those as yet uninvolved in the church's activities indicated in processes of social movement.

Change evolves through social movement processes by tapping into existing elements that are culturally meaningful in the past and present. New churches are constructed in locations that have a visceral connection because the location, art, architecture and activities associated with it are already intrinsically significant. As with the first phase, the choice of church location, which in the second phase is in pre-existing cemeteries and on major routes, is also indicative of the drive to make the churches and all that they offer, visible and part of daily life, while not being too overt or forceful. They may have articulated their importance by processions

(mentioned above), which would have further exploited the concept of exclusivity, thereby encouraging members of the community to participate. The choice of a mortuary context may be seen as drawing upon ancestral memory in the community so as to legitimise the new religious practice. This in itself was a problematic issue in the early years of the construction of monumental churches, where there was a tension between the church's location in a supposedly polluted space, and the location of burials in intramural churches (Saradi 2006, 433-4). Moreover, social stratification within the context of the church continued even in death wherever Christian cemeteries became established around churches and where those deemed most holy were given prime space in the church, with the social elite buried close by (ibid 434). The location of a church at a martyr's tomb, or at the site of a miracle, would also have ensured a high number of visitors and a certain level of curiosity about the area. It may be the case in some churches, such as the Acropolis Basilica Sparta, that viewing locations and platforms were constructed to allow visitors to view the martyr's grave from the interior of the church only.^{x1i}

Tipping Point

The third phase – tipping point – is brought about through the realization of a critical mass, whereby the use of landscape, location and networks in the establishment of the social movement, such as with Christianisation, evolves into the dominant,

culturally meaningful movement, in this instance through a critical mass of churches in the urban, suburban, coastal and sanctuary contexts. Once critical mass is reached, a certain natural momentum accumulates (tipping point), where the numbers of churches being built overshadows any existing religion, and groups begin to identify with the new churches. Change as a result of tipping point is also an emergent process and is seen in the most conservative of populations and it is likely that this explains the later foundation of many of the rural churches in the Peloponnese. In most, if not all, cases examined, the rural churches identified as having been built as a result of this process are constructed in locations that do not necessarily have evidence of pre-existing cult (such as Nemea Evangelistra (Pl. 8), Talanta and Konditsa). The church at Panariti identified by Lolos (2011) is also a rural site (Pl. 7). There is some suggestion of evidence for earlier cult on this site; but for most churches, there is little sign of prior Christian or even religious presence in their locations. Collar notes the importance of phase transition, particularly in terms of understanding the part that networks play in the spread of new religion. She emphasises that when significant change takes place either within the network or with the creation of a new network (phase transition), this is caused not by one process but by multiple players and is deemed an emergent process (Collar 2009). However, in order for communication to occur across the network a cluster of

groups (a giant component) is necessary. If there is no giant component, any change will happen in isolation (*ibid.*, 145). This situation may be equated with tipping point, and the foundation of the rural churches such as Konditsa and Panariti. The topography of the churches clearly reveals the importance of visibility and memory manipulation. The churches are all located on mountaintops, and would have been clearly visible, dominating the landscape, and functioning as symbols of land ownership. Elevation would also have encouraged awe, in terms of proximity to God; but also admiration of the arduousness of construction. Their elevation and location beside water sources or places of natural beauty naturalized these increasingly ubiquitous churches.

While it is not precisely the same development, there are elements of the tipping point process identifiable in the way in which the Christianization of the urban sphere is undertaken. In the first phase of the Christianization of the urban sphere, churches are constructed in the suburbs; and only once a number of churches have been built is the city centre occupied by a church. Thus far, the incremental construction of churches from the outskirts (on routes) to cemeteries to intramural constructions is seen in Argos, Corinth and Sparta; and this is likely to be the case for Patras and Tegea also. It is usually just a single church at the centre, and often located on or near an earlier cult site (for example on Temple Hill in Corinth (Pl. 2) and

the Acropolis Basilica (Pl. 6). Outside the Peloponnese the same phenomenon is seen in Athens (Saradi 2006; Frantz 1965, 187-205), Knossos and Gortyn (Sweetman 2004b, 325-8). In urban areas, therefore, the application of the sociological evidence is not necessarily mutually exclusive. Save for the presence of earlier cult, it is arguable that the same tipping point process that takes hold of the Peloponnese is visible on a miniature scale in the urban context.

