Horoi as Reserved Areas

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In the Panathenaic Oration, p. 102 Jebb = 163 Dindorf, Aelius Aristides praises Attica as a first home of man, a χώρος τις ἄνθρωπων ἵδιος ἐκ πάσης γῆς ἐξηρημένος, ὀσπερ οἱ τῶν τεμενῶν ὄροι. The whole passage and other questions concerning it will be treated in my forthcoming study of the oration; here I wish merely to draw attention to the connection between this passage and the senatus consultum calling for a determination τῶν ὄρων Περγαμηνῶν εἰσών, which stood in the market place of Aristides’ own city, Smyrna, also in Adramyttium and perhaps other cities of Asia.

Clearly Aristides is not here using the word ὄροι in the sense of “boundaries.” Rather the ὄροι he has in mind was a χώρος τις which had been set apart in a τέμενος.

Now the senatus consultum which called for a determination τῶν ὄρων Περγαμηνῶν εἰσών concerns estates mentioned in the testament of Attalus III. Publicans with contracts from the censors of 131 B.C. had apparently tried to operate not only in the territory left to the Romans but also in certain areas which belonged to the Pergamenes. This led to an important case which the Senate settled in the extant acta of 129 B.C.

In the dispute between the publicans and the Pergamenes the word for “boundaries” was probably ὄρια, as in the later documents of the dossier discovered at Smyrna. The word ὄρος had a different meaning. In fact, the above cited passage of Aristides, who compared Attica, the home of man, with other countries which gloried in elephants and lions and horses and dogs, strongly suggests that the ὄροι Περγαμηνῶν were certain areas set apart as τέμενη from the land bequeathed to

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2 P. Viereck, Sermo Graecus, p. 62, no. 15=IGR IV, 262.
the Romans. Later Sulla deprived Pergamum of its special status, but when Julius Caesar restored the special status of the Pergamene territory, he was honored as άποκαταστήσαντα τοῖς θεοῖς τὴν τε πόλιν [καὶ τῇ]ν χώραν, and the man who received credit for persuading Caesar was similarly honored as άποκαταστήσαντα τοῖς πατρώοις θεοῖς τὴν τε πόλιν καὶ τὴν χώραν.4

The οροί Περγαμηνῶν, which may have arisen after the Attalid bequest by which certain (Pergamene) temple estates were reserved to Pergamum, were probably close to Pergamum; in fact, Elaea and Adramyttium bordered on Pergamene territory, while Smyrna may have been chosen for one copy of the inscription because, as L. Robert suggests, it was the center of a conventus.

SEG IX, 352, a bilingual inscription of Cyrenaica, reports that Nero restored to the Roman People reservations occupied by individuals: fines occupatos a privatis, οροὺς διακατεχομένους ύπο ἰδιωτῶν.

The word ορος in the Attic terminology of land tenure6 is well attested for a marker indicating that the estate where it appeared was in some special category. In some places apparently the estate so marked could itself be called a ορος.

This meaning occurs in a misunderstood passage of Euripides, Heraclidae 37–38, where the following situation exists. Iolaus, Alcmene, and the Heraclidae have landed at Marathon and taken refuge in the sanctuary of Zeus. Iolaus says: δν ἔκατι τέρμονας / κλεινών Ἦθελνων τόντοι ’ἄφικμοεθ’ ορον. So Nauck and others read the manuscripts. Allen and Italie (Concordance, s.v. ορος) give “’Ἠθελνών τόντοι’ . . . ὅτι (τῆς’ . . . ὅδιν Steph.).” Both these interpretations are incorrect because the authoritative version calls for no emendation and because the word Ἦθελνων depends from τέρμονας (the confines of Attica) and not from ορον (the precinct where the temple and altar of Zeus are located). Marathon on the coast may properly be described as the confines of the Athenians. Translate: “By reason of which relationship we have come to this sacred precinct, to the confines of famous Athens.”

4 For the references see L. Robert, op.cit.
Another example occurs in the Διηγήσεις of the poems of Callimachus. The citation from Callimachus reads Τυρσηνὸν τείχισμα Πελασγικὸν εἰς ἕµε γαῖα. Then comes the explanation: “He is making mention of the separate estates of the Pelasgians at Athens and of the wall built by them.” Ἰστορεῖ περὶ τῶν Ἀθηναίων Πελασγικῶν ὁρῶν καὶ τοῦ ποιηθέντος ὑπ’ αὐτῶν τείχους. The horoi of the Pelasgians, it seems, lay within the precinct known as the Pelargikon or Pelasgikon, and could be described as gaia.

The development in the Attic use of the word ὅρος may have been from a boundary stone or a stone marker standing in a clearly visible part of an area reserved for a special purpose. It was something to see, not to read, although inscribed horoi doubtless developed along with literacy, at least for new employments as with fourth-century types of hypothecation. The horoi which Solon removed were probably un-inscribed stones marking fields that had to be used for one purpose, e.g. to produce grain for a creditor’s table. The phrase “horoi of the Pelasgians” suggests that a transference of meaning from “stone marking a reserved area” to the area itself occurred quite early. By the Classical period this latter usage was in Attica felt to be archaic perhaps.*

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* A. Vogliano, Papiri della R. Università di Milano I (Milan 1937) 93.

* The author had the benefit of criticism from John V. A. Fine.