

Roman Infrastructural Changes to Greek Sanctuaries and Games:
Panhellenism in the Roman Empire, Formations of New Identities

by

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Table of Contents

| | |
|---|------------|
| Acknowledgements | ii |
| List of Figures | vii |
| Abstract | vii |
| Chapter 1: Introduction: (Re)organization of the Greek Panhellenic sanctuaries in the Roman period | 1 |
| 1. Introduction | |
| 2. Bureaucracy and the organization of religious space | |
| 3. The study of infrastructure | |
| 4. The question | |
| 5. The argument | |
| 5.1. Overview of the dissertation chapters | |
| Chapter 2: Negotiation of Greek and Roman identities in the province of Achaëa | 16 |
| 1. Introduction | |
| 1.1. “Romanization” and the study of Greco-Roman identities | |
| 1.1.1. The spread of <i>paideia</i> in the Greek world | |
| 1.1.2. Hellenism and Italic identity | |
| 2. Greece in the late Hellenistic period | |
| 3. The province of Achaëa | |
| 3.1. Augustan Greece | |
| 3.2. Tiberius to Trajan | |
| 3.3. Hadrian | |
| 4. Conclusion | |
| Chapter 3: Hellenic festivals and games in the Roman period | 45 |
| 1. Introduction | |
| 2. Athletic competitions in Archaic & Classical Greece | |
| 3. Hellenistic expansion of the athletic program | |
| 4. History of professional associations | |
| 4.1. Development of athletic synods | |
| 5. Athletics in the Roman period | |
| 6. Conclusion | |
| Chapter 4: The sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia: Conservatism and change in a Panhellenic sanctuary | 70 |
| 1. Introduction | |

- 1.1. History of scholarship
- 1.2. History of Roman Olympia
- 1.3. Elis, mother-city of the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia
- 2. Epigraphic evidence for Roman Olympia
 - 2.1. Religious personnel
 - 2.2. Roman Olympic victors
- 3. Julio-Claudian reorganization of the sacred space
- 4. Water supply and baths in the sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia
 - 4.1. Nymphaeum of Herodes Atticus
 - 4.2. Kladeos Baths
 - 4.3. Bath to the south of the Leonidaion
 - 4.4. Other bath complexes in the sanctuary of Zeus
- 5. Hostels in the sanctuary of Zeus
 - 5.1. Leonidaion
 - 5.2. Peristyle building north of the Prytaneion
- 6. Southwest building
- 7. Conclusions

Chapter 5: The sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi: Pythian Panhellenism

137

- 1. Introduction
 - 1.1. History of scholarship
 - 1.2. History of Roman Delphi
- 2. Epigraphic Evidence for the administration of the Pythian Games
 - 2.1. Augustan reforms
 - 2.1.1. Changes to the Pythian religious personnel under the Julio-Claudians
 - 2.2. Possible Neronian reforms
 - 2.3. Amphiktyonic controversies
 - 2.4. Amphiktyony in Pausanias' time
- 3. Archaeological evidence
 - 3.1. Domitianic restoration of the temple of Apollo
 - 3.2. Herodes Atticus in the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi
 - 3.3. East Baths
 - 3.4. "Roman Agora"
 - 3.5. Gymnasium complex and Roman bath
 - 3.5.1. The Greek period gymnasium
 - 3.5.2. The Roman period gymnasium
- 4. Conclusions

Chapter 6: Argos and the Nemean Games: A Panhellenic Game in an urban context

176

- 1. Introduction
 - 1.1. History of scholarship
 - 1.2. History of the Nemean Games
- 2. The theater
- 3. The Roman Bath

| | |
|---|------------|
| 4. The Agora | |
| 5. Conclusions | |
| Chapter 7: The sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia: Panhellenism administered by a Roman colony | 198 |
| 1. Introduction | |
| 1.1. History of scholarship | |
| 1.2. History of Roman Corinth | |
| 1.3. History of the Isthmian sanctuary | |
| 2. Roman epigraphic evidence for the Isthmian Games | |
| 2.1. Religious personnel | |
| 2.2. Roman Isthmian victors | |
| 3. The Roman period organization of the sacred space | |
| 3.1. The Palaimonion | |
| 3.2. Roman temenos walls | |
| 4. Terracing, roads, and landscaping | |
| 4.1. Roman arch | |
| 5. Water supply in the sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia | |
| 5.1. Roman baths | |
| 5.2. Roman cisterns | |
| 5.3. Additional hydraulic infrastructure | |
| 6. The area east of the temenos of Poseidon | |
| 6.1. East Isthmia Archaeology Project | |
| 6.1.1. Preliminary results | |
| 7. Conclusions | |
| Chapter 8: Conclusion: The Roman infrastructure and bureaucracy of the Panhellenic sanctuaries | 263 |
| 1. Introduction | |
| 2. Infrastructure in the Roman Panhellenic sanctuaries | |
| 3. Panhellenic bureaucracy in the Roman period | |
| 4. Greek athletic festivals in the Roman imperial period | |
| Figures | 278 |
| Table | 321 |
| Bibliography | 322 |

List of Figures

| | |
|--|-----|
| 4.1. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia (Wikimedia Commons) | 278 |
| 4.2. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Metroön. A = Domitian (?); B = Claudius; C = Titus; D = Augustus as Zeus; E = Domitia (?); F = Agrippina the Younger; G = Julia Titi (?) (Hitzl 1991) | 278 |
| 4.3. Map of Elis and Olympia (Barrington Atlas 2000) | 279 |
| 4.4. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Bronze plaque discovered in Southwest Building (Kyrieleis, et.al. 2003) | 280 |
| 4.5. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Bronze Bronze plaque discovered in Southwest Building, drawing (Kyrieleis, et.al. 2003) | 280 |
| 4.6. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Bronze plaque discovered in Southwest Building, transcription (Ebert 1997) | 281 |
| 4.7. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Southwest Building (after Sinn, et.al. 1994) | 282 |
| 4.8. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Nymphaeum of Herodes Atticus, reconstruction (Bol 1984) | 282 |
| 4.9. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Nymphaeum of Herodes Atticus (Karen A. Laurence) | 283 |
| 4.10. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Greek baths (Kunze and Schleif 1944) | 283 |
| 4.11. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Kladeos Baths, plan (Kunze and Schleif 1944) | 284 |
| 4.12. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Kladeos Baths, elevation | 284 |
| 4.13. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Baths south of the Leonidaion with Leonidaion and Southwest Building (Sinn, et.al. 1994) | 285 |
| 4.14. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Baths south of the Leonidaion, plan (after Sinn, et.al. 1994) | 285 |
| 4.15. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Baths south of Leonidaion, heating system (Karen A. Laurence) | 286 |
| 4.16. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: So-called Villa of Nero (Mallwitz 1972) | 286 |
| 4.17. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: East Baths (Kunze, et.al. 1994) | 287 |
| 4.18. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Roman period Leonidaion (after Mallwitz 1972) | 287 |
| 4.19. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia, Peristyle building north of prytaneion | 288 |
| 4.20. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Inscription, Southwest Building (Kyrieleis 2003) | 288 |
| 4.21. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Inscription, Southwest Building, reverse (Sinn, et.al., 1995) | 288 |
| 5.1. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi (Bommelaer 1991) | 289 |
| 5.2. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi: Major excavated areas (Bommelaer 1991) | 289 |
| 5.3. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi: Bouleuterion, *221 (Bommelaer 1991) | 290 |
| 5.4. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi: Inscription honoring Plutarch (Karen A. Laurence) | 290 |
| 5.5. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi: Domitian (FD III.4.120) (Karen A. Laurence) | 291 |
| 5.6. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi: Stadium of Herodes Atticus (Aupert 1979) | 291 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| 5.7. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi: East baths (Bommelaer 1991) | 292 |
| 5.8. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi: So-called Roman Agora (Bommelaer 1991) | 292 |
| 5.9. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi: Gymnasium (Jannoray 1953) | 293 |
| 5.10. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi: Gymnasium, loutron and palaistra (Jannoray 1953) | 293 |
| 5.11. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi: Gymnasium, drains (Karen A. Laurence) | 294 |
| 5.12. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi: Gymnasium, distribution of graffiti in xystos (Queyrel 2001) | 294 |
| 5.13. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi: Gymnasium, inscription from xystos (Queyrel 2001) | 294 |
| 6.1. Argos: Excavated area (Piérart and Touchais (1996) | 295 |
| 6.2. Map of Argolid, Argos, Nemea (Barrington Atlas 2000) | 296 |
| 6.3. Argos: Theater (Moretti 1993) | 296 |
| 6.4. Argos, Theater (Karen A. Laurence) | 297 |
| 6.5. Argos: Theater, Hellenistic period (Moretti 1993) | 297 |
| 6.6. Argos: Theater, Roman period (Moretti 1993) | 298 |
| 6.7. Argos: Odeion, mosaic (Ginouvés 1972) | 298 |
| 6.8. Argos: Roman bath, original plan (Aupert 1985) | 299 |
| 6.9. Argos: Roman bath (Aupert 1985) | 299 |
| 6.10. Argos: Argora (Pariante and Touchais 1998) | 300 |
| 6.11. Argos: Nymphaeum (Marchetti and Kolokotsas 1995) | 300 |
| 6.12. Argos: Cistern (Marchetti and Kolokotsas 1995) | 301 |
| 6.13. Argos: Nymphaeum, reconstruction (Marchetti and Kolokotsas 1995) | 301 |
| 7.1. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia (Gebhard and Hemens 1992) | 302 |
| 7.2. Corinth: Roman Forum (Williams and Bookidis 2003) | 303 |
| 7.3. Map of Corinthia (Wikimedia Commons) | 303 |
| 7.4. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: Early Iron Age deposit on East Terrace (Gebhard and Hemens 1992) | 304 |
| 7.5. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia (Gebhard, Hemens, and Hayes 1998) | 304 |
| 7.6. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: Early Roman sanctuary (Gebhard, Hemens, and Hayes 1998) | 305 |
| 7.7. Corinthian coin issued between 43 and 42 B.C.E. by Corinthian duoviri P. Tadius Chilo and C. Iulius Nikephoros. Reverse: Taming of Pegasus; Obverse: Seated Poseidon (Amandry 1988) | 305 |
| 7.8. Corinthian coin issued between 41 and 40 B.C.E. by Corinthian duoviri P. Aebultius and C. Pinnius. Reverse: Pine wreath (Amandry 1988) | 305 |
| 7.9. Corinth inscription 8.3.153 (Karen A. Laurence) | 306 |
| 7.10. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: Hadrianic period (Gebhard, Hemens, and Hayes 1998) | 306 |
| 7.11. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: Antonine period (Gebhard, Hemens, and Hayes 1998) | 307 |
| 7.12. Corinth inscription 8.3.230 (Karen A. Laurence) | 307 |
| 7.13. Corinth inscription 8.1.15 (Karen A. Laurence) | 308 |
| 7.14. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: Palaimonion lamps (Broneer 1977) | 308 |
| 7.15. Reconstruction of Palaimonion temple (Broneer 1973) | 309 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| 7.16. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: Plan showing Early Stadium and Embankment Wall (Gebhard and Hemens 1998) | 309 |
| 7.17. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: Roman Arch (Gregory and Mills 1984, figure 3) | 310 |
| 7.18. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: Greek bath (Gregory 1995) | 310 |
| 7.19. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: Roman Bath (Gregory 1995) | 311 |
| 7.20. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: Roman Bath, monochrome mosaic (Gregory 1995) | 311 |
| 7.21. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: Roman waterworks (Broneer 1973) | 312 |
| 7.22. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: East Field, trenches (1970 = red, 1971 = blue, 1972 = green) (Ellis, et.al. 2008) | 312 |
| 7.23. Hierarchy of abstractions (Ellis, et.al., 2008) | 313 |
| 7.24. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: East Field, phase 2 (courtesy of Eric Poehler) | 313 |
| 7.25. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: East Field, phase 3 (courtesy of Eric Poehler) | 314 |
| 7.26. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: East Field, phase 4 (courtesy of Eric Poehler) | 314 |
| 7.27. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: East Field, phase 5 (courtesy of Eric Poehler) | 315 |
| 7.28. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: relief of Asklepios, Hygeia, and Telesphoros (Lattimore 1996) | 315 |
| 7.29. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: relief of Cybeles (Lattimore 1996) | 316 |
| 7.30. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: relief of Nymphs (Lattimore 1996) | 316 |

ABSTRACT

**Roman infrastructural changes to Greek sanctuaries and games:
Panhellenism in the Roman Empire, formations of new identities**

by

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Chair: Sharon Herbert

My dissertation examines the changes to the Panhellenic Games in Greece during the Roman period through an examination of the nonmonumental architecture, infrastructural features, and epigraphic evidence of the four original Panhellenic Games: the Olympic, Pythian, Isthmian, and Nemean. I argue that, though each of these Games played an important role in defining Greek responses to Roman rule, they were used in quite disparate ways and were conceptualized differently by their participants. The Olympic Games, for instance, continued to be administered by the city of Elis, which had autonomous control over the sanctuary of Zeus, maintaining its independence and preserving the traditional Greek cultural milieu; in contrast, Augustus, Nero, Hadrian and other emperors manipulated the membership of the Amphiktyonic League at Delphi in order to better serve their political strategies for the province of Achaëa. The Nemean

Games were transferred to their mother-city of Argos in the Hellenistic period and continued to be celebrated there in an urban context throughout the Roman period. The Isthmian Games were administered by the Roman colony of Corinth, who used their control over that spectacle to legitimate their place in Achaea. They maintained a Greek veneer over the Isthmian festival, through the continued use of Greek as the language of the Games, while making significant changes to the administration of the festival to make it suit the political structure of the new Roman colony. I conclude that there was not one Roman administrative model of control over these Games, but features of them were deliberately chosen and modified by many groups and individuals, from the emperors, to Roman citizens of Greece, to the native elites, to the athletes, to legitimize and highlight their connections to the classical Greek past and to create a broader sense of Panhellenism throughout the province of Achaea and the rest of the Greek world.

Chapter 1:

Introduction: (Re)organization of the Greek Panhellenic sanctuaries in the Roman period

1. Introduction

From the 6th century B.C.E., when the original stephanic cycle was solidified, the four Panhellenic festivals held at Olympia, Delphi, Isthmia, and Nemea were some of the most important for the ancient Greeks. The sanctuaries themselves, and the biennial and quadrennial contests celebrated at them, became places for citizens from all over the Greek world to gather and proclaim their common Greek identity. Celebrated in many different cities and regions throughout Greece, Magna Graecia, Asia Minor and beyond, these athletic festivals provided the opportunity for people to gather and celebrate in their common Greekness.¹

Long after the Battle of Actium, when Achaëa became one of many provinces in the Roman Empire, these four original Panhellenic Games continued to be celebrated and honored above all other religious athletic competitions. These festivals, however, were not static and fixed entities. Throughout the Roman imperial period, they were altered in quite different ways in order to serve and meet the various new requirements, both physical and experiential, of their new cosmopolitan and multi-ethnic audiences and participants of the Roman Empire.

¹ Stephen G. Miller, *Ancient Greek athletics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 112. Using 480 B.C.E. as a starting point Miller reconstructs the Crown Games within the course of an Olympiad as: 480, July/August – Olympia; 479, July/August – Nemea; 478, April/May – Isthmia; 478, July/August – Delphi; 477, July/August – Nemea; 476, April/May – Isthmia; 476, July/August – Olympia.

2. Bureaucracy and the organization of religious space

Despite the large number and diversity of buildings that were present in Greek sanctuaries, scholarship focusing on the archaeology of Greek cult often falls into two broad categories, concentrating either on monumental architecture in isolation, or on broader issues or regionalism and landscape.² While both of these camps are important and have both produced much worthwhile scholarship, they each fall short in their own ways.

Studies of individual buildings fail to put those constructions in the context of the site as a whole. Space is a fluid construct and is constantly developing and changing through time.³ By studying a building or dedication in isolation, it is removed from this interactive space and the full nature of how visitors to the sanctuary related to it and perceived of it are not fully explored. Landscape studies of Greek sanctuaries admirably attempt to rectify this situation.⁴ While these analyses have pushed studies of the

² Susan E. Alcock, *Graecia capta: the landscapes of Roman Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); F. d. Polignac, *Cults, territory, and the origins of the Greek city-state* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); Catherine Morgan, *Athletes and oracles: the transformation of Olympia and Delphi in the eight century B.C* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

³ Thomas Barrie, *Spiritual path, sacred place : myth, ritual, and meaning in architecture* (Boston: Shambhala, 1996); Erica Carter, James Donald and Judith Squires, *Space and place : theories of identity and location* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1993); Tim Cresswell, *Place : a short introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2004); Bill Hillier and Julienne Hanson, *The social logic of space* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Eric Hirsch and Michael O'Hanlon, *The anthropology of landscape : perspectives on place and space* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995); Ian Hodder and Clive Orton, *Spatial analysis in archaeology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976); Matthew. Johnson, *Ideas of landscape* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2007); Henri Lefebvre, *The production of space* (Oxford: Blackwell Pub., 1991); Michael Parker Pearson and Colin Richards, *Architecture and order : approaches to social space* (London: Routledge, 1994); Adam T. Smith, *The political landscape : constellations of authority in early complex polities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Adam T. Smith and A. Brookes, *Holy ground : theoretical issues relating to the landscape and material culture of ritual space objects : papers from a session held at the Theoretical Archaeology Group Conference, Cardiff 1999* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2001); Edward W. Soja, *The political organization of space* (Washington: Association of American Geographers, 1971); Christopher Y. Tilley, *A phenomenology of landscape : places, paths, and monuments* (Oxford: Berg, 1994).

⁴ DePolignac, *Cults, territory, and the origins of the Greek city-state*, Alcock, *Graecia Capta*, Susan E. Alcock and Robin Osborne, *Placing the gods: sanctuaries and sacred space in ancient Greece* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

archaeology of Greek cult into more dynamic theoretical frameworks, wherein sacred space is examined as a dynamic entity with which the ancient Greeks and Romans negotiated, they tend to focus on broad changes over time rather than on the ways in which individual structures were affected by each other and their place in the space of the sanctuaries.⁵

I, too, will devote a significant number of pages in this study to particular structures, but have attempted to approach the data with a semi-macro or middle level of analysis of the sites and their games, attempting to pull together the above opposing macro- and micro-scale approaches.⁶ By focusing on the Roman period constructions as a whole in these four sanctuaries, I will examine the overall context of these new structures and infrastructural works in the cult site, both how they interacted with the other structures and dedications throughout the site, and the messages they produced and were used to produce by the visitors.

Through the examination of these infrastructural works in their broader context and by placing them into the holistic workings of the sanctuary space in the Roman periods, I thereby strive to populate these sanctuaries with their worshippers. It is imperative to remember that these buildings were not constructed and did not exist in isolation, but were located within sanctuaries that had been accruing other dedications and structures for centuries. Furthermore, people, athletes, spectators, and others interacted with these buildings and with the sanctuary as a whole throughout its history. As new buildings were constructed in the Roman imperial periods into these age old sites, they interacted with other buildings and created new dynamics for the visitors and

⁵ Michael C. Scott, *Delphi and Olympia: The spatial politics of Panhellenism in the Archaic and Classical periods* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

⁶ David L. Clarke, *Spatial archaeology* (London: Academic Press, 1977); Scott, *Delphi and Olympia*, 22.

administrators. Space, after all, is an evolving setting for the actions of people. These people, by their dedications and other activities at a site, actively constructed value and meaning onto the space and created multiple interpretations of these sites.⁷

The creation of any building or feature on a sanctuary site, from the monumental dedications to the drainage, was a process of collaboration and consultation between many different agents, from dedicators, to sanctuary officials, city officials, and local and specialist builders and sculptors.⁸ Michael C. Scott has begun to address these issues in regards to monumental dedications at Olympia and Delphi in the Archaic and Classical periods.⁹ In a study of the Siphnian Treasury, in particular, he demonstrated that its construction was a collaborative project between many different groups, including the Siphnians, the Amphiktyonic League, local builders, and marble craftsmen. There were also a wide range of influences that could react against building on a site, such as particular historical and political circumstances. The physical terrain was another major factor in the building of new structures and features, as space influenced the positions of the buildings that were constructed within it through geographical features and previously built structures. There were also preferences for building in particular areas, the financial and political clout of the dedicators, the role and power of the controlling power at the sanctuary, and the presence or absence of skilled craftsmen that would affect the structures built in any sanctuary at any time.

⁷ Barbara Bender, *Landscape: politics and perspectives* (New York: Berg, 1993); A. Bernard Knapp and Wendy Ashmore, "Archaeological landscapes: constructed, conceptualized, ideational" in *Archaeologies of landscape: contemporary perspectives*, ed. A. Bernard Knapp and Wendy Ashmore (Oxford: Blackwell Publ., 1999), 1-2; Eric Hirsch and Michael O'Hanlon, *The anthropology of landscape: perspectives on place and space* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995); Tilley, *A phenomenology of landscape*.

⁸ M. C. Scott, "Putting architectural sculpture into its archaeological context: the case of the Siphnian Treasury at Delphi," *BABesch* 82 (2007): 327.

⁹ Scott, "Putting architectural sculpture into its archaeological context," M. C. Scott, "Constructing identities in sacred interstate space: the case of the Arkadian monument at Delphi," *BAR* 1739 (2008): 431-8; Scott, *Delphi and Olympia*.

The parties that were building on sanctuary sites changed from the Archaic and Classical periods to the Roman period, from individual poleis to local and imperial elites. Scholars have begun to study the Panhellenic sanctuaries for these influences in the Archaic and Classical periods,¹⁰ but these sites continued to be places of competing identities and a place where the past and present intermingled to create complex stories of identity throughout the Roman era. Infrastructure plays an important, but often ignored, role in this dynamic period.

3. The study of infrastructure

The Romans were experts at the construction of infrastructure, as can be seen by the massive numbers of aqueducts, baths, and roads that stretched throughout the far reaches of the empire. Greece was no exception to this rule, and, as we have seen, neither were the sanctuaries located within this province of Achaëa. The study of infrastructure, however, has been a relatively overlooked discipline in Greek archaeology.¹¹ The infrastructural networks in Greek religious spaces, especially, have been studied in relative isolation both to each other and to the layout of the sanctuary as a whole.

Infrastructure deals with the physical and organizational facilities constructed for an institution to function and the mechanisms by which the sanctuary was actually run, both on a day-to-day basis and during the huge Panhellenic festivals with which this dissertation deals. I divide the infrastructure of Greek sanctuaries into three types: tourist, transportation, and water management. Transportation infrastructure includes, but is not limited to, the roads that served not just the sanctuary itself, but linked these spaces with

¹⁰ Scott, *Delphi and Olympia*.

¹¹ There are exceptions to this rule, such as John McKesson Camp, "The water supply of ancient Athens from 3000 to 86 B.C." (PhD diss., Princeton University, 1977); Dora P. Crouch, *Water management in ancient Greek cities* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Mabel L. Lang, *Waterworks in the Athenian Agora* (Princeton: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1968).

cities, ports and other sites throughout the province. Water management pertains to the hydraulic infrastructure, from aqueducts to drains to baths. I define touristic infrastructure as those things that were constructed in order to supply the spectators, athletes, and other visitors to the sites with both their physical necessities and entertainment, including food, water, and shelter, but also the baths and other such structures. These different divisions, then, are not mutually exclusive. Water management and transportation both fall in their own category, but also within the realm of tourism.

This study of infrastructure involves analyzing the sanctuary site as a whole, beyond the examination of individual buildings and a limiting focus on view-sheds. The relationships between buildings in a sanctuary did not only rely on the visual connections between structures.¹² Rather, these sites were populated with worshippers, athletes, and other visitors who would have negotiated their ways through the sacred space. *How* did the spectators and athletes use the new buildings that were constructed in these sanctuaries in the Roman period, and *who* were these people, an especially significant question in the Roman period when complex issues of Roman versus Greek identity were being navigated. The infrastructural changes to the Greek sanctuaries and games that coincided with the Roman occupation of Greece studied in this dissertation indicate the disparately changing functions of these spaces in the Roman imperial period and the dynamics between the visitors and participants at the games.

There is a strong corollary between infrastructural works and some of the monumental constructions erected on a site. In a recent book on Pompeii, Eric Poehler

¹² Though extremely worthwhile, C. A. Doxiades, *Architectural space in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1972); Richard T. Neer, "Framing the gift: the politics of the Siphnian Treasury at Delphi," *CA* 20 (2001): 273-344; Richard T. Neer, "The Athenian Treasury at Delphi and the material of politics," *CA* 23 (2004): 63-93.

discusses the interrelatedness of infrastructure and monumental architecture in the Pompeian forum area.¹³ His study suggests that the hydraulic and transportation systems were planned as a whole, in theory if not in practice, and required an organizational structure that could manage such city-wide, or in my case sanctuary-wide, planning. These infrastructural units were planned *with* the monumental architecture and had to be installed in order for the monumental architecture to run the way it was supposed to. Indeed, many times the construction of infrastructure was planned over a site as a whole, raising important issues regarding the planning and orchestration of these sites. The infrastructure, then, is physically linked with monumental architecture and both need to be studied together, as a whole.

4. The question

The original four stephanic competitions maintained their preeminent position in the Hellenistic and Roman periods.¹⁴ As more and more festivals were founded throughout the Roman Empire, and athletes became members of professional synods, the games of the periodonikoi remained the most prestigious in the Empire. Other games were founded for and by the emperors, but the original four Panhellenic Games were steeped in ancient tradition and Hellenic ideals of *arête*, civic pride, and competition.

¹³ Eric Poehler, "Practical matters: infrastructure and the planning for the post-earthquake forum at Pompeii" in *Art, industry and infrastructure in Roman Pompeii*, ed. E. Poehler, M. Flohr and K. Cole (Oxford: Oxbow, 2011), 153-54.

¹⁴ Through the course of the Roman occupation of Achaëa, a few other games were added to this prestigious circuit and also became periodonikoi games. After the Nemean Games were transferred to Argos, games there dedicated to the goddess Hera, at which the prize was a shield, were added to this prestigious circuit. New games were established on the Greek model in the Augustan period at both Nikopolis in 30/29 B.C.E. and Naples in either 2 B.C.E. or 2 C.E, both of which were directly associated with the emperor. The high status of these games was established as they entered the Panhellenic stephanic circuit with the original four Panhellenic Games.

There have recently been a number of scholarly works studying the role of athletics in the Roman world.¹⁵ These works have examined the complex role that Hellenic athletic and gymnasium culture played in the Republic and the Empire. The Roman generals, officials, and emperors took active interests in Greek athletic festivals, patronizing athletic guilds, founding new games, and dedicating statues and buildings in sanctuaries. Benefaction of Greek games became a way to show one's philhellenism and promote panhellenism in the provinces of the Greek East, while also providing reminders of the power of Rome. For local elites who also gave support to the games, the athletes who participated, and others who came as spectators, these festivals were venues to advertise one's Hellenism in the Roman world.

While these recent studies have been significantly constructive, there has not been a concerted effort to link the study of shifting identities and the Roman and Greek interchange regarding the Roman presence in Greece with the archaeological record and the actual physical spaces in which these games took place. Changes to the sanctuary structures, as well as questions pertaining to who built new structures, who benefited from them and how, need to be addressed much more fully.

A recent German archaeological project focusing on the Roman period at Olympia, as well as my own participation in the East Isthmia Archaeology Project, which is focusing on Roman infrastructural buildings at the sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia, provided an impetus for this dissertation. In addition to these two Crown Games, the

¹⁵ For example, Jason König, *Athletics and literature in the Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Jason König, "Greek athletics in the Severan period: literary views" in *Severan culture*, ed. S. Swain, S. Harrison and J. Elsner (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 135-45; Zahra Newby, *Greek athletics in the Roman world: victory and virtue* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Onno van Nijf, "Athletics, festivals, and Greek identity in the Roman East," *PCPS* 45 (1999): 176-200; Onno van Nijf, "Athletics, *andreia*, and the *Askesis*-culture in the Roman East" in *Andreia: studies in manliness and courage in classical antiquity*, ed. Ralph Mark Rosen and I. Sluiter (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 263-86.

sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi provides a wealth of epigraphic evidence to answer questions about the use of these sanctuaries in the Roman period. The final original Crown Games, the Nemean, round out the study, which were celebrated in the city of Argos from the Hellenistic period and present a case study of how games were celebrated in an urban context. Through a study of the changes in the infrastructure and bureaucracy of these games in the Roman imperial period and the role that Greek athletics played in the Roman Greek East, a clearer picture of the use of these sanctuaries and their games and the people that occupied them in the Roman imperial period can be drawn.

5. The argument

In this dissertation, I will study the ways in which the four original Panhellenic Games were used in the Roman period to form and negotiate complex identities by the various visitors to the sites. All four continued to rank first in a successful athletes' *cursus honorum* of victories throughout the Hellenistic and Roman periods, even as the number of athletic festivals multiplied. Each of these games and sanctuaries, however, received dramatically different treatment depending on the organization and make-up of their mother city and for what purpose and role the emperor and other members of the Roman Empire chose to fashion them.

I will be analyzing these issues through a focus on the infrastructural and bureaucratic changes to these four sanctuaries. The majority of the new amenities built at the sites during the Roman imperial era were infrastructural, rather than monumental religious buildings. The sanctuaries were modernized with the construction of new baths, aqueducts, drainage systems, hostels, and other structures that were meant to make the visitors, members of the new Roman Empire, more comfortable. In conjunction with this

focus on physical infrastructural changes to the sanctuaries, I will also examine the epigraphical record to show the dramatically different ways that the organizational framework of these distinctive games was changed throughout the Roman imperial period.

5.1. Overview of the dissertation chapters

In Chapter Two, I will set my dissertation within a theoretical framework and historical context. Using the second century C.E. sophist Favorinus as a building block, I will discuss the construction of multiple identities by elites in the Roman Empire and how Hellenic identity became expressly associated with *paideia*, by which all those with the means and leisure to devote themselves to an appropriate Hellenic education could become Hellenized. I will then discuss the historical context of the province of Achaëa from the second century B.C.E. through the reign of Hadrian. I will focus on the Augustan period, and the creation of an ideal categorization of Hellenism developed based on Roman ideals of *virtus* and the “old Greece” epitomized by Athenian *paideia*, Spartan militarism, the Persian Wars, and Greek athletics, and how later emperors and elites, especially Hadrian and Herodes Atticus, followed his model.

Chapter Three examines the theoretical and historical context of athletics in the Roman Empire. I will examine the creation and evolution of athletic and artistic professional organizations, or synods, and their growing importance through the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Throughout the dissertation, I will discuss the evidence of the athletes who took part at the four original Panhellenic Games in each individual case study. While evidence of these synods appears to be largely archaeologically

invisible, it is possible to detect overall changes to the guilds and the role of sport through the Empire at the individual sites.

The first case study, the Olympic Games, is presented in Chapter Four. These were the oldest of the Panhellenic festivals, and were considered the most important. They always retained the first place in an athlete's *cursus honorum* no matter in what other spectacles he may have competed and this sanctuary of Zeus served as the conceptual heart of ancient Greece. The ancient city of Elis maintained much of its autonomy over the Olympic Games throughout their Roman history. The traditional structure of priests and other personnel, who continued to be supplied from the population of Elis itself, was maintained, and the events in the games were sustained in their traditional manner.

The sanctuary itself saw the patronage of many influential Romans, such as Agrippa, Nero, and Domitian, and statues of the imperial family were housed in the Metroön. In addition, the famous Athenian Herodes Atticus and his wife Regilla provided a monumental Nymphaeum and the aqueduct responsible for its water flow. Benefited by the construction of this aqueduct, several baths were built throughout the Roman period and lined the perimeter of the Altis. The Leonidaion was altered and other guesthouses were built and, under Nero and Domitian, a huge building was constructed in the southwestern corner of the Altis that served some infrastructural purpose.

A majority of architectural work that was carried out in the sanctuary, then, was infrastructural, to provide more plentiful and comfortable accoutrements to the visitors to the sanctuary in the form of baths and other hospitality structures. The focus switched from those who came to participate in the games to those who came to watch them, with

more elaborate seating built into the stadium and plenty of baths and other places to relax in expectation of or in between events of the games. As the oldest and the most prestigious of all of the games, Olympia was an ideal place to come and celebrate Panhellenism.

In Chapter Five, I turn to the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi, which was made famous by the Pythian Games celebrated at her sanctuary and, of course, by the oracle of Apollo. There are fewer Roman constructions at Delphi and less of the periphery has been excavated, so further information is not available. Two baths were constructed at the site, including one added to one of the terraces of the Hellenistic gymnasium between the Apollo and Marmaria sanctuaries. Herodes Atticus also undertook a renovation of the stadium and Domitian an unspecified repair to the temple. Some structures were built to the east of the sanctuary entrance, which have been identified as an agora and shops, but which I believe were a monumental entrance to the sanctuary.

Like Olympia, however, the structures within the temenos of Apollo remained relatively unchanged throughout the Roman period. Additional dedications were added and many were taken away by various conquerors and emperors, but no new monumental dedications were constructed. One of the most surprising absences at Delphi was the relative lack of evidence for the imperial cult. The other three games incorporated some form of emperor worship: both the Nemean and Isthmian Games had imperial contests celebrated in close conjunction with them and, as stated above, the Metroön and Nymphaeum of Herodes Atticus at Olympia held statues of the imperial family.

Like Olympia, the sacred topography of Delphi remained relatively unchanged in the Roman period, but, in contrast, the organizational structure of the sanctuary was

drastically changed, with several emperors having a direct hand in the manipulation of the Amphiktyonic League. This league was dramatically altered by Augustus, Nero, Domitian and Hadrian in the Roman period, who all shifted the membership and balance of power of the association. Additionally, much of the actual power of the League was taken away by the creation of two posts: the epimelete, head of the league, and the agonothete, the president of the Pythian Games. I will argue that the emperors made these changes in order to use the league to bond together cities behind a Panhellenic ideal in order to strengthen and secure the province of Achaea, while also ensuring that the league did not have enough political power to oppose Roman rule.

Chapter Six is a study of the limited evidence of the Roman Nemean Games. The sanctuary of Zeus at Nemea was abandoned in the third century B.C.E. and the games were celebrated biennially in the mother city of Argos, accompanied by games dedicated to either Hera or the imperial cult in alternating years. There is less archaeological evidence for the Nemean Games, because the sanctuary and stadium have yet to be excavated in Argos. A monumental theater and bath complex, however, certainly serviced the needs of the spectators who came to Argos to watch the games, but were certainly not used exclusively for these competitions.

The experience of the Nemean Games, then, was drastically different than those of the other three traditional Panhellenic Games. They were not celebrated in a sanctuary, but in an ancient Greek city whose mythical ties went back to Perseus. The Argolid, itself, was home to many other heroes, like Herakles and Agamemnon. I believe that the Argives used this new placement of the Nemean Games to their advantage in creating a heroic memory for themselves and for the various athletes and spectators who would be

coming from the rest of the Mediterranean world. While a modern, vibrant city, they also presented themselves as a museum of mythical and Classical heroes.

The final case study of this dissertation is the Isthmian Games. The sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia provides a different example of Roman influence on a Panhellenic sanctuary. The mother city of Isthmia was Corinth, which was sacked by the Romans in 146 B.C.E. and then refounded as a Roman colony in 44 B.C.E. The Isthmian Games, which had found a new home in Sikyon after 146, may have been returned to Corinth by 40 B.C.E., just a scant couple of years after the new city was founded.

The games themselves, however, were not returned to the sanctuary of Isthmia until the mid-first century C.E. When the site was reopened, a new architectural complex was constructed for Palaimon, the child hero for whom the Isthmian Games were founded. Although a fragment of Pindar indicates that this cult could have been celebrated for centuries, there is no archaeological evidence for it until the Roman reopening of the sanctuary. Other Roman period changes to the sanctuary include the construction of four stoas that surrounded the temple and enclosed the sanctuary space, a monumental bath complex, and a Roman arch. An area east of the temenos was also developed in the later history of the site, in order to serve some extra infrastructural need.

I believe that the sanctuary of Poseidon was a place for the Roman period Corinthians to act out a new cultural identity. The sanctuary had an ancient history, being a meeting ground for people from all over the Corinthia since the Early Iron Age and, most famously, the Panhellenic Council of 480 B.C.E. Poseidon was the patron god of the Isthmus and played a particularly strong symbolic and religious role in Corinth, too, being the lover of the mythical nymph Peirene and father of the region's two harbors'

eponyms. I will show that the Isthmian Games were used by the Roman period Corinthians to legitimize their presence as the capital of the province.

All of these games, then, continued to be celebrated under the jurisdiction of the Roman Empire. In this study, I will study the changes to the infrastructure and bureaucracy of the games and show how each of the sites served a different purpose in the preservation or creation of a Hellenic cultural identity for the spectators and athletes of the Roman Empire who visited the site. Olympia was steeped in tradition. Delphi maintained the appearance of tradition, while being drastically modified from within. Nemea was abandoned for a city that was famous for its mythical role in Greece. And the Isthmian sanctuary was used by the Roman Corinthians to display and create a new Hellenic identity for themselves.

Chapter 2:

Negotiation of Greek and Roman identities in the province of Achaëa

1. Introduction

Before delving into the Roman period changes to the bureaucracy and infrastructure of the four case studies of this dissertation, the Olympic, Pythian, Nemean, and Isthmian games, I will briefly outline the history of interactions between the cities and leagues of the Peloponnese and mainland Greece with Republican and Imperial Rome from the Hellenistic through the Hadrianic periods. I study the Hellenistic period in order to put the developments in the province of Achaëa into an historical context, but will focus on the Augustan through the Hadrianic period in particular throughout most of the dissertation.

Building on the Hellenic influences to Roman culture and the philhellenism felt among some of the elites of the Italic peninsula, Augustus and his successors encouraged a specific and approved strain of philhellenism in order to promote Augustan values. Under the principate, particular elements of Hellenic cultural heritage were highlighted by Augustus, his followers, and supporters, as well as by local elites. As we shall see, the Panhellenic games, traditionally believed to have been created to prepare men for war, were included within this sphere. Augustus and his son-in-law Agrippa, followed by Augustus' successors, supported the most famous and important of these games and the sanctuaries in which they were celebrated. A derivative of this so-called "cultural revolution" in Greece was an increased sense of panhellenism among those who

associated themselves with a Hellenic cultural identity. In some ways, an image of a unified Greece, represented, for instance, in the combined Greek force that fought in the Persian Wars and the originally Greek-exclusive ideals of the Panhellenic games, promoted a unity within the Roman provinces and enthusiasm for and a promotion of institutions of Greece's classical past.

1.1. "Romanization" and the study of Greco-Roman identities

The study of "Romanization" (variously called romanization or Romanization) has been an object of contention and debate for some time.¹ The top-down approach, in which Rome disseminated its culture, in both material and ideological forms, to all of the grateful and accepting "savages" that they conquered, has been frequently reevaluated, and even the relevance of the model itself has been brought into question.² This model assumes a geographic unification of the Empire which is not applicable. For the purposes

¹ For recent bibliography, see P.A.R. van Dommelen, and N. Terrenato, *Articulating local culture : power and identity under the expanding Roman republic*, International Roman Archaeology Conference series (Portsmouth: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 2007); Richard Hingley, *Globalizing Roman culture : unity, diversity and empire* (London: Routledge, 2005); David Mattingly, "Being Roman: expressing identity in a provincial setting" *JRA* 15 (2004): 5-25. Similar theoretical issues are also being debated in the field of Minoanization and the effect of Crete on the rest of the Mediterranean world in the Bronze Age, for instance Cyprian Broodbank, "Minoanisation," *PCPS* 50 (2004): 46-91, as well as Hellenization and the interactions between Greek and other cultures in the eastern Mediterranean. See especially Carla Antonaccio, "Hybridity and the cultures within Greek culture" in *The cultures within ancient Greek culture : contact, conflict, collaboration*, ed. Carla Dougherty and Leslie Kurke (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 57-76; Claire L. Lyons and John K. Papadopoulos, *The archaeology of colonialism* (Los Angeles, CA: Getty Research Institute, 2002); P. Van Dommelen, "The orientaling phenomenon. Hybridity and material culture in the western Mediterranean" in *Debating orientalization : multidisciplinary approaches to change in the ancient Mediterranean*, ed. Corinna Riva and Nicholas C. Vella (London: Equinox, 2006), 135-52.

² Francis Haverfield has often been pointed out as one of the first practitioners of this theory: Francis Haverfield, "An inaugural address delivered before the First Annual General Meeting of the Society," *JRS* 1 (1911): xi-xx; Richard Hingley, "The 'legacy' of Rome: the rise, decline, and fall of the theory of Romanization" in *Roman imperialism: post-colonial perspectives: Proceedings of a symposium held at Leicester University in November 1994*, ed. Jane Webster and Nicholas J. Cooper (Leicester: School of Archaeological Studies, University of Leicester, 1996), 39-40. For dissent, see Martin Millett, *The Romanization of Britain: an essay in archaeological interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); David Mattingly, "Vulgar and weak 'Romanization', or time for a paradigm shift?," *JRA* 15 (2002): 536ff; Nicola Terrenato, "Tam Firmum Municipium. The Romanization of Volaterrae and its cultural implications," *JRS* 88 (1998): 94-114; and Greg Woolf, *Becoming Roman : the origins of provincial civilization in Gaul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) among others.

of this dissertation, I will not attempt to formulate a comprehensive definition of “Romanization,” but will instead consider the specific associations between the Hellenic and Roman cultures and the formation of Greco-Roman identities in the province of Achaëa.

The relationships between the different cultural groups discussed in this dissertation were not static or monolithic, but were highly nuanced and varied. Like “Romanization,” the study of identity has also received a scholarly resurgence in the last decades.³ It is now understood that identity is not a static thing founded purely on biology, language, or religion. Rather, it is based on perceptions of shared culture that are not static, but are actively constructed and so, therefore, change meaningfully over time. Cultural identity is especially conceived against the confrontation of other conflicting identities, so an identity is defined by its difference from others and relies as much on these differences as on similarities within a group. Identity is constantly under a complex process of negotiation and formation.

From their early interactions in the Italic peninsula, to the subjugation of the province of Achaëa under the Roman Empire, to the height of the empire when more Greek provincials were gaining citizenship, Hellenic and Roman cultural identities were in a constant dialogue with one another. Those living during these times allude to the fact that they could hold several seemingly conflicting identities simultaneously. The second century C.E. sophist Favorinus is an apt descriptor of this. The eunuch from Gaul was a

³ For recent bibliography on identity, see Jonathon M. Hall, *Hellenicity: Between ethnicity and culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); S. Jones, *The archaeology of ethnicity : constructing identities in the past and present* (London: Routledge, 1997); Jason König, *Athletics and literature in the Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Ian Malkin, *Ancient perceptions of Greek ethnicity* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2001). Also, Nathan Glazer, David P. Moynihan and Corinne Saposch Schelling, *Ethnicity : theory and experience* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1975); Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Ethnicity and nationalism : anthropological perspectives* (London: Pluto Press, 1993).

wealth of contradictions. The biographer Philostratus, in fact, describes Favorinus' major paradoxes as three-fold: though he was a eunuch, he had been tried for adultery; though he had quarreled with Hadrian, he was still alive; and, though he was a Gaul, he lived the life of a Hellene.⁴ In Favorinus' *Corinthian Oration*, in which he censures the citizens of Corinth for taking down a statue of him that they had previously dedicated, Favorinus makes the statement that he was more Greek than the Greeks and more Roman than the Romans, though he himself was from Arles.⁵

The word that Philostratus uses to denote the Greekness of Favorinus was ἐλληνίζειν. Wallace-Hadrill argues the significance of this particular verb, as its termination indicates a repeated process which specified that Favorinus was not just Greek or just speaking Greek, but was *becoming* Greek through repeated action, or *habitus*.⁶ The transformation of a Roman citizen from Gaul into a Greek was made possible through the spread of *paideia*. This notion, that a Hellenic cultural identity could be taught, will be discussed at greater length below. As a Roman, Greek, and Gaul, Favorinus presented himself as a cultural paradigm. His description of his own identity indicates that he could hold these different banners as a cultural ambidexterity. He was Greek without sacrifice or loss of his Romanness or Gaulishness, and therefore any other combination without loss or sacrifice of any particular facet of his cultural identity.

This example illustrates that individuals have the ability to hold several identities at once. Greek and Roman cultures were never monolithic unchanging entities, but were constantly influenced by each other and the many other cultural groups in the eastern, and

⁴ Philostr. *V S* 1.8

⁵ Favorinus, *Corinthian Oration* 25-6; Maud. W. Gleason, *Making men: sophists and self-presentation in ancient Rome* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 3-20, 131-68; Jason König, "Favorinus' Corinthian oration in its Corinthian context," *PCPS* 47 (2001): 141-68; Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, *Rome's cultural revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 4-7.

⁶ Wallace-Hadrill, *Rome's cultural revolution*, 6.

later the western, Mediterranean. As these cultures came in contact or conflict with one another, the cultures did not just blend or fuse together into a hybrid culture. Instead, they created a plurality of cultures that can best be understood as layers of strata superimposed and coexisting with one another.⁷ For instance, as we shall see, the modern physical features of Roman culture, such as baths, arches, and aqueducts, were constructed in the eastern provinces as *additions* to the native Hellenic culture, not as *replacements* for aspects of Greek culture. The Panhellenic games continued to be celebrated along often traditional lines, but with these new Roman features. The games were still markers for Hellenic cultural identity, but one could also act as a Roman, Gaul, or, for instance, a Syrian at these bastions of Greek sport.

This stratification of cultural identities was partly due to the different ways that the Roman and Hellenic identities were constructed. Below, I will outline the spread of Hellenic culture through the Mediterranean in the years following the eastern conquests of Alexander the Great and the development of a Hellenic ethnic identity based on a common cultural heritage rather than genealogical descent. In the west, the Latin cultures of Italy were confronted with and influenced by Hellenism from the earliest periods of Greek colonization in South Italy and Sicily. This led to an ambivalent reaction to Hellenic culture: philhellenism by many Roman elites who esteemed it, but fear that its influences were undermining Republican heritage.

1.1.1. The spread of paideia in the Greek world

Starting in the eighth and seventh centuries B.C.E., Hellenic genealogy emerged in the form of charter myths. The ethnic groups of the Achaeans, Ionians, Aeolians, and

⁷ Wallace-Hadrill, *Rome's cultural revolution*, 7.

Dorians were said to be descended in various ways from the eponymous hero Hellen.⁸ These mythological associations helped to create an overarching genealogical Hellenic identity. Following the Persian Wars, this shared genealogy was gradually replaced with a collective *cultural* identity. By the time of Herodotus, this identity combined both genealogy *and* culture: “the common blood, the common language; the temples and religious ritual; the whole way of life we understand and share together”.⁹

For the Greeks, a coalesced *political* sense of Hellenic identity was not a priority. In the Archaic and Classical periods, the poleis of ancient Greece comprised separate political entities which were often at odds with one another. It was through common institutions, for instance the Panhellenic Games, that the peoples of these poleis would gather together to celebrate their Hellenic identity. The diffusion of Greek-speakers throughout the eastern Mediterranean under Alexander the Great and his successors physically separated individuals and groups who considered themselves to be culturally Greek from the cities, sanctuaries, and other cultural centers Greece and Ionia.

Though the specifics of the process are not central to the discussion here, Athens had become the ‘self-appointed arbiter of cultural authority’ by the end of the fifth century and, by the Hellenistic period, it was this culture, and not one’s city’s genealogical connection to an ethnic group, that was the marker of one’s Hellenic identity.¹⁰ What is fundamental in this change from genealogy to culture was that *paideia* could be taught and disseminated.¹¹ This *paideia*, or a proper education and knowledge

⁸ Hall, *Hellenicity*, 24-29. The particulars of the variant traditions are not significant for the discussion here. See especially Hesiod, *Ehoiai*, Hekataios fr. 15, 16, pseudo-Skymnos 589; Eur. *Ion* 57-75, 1589-94.

⁹ Hdt. 8.144.2.

¹⁰ Isoc. *Paneg.* 39-50; Hall, *Hellenicity*, 189-205.

¹¹ See, for example, Jaap-Jan Flinterman, *Power, paideia & Pythagoreanism : Greek identity, conceptions of the relationship between philosophers and monarchs and political ideas in Philostratus' Life of*

of particular Hellenic cultural traditions, was used to define Hellenic cultural identity for the Greek-speakers of the eastern Mediterranean, most clearly seen by the elites who also claimed a guardianship over this Greek culture. Plutarch presents Alexander the Great as one of the first to encompass this new sense of Hellenic cultural identity, who, then, through his military mechanizations, allowed its transmission to all those who could afford a Hellenic education, not just for those who were born in a Greek city.¹² Under the Roman Empire, there was an expansion of *paideia* to the west and a Greek education also became available to elites all over the Empire, like Favorinus.

1.1.2. Hellenism and Italic identity

The cities and leagues of Greece and Rome had a long and complex relationship long before the establishment of the Roman Empire and the creation of the province of Achaëa. There were different forms of active resistance and interactions between the peoples of Greece and Rome between the Hellenistic and Augustan periods.¹³ From the presence of Greek colonies in southern Italy and Sicily during the Roman expansion in Italy, to Rome's increased involvement in the wars between the Hellenistic powers of the Eastern Mediterranean, these two cultures became inextricably linked.

The Greek colonies in southern Italy and Sicily were a ripe meeting ground for Hellenic and Italic cultures several centuries before Rome became involved in the wars gripping the eastern Mediterranean. Mythologically, Italy was a meeting ground for the

Apollonius (Amsterdam : J.C. Gieben, 1995); N. M. Kennell, *The gymnasium of virtue : education & culture in ancient Sparta* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995).

¹² For thorough discussion, see S. Humbert, "Plutarque, Alexandre et l'Hellénisme" in *ΕΛΛΗΝΙΣΜΟΣ: quelques jalons pour une histoire de l'identité grecque : actes du Colloque de Strasbourg, 25-27 octobre 1989*, ed. S. Saïd (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1991), 169-82.

¹³ A. J. S. Spawforth, *Greece and the Augustan cultural revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Paul Veyne, *L'empire gréco-romain* (Paris: Seuil, 2005).

two cultures, as Aeneas and other Trojan War heroes made landfall on the peninsula.¹⁴ Roman culture followed a trope found throughout the Eastern Mediterranean, especially Asia Minor, wherein Greek gods and heroes were incorporated into native myths in order to place one's culture into the ancient and legitimizing backdrop of the Greek religious tradition, providing a shared cultural heritage that gave both parties a common background.¹⁵

As opposed to many of the other cultures and peoples that were conquered by the Romans, Greece was in many ways their cultural ancestor, influencing their religion, literature, and architecture. In Rome, elite culture was reliant in many ways upon ancient Greece, and Roman elites used their familiarity with Greek high culture as a point of reference with other cultures in the Hellenistic East, validating their new status as one matching those of the other empires and rulers of the world.¹⁶ While the Romans were indebted to the Greeks because of their inherited mythology and other aspects of their culture, some texts show ambivalence towards this common ground. There was a conceptual divide between geographic and historic Greece, between the contemporary Greeks and the Classical Greeks who were responsible for the triumph of the Persian Wars. The intelligentsia of Rome was well versed in Greek literature, art, architecture, and religion, but there was also a stigma against having too close an association with the Hellenes and their culture.¹⁷

¹⁴ For a thorough discussion of these stories, see Timothy Gantz, *Early Greek myth: a guide to literary and artistic sources* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), chapter 17.

¹⁵ Andrew Erskine, "Unity & identity: shaping the past in the Greek Mediterranean" in *Cultural borrowings and ethnic appropriations in antiquity*, ed. E. S. Gruen (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 2005), 121.

¹⁶ See, for example, Katherine Welch, "A new view of the origins of the Basilica: the Atrium Regium, Graecostasis, and Roman diplomacy," *JRA* 16 (2003): 5-34 for a discussion on the origins of the basilica on a model of Hellenistic royal halls.

¹⁷ Plut. *Vit. Cato* 23.1-3; Plin. *HN* 7.113, 29.13-14; Plaut. *Mostell.* 20-24; Cic. *De or.* 2.75-76. For discussion, see Erich S. Gruen, *The Hellenistic world and the coming of Rome* (Berkeley: University of

While *paideia* was central to the Hellenic cultural identity in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, an important part of Roman cultural identity was a juridical component based on political membership and citizenship.¹⁸ While one needed to speak Greek to be considered Greek, as we saw with Favorinus, speaking Latin was not central to being Roman. Roman citizenship and membership in the *populus Romanus* made one Roman. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill uses the pertinent example of Greek language and Italic clothing to demonstrate how Romans constructed their identities.¹⁹ The Roman toga was a symbol of membership in the elite and exclusive field of Roman citizenship, for which there was not a Hellenic equivalence. This is, again, in contrast to Greek language, which was the critical marker for Greek cultural identity. This has led some to suggest that Roman identity was more superficial than, or secondary to, Greek.²⁰ Rather, both could be held in tandem without the application of modern value judgments regarding the worth of different defining factors of identity.

These models will all become more relevant and clear as we look at the particular case study of Roman interactions with the cities and leagues of mainland Greece and the historical context presented in this chapter.

2. Greece in the late Hellenistic period

The struggles between the Hellenistic successors and, later, the Roman Civil Wars, many battles of which took place on Greek soil, ravaged the economy and politics

California Press, 1984), 260-266. See also Veyne, *L'empire gréco-romain*, for useful study of the interactions and resistance between Greeks and Romans in the Hellenistic period.

¹⁸ Wallace-Hadrill, *Rome's cultural revolution*, 41.

¹⁹ Wallace-Hadrill, *Rome's cultural revolution*, chapter 2.

²⁰ Simon Swain, *Hellenism and empire: language, classicism, and power in the Greek world, AD 50-250* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 69-71.

of Greece.²¹ Through the second century B.C.E., the Republic of Rome was drawn into the conflicts that had gripped the Eastern Mediterranean and mainland Greece since the death of Alexander the Great. Early Roman involvement in Greek affairs was relatively slight and the Hellene's motivations in the many wars and battles fought in the Peloponnese and northern Greece in the second century involved their own disputes and arguments.²² As the cities and leagues of Greece sought out the advice and intervention of Rome more and more, however, Rome became entangled in the constant skirmishes between these leagues and cities and the kingdom of the Macedonians.

The Achaean League of the Peloponnese was a leading power in the mid-third century B.C.E., but became dependent on the powers of Macedonia and Rome. Corinth, and its strategically situated acropolis, moved back and forth between powers like a pawn, with an almost continual garrison situated on Akrocorinth. After the Second Macedonian War (200-197), in which the League had sided with the Romans against Philip, T. Quinctius Flaminius famously declared that all of the Greeks were free during a celebration of the Isthmian Games.²³ This site, the sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia, was partially chosen because it had been the site of the first known council of Hellenes held before the Persian War, a meeting that resulted in the eventual freedom of the Greeks through their victory over Xerxes and an event that held great resonance in the Greco-Roman world of the eastern Mediterranean. In a recent article, Elizabeth R. Gebhard has also argued that the sanctuary was used because of resonances provided by Macedonian and other victory monuments in the sanctuary, some of which had been

²¹ J. Wiseman, "Corinth and Rome I: 228 BC - AD 267," *ANRW* 2, no.7.1 (1979): 438-548 deals with Corinth in particular, is a good summary and draws on the events in the rest of the Peloponnese and Corinth's role city flip-flopping between Macedonian and Achaean League control.

²² Gruen, *The Hellenistic world and the coming of Rome*, chapters 13 and 14.

²³ Polyb. 18.46.15.

destroyed, which would have made the freedom *from* Macedonian rule more significant.²⁴ I believe that the battles over Corinth, mother city of the Isthmian Games, were a more poignant reason for Flaminius' choice of location. During the Second Macedonian War, a crucial battle had taken place in that city between Philips' troops and those of Flaminius' brother, Lucius Quinctius Flaminius, and Attalos of Pergamon, a Roman ally.²⁵ I believe that this proclamation at this particular sanctuary was a striking and meaningful display of Roman, and consequently Achaean, victory.

After this, Rome replaced Macedonia as the leading power in Greece and became more entrenched in disputes through the second century B.C.E. By the Third Macedonian War (171-168), Rome became more impatient with the lack of whole-hearted support from the cities of Greece. At the end of the war, the Macedonian monarchy was destroyed and the territory was divided into four republics.²⁶ They revolted in 149 B.C.E., after which Macedonia was converted into a province.

Matters escalated in the Peloponnese by 146 B.C.E., when Rome became involved in the Achaean War, in which the city of Sparta attempted to withdraw from the Achaean League. Roman embassies demanded that certain cities, not only Sparta, but also Corinth, Argos, Heraclea, and Orchomenos, should be detached from the League.²⁷ At the end of this war, the Roman general Mummius brutally sacked the city of Corinth, gathering place of the League, ensuring that the city could no longer serve as a focal point for Greek resistance. Roman authors discuss the abandonment of the city and the

²⁴ Elizabeth R. Gebhard, "Poseidon on the Isthmus: between Macedon and Rome, 198-196 B.C." in *Griechische Heiligtümer als Erinnerungsorte: Von der Archaik bis in den Hellenismus*, ed. Matthias Haake and Michael Jung (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2011), 45-67.

²⁵ Livy 23.23.3-13; App. *Mac.* 7.

²⁶ Livy 45.17-18.

²⁷ Paus. 7.14.1-3.

vast wreckage that had taken place there.²⁸ These accounts were written long after the fact and used rhetorical tropes to link the destruction of Corinth to that of Carthage, sacked in the same year.²⁹ Excavations have shown that the damage done to Corinth was actually selective, limited to a few symbolically important buildings, such as the North Stoa and portions of the South Stoa; additionally, the inscriptions of the Greek city were summarily smashed and their pieces scattered.³⁰ The Temple of Apollo, on the other hand, survived relatively intact, the Peirene fountain continued to be in working order, and the site continued to be inhabited by some of the previous citizenry of Corinth.

After the war, ten commissioners aided Mummius in a major reorganization of Greece that fragmented the administration of the area, putting an end to the brief political unification that Greece had experienced with organizations such as the Achaean League. Depending on their role in the Achaean War, cities and regions were treated variously: Boeotia and Phocis, which had been hostile towards Rome, were subject to the Roman governor of Macedonia; cities that had been friendly to Rome, such as Sikyon, Sparta, Epidaurus, and others, were proclaimed free; others, such as Patrae and Argos, paid tribute to Rome. Pausanias suggests that the province of Achaia was established at this time, and some inscriptions also allude to this.³¹ Several others report various groups in Greece appealing to the governor of Macedonia,³² while others report that the Greek states were made free and autonomous.³³ If they were free, it was probably a greatly

²⁸ Strabo 8.6.23; Diod. Sic. 32.4.5, 27.1.

²⁹ N. Purcell, "On the sacking of Corinth and Carthage" in *Ethics and rhetoric*, ed. D. Innes, H. Hine and C. Pelling (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995); Susan E. Alcock, *Graecia capta: the landscapes of Roman Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 133.

³⁰ M. E. H. Walbank, "The foundation and planning of early Roman Corinth," *JRA* 10 (1997): 95.

³¹ Paus. 7.16.10; SIG³, 683; SEG III, 378.

³² SEG III, 378; *I.G.R.R.*, 1.118; Plut. *Vit. Cimon* 1-2.

³³ Zonaras, 9.31.

reduced freedom in which they were under the supervision of the governor of Macedonia.³⁴

At Corinth, the *chora* around the polis was confiscated and either given to Sikyon or became *ager publicus*.³⁵ Centuriation in Corinth followed the reorganization carried out by Mummius and his ten commissioners. The archaeological evidence of this consists of 16 x 24 *actus* units to the north of the city and as far west as the Longopotamos River, which probably served as the border between the Corinthian and Sikyonian territories.³⁶ This evidence corresponds to the Corinthian *chora* becoming *ager publicus*. The prolific commercial trade of Corinth shifted further east to Alexandria, the island of Delos, and ports in Asia Minor. The purpose of pillaging the city of Corinth, therefore, seems not to have been to obliterate the city completely, but rather to revoke its civic status and ensure that it could no longer function as a political entity or be used as a focus of opposition to Roman power and authority.³⁷

Greece descended into an economic slump following the dissolution of the Achaean League. The Romans seem to have made no attempts to reorganize the agriculture or industry of the Peloponnese and the fragmented nature of the cities created a drop in the trade and economy of the area. Furthermore, the taxation imposed on the cities, the rise in piracy, the Mithridatic Wars, and the constant stream of troops that went through Greece during the Civil Wars further hurt the economy.

³⁴ Robert Morstein Kallet-Marx, *Hegemony to empire: the development of the Roman Imperium in the East from 148 to 62 B.C.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 49-56.

³⁵ Strabo 8.6.23; Cic. *Leg. agr.* 1.5, 2.51; *CIL* I² 585.

³⁶ David Gilman Romano, "Romanization in the Corinthia: urban and rural developments" in *Roman Peloponnese III: Society, economy and culture under the Roman Empire: Continuity and innovation*, ed. A. D. Rizakis and C. E. Lepenioti (Athens: National Hellenic Research Foundation, 2010), 156-57.

³⁷ Elizabeth R. Gebhard and Matthew W. Dickie, "The view from the isthmus, ca. 200 to 44 B.C." in *Corinth, the centenary, 1896-1996*, ed. C. K. Williams and Nancy Bookidis (Princeton: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 2003), 264; Walbank, "The foundation and planning of early Roman Corinth," 96.

3. *The province of Achaëa*

The triumph of Octavian over Antony and Cleopatra established long term peace and stability in the eastern Mediterranean following centuries of warfare. After a brief overview of the makeup of the province of Achaëa in the Augustan period, I will examine the ways that Augustus and his followers used particular aspects of Greek cultural history to shore up a renewed interest in *virtus* in order to contrast him with and elevate him over his defeated rival, Antony.

Pausanias notes abandoned rural shrines many times in his travels through Greece, leading to speculations of abandonment of the countryside in the Hellenistic and Roman periods.³⁸ The sanctuary of Zeus at Nemea, for instance, was abandoned in the third century B.C.E., and the Nemean Games were permanently moved to its mother city, Argos. Survey archaeology has largely supported these conclusions, indicating that landholdings were divided between fewer and fewer, and richer and richer, families.³⁹

In 27 B.C.E., Achaëa and Macedonia were divided into two distinct provinces. The province of Achaëa was so named because of the Roman interactions in the previous centuries with the Achaean League, which had at its greatest extent expanded to hold power over the entire Peloponnese. The leagues themselves were reinstated after the Roman conquest of Greece and served as intermediaries between the Roman power and the disparate cities of the province.⁴⁰ The provinces that make up modern Greece were not as wealthy as others in the Mediterranean. They did not produce huge surpluses, agricultural or otherwise, and were both economically and politically poor. Located in the

³⁸ For complete list, see Alcock, *Graecia Capta*, 146. Also Polyb. 36.17.5-7; Strabo 8.7.3, 8.8.1.

³⁹ For study, see Alain Bresson, *L'économie de la Grèce des cités* (Paris: A. Colin, 2007), 64-65.

⁴⁰ The date of the reinstatement of the leagues is a complex subject. A full rehashing of the matter is not necessary here, but see Kallet-Marx, *Hegemony to empire*, 76-82 for a good summary.

heart of the area covered by the *pax Romana*, there was no need for a Roman garrison in the province. Achaea was, however, located at a strategic point in the Mediterranean and was a natural stopping point between the Italian peninsula and the much richer provinces to the east, such as those in Anatolia and along the Black Sea. As such, the province of Achaea provided Rome with secure ports along important maritime routes.

The beginning of Achaea's economic revival came with Julius Caesar's refoundation of the city of Corinth in 44, the same year as his death.⁴¹ There is no record of the precise number of settlers that were sent to Corinth, but Appian reports that Carthage, which was also refounded in 44 B.C.E., was settled with 3,000 Roman citizens and others "from surrounding districts".⁴² The population of this newly founded colony included veterans and freedmen, who, in Corinth, unlike in Rome, were able to hold office and so gain more power and influence in that city and the province of Achaea.

The new Roman citizens of Corinth had strong ties to the culture of the Greek East, reflecting conflicting and nuanced identities of those in charge of Corinth. They were predominantly from families of Roman *negotiatores* and their freedmen, who used the increased business opportunities at Corinth to gain fortune from the trade between the Western and Eastern Mediterranean via the dual emporia of Kenchreai and Lechaion.⁴³ The names of these individuals, where preserved, suggest that many of them had an eastern origin or other eastern connections.⁴⁴ Many of their nomina, such as Furius,

⁴¹ Dio Cass. 93.50.3-5; Strabo 8.6.23, 17.3.15; Plut. *Vit. Caes.* 52, 57; Paus. 2.1.2.

⁴² App. *Pun.* 136.

⁴³ Ben Millis, "The social and ethnic origins of the colonists in early Roman Corinth" in *Corinth in context: comparative studies on religion and society*, ed. S. J. Friesen, D. N. Schowalter and J. C. Walters (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 22; A. J. Spawforth, "Roman Corinth: The formation of a colonial elite" in *Roman Onomastics in the Greek East: Social and Political Aspects*, ed. A. D. Rizakes (Athens: Kentron Hellenikes kai Romaikes Archaioyotetos, 1996), 169.

⁴⁴ Spawforth, "Roman Corinth: The formation of a colonial elite," 175-82.

Licinius, Publilius, and Servilius, are associated with Roman families known to have been active in the east, while many of their cognomina were Greek.

In the Augustan period, there was a shift in population to the major city centers, especially the Roman colonies of Corinth, Nikopolis, and Patras, though also other larger cities, such as Messene, Sparta, and Argos. Nikopolis and Patras, like Corinth, were founded with a mix of veterans and indigenous Greeks, but they also had large influxes in their populations through imposed demographic growth. These two cities were given land in surrounded areas, some of the cities of which were actually destroyed to force their populations to move into these new city-centers.⁴⁵ All three were also given territory surrounding their cities, with Patras gaining land on both sides of the Corinthian Gulf. These Augustan initiatives ensured that these cities would be successful and grow.

There is also evidence of centuriation in these Roman colonies. The colony of Corinth, for instance, was subject to cadastral reorganization on multiple occasions. Excavated roadways provide evidence for the Caesarian refoundation of Corinth. Romano reconstructs a plan of four equal *centuriae* of 32 x 15 *actus*.⁴⁶ The Lechaion Road that runs through the center of the Roman forum served as the *cardo maximus* of the colony and was so named because it led directly to the Lechaion harbor.

The geographical position of these three Roman colonies is striking. They were all located to the west of Peloponnesian isthmus, making communication with Rome easier. They are also striking in the antagonism these regions had had towards Rome, as the heartlands of both the Aetolian and Achaean Leagues. The imperial refoundations of these cities imposed their allegiance towards the Roman Empire. The focus on these

⁴⁵ Strabo 7.7.5-6; 10.2.2-3; Paus. 5.23.3; 7.18.7-8; 8.24.11; 10.38.4.

⁴⁶ Romano, "Romanization in the Corinthia: urban and rural developments," 159.

cities may be an indication that the imperial administration on some level was attempting to centralize the economy of the province.

3.1. Augustan Greece

Augustus began a program, aided by many of his advisors and helpers, and then followed by his successors, that revitalized various Greek institutions to create an approved brand and a more cohesive sense of panhellenism in the provinces of Greece. We shall see that native elites used other festivals and institutions, including the Panhellenic games, to show their support of Augustus' interest and to create a renewed sense of identity by linking themselves to the Greek past and its most venerable cultural institutions, thereby promoting the continued relevance of their cultural heritage.

In his recent book, *Greece and the Augustan Cultural Revolution*, A.J.S. Spawforth examines in depth this role of Hellenism in the Augustan period and how the provinces of Greece, and the cities of Athens and Sparta especially, benefitted from the attention and support of the early principate.⁴⁷ In his model, the Augustan restoration of the Roman state was not only political, but also involved moral renewals. Augustus and his new regime emphasized *mos* and *virtus* as two defining characteristics of a Roman cultural identity. In contrast to Greek *paideia*, the act of speaking Latin did not make one Roman, but Augustan and earlier authors argued that one's morality was a strongly contributing factor.⁴⁸ Corruption of the values and *mores* among the Roman elites was posited as an explanation for the civil wars and political upheaval of the late Republic, with Antony and his eastern opulence as a driving example and scapegoat.

⁴⁷ Spawforth, *Greece and the Augustan cultural revolution*. Also see Veyne, *L'empire gréco-romain*, who introduced this new model of Greco-Roman interaction.

⁴⁸ *Enn. Ann.* 156; *Cic. Phil.* 4.13. See also Catharine Edwards, *The politics of immorality in ancient Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Myles Anthony McDonnell, *Roman manliness: virtue and the Roman Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

Within this revitalization of Roman manhood, Spawforth argues that there was an official Roman discourse with Hellenism that venerated so-called “old Greece.” This was a sort of idealized version of Archaic and Classical Greece, emphasizing the Persian Wars, Athenian rhetoric, Spartan militarism, and other specific qualities of ancient Hellenism. This emphasis on the Persian Wars and Attic Greek were allusions to the wars in which Augustus himself had recently triumphed, first over Brutus and Cassius and then Antony and Cleopatra. This preference for “manly” Attic over “effeminate” Asiatic rhetoric was also articulated in oratorical debates in Augustan Rome. Spawforth draws especially on the example of Dionysius of Halicarnassus’ *On illustrious orators*, in which the Greek orator genderizes rhetoric, elevating the Attic over the Asiatic.⁴⁹ In fact, Spawforth points out that Octavian used these same debates to attack Antony, claiming that Antony wanted to introduce the unmeaning verbosity of Asiatic orators to the Republican tongue.⁵⁰

What Spawforth presents, then, is a “re-hellenizing” of Hellenism, or particular aspects of Greek cultural identity, under the principate. This was, however, a Roman idea and ideal of Hellenism that suited the moral and political messages that were promoted by Augustus.⁵¹ Roman culture had been influenced by the Hellenic for centuries. Under Augustus, the cultural discourse between Hellenism and Romanism was not stilted, but continued along appropriate paths to highlight Greek traditional virtues, and, from there, Roman *virtus*. In this, I believe correct, model, Hellenic culture and Roman power were not separated, but were entwined and built upon one another, in contrast to other models

⁴⁹ Dion. Hal., *De Or. Vet.*, preface, 1-3. Though later, this theme was again taken up by Quintilian (Quint. *Inst.* 12.16.1ff.) in regards to Ciceronian oratory. Swain, *Hellenism and empire*, 22-23.

⁵⁰ Suet. *Aug.* 86.2-3. Spawforth, *Greece and the Augustan cultural revolution*, 22.

⁵¹ Spawforth, *Greece and the Augustan cultural revolution*, 18.

of Roman Greece that see the consistent promulgation of Hellenic culture as a resistance to Roman rule.⁵²

In Spawforth's view, "re-hellenizing" embraced the cities of Athens and Sparta, especially, with their divergent interests and expertise in *paideia* and militarism, respectively. By the Roman period, Athens had become the symbolic home of Hellenic *paideia*, and Augustus and his son-in-law Agrippa followed in the tradition of Hellenistic kings in giving architectural gifts to this city, such as the Odeon in the Athenian agora. By focusing on the Archaic and Classical periods of Athens, the *paideia* the city could be highlighted while the city's more recent history, and its resistance to Augustus, could be overlooked.

These cities were also, of course, two of the quintessential Hellenic forces in the Persian Wars, with Athens' victories at Marathon and Salamis, and Sparta's at Plataea. These seemingly contrary values of these cities – education and military training – were, together, quintessential to the concept of Hellenism for the Romans. I will argue that the Panhellenic games also fit into this model. Augustus and Agrippa paid particular attention to the Olympic and Pythian Games, and local elites correspondingly esteemed the Isthmian and Nemean, as elements of this approved Hellenism which honored panhellenism and the Greek martial past.

These Augustan emphases were given further agency by Greek elites, as the pro-Roman governing class openly collaborated with Roman power. During the increased contact between the Roman Republic and the Greek city-states in the second and first centuries B.C.E., it was the local elites that acted as diplomats between their city and the

⁵² Swain, *Hellenism and empire*; Susan E. Alcock, "The reconfiguration of memory in the eastern Roman empire" in *Empires: perspectives from archaeology and history*, ed. Susan E. Alcock, Terrance D'Altroy, Kathleen D. Morrison and Carla M. Sinopoli (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 323-50.

Roman power. This trend continued under the empire. Greek religion, in particular, provided a charged and potent arena for the dialogues between Augustan Rome and the Greek East and acted as a channel of communication with the Romans. Imperial cult in the Greek East especially was hosted by large cities, in order to provide a connection between the external authority and the provincial community, especially the local elites.⁵³ The location of these cults served as peaceful reminders of who was in command, while giving elites the opportunity to demonstrate their leadership roles in the community through priesthoods. In Achaea, the locations of imperial cult were in the larger cities, such as Athens, but this cult was also strongly associated with the Panhellenic Games. Statues of the imperial family were placed within the Metroön at Olympia, and both the Nemean and Isthmian Games were celebrated alongside imperial counterparts.⁵⁴ With the exception of Corinth, the mother-cities of the four games studied in this dissertation were not especially large cities, but for a few weeks once every two or four years, their sanctuaries would become some of the largest population centers in the province of Achaea, thereby reaching a larger and broader audience.

3.2. Tiberius to Trajan

Between Augustus and Hadrian, imperial attention to Greece largely maintained the model established by Augustus discussed above, with relatively little personal interference. Under Tiberius, the status of the province was changed and Achaea became an imperial, rather than a senatorial, province.⁵⁵ Tiberius also competed in the horse races at Olympia. Claudius returned the province to its senatorial status in 44 C.E., and held

⁵³ S. R. F. Price, *Rituals and power: the Roman imperial cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

⁵⁴ The major discrepancy in this picture is at Delphi, where there is very little evidence for the imperial cult.

⁵⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 1.76.

honorary posts in Achaëa, such as the eponymous archonship of Delphi, and had an interest in the Eleusinian Mysteries.⁵⁶ So, these emperors continued to support the old, established institutions, following the model of Augustus.

The emperor Nero, of course, was an exception to this policy and went on an infamous visit to Greece in which he reorganized the *periodic* circuit so that he could compete in all of the crown games during his trip.⁵⁷ Nero's involvement in Greece will be dealt with throughout the dissertation, including his involvement with the Amphiktyonic League, his possible building projects at Olympia, and his echoing of Flamininus' proclamation at Isthmia, declaring Greece free and immune from taxes.

It has been argued that Nero's trip to Greece could be regarded as a measured and thoughtful strategy in a political agenda.⁵⁸ He travelled to sites that were currently of the utmost political importance in Greece, such as Isthmia, which was administered by the Roman colony of Corinth, now the capital of the province of Achaëa. Additionally, the Amphiktyonic League continued to play an important role in the Greek world, and Nero's visit to Delphi probably had something to do with the importance of that sanctuary site.

While this view is compelling, N.M. Kennell has shown that the motivations of scheduling Nero's visit revolved around his agonistic ambitions.⁵⁹ Nero travelled to all of the stephanic competitions in Greece, but, in pointed contrast, he did not visit Athens or Sparta, bastions of the old Hellenic world. His strategic philhellenism can be seen in opposition to Augustus' privileging of the centers of 'old Greece.' His personal participation in the events was contrary to the values of Roman *virtus*. The Roman

⁵⁶ SEG 51.607. Suet. