

## THEORIA AND DARŚAN: PILGRIMAGE AND VISION IN GREECE AND INDIA\*

Analogies will not teach us what happens in the past; they may help us to keep our reconstructions within limits consistent with what is known to happen. (A. D. Nock)<sup>1</sup>

### 1. THEORIA IN GREEK RELIGION

What was the Greek for pilgrim? If there is no simple answer, the explanation is the great diversity of ancient pilgrimages and pilgrimage-related phenomena. People went to sanctuaries for all sorts of reasons: consulting oracles, attending festivals, making sacrifices, watching the Panhellenic games, or seeking a cure for illness; there were variations in the participants (individuals or state-delegations, small groups or large), and variations in the length of distance traversed to get to the sanctuary; finally, changes occurred in the shape of pilgrimage over time: pilgrimage is not the same in the Hellenistic period as it is in the classical period, and pilgrimage in the Roman world is different again.

If we limit our scope to state-pilgrimage and to the classical period, we find a special vocabulary for pilgrimage in the word *θεωρός* and its derivatives *θεωρέω*, *θεωρία*, and *θεωρίς*.<sup>2</sup> *θεωρία* is the normal term for state-pilgrimage, as we see in the famous introduction to Plato's *Phaedo* (58b) describing the Athenian pilgrimage to Delos. The corresponding term for a pilgrim is *θεωρός*, found first in Theognis (*Eleg* 776), and frequently in the fifth century. The verb *θεωρέω* can mean 'go on a pilgrimage to', as in Thucydides' account of Ionian pilgrimage to the Delian festival (3.101). *θεωρίς* is the normal Attic term for a sacred ship used to convey sacred delegates to and from a sanctuary.<sup>3</sup> One area where this family of words is never used is that of pilgrimage to healing sanctuaries; if we find any word used there, it is *ἰκέτης*, in later texts sometimes the neutral *συμφοιτητής*.<sup>4</sup> In the Greek of the Roman period, a greater variety of vocabulary is found, including *συνθύτης*, *θηγκόλος*, and *πανηγυριστής*.<sup>5</sup>

\* I would like to thank the anonymous reader for helpful criticism.

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World* (Oxford, 1972), 2.603; originally in a review of H. Waagenvoort, *Imperium, studien over het 'mana'-begrip in zede en taal der Romeinen* (Amsterdam, 1941) in *AJP* 65 (1944), 101.

<sup>2</sup> Contrast the view of M. Dillon, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in the Ancient World* (London, 1997), xvi, that there is no specialized vocabulary for pilgrimage in ancient Greece.

<sup>3</sup> Studies of the word-family, to which I will refer in the course of this article, include: C. P. Bill, 'Notes on the Greek *θεωρός* and *θεωρία*', *TAPA* 32 (1901), 196–204; H. Koller, 'Theoros und Theoria', *Glotta* 36 (1957–8), 273–86; H. Rausch, *Theoria: Von ihrer sakralen zur philosophischen Bedeutung* (Munich, 1982); J. Redfield, 'Herodotus the Tourist', *CPh* 80 (1985), 97–118; G. Siebart, 'Reflexions sur la notion de pèlerinages dans la Grèce antique', in F. Raphael *et al.*, *Les Pèlerinages de l'antiquité biblique et classique à l'occident médiéval* (Paris, 1973), 33–53; D. Wachsmuth, *Der Kleine Pauly* 5.730–1; L. Ziehen, *RE*<sup>4</sup> V (1934), 2228–33 s.v. *Theoria*; *ibid.*, 2239–44 s.v. *Theoros*.

<sup>4</sup> *ἰκέτης*: *IG* iv<sup>2</sup> 537, 538, 121 (= Epidauria Iamata; lines 4, 15, 20, 23, 34, 72, 90); 1286.3, 1308, 1367; also in a much more general sense in *IG* iv 492; *συμφοιτητής*: Aelius Aristides, *Hieroi Logoi* frequently; *συμφοιτῶν* was used of Egyptian pilgrims by Herodotus 2. 60; Philostratus, *VA* 4.34.

<sup>5</sup> *συνθύτης*: L. Robert, *Études Anatoliennes. Recherches sur les inscriptions grecques de l'Asie Mineure* (Paris, 1937), 318, n. 6; e.g. *IG* v 1.47: *συνθύτας ἰς 'Ρόδον* ('representative to Rhodes'); *θηγκόλος*: in Lucian, *Alex.* 41; *πανηγυριστής*: Strabo 17.1.17, Lucian, *De Dea Syria* 55.

To understand the word family *θεωρία* in its application to pilgrimage, we should first get a sense of range of the meanings with which *θεωρία* and related words are used in religious contexts. These meanings include the following:

**Th1** *A type of festival, a 'show'*, whether or not people come from a distance to see it. This usage is often thought to be late, but we find it as early as the fifth century B.C. in a fragment of Pindar (fr. 52o).<sup>6</sup> Plato seems to use the word in this sense in the *Crito*, where the Laws say that Socrates says he has never left Athens *ἐπὶ θεωρίαν*.<sup>7</sup> The Athenian 'theoric fund' was designed to fund attendance at local spectacles, for which the usual word at some point must have been *θεωραίαι*.<sup>8</sup>

**Th2** *Being a spectator at a festival*, one of a range of activities that pilgrims might engage in. It may be presented as an alternative to taking part at the games, as in Isocrates, *Panegyricus* 44, and Achaëus, *TrGF* 1.20–1; at Lysias, *Or.* 6.5 it is one of a number of sacred activities, parallel to being initiated and sacrificing.<sup>9</sup> The word *θεατής* is more common in this sense, as is *θέα* for Th1.<sup>10</sup>

**Th3** *θεωρία* can refer to a sacred delegation to a sanctuary, as at Thucydides, *Hist.* 6.16.2, referring to Alcibiades' entry in the Olympic Games: *τῆς Ὀλυμπιάζε θεωρίας*; or in the Coan *lex sacra*, *LSCG* 156b, from c. 300 B.C. A *θεωρός* is a member of such a delegation, and the chief is an *ἀρχεθέωρος*. The verb *θεωρέω* can mean 'take part in a sacred delegation'. An inscription from Delphi that sets out regulations governing a pilgrimage from Andros (*CID* 1.7, A32–3) mentions a group of people *οἱ σὺν τῶ[ι βασι]λεὶ θεαρείουσιν*; this clause seems to refer to members of the delegation who are not major officials. In the Treaty of Nicias summarized in Thucydides (5.18.2), free access to the Panhellenic sanctuaries is defined in terms of four activities: sacrificing (*θύειν*), going (*ιέναι*), consulting oracles (*μαντεύεσθαι*), and, lastly, *θεωρεῖν κατὰ τὰ πάτρια*. The implied distinction is perhaps between three less official and *ad hoc* forms of sanctuary visitation on the one hand and the great state delegations, which are traditional patterns of cultic activity, on the other.

**Th4** A related sense is the action of a sacred delegation going to and from the

<sup>6</sup> L. Robert, *À travers l'Asie Mineure. Poètes et prosateurs, monnaies grecques, voyageurs et géographie* (Paris, 1980), 249, n. 30; Pindar, fr. 52o: see I. C. Rutherford, 'Two heroic prosodia: a study of Pindar, *Pa.* XIV–V', *ZPE* 92 (1992), 59–72; Isocrates, *Areopag.* 52–3, *Aegin.* 10.6.

<sup>7</sup> Some manuscripts and Herodicus *ὁ Κρατήτειος*, cited in Athenaeus (216b), report the additional words *ὅτι μὴ ἄπαξ εἰς Ἴσθμόν*. Fortunately, that issue does not affect the interpretation of the passage in any major way.

<sup>8</sup> J. J. Buchanan, *Theorikon. A Study of Monetary Distribution to Athenian Citizens during the Fifth and Fourth Centuries B.C.* (New York, 1962).

<sup>9</sup> *τοὺς μύστας . . . καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους Ἕλληνας οἱ ἕνεκα ταύτης τῆς ἑορτῆς <δεῦρο ἔρχονται> ἢ θύειν εἰς ταύτην τὴν πανήγυριν βουλόμενοι ἢ θεωρεῖν*. *θεωρεῖν* could conceivably mean 'celebrate (the festival)' here. *θεωρία* καὶ *θυσία* is a common combination: cf. (Aristotle), *Rhet. ad Alexand.* 1424a: advice on how to make a *θυσία* 'πρὸς . . . τὰς θεωρίας λαμπρῶς'.

<sup>10</sup> *θεατής*: e.g. Aristoph. *Clouds* 757; cf. also the similar *ματήρ*, attested at Bacchylides 9.23; *θέα*: e.g. Theophr. *Characters* 5.7. The ancient Atticists worried about how to distinguish these words: the grammarian Lysimachides argued against Caecilius of Caleacte that *θεατής* was the *vox propria* for watching a contest, whereas *θεωρός*, which he derived from *θεός*, meant a sacred delegate and was only incidentally concerned with 'watching' (*FGrHist* 366F9; Ammonius, *Περὶ διαφόρων λεξέων*, s.v. *θεωρός*, ed. Valckenaer [Göttingen, 1789], 68; Caecilius 168 Ofenloch). Later on *θέα* is specially associated with sightseeing: see Th9 below.

*sanctuary*. Thus, in the introduction to Plato's *Phaedo* (58b), already mentioned, the beginning of the *θεωρία* to Delos is specified as the point when the priest garlands the ship; here the word means not the sacred delegation itself, but rather its activity (roughly 'pilgrimage' in its modern English sense).

**Th5** *θεωρός* can be used with the special sense of *consultant of an oracle*, especially and perhaps only in cases where the consultant represents a city-state. This occurs first in Theognis, and by the fifth century seems to be the *vox propria* for the concept in most sources (the exception is Herodotus, who uses *θεοπρόπος* in this sense).<sup>11</sup>

**Th6** *θεωρός* can be used for *an official sent out from a sanctuary to announce festivals*, and *θεωρία* for a delegation made up of such announcers. This has been thought to be a Hellenistic development, though there seems to be a fifth-century instance of it from Olympia.<sup>12</sup>

**Th7** The expression *κατὰ θεωρίαν* can mean *by way of sightseeing*. Thus, the speaker of Isocrates' *Trapeziticus*, a young man from the Bosphorus, says that he has been sent off by his father to Athens and the rest of Greece *κατ' ἐμπορίαν καὶ κατὰ θεωρίαν*. Again, in a fragment of the *Deliakos* of Hyperides (fr. 70 Blass), certain rich Aeolians—later to be murdered on Delos—are said to have left their home *κατὰ θεωρίαν τῆς Ἑλλάδος* ('to visit Greece'). In both cases, the expression seems to imply visiting a number of places, rather than making a pilgrimage to only one. However, it is likely that many of the places to be visited *κατὰ θεωρίαν* were religious centres, so we might rather translate: 'sacred sightseeing'. A similar idea is reflected in Hellenistic and Roman *proskunemata* found in the Valley of the Kings in which ancient tourists use the verb *θεωρέω* to describe their visits.<sup>13</sup> For the sense 'tourist, sightseer', the word *θεατής* is usual.<sup>14</sup>

Two further senses that are only obliquely related to pilgrimage deserve to be mentioned.

**Th8** Related to the 'sightseeing' sense is the sense of *exploration*. Herodotus recounts a trip that Solon made to Lydia and Egypt to learn about other peoples, describing it as a *θεωρία*.<sup>15</sup> Complementary is Herodotus' account of the journey of

<sup>11</sup> Theognis, *Eleg* 776; Hdt., *Hist.* 1.48, 1.67, 5.79, 6.57, 7.140.

<sup>12</sup> This sense occurs regularly in *θεωροδοκία* inscriptions, for example those linked to the establishment of the Magnesians festival of Artemis Leukophryene in 208 B.C. Olympia: *IvO* 36 = *Syll.* 171; *IvO* 3; unpublished decree: P. Perlman, *The Theorodokia of the Peloponnese*, thesis (Berkeley, 1984), 30.

<sup>13</sup> Texts collected in J. Baillet, *Inscriptions grecques et latines des tombeaux des rois ou syringes* [= *Memoires de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire* 42 (1926)], e.g. n. 255.

<sup>14</sup> *θεατής* in the sense 'tourist' at Hdt. 3.139, Euripides, *Ion* 301.

<sup>15</sup> Hdt. 1.29–31. Many scholars are sceptical about the historicity of this account: see A. B. Lloyd, *Herodotus Book II* (Leiden, 1975), 55ff., though it is defended by S. S. Markianos, 'The chronology of the Herodotean Solon', *Historia* 23 (1974), 1–20, who puts it in the 570s; see also K. Freeman, *The Work and Life of Solon* (Cardiff, 1926), 155ff. Aristotle, *Ath. Pol.* 11.1 says that Solon went off to Egypt (Lydia is not mentioned) *κατ' ἐμπορίαν ἅμα καὶ θεωρίαν*. Trade is also a motive that Plutarch (in part at least following Hermippus the Callimachean) sees in Solon's absence; he discusses two absences, the first, as a young man (*Solon* 2. 1 = Hermippus, fr. 7 Wehrli = *FHG* III38F9), when he left for the sake of trade, though some say that *πολυπείρια* and *ἱστορία* were motives also; the second after the *nomothesia* (*Solon* 25.5), when the real motive is to avoid political strife, but the pretext is *ναυκληρία* (literally, 'possession of a ship'), which

Anacharsis to Greece and other places, which is described by the verb *θεωρέω*.<sup>16</sup> Redfield has suggested that it is helpful to think of Herodotus' own travels and researches as *θεωρία* in this scientific sense: a journey undertaken with the purpose of comparison between the *νόμοι* of different cultures.<sup>17</sup> In Plato's *Laws* (952b), which draws heavily on practices attested in the classic Greek city-state, *θεωροί* are men who are sent off by the state to learn about other states. In pre-modern societies, one motivation or pretext for visiting foreign states is to acquire knowledge, a pattern that has been investigated by the anthropologist Mary Helms.<sup>18</sup>

**Th9** Finally, in some areas of Greece the word *θεωρός* can mean a state-official, an *overseer*. This could be an independent development; alternatively, it could be explained by the hypothesis that having the right to represent the state at a sanctuary was regarded as a token of importance in the state, especially since an oracle like Delphi could be a source for law-codes.<sup>19</sup>

The various meanings of *θεωρία* are not always easy to distinguish; more than one of the senses 'state delegation', 'festival', and 'sightseeing' sometimes seem to be present in the same text. For example, in Aristophanes' *Peace*, the mute character Theoria seems to represent both the practice of state delegations and the idea of the spectacle itself.<sup>20</sup> So in Xenophon's *Hieron* (1.11ff.), Hiero, wanting to prove that tyrants are worse off than other men with respect to objects perceived through vision, makes the point that οἱ . . . τύραννοι οὐ μάλα ἀμφὶ θεωρίας ἔχουσιν ('Tyrants are not much concerned with *theoriai*'), since their precarious position does not allow them to leave their home city; here the word *θεωρίαί* seems to mean both state-delegations sent to festivals but also the spectacles themselves and the viewing of them.

How should we understand the semantic development that led to these different senses? The earliest sense of the word-family *θεωρία*–*θεωρός*–*θεωρέω* is likely to be illuminated by its etymology. One solution that has been attempted—both by modern scholars and by ancient ones—is that the word *θεωρός* incorporates *θεός*, and denotes an activity specially connected with the gods (compare the often synonymous term

presumably is not much different from trade again; the second trip took him to Egypt, Cyprus, and Lydia, the destinations of the first are not specified. This scenario has the attraction of allowing for the possibility that the experience of foreign cultures which Solon picked up on his foreign travels was a stimulus to him in formulating constitutional reforms at Athens.

<sup>16</sup> Hdt. 4.76: γῆν πολλὴν θεωρήσας καὶ ἀποδεξάμενος κατ' αὐτὴν σοφίην πολλὴν ἐκομίζετο ἐς ᾗθεα τὰ Σκυθέων. Cf. Dio Chrysostomus 32.45; Diog. Laert. 1.104.

<sup>17</sup> J. Redfield, 'Herodotus the Tourist', *CPh* 80 (1985), 97–118. A similar connection is made by H. Drexler, *Herodot-Studien* (Hildesheim, 1972), 25ff.

<sup>18</sup> M. W. Helms, *Ulysses' Sail. An Ethnographic Odyssey of Power, Knowledge and Geographical Distance* (Princeton, 1988), 68–9.

<sup>19</sup> See Bill (n. 3), 196; Ziehen (n. 3), 2239; Rausch (n. 3), 25ff.; A. J. Graham, 'On the great list of theoroi at Thasos', *AncW* 5 (1982), 103ff.; *IG* xii 8, 89, nr. 263, 267.171ff.; but this came from Paros, *Syll.* 2.569 (= *LSCG* 111.10); also known for Tegea from Xen. *Hell.* 6.5.7; Mantinea: Thuc. 5.47.9; Oropus: *IG* vii 424; Naupaktos: *SGDI*, 1424–8. This scenario works particularly well if we assume that the information that the *θεωρός* gets from an oracle is of an extremely general type, for example the contexts of a lawcode, as Lycurgus derives such a lawcode from Delphi (Hdt. 1.65.4). Indeed, Aristotle, *Pol.* 5.8.3 (1310b22) actually seems to describe such a widening of power.

<sup>20</sup> See A. Sommerstein, *Peace* (= *The Comedies of Aristophanes* 5) (Warminster, 1985), 157, on line 523; I. C. Rutherford, 'Theoria as theatre. Pilgrimage in Greek drama', *PLLS* 10 (1998), 141–5.

θεοπρόπος). One authority who has argued in favour of the etymology from θεός is Koller, who sees a key transitional element in the idea of 'travel' implied in θεωρία as pilgrimage which leads to a sense 'exploration' and 'inquiry' (Th8); he believes that the 'watching' sense first develops in the fifth century B.C., stimulated by the phonetic resemblance of θεωρέω to θεάομαι.<sup>21</sup>

However, it seems likelier that the original sense is 'watch', and that θεωρέω, like θεάομαι, derives from a proto-Indo-European stem *dheyH<sub>2</sub>*; the same stem yields the Sanskrit stem *dhya-*, as found in *dhyanā*, the ultimate source for Chinese *chan* and Japanese *zen* (as in 'zen-Buddhism'). To judge from Vedic, the early sense may have been 'think', with special reference to religious subjects of thought. In Greek, the root is also responsible for σῆμα (from the vocalisation *dhyeH<sub>2</sub>*). The sub-family θεωρία will be the product of combination of the root with some suffix (-*wor* = 'watch?').<sup>22</sup>

The original idea was probably one of a spectacle of religious significance: a procession, a sacrifice or other ritual, an artistic performance, an athletic competition, or a whole festival (Th1), and contemplation of such spectacles (Th2). People who watched such spectacles and competitions were called θεωροί, whether they travelled a long distance, a short distance, or no distance at all. Subsequently, θεωρία/θεωρός developed a special association with long-distance travel, and came to mean not just 'sacred contemplation' but 'journey to sanctuary culminating in sacred contemplation'. Later, they lost their primary association with 'watching', and came to mean 'religious delegation'/'religious delegate' in general, including delegates sent to make public dedications at sanctuaries, and delegates sent out by sanctuaries to announce forthcoming festivals in their own cities (Th3, Th4). The development was perhaps synecdochic, moving from part of the delegation (those who went to watch someone else perform a ritual) to the delegation as a whole. The driving paradigm here was perhaps the journey to the Panhellenic athletic competitions, particularly Olympia.<sup>23</sup> This prestige activity becomes the model for other forms of sacred visitation, such as consulting oracles. And because consulting oracles is often the most conspicuous activity of pilgrims, θεωρός eventually came to be specially used for oracle consultants (Th5).

The timing of these developments is unclear, but Theognis (*Eleg.* 776) gives us a *terminus ante quem* for the development from Th2 to Th4 and probably to Th5. We might speculate that θεωρία had been used in the context of pilgrimage (if not as a general word for pilgrimage) since the time when sanctuaries first start to become important as areas of interstate co-operation in the eighth century B.C.<sup>24</sup>

This picture of the semantic development is made more complex by the existence of the 'exploration' sense of θεωρία (Th8). This could be entirely independent, or it could be a development from the 'pilgrimage' sense, or if it pre-dates it, it could be the intermediary between it and the general sense of 'watching'. On present evidence, I do not see any way of deciding the relative chronology of these senses, but I doubt whether the issue affects the general picture very much.

The application of the word-family θεωρία-θεωρός-θεωρέω to state-pilgrimage

<sup>21</sup> Koller (n. 3); more recently, Rausch (n. 3) inclines in Koller's direction. Ancient testimony: Caecilius 168 Ofenloch (see n.10).

<sup>22</sup> For the etymology, see e.g. P. Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque* (Paris, 1968), 433-4. For σῆμα, see A. L. Sihler, *A New Comparative Grammar of Greek and Latin* (New York and Oxford, 1995), 191.

<sup>23</sup> P. Boesch, *ΘΕΩΡΟΣ. Untersuchung zur Epangelie griechischer Feste* (Berlin, 1908), 7

<sup>24</sup> C. Morgan, *Athletes and Oracles. The Transformation of Olympia and Delphi in the Eighth Century B.C.* (Cambridge, 1990).

will have been consolidated by its high stylistic register. Folk-etymology played a part here: even though *θεωρός* is not derived from *θεός*, people may have come to believe that it was. By the late fourth century B.C., the conceptual link between *θεωροί* and the sacred had become so close that it was regarded as a sign of dangerous innovation when secular delegates to Hellenistic potentates received the title; the same link may be implied already in Pindar, and for all we know it was first made in the sixth century B.C. or earlier.<sup>25</sup> A second factor contributing to a high stylistic register may have been the political sense 'overseer' (Th9), which will have lent an aura of officialdom.

## 2. PILGRIMAGE AND CONTEMPLATION

This application of these words has puzzled some scholars, for whom pilgrimage and contemplation seem to have little in common.<sup>26</sup> In fact, it can be shown that the act of viewing played an important and perhaps even a defining part in the activity of state-pilgrimage. To begin with, the culminating activity of Greek state-pilgrimage was usually a festival or other religious spectacle, and witnessing such spectacles was one of the major activities of state-pilgrims. Of course, religious spectacles are a regular, pervasive feature of all Greek religious life, and being a spectator was the most common way of participating for local populations as well as for state-pilgrims from abroad (one thinks of the elaborate processions of the Athenian Dionysia and Panathenaia, for example). To that extent, religious contemplation in itself was not a distinctive feature of the state-pilgrim; what was different about state-pilgrims, however, was that for them participating in a festival by assuming the role of spectators was an official duty, the carrying out of which had motivated a journey of more than routine length from one *polis* to another; and hence the term *θεωροί*, which could reasonably be applied even to local participants, in practice tended to be used exclusively for official delegates from abroad.

So one answer to the question 'What were *θεωροί* *θεωροί* of?' is surely festivals, but there may have been other objects as well, such as cult-statues, temples, and sacred artefacts. Thus in Euripides' *Andromache* a messenger reports that Neoptolemus and his companions devoted three days to contemplation (*θέα*) of the sanctuary, before offering sacrifice (1086–8).<sup>27</sup> Here contemplation is represented as an activity typical of peaceful pilgrims, by implication contrasted with the hostile approach to the sanctuary that Neoptolemus makes in conventional versions of the myth. Again in Euripides' *Ion*, also set in Delphi, the chorus are visitors, servants of Creusa, who admire the sculptures on the pediments of the temple of Apollo.<sup>28</sup> Both here and in the *Andromache*, contemplation of sacred artefacts is one of a pilgrim's activities.

In a few cases tradition recorded the reactions of famous visitors to sacred artefacts: Pythagoras is said to have 'contemplated' the ritual *thronos* on Mt. Ida in Crete when he visited there. One of Pythagoras' disciples, the philosopher Parmeniscus of Metapontum, made a pilgrimage to the subterranean cave of Trophonius in Lebadeia and in consequence found himself unable to laugh (a reflection of the chthonic nature

<sup>25</sup> Plut. *Dem.* 11; Arrian, *Anab.* 7.23.2; implied perhaps in Pindar, fr. 520: see Rutherford (n. 6), 61.

<sup>26</sup> I think particularly of Koller (n. 3) and Rausch (n. 3). The visual aspect of Greek pilgrimage seems to be neglected also in Dillon (n. 2).

<sup>27</sup> On this passage, see Rutherford (n. 20), 146–8.

<sup>28</sup> F. Zeitlin, 'The artful eye: vision, ecphrasis and spectacle in Euripidean theatre', in S. Goldhill and R. Osborne (edd.), *Art and Text in Ancient Greek Culture* (Cambridge, 1992), 138–96.

of the cult); but then he visited the Letoon at Delos, and upon seeing the aniconic statue of Leto, he laughed out loud (responding to the primitive workmanship, but also perhaps to the Olympian and joyful associations of the family of Apollo).<sup>29</sup>

A special form of sacred viewing is found in the context of initiation into the Mysteries, where the initiate may have access to secret sights which are off limits to the ordinary pilgrim, including sacred drama which articulated the chief myth of the sanctuary. The word *θεωρία* seems to be usually confined to the activities of the ordinary pilgrim, whereas for the viewing of secret sights associated with the Mysteries at Eleusis and Samothrace we find a special term: *ἐποπτεία*.<sup>30</sup> But while our sources distinguish *θεωρός* and *ἐπόπτης* in this way, it is equally true that the common factor of vision is a link between the initiatory and non-initiatory forms of pilgrimage.<sup>31</sup>

Sacred contemplation need not have been limited to man-made objects. Natural features of landscape of ritual significance might have been objects of 'contemplation' also. Almost every sanctuary is frequently praised for its natural situation, and natural features of the site, for example at Delos, Mt. Cynthus, the sacred lake, and olive-tree; at Delphi the Castalian Fountain and the twin rocks called the Phaidriades; at Eleusis the stream called the Rheitoi; and so on. And it seems a reasonable assumption that pilgrims will have made a point of viewing such sights.<sup>32</sup>

Many and perhaps most of the rituals, artefacts, and natural features that Greek pilgrims encountered are likely to have been already known to them from the reports of other pilgrims and from myth. They made the journey to the sanctuary in the expectation of seeing precisely these sights. And largely because the viewing of them took place against the background of a network of religious assumptions it can be described as a religious activity. Autopsy affirms religious expectations, and completes religious knowledge.<sup>33</sup>

There may be a political dimension here as well. Contemplation of artefacts and inscriptions at a sanctuary would also teach the pilgrim about the traditions of the sanctuary. At Panhellenic sanctuaries, he might learn about the impressive dedications which had been made at the sanctuary from all over the Greek world. Thus Greek pilgrimage can be seen as a transition from local space to Panhellenic space and back again. Since a genuine political union never develops in ancient Greece, the great

<sup>29</sup> Pythagoras: Porph. *Vit. Pyth.* 17, 25.17ff. Nauck; Parmeniscus: Ath. *Deipn.* 14.614b. The sequence is reminiscent of the two visitations by Xuthus in Euripides' *Ion*, first to the oracle of Trophonius at Lebadeia, second to Delphi.

<sup>30</sup> Plut. *Dem.* 26, *Alc.* 19–22. G. E. Mylonas, *Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries* (Princeton, 1961), 239, 274. The *θεωρός* and *ἐποπτής* are explicitly distinguished in Samothracian inscriptions: see S. G. Cole, *Theoi Megaloi: The Cult of the Great Gods at Samothrace* (Leiden, 1984), 38–56.

<sup>31</sup> On the vision of the initiate, see R. S. Seaford, 'Sophocles and the Mysteries', *Hermes* 122 (1994), 275–88; id., 'Immortality, salvation, and the elements', *HSCPh* 89 (1986), 91ff. For I. Lada-Richards, 'Neoptolemus and the bow: ritual *thea* and theatrical vision in Sophocles' *Philoctetes*', *JHS* 117 (1997), 179–83, the presentation of Philoctetes' bow in Sophocles' tragedy suggests a form of ritual viewing associated with Eleusis, but I wonder if it is the more general form of ritual viewing that is implied there.

<sup>32</sup> Good remarks on location of sanctuaries in M. Jost, 'The distribution of sanctuaries in civic space in Arkadia', in S. E. Alcock and R. Osborne (edd.), *Placing the Gods. Sanctuaries and Sacred Space in Ancient Greece* (Oxford, 1994), 217–230.

<sup>33</sup> See S. Coleman and J. Elsner, *Pilgrimage. Past and Present in World Religions* (London, 1995), 204–5: 'pilgrimage sites act as an embodiment of myth-history, allowing adherents to reinvoke elements of their faith in words, images and physical actions'.

sanctuaries and pilgrimage to and from them is an important way of expressing national unity, and of articulating a sense of Greek identity.<sup>34</sup>

Because of the visual emphasis of ancient Greek pilgrimage, it is often difficult to disentangle it from sightseeing (Th7).<sup>35</sup> Earlier on I mentioned the speaker of Isocrates' *Trapeziticus* who came to Greece κατὰ θεωρίαν, and the Aeolians reported by Hyperides to have come to Delos for the same reason, and I suggested that the motivation for these visitors was not secular sightseeing, but a sort of sacred tourism focused on religious sites. Other examples of the same pattern come from Egypt: in a Greek inscription of the late fifth century B.C. from the temple of Seti I at Abydos, known to the Greeks as the Memnonion, a group of visitors commemorated their visit with the statement that each of them ἐθήσατο ('watched'; the Ionic form of θεάομαι); in the same place a Cypriot visitor writes in Cypriot script that *e-ta-we-sa-to* (= ἐθαήσατο).<sup>36</sup> Was the viewing referred to here merely recreational? Or was it motivated by a belief in the sacredness of the place? The latter might be thought unlikely at this period, but one should bear in mind that at least some Aramaic-speaking visitors to Abydos from this period seem to have been motivated by religious feeling.<sup>37</sup> Three centuries later we find a comparable usage of the word θεωρία in a documentary papyrus, in which an official in Alexandria asks that certain sites in the Fayyum, particularly the labyrinth, be prepared for the visit of a Roman official called Memmius who was coming there ἐπὶ θεωρίαν (*P. Tebt.* 1, 33 [112 B.C.]). This sounds more like sightseeing rather than pilgrimage, particularly since one does not expect a Roman official to have a religious motivation for visiting Egyptian sites on the Nile; but the fact that sacrifice is mentioned shows that there is a religious element here also.<sup>38</sup>

Lurking in the background and arguably colouring these ideas of religious or secular viewing is one further sense of θεωρία, that of 'philosophical contemplation'. This sense, securely established only from the time of Aristotle, but perhaps as old as Pythagoras, has at least one point in common with religious viewing in so far as the objects of philosophical contemplation can include the gods and the divine. For Aristotle, θεωρία is roughly the activity of the divine part of the soul, opposed to political virtue. In the *Eudemian Ethics* (8.3.16) he says that the end of human life is to contemplate the divine, and in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (10.8) he argues that the

<sup>34</sup> On pilgrimage and identity, see J. Elsner, 'Pausanias: A Greek pilgrim in the Roman world', *Past and Present* 135 (1992), 3ff.

<sup>35</sup> There is a good discussion à propos of Pausanias in Elsner (n. 34), 3ff.; for a general discussion, E. Cohen, 'Pilgrimage and tourism: convergence and divergence', in E. A. Morinis (ed.), *Sacred Journeys: the Anthropology of Pilgrimage* (New York, 1992), 47–61.

<sup>36</sup> P. Perdrizet and G. Lefebvre, *Inscriptiones Graecae Aegypti* III (Paris, 1919), n. 424; O. Masson, *Les inscriptions chypriotes syllabiques; recueil critique et commenté* (Paris, 1961), n. 379; cf. the verb *hzy* = 'see' in a Phoenician inscription from Abydos published in M. Lidzbarski, 'Phönische Inschriften', *Ephemeris für semitische Epigraphik* 2 (1900), 170–1.

<sup>37</sup> These are B.3.f.23 in J. A. Fitzmyer and S. A. Kaufmann (edd.), *An Aramaic Bibliography* (Baltimore, 1992–). The Aramaic papyrus purporting to commemorate the visit of Aramaic-speaking pilgrims in 417 B.C., published by J. Teixidor, 'Un nouveau papyrus Araméen du règne de Darius II', *Syria* 41 (1964), 285–90, is a forgery: see J. Naveh, 'Aramaica Dubiaca', *JNES* 27 (1968), 317–25.

<sup>38</sup> Pilgrim and tourist: A. J. Festugière, 'Les proscynèmes de Philae', *REG* 83 (1970), 175ff. at 191; É. Bernard, *Les inscriptions grecques et latines de Philae* (Paris, 1969), 1.22–8; M. Malaise, 'Pèlerinages et pèlerins dans l'Égypte ancienne', in J. Chelini and H. Branthomme (edd.), *Histoire des pèlerinages non chrétiens. Entre magique et sacré: le chemin des dieux* (Paris, 1987), 55–82, particularly at 63.



activity of gods is precisely contemplation.<sup>39</sup> While the 'philosophical contemplation' and 'pilgrimage' senses of *θεωρία* are not directly linked,<sup>40</sup> a certain semantic imbrication between them readily arises because the idea of pilgrimage is readily deployed as a symbol for the philosophical enquiry.

For one thing, being a spectator at the Panhellenic games was sometimes used as a symbol for the *θεωρητικός βίος*, the life of contemplation lived by philosophers, which is opposed to the *πρακτικός βίος* or practical life lived by politicians and by most citizens (both of these are sometimes opposed to a third form of life: the *ἀπολαυστικός βίος*, or life of enjoyment). This idea is at least as old as Heracleides of Pontus (fr. 88 Wehrli), who represented Pythagoras distinguishing three forms of life that men can lead, just as people come to religious festivals for three reasons: competition, trade, and *θεωρία*; it may even be as early as Pythagoras himself.<sup>41</sup> Second, philosophers seem to exploit the idea of pilgrimage as a journey culminating in *θεωρία* as a symbol for the path of reasoning, consisting of dialectic, and culminating in rational enlightenment. Thus in Plato's *Republic* (517b), the desired enlightenment comes after one has followed a route of learning; and in his *Symposium* (210d–e), Diotima describes how the ascent of the soul is marked by looking at a series of sights, culminating in contemplation of the 'ocean of the beautiful'. A factor in the background here may have been the Eleusinian Mysteries, which culminated in a particularly dramatic enlightenment.<sup>42</sup>

If philosophers could represent themselves as pilgrims, did *θεωροί* ever see themselves as contemplating in the manner of philosophers? One hint in this direction comes from an Athenian inscription from the Hellenistic period (*IG* ii<sup>2</sup> 886), which has been reconstructed to say that a young man from Pergamon who came as a *θεωρός* to Athens decided to stay there so that he could study philosophy. The inscription mentions Evander, who was an Academic, and it seems to commend the young man for returning to Pergamon and influencing Attalus I in Athens' favour. Here, then, *θεωρία* in the ritual sense is a frame for *θεωρία* in the philosophical sense.<sup>43</sup> It is also

<sup>39</sup> The union of these two propositions is that gods contemplate themselves, which is what is implied in *Met.* 12.9.4 (1074b) (although this is framed in terms of *νοῦς* and not of *θεωρία*). The religious application of *θεωρία* may be as old as Anaxagoras, who regarded *θεωρία* of the sun, moon, and heavens as the central purpose of human life: Anaxagoras: DK59A1 = Diog. Laert. *Vit.* 2.10, DK59A29 = Clement, *Strom.* 2.130; DK59A30 = Aristotle, *EE* 1.5 (1216a11).

<sup>40</sup> Not directly from the pilgrimage sense, *contra* P. Dubois, *Sowing the Body. Psychoanalysis and Ancient Representations of Women* (Chicago, 1988), 9–10.

<sup>41</sup> Attribution to Pythagoras is doubted by W. Burkert, 'Plato oder Pythagoras? Zum Ursprung des Wortes "Philosophie"', *Hermes* 88 (1960), 159–77. See also the discussion of R. Joly, 'Le thème philosophique des genres de vie dans l'antiquité classique', *Académie royale de Belgique, mémoires, classe des lettres* 51.3 (Brussels, 1956); compare Amphion's defence of the theoretical life in Euripides, *Antiope*; discussed by B. Snell in 'Vita Activa and Vita Contemplativa in Euripides' *Antiope*', a chapter in *Scenes from Greek Drama* (Berkeley, 1967), 70–98 (= *Szenen aus griechischen Dramen* [Berlin, 1971], 77–103).

<sup>42</sup> C. Riedweg, *Mysterieterminologie bei Plato, Philo and Klemens von Alexandria* (Berlin, 1987), 2–29.

<sup>43</sup> Athenian inscription: *IG* ii<sup>2</sup> 886.8ff. M. N. Tod, 'Sidelights on Greek philosophers', *JHS* 77 (1957), 137, n. 91; L. Robert, *Bull. Épigr.* 84 (1958), 109. A good example of how religious *θεωρία* might serve as a framework for secular exploration is suggested by the figure of Eudoxus of Cyzicus (second century B.C.); Strabo (*Geog.* 2.3.4–5), drawing on Poseidonius, says that he came to Egypt to the court of Ptolemy Physcon as a *θεωρός* and *σπονδοφόρος*, presumably to announce the Cyzicean *Koreia*, but from there he embarked on an expedition to India. Subsequently he returned to Cyzicus, and from there set out again to attempt a circumnavigation of Africa, in which he failed.

worth noticing here Herodotus' account of Solon's *θεωρία*: Solon left Athens *κατὰ θεωρίας πρόφασιν*, but his real motive was to avoid being forced to change any of his laws (1.29); later he gives *θεωρία* as one of his motives (*αὐτῶν . . . τούτων καὶ θεωρίας . . . εἵνεκεν*); and Croesus says that word has reached him of Solon's wisdom, how he has travelled to much of the earth *φιλοσοφῶν . . . θεωρίας εἵνεκεν*. Now the 'exploration' sense is not identical to the 'pilgrimage' sense, but they may have been felt to be related, and to that extent we might take this passage as an indication that *θεωρία*, in the sense of state-pilgrimage, could accommodate philosophical contemplation.

### 3. A HINDU PARALLEL: *DARŚAN*

In this final section I want to bring to bear on the Greek material a parallel from a contemporary religious tradition, the notion of *darśan* in Hinduism. Such a strategy brings with it risks. For one thing, we are comparing sources of radically different kinds: predominantly literary sources in the case of ancient Greece, but direct questioning of subjects in the case of the contemporary tradition. How close are the accounts that Greek writers give us of pilgrimage to the accounts that the pilgrims would have given themselves, or those that anthropologists would have given if they were able to interview them?

There is also a more serious second problem. The strategy of comparing aspects of pilgrimage in two cultures seems to rely on the totalizing assumption that there is a cross-cultural phenomenon of pilgrimage. However, the trend of some recent anthropological work has been to stress the differences between pilgrimage traditions, whether in different cultures, or in the same culture, or even between different groups of pilgrims visiting the same sanctuary.<sup>44</sup> Against that trend, it might seem futile to draw attention to apparent similarities between different traditions.

However, it may be just as big a mistake to refuse to acknowledge some similarities between different traditions as to try to make all of them conform to some sort of abstract model. Anthropologists who stress diversity can be thought to be reacting to an earlier generation of anthropologists who tried to impose a monolithic model on all such traditions.<sup>45</sup> In one of the most recent considerations of the issue, Coleman and Elsner come down to the view that certain features of pilgrimage span many cultures, among them an interaction between 'persons', 'texts' and 'places', and the shared concept of the journey.<sup>46</sup> Against this background, it seems legitimate to explore the possibility that features of one pilgrimage tradition may shed light on another.

Pilgrimage has flourished in India for millennia. The *Mahābhārata* already contains extensive accounts of sacred fords or *tīrthas* which pious Hindus were expected to visit.<sup>47</sup> But in the case of India we are not confined to historical sources; pilgrimage still continues in the Hindu tradition, and it has been studied extensively by

<sup>44</sup> J. Eade and M. J. Sallnow, *Contesting the Sacred. The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage* (London, 1991).

<sup>45</sup> V. Turner, 'The center out there: pilgrim's goal', *History of Religions* 12 (1972), 191ff. = 'Pilgrimages as social processes', in *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors. Symbolic Action in Human Society* (Cornell, 1974), 166ff.; V. Turner and E. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture* (New York, 1978).

<sup>46</sup> See Coleman and Elsner (n. 33), 203ff., 205.

<sup>47</sup> Two such accounts are given, the first by the sage Pulastya (3.80–4), the second by Dhaumya (3.85–93).

anthropologists, geographers, and scholars of religion. The general cartography and organization of pilgrimage in some ways reminds us of pilgrimage in ancient Greece, with a network of local, regional, and national sanctuaries, which stage periodical festivals according to the rhythm of a sacred calendar of festivals.

One of the advantages of working with a living tradition is that data are much more readily available, and the profile that we can put together of pilgrimage is correspondingly more contoured and nuanced. Motivations for pilgrimage are many and various, and they vary from one sanctuary to another. Some of the most common are bathing in a sacred river or lake, and specific lifecycle purposes such as tonsure and ceremonies for the deceased, and making vows of various sorts. In general, there is a sense that going to a major sanctuary brings the pilgrim closer to the sacred; the limiting case of that is the choice made by many pilgrims to die at Varanasi because this is perceived as a location of extreme sacredness.<sup>48</sup>

Another motivation for pilgrimage which is claimed by many Hindu informants is *darśan*, which means contemplation, and the religious insight that accompanies this process.<sup>49</sup> *Darśan* or *darśana* (the former is Hindi, the latter Sanskrit) is cognate with the ancient Greek verb *δέρκομαι*, which means 'look intensely'.<sup>50</sup> *Darśan* means 'sacred vision', sometimes achieved as the end-product of pilgrimage, sometimes achieved through seeing a famous or sacred person or persons. Pilgrims are sometimes called *darśaniyas*—those who come to see.<sup>51</sup> The word *darśan(a)* is explicitly linked with pilgrimage only in modern sources, although there are some indications that contemplation was a recognizable activity in pilgrimage as early as the *Mahābhārata* and the *tīrtha*-lists.<sup>52</sup>

In her wide-ranging study of *darśan* Diana Eck singles it out as the central motive for pilgrimage in Hinduism, and one of the fundamental concepts in the religion as a

<sup>48</sup> S. M. Bhardwaj, *Hindu Places of Pilgrimage in India (A Study in Cultural Geography)* (Berkeley, 1973); G. Deleury, 'L'Inde et la religion du pèlerinage', in J. Chelini and H. Branthomme (edd.), *Histoire des pèlerinages non chrétiens. Entre magique et sacré: le chemin des dieux* (Paris, 1987), 195–216.; A. Grodzins Gold, *Fruitful Journeys. The Ways of Rajasthani Pilgrims* (Berkeley, 1988); E. A. Morinis, *Pilgrimage in the Hindu Tradition. A Case Study in West Bengal* (Delhi, 1984).

<sup>49</sup> On *darśan* also Morinis (n. 48), 73; D. L. Eck, *Darśan. Seeing the Divine in India*<sup>2</sup> (Chambersburg, 1985); J. Gonda, *Eye and Gaze in the Veda* (Amsterdam, 1969), 56–8; similar themes in Buddhist tradition are discussed by Nancy Falk, 'To gaze on the sacred traces', *History of Religions* 16 (1977), 281–293. Some special aspects are discussed by L. A. Babb, 'Glancing: visual interaction in Hinduism', *Journal of Anthropological Research* 37 (1981), 387–401; J. M. Stanley, 'Special time, special power: the fluidity of power in a popular Hindu festival', *JAS* 37 (1977), 27–43; A. S. Geden in *The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* (New York, 1912), 402. At the sanctuary of Sri Venkatesvara at Tirumala-Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh in southern India *darśan* is much the most common motive among pilgrims there: T. S. Naidu, 'Pilgrims and pilgrimage: a case study of Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams', in M. Jha (ed.), *Dimensions of Pilgrimage. An Anthropological Appraisal* (New Delhi, 1985), 22, with table on 24.

<sup>50</sup> The formation *darśana* may be reflected in a Cretan gloss preserved by Hesychius (1.47 Latte): *δόρκανα* ('with keen vision'), though T. Burrow, *The Sanskrit Language*<sup>2</sup> (London, 1973), 137, says the Sanskrit noun reflects a PIE formulation in -en. This verb rarely has a specially sacred sense in ancient Greek religion and culture, though there may be isolated examples: cf. Sophocles, *TrGF* 4, fr. 837.

<sup>51</sup> L. P. Vidyarthi, *The Sacred Complex in Hindu Gaya* (Bombay, 1961), 84–5.

<sup>52</sup> See J. W. Laine, *Visions of God. Narratives of Theophany in the Mahābhārata* [= *Publications of the De Nobili Research Library* 16] (Vienna, 1989), 40–1, referring to 3.129.18–19 (Yudhisthira has a vision of all the worlds while having a bath in the Yamuna river), and 3.145 (description of the Hermitage of Nara and Narayana). The antiquity of the term is also indicated by the traditional association between religious experience and sight: see Gonda (n. 49).

whole. According to her, the objects of *darśan* can be not just statues and temples, but also sacred places, including fords (*tīrthas*), abodes (*dhāms*), benches (*pīthas*), great mountains, or rivers, like the Ganges. The object of *darśan* can even be the various types of holy men recognized in Hinduism: *sants*, *sādhus* or *sannyāsins*. There is also an inverted context in which instead of the pilgrim going to view the image, the image is paraded through the streets so that people can see it.<sup>53</sup> A vivid description of *darśan* is provided by the anthropologist John Stanley, who in a study of pilgrimage in Maharashtra (in West India), specifically the traditions of Pandharpur and Alandi, describes three kinds of *darśan*.<sup>54</sup> The weakest is *darśan* of the spire (*sikar*) of the temple; stronger than this is *darśan* of the image of the deity, taken by standing directly in front of it; the strongest is a paradox: 'The most powerful *darśan* is actually physical *darśan* where the pilgrims not only see but touch the image of Vithoba.' This, then, is not a form of *seeing* at all, but a closer form of contact; it is as if *darśan* covers all forms of contact with the divinity.

How does *darśan* in contemporary India compare with *θεωρία* in Greek tradition? At first glance, the differences might seem more compelling than the similarities. Compared with *θεωρία*, *darśan* seems to have a deeper religious significance, and to involve a more or less fixed manner of performance. The premise in Hindu religion is that the deity inhabits the statue; in the works of some theologians, the image is conceived as one of five fundamental forms of the deity.<sup>55</sup> The pilgrim 'takes' *darśan*, and the deity 'gives' it, as if it is a blessing passed from deity to worshipper. It is often explained as a discharge of power mediated by sight or by touch.<sup>56</sup> Not only does the worshipper look at the deity, but the deity is thought to return the look. This belief is underwritten by a special sort of ritual in which the eyes of the statue are represented as being opened, and even an analogous ritual in which temples were given eyes which were symbolically opened when they were consecrated.<sup>57</sup> Furthermore, *darśan* is ritualistic. An example would be the sequence of three ranked *darśans* at Pandharpur described by Stanley, actions that the pilgrim feels himself to a greater or lesser extent obliged to perform. Furthermore, in some contexts we find a stress that the sacred gaze take place with specific attendant circumstances: thus, *darśan* can be enhanced by the waving of earthen lamps (this is known as *arati*; during performance of *Ramlila* drama at Varanasi which is watched by pilgrims, value is placed on moments when the action is arrested to produce a powerful image, called a *jhanki* or 'glimpse', accompanied by fireworks).<sup>58</sup>

Greek writers rarely talk as if contemplation of sacred images has a religious significance (though we should bear in mind that many literary sources approach the

<sup>53</sup> Eck (n. 49), 4, 57, 65.

<sup>54</sup> On *darśan* in the pilgrimage to Pandharpur, J. M. Stanley, 'The great Maharashtrian pilgrimage: Pandharpur and Alandi', in E. A. Morinis (ed.), *Sacred Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage* (New York, 1992), 65–87; G. A. Deleury, *The Cult of Vīṭhobā* (Poona, 1960), 73; D. B. Mokashi, *Palkhi. An Indian Pilgrimage*, trans. P. C. Engblom with introductory essays by P. C. Engblom and E. Zelliott (Albany, 1987), 10.

<sup>55</sup> Eck (n. 49), 18–22, 45–51; besides the devotional *bhakti* approach to images, Eck also distinguishes a Hindu attitude to images as *yantra*, where they are conceived as devices for focusing the mind.

<sup>56</sup> Stanley (n. 52), 85.

<sup>57</sup> Eck (n. 49), 53 (statues), 59 (temples).

<sup>58</sup> *Arati*: Eck (n. 49), 47–8; L. P. Vidyarthi, Makhan Jha, and B. N. Saraswatim, *The Sacred Complex of Kāshī (A Microcosm of Indian Civilisation)* (Delhi, 1979), 46–8; *jhanki*: Linda Hess, 'Staring at frames till they turn into loops: an excursion through some worlds of Tulsidas', in B. R. Hertel and C. A. Humes (edd.), *Living Banares. Hindu Religion in Cultural Context* (Albany, 1993), 93.

subject from a philosophical perspective which is to some extent inimical to popular religious perceptions, so that it remains possible that at the popular level it was believed that viewing a statue was a way of establishing a more intimate relationship with the deity). Nor does contemplation of sacred images seem to be performed according to a fixed plan, or under regulated conditions;<sup>59</sup> certainly, at some sanctuaries there was a more or less fixed repertoire of sacred sights that the visiting pilgrims would take in. Still, there is no sign that there was a religious obligation to look at the sights. In Greek religion, it is only in the context of mystical initiation that the individual experience of vision is stressed; more generally, the religious importance of being a spectator is as a means of participation in a communal ritual.

These differences of emphasis aside, significant points of contact between Hindu *darśan* and Greek *θεωρία* remain. Just as in Greek tradition the fundamental idea in *θεωρία* is that of watching a festival or ritual, so in India pilgrimage tends to take place in the context of festivals. In Hindu tradition, pilgrims may take *darśan* from statues while the statues are being paraded in ritual processions, and the ritual parading of images for the benefit of spectators from home and abroad is an activity widely attested for Greek religion as well.<sup>60</sup> A special parallel concerns the relationship between pilgrimage and national identity: in ancient Greece *θεωρία* was the chief interstate institution through which a Panhellenic identity was maintained. There are signs of a similar tendency in contemporary India: for example, at Varanasi there is a temple called *Bhārat Mātā* ('Mother of India'), containing a large map of India, which pilgrims are supposed to contemplate, climbing to the second-floor balcony for a good view; Varanasi is often presented as a microcosm of India itself, containing within itself all that is Hindu.<sup>61</sup>

Another unexpected parallel between *darśan* and *θεωρία* is that both words are used in their respective traditions to describe philosophical insight and contemplation. We have seen how this works in the case of Greek *θεωρία*. In Indian tradition, Sanskrit *darśana* also has a philosophical sense, denoting a philosophical school or system, a choice of term which seems to reflect the strongly visual sense of philosophy in India.<sup>62</sup> There were six main *darśanas*, some concerned with logic and epistemology, others with moral philosophy; the best known perhaps being the *yoga-darśana*.<sup>63</sup> The relative chronology of the development of the philosophical senses is different in the two cultures: in India the philosophical sense of Sanskrit *darśana* is attested long before the Hindi *darśan* is attested in the sense of 'religious insight', but the philosophical term could develop from an earlier association of the root *drs-* with 'religious insight', 'viewing the gods', as we see at the start of the eleventh chapter of the *Bhagavadgītā* where Krishna reveals himself to Arjuna, with overpowering effects.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>59</sup> The only testimony I know of which suggests it matters how a pilgrim looks at the statue is Herodas, *Mim.* 4.76–8 in which a speaker threatens anyone who does not look on Asclepius or his works justly: ὅς δ' ἐκείνον ἢ ἔργα τὰ ἐκείνου | μὴ παμφαλήσας ἐκ δίκης ὀρώρηκεν, | ποδὸς κρέματ' ἐκείνος ἐν γυαφέως οἴκῳ ('if any gaze on him or his works save from a just point of view, may he be hung up by the foot at the fuller's!').

<sup>60</sup> *Darśan* and festivals: Eck (n. 49), 55–8.

<sup>61</sup> D. L. Eck, *Banaras. City of Light* (Princeton, 1982), 38–9.

<sup>62</sup> J. Gonda, *The Vision of the Vedic Poets* (The Hague, 1963), 25–6. S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy I* (London, 1927 [1948]), 43; Eck (n. 49), 58–9.

<sup>63</sup> K. K. Klostermaier, *A Survey of Hinduism* (Albany, NY, 1989), 539; S. Radhakrishnan and C. A. Moore, *A Source Book of Indian Philosophy* (Princeton, 1957), *passim*.

<sup>64</sup> See R. Zaehner (ed.), *The Bhagavad-Gita* (Oxford, 1969), 304. Similar apparitions of deities to mortals in the *Mahabharata* are discussed by Laine (n. 52).

While the 'pilgrimage' sense of *darśan* might have existed for millennia without being recorded, it is perhaps likelier that it is inspired by the philosophical term. Contrast the situation in Greece, where the 'pilgrimage' sense of *θεωρία* probably pre-dates the sense of 'philosophical contemplation'. The semantic development in both traditions is similar in so far as the word chosen to express the religious contemplation of the pilgrim is one with a high stylistic register, but whereas Hindi *darśan* is coloured by its philosophical connotations, Greek *θεωρία* is marked primarily by a perceived link to the word *θεός*.

To conclude: the application of the words *θεωρός* and *θεωρία* to pilgrimage and sacred delegations in ancient Greece is best explained by the hypothesis that the prestige-activity of watching the Panhellenic games was the dominant paradigm for other forms of sacred visitation. The sacred contemplation we have found in contemporary Hindu pilgrimage seems at first sight rather different, in so far as Hindu *darśan* is comparatively ritualized, implying a more direct contact with the deity than *θεωρία*, and occupying a central place in the overall scheme of Indian religion as an activity that ultimately brings liberation. Despite the difference of emphasis, I would suggest that Hindu *darśan* is a valuable analogy for the student of Greek religion, providing as it does a vivid illustration of a contemporary pilgrimage tradition which accords a high place to contemplation of the sacred.

*University of Reading*

IAN RUTHERFORD  
i.c.rutherford@reading.ac.uk