The multiple processes occurring simultaneously throughout the Peloponnese and even within individual towns are explicable by the emergent nature of Christianization, and also owing to cultural lag. For example, while rural areas of the northeast have churches constructed as a result of tipping point, at the same time, churches in the suburbs of Sparta might be built as a result of social movement. Furthermore, the processes are not location exclusive, tipping point is the reason for rural and some central urban constructions.

The analysis of church topography and Christianization aids in an understanding of the various roles that locations played at different points within the local, regional and international networks. Networks are the means through which the three phases of change occurred in the Christianization of the Peloponnese. In terms of strategic change, as a considered process, it makes sense that the earliest churches would have been

constructed in hubs; highly connected areas such as the Panhellenic sanctuaries like Epidavros and ports such as Kenchreai. These hubs would have helped mediate connections between the Peloponnese and the outside world. The contact between hubs and nodes would have stimulated the construction of churches in the spaces between them creating further nodes (phase transition) (Chen and D'Souza 2011, 1). It is possible to see this on the location plan of the Peloponnesian churches (Pl. 1). In the Peloponnese, it is likely that Molaoi and Geraki were two nodes; and the construction of the church at Apidea indicates the creation of a new node. The same may apply to the foundation of the church at Talanta in between Molaoi and Neapoli, and the churches at Chilimodi and Prosymna in between Argos and Kenchreai. In the case of Palaia Epidavros and the Asklepion at Epidavros, it may be that the churches at Ano Epidavros are initially constructed as a new node; but then this region begins to surpass that of Palaia Epidavros in terms of the number of churches constructed there. It is clear that the churches in Arcadia were founded as a result of emergent processes belonging to the second and third phases of social movement and tipping point, which reflect its location between nodes situation of the area between nodes.

Current scholarship on network analysis favours the idea that increasingly, considerable levels of connectivity can be

achieved with fewer connections (Chen and D'Souza 2011, 1-4). When applied to the Late Antique evidence, it is useful to see how it can further support the identification of the three phases and the classification of ports/sanctuaries, towns and cities, and rural spaces within. It is possible to see how Christianity spread through the established networks, and how in part this was a self-perpetuating process, in that it also helped create new networks. This in turn helps to explain why conversion of the urban spaces occurs after many of the sanctuaries already had churches established in them. For example, ports and sanctuaries may be identified as hubs in the early part of the Late Antique period, and then major towns become hubs, which when clustered together form a giant component, out of which comes the spread of conversion into rural areas. This helps to explain why the churches in Sparta for example appear to be later than some of those on the Laconian coast. It also seems that Sparta may have been less connected to other urban spaces in the Peloponnese than its own coastal towns. While scholars note that there are naturally arising networks, recent research has shown growth by preferential attachment is more about local engineering than simply relative location (D'Souza *et al* 2007). This emphasises the importance of the roles of individuals, groups and organizations within the networks and that changes do not just occur in isolation.

On a macro-scale (the Peloponnese) and

micro-scale (urban contexts), the three processes are identifiable; and it is clear that visibility and uses of memory and tradition play a central role in the success of the conversion process. While these points are a matter for more detailed discussion in another article, it is worth noting here how the topography is used as a basis for successful Christianization through the incorporation of the use of the church in everyday life.

In the Peloponnese it is clear that once the initial deliberate strategies have been used by the state to establish churches at key locations for successful conversion (ports and sanctuaries), the later emergent approaches to conversion are subtle and in many cases, community-led. Even within the deliberate strategic, quite a relaxed approach is taken where, the location of the church on the periphery of sanctuary is arguably a manipulation of memories in order to encourage new community cohesion centred on the church (Sweetman forthcoming). In terms of the topography, the location of churches in earlier cemeteries (for example at Kodratos in Corinth), and then the use of the church lands for burial, connect the new community of Christians with their ancestors. This serves multiple purposes. It legitimises further the new religion through past memories, as well providing a community focus through shared use (Sweetman 2010, 224). The same may be seen to apply to sanctuary space, particularly in the case of Epidavros, Nemea and Olympia. While the

direct ancestors may not be present, the same sense of ownership and community would have been, particularly in many cases because there is evidence of continuing cult practice into the 5th century. In most of these cases, the new church is located with high visibility, while not forcefully eclipsing earlier buildings. In fact, it is only really in the second phase (with the examples of Cleonai and Sanctuary of Apollo at Argos), but primarily the third, Christianization phases (Lykosoura), that the direct reuse of earlier cult buildings is found. Rural areas and sanctuaries do not tend to have multiple churches. This further helps to define the different phases of conversion, but also emphasises the importance of visibility in the conversion process: arguably, once the church was visible and used, there was no need to provide further churches in the less densely populated locations.

Mountain top visibility is related to the tipping point scenario for the Christianization of the rural area. But memory here is used in terms of identifying with gods (i.e. on heights), and also in terms of ancestral rights over the land. The setting of the churches on edges of communities or difficult to reach locations symbolically defined the region for others to see; but it gave the community a shared identity tied to ownership of the landscape, particularly as they moved across the space. Acknowledgement of the community's territory or urban extent emphasised the exclusivity of the population, as well as subconsciously connecting the

church with ownership of that land and its wealth. Likewise, the pattern that existed between churches on acropolis sites that have intervisibility with urban centres in the valley below may be a wider scale version of the same construct. This is well illustrated with the examples of Corinth and Acrocorinth (Pl. 11), and Argos and the Sanctuary of Apollo. As can be seen from Appendix 1, the positioning of a church beside water was also closely related to the third Christianization phase. It is arguable that the location of churches beside water sources in the rural areas could be for baptismal purposes. Thus far, those that are so located do not have evidence for formal baptisteries, for example Gortys or Agios Ioannis in Arcadia (Pl. 12); but this does not obviate the fact that they were gathering points. There is likely to be as much variation in the agents that activate the spread of Christianity as there are processes and timescales; and this is particularly understandable when the Late Antique Peloponnese is seen in terms of its role within the Mediterranean network society. While use of memory and tradition may have helped to stimulate the use of the church in the conversion process, as is clear from above, the spread of Christianity could only have happened through network connections.

The analysis of the evidence shows that in most cases there are few linear developments and that certain locations with multiple churches such as Corinth, Argos, Sparta, may have a series of construction dates, some even

in parallel. This is expected in emergent processes. In terms of defining external origins for the earliest churches in the Peloponnese, it is more difficult. Although this phase has more structured deliberate elements and therefore linear developments it is extremely difficult to make connections between places based on shared architectural form it is therefore useful to examine the evidence for network connections more broadly.

As Saradi and Eliopoulos (2011, 263) argued, there is a range of reasons for the retention of pre-Christian cult in the Greek provinces which includes the tenacity of Athenian traditions and the philosophical schools as well as limited network connections more generally. It may be the case that Athens is the key difference here, with the earliest church thought to be constructed in the city in the mid-5th century, which according to Krautheimer (1986, 118) is a reflection of the power of the University of Athens. Evidence from the Cycladic islands indicate the construction of churches starting in the mid to late 4th century which is somewhat earlier than in the Greek mainland which would make sense in terms of the impact of network connections. In other cities and sanctuaries of the Greek provinces, such as Knossos, Corinth, Nea Anchialos and Epidavros, churches had already been constructed in the late fourth or early 5th century. This suggests that some places at least were well connected with certain networks.

The methodology developed here is not without its flaws, which for the moment concern issues of chronologies and bias in the focus of the archaeological work that has been undertaken, for example, the regions that have the highest concentration of rural churches are those areas for which surveys have been published: Lakonia, Sikyon (Corinthia), Methana (Argolid).

As is evidenced through the sociological application and network analysis, conversion of the Peloponnese is likely to have been multi-directional. Different groups, such as church leaders, priests, local elite and broader swathes of the population would have steered the process at different times. Existing spaces would have been manipulated somewhat organically through the situation of a church; but active processes that create the places through use would have maintained the strength of community identity without the risk of a tension-based conversion through new social memories and foci. The process is not clear cut. It is not just about religion and place, but about power and the past. In the sanctuary context, attention is primarily on the subtle transformation of emphasis on the new church, while in some cases pre-Christian practices continue at the temple. In the later phase, which is not just exclusive to widespread occupation of rural spaces, the question arises as to whether the conversion of Roman temples may be seen as more aggressive Christianization, or simply the need

for space. This question, as well as queries relating to the types of buildings and the nature of pre-existing cult, is examined in elsewhere (Sweetman *forthcoming*).

Within the frame of strategic change, a number of different factors can be seen to activate the change. This makes sense particularly when religious ideology comes from the top down while religious practice is being undertaken on a much wider scale which allows for a greater range of differences. Such an application allows for an overall aim of conversion, but without the traditional understanding of a linear chronological development, or a flattened, single response. This also makes it possible for Christianity and polytheism to exist on a wide scale within the Peloponnese and on a narrow scale even within a sanctuary area such as Epidavros. The construction of the churches can be seen as elements within a process which may be different according to geographic location even if the chronology is the same. This is somewhat at odds with the Christian philosophy which views historical processes as linear with a clear beginning and end and without repetition, in part because it is ordained by God. The avoidance of direct causation allows for a variety of agents, be they institutional or individual, in accordance with different phases, locations or roles within networks. In order to allow social change to be successful the message needs to be understood and the networks need to be in place, which is why there is a need for

locations, architecture, iconography and even elements of practice to be familiar as well as having memorable features. In all, application of the theories of strategic change allow the evidence of the topography of the Peloponnesian churches to be understood in terms of incremental Christianization, through a range of agents and methods.

APPENDIX 1

Appendix 1

Currently Accepted dates:

5th Century

- Kenchreai
- Corinth Ag Paraskevi?
- Hermeione
- Sikyon (Sanct)?
- Olympia
- Elis (?)
- Ano Epidavros Panagitsa?
- Epidavros Asklepion
- Lakkomata (Troizen)
- Patras Kanakari St
- Patras Sisini & Rofou

Late 5th to early 6th

- Kiato
- Ano Epidavros (Ag. Paraskevi)
- Methana (Acropolis)
- Methana (Ag. Nikolaos)
- Argos (Paliopyrgo)
- Argos Messenias st
- Nemea
- Cleonai
- Chotousa
- Skyllountia
- Aigion
- Patras Kanakari 2
- Patras Korinthos street
- Kato Roitika
- Philiatra
- Kainepolis Ag. Petros (?)

6th

- Lechaion
- Sikyon
- Melissi
- Corinth Kodratos
- Corinth Kraneion
- Corinth Asklepion
- Corinth NE Temple Apollo (Late 6th)

Church location

Ports:

- Kenchreai
- Leachion
- Kiato
- Melissi
- Hermonine
- Methana
- Spetses
- Kato Meligos
- Astros
- Gerakas
- Neapoli
- Vromantas
- Gytheio
- Gerakas

- Argos Kephalaria
- Argos Alike
- Argos Danos St.
- Argos Danos & Seferis
- Argos Baths
- Argos Chatzi (?)
- Argos Sanctuary of Apollo
- Spetses Evangelistra
- Spetses Mill
- Pallantion Ag. Georgios
- Pallantion Ag. Cristoforos
- Lykosoura
- Tegea Agora (or 5th)?
- Tegea Thrysou (or 5th)?
- Kato Meligious
- Konditsa
- Sparta (Acropolis Basilica)
- Sparta (Kleombrotou)
- Geraki (Krini)
- Apidea
- Molaoi A
- Molaoi B
- Molaoi C
- Monemvasia
- Neapoli
- Gytheio Acropolis
- Gytheio Town
- Gytheio Andriakou
- Kainepolis Monastiri
- Tigani
- Alyka
- Messene (by theatre)
- Anilion
- Triatia
- Skioessa
- Aigion

7th century

- Ano Epidavros Ag. Marina
- Tegea Provantinou
- Anilion

- Kiparissos
- Oitylo
- Korone
- Methone
- Filiatra
- Kato Achaia
- Aigio
- Kato Roitika

Towns

- Corinth
- Sikyon
- Argos
- Tegea
- Megalopolis
- Mantinea
- Sparta
- Molaoi
- Geraki
- Monemvasia
- Alyka
- Messene
- Elis
- Patras

Sanctuaries

- Kenchreai (?)
- Epidavros
- Akrocorinth
- Sikyon
- Nemea
- Olympia
- Choutsa
- Lykosoura
- Sparta
- Cleonai
- Longas

Mountains

- Almyri
- Sophikon East
- Chilimodi
- Bozikas
- Lalioti
- Panatiri (Sanct)
- Pellene
- Melissi
- Nemea Evanglistria
- Methana
- Palea Epidavros
- Nichoria
- Skyllountia
- Leontion
- Tritaia

Water source

- Kleonai
- Bozikas
- Kiato (Port)
- Panariti
- Ano Epidavros
- Kephalaria
- Lykeria
- Astros (Monastery)
- Astros (Villa)
- Kato Doliana
- Kato Megilious
- Gortys
- Ag. Ioannis
- Koniditsa
- Talanta
- Skioessa
- Pallantio (Lake)
- Lianos
- Korone
- Phiglia
- Platnovrysi
- Leontion
- Olena

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ⁱ Scholars have focused on specific areas such as the topography of the Argolid (Konte, 1985, 118-120), Elis (Lambropoulou 1991, 283-91), and Laconia (Etzéoglou 1988, 99-107), or urban landscapes like Sparta (Kourinou-Pikoula 1986, 89-104) and Tegea (Orlandos 1973, 3-175). Gregory's synthetic view of the urban environment of Byzantine Greece is a more unusual approach (Gregory 1982, 43-64).

Furthermore, the limitations of the typological approach that has been taken to the study of late antique churches more generally has been noted by Bowden (2001, 57-68).

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ⁱⁱⁱ San Crisogono or the Lateran Basilica (Krautheimer 1986, 36-7; 46-7).

^{iv} Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem or the Rotunda on Golgotha (Krautheimer 1986, 60-1).

^v However, Foschia (2009, 209-33) has convincingly shown that many of these designations may be attributable to other periods.

^{vi} See <http://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/greekbasilicas/article/> for the locations of the churches.

^{vii} Further analysis of the co-existence of polytheistic sanctuaries and Christian churches can be found in Sweetman *forthcoming*.

^{viii} For general examples see Lavan (2011, xv-xvii); for specific provinces such as Egypt see Dijkstra 2011, 389-90; for the Peloponnese see Rothaus 1996, and for a specific example, Nemea (Birge, Kraynak and Miller 1992) and for Eleusis see Saradi and Eliopoulos 2011, 283.

^{ix} Knossos and Sparta are such examples, see Sweetman 2012. For discussion of the earlier focus on Late Antique urban decline see Haldon 2006, 607. For a specific illustration of how economic decline had been assumed for Palestinian ports which were more likely to have simply changed in their monumentality for pragmatic reasons in the Late Antique period see Kingsley 2001, 69-87. For defence for the use of the term 'decline' see Liebeschuetz 2001.

- x Liebeschuetz, 'Uses and abuses', 236 also discusses how the neglect of post-Classical levels by archaeologists in the past had contributed to the idea of late antique urban decline.
- xi Particularly in terms of more focus on practical investigation of the period as well as efforts to re-dress the bias concerning decline.
- xii *Lives* of saints do not survive from this area of Greece for this period (I am grateful to an external reader for clarifying this).
- xiii For the evidence of Christianization from the *Vitae* of the saints and missionaries and the roles of the *Vitae* as propaganda see Kuznetsova 2000, 125-32.
- xiv See P. Themelis, 'Υστερορωμαϊκή και ΠρωτοΒυζαντινή Μεσσήνη' in *ΠρωτοΒυζαντινή Μεσσήνη και Ολυμπία. Αστικός και αγροτικός χώρος στη δυτική Πελοπόννησο. Πρακτικά του διεθνούς Συμποσίου, Αθήνα 29-30 Μαΐου 1998* eds. P. Themelis and B. Konti (Athens, 2002), 20-58; P. Themelis, 'The economy and society of Messenia under Roman Rule', in *Roman Peloponnese III. Society, economy and culture under the Roman Empire: Continuity and innovation*, eds. A. Rizakis and C. E. Lepenioti (Athens, 2010), 89-110.
- xv http://www.yppo.gr/0/anaskafes/pdfs/5_EBA.pdf; AR ID1473 and http://www.yppo.gr/0/anaskafes/pdfs/E_EPKA.pdf
- xvi Particularly excavation work by Dr Athanasoulis and work on ceramics by Ellie Tzavella.
- xvii On the personal objects see Saradi 2006, 382-3. See Foschia 2009, 210 for discussion of the relatively late changing focus from civic to religious investment in the public sphere.
- xviii See Walbank 2010, 267. For examples in Argos see Feissel 1980, 466. These points are discussed in more detail in R. J. Sweetman, 'Memory, Tradition and Christianization of the Peloponnese' (*forthcoming*).
- xix Some of the published surveys such those of Lakonia (Cavanagh, Crowel, Catling & Shipley, eds., 1996), Methana (Mee & Forbes, eds., 1997), Asea (Forsén, & Forsén 2003) and Sikyon (Lolos 2011) indicate an increased focus on rural life particularly in the 4th century and in time, more evidence for non-urban religious practice in the Late Antique period may be forthcoming.
- xx See Ricoeur, *History*, 186, for discussion of the lack of continuous trajectory or a unified history, and the argument for multiple simultaneous histories.
- xxi Sweetman 'Christianization', Varalis, *The Influences, Caraher, Church*.
- xxii There is a possibility that the foundation of the church at Kenchreai is a little earlier, around the late 4th century (Sweetman 2010).
- xxiii Dr Athanasoulis is currently working on these churches with some original theories regarding their dates.
- xxiv Further discussion of this point relating to the diachronic use (or not) of cities and sanctuaries will be found in a forthcoming article by the author.
- xxv For their location, see Sanders 2005, fig. 16.1.
- xxvi <http://extras.ha.uth.gr/sikyon/en/season2005e.asp>.
- xxvii It is tempting to include Lechaion in this group but if correct, the late date of the church would suggest otherwise. In any case, if it is correct that the Lechaion church is an Imperial construction it is most interesting in terms of strategic processes in the 6th century.
- xxviii Oikonomou-Laniado *Argos Paléochrétienne*, 11-25.
- xxix Oikonomou-Laniado (2003, 21) identifies this church as part of a small monastic complex.
- xxx The on-going survey work there however has been very successful and the plentiful publications are very useful particularly for the diachronic occupation of the city.
- xxxi Roy also suggests that Megalopolis was not as well-maintained in the Roman period as it had been although there was some limited investment (for example Domitian) to at least keep the public centre of the city working.
- xxxii The theatre and Provation sites are current excavations.
- xxxiii It may only be seen as isolated in terms relative to the centrality of the geographic location. Jost & Hoët-van Cauwenberghe (2010, 291) note that there were some original cults established in the Imperial period, for example that of Antinous at Mantinea and of Pallas and Evander at Pallantion.
- xxxiv This is not problematic, particularly since the breakdown of discussion is based on the modern geographical divisions.
- xxxv There were some initial but minor attempts to damage the Athena Chalioikos temple by Christians, but it does not seem to have caused significant damage.
- xxxvi Excavations are currently underway by Athanasoulis.

^{xxxvii} According to Osanna (1996, 174), three temples are known from the site through Pausanias: Athena, Ares and the Great Gods.

^{xxxviii} I would like to thank an external reader for noting this.

^{xxxix} For a good example, see the laws on child exposure as discussed by Grubbs 2009, 119-33

^{xl} In illustration, see <http://openvirtualworlds.org/basilica/>.

^{xli} This is a feature of the West Building (Sweetman and Katsara 2002) and it is suggested that the west building stairs may have incorporated a viewing platform over the grave of the supposed martyr's grave in the south side of the West building. See also Saradi 2003, 31-6 (I am grateful to an external reader for suggesting this reference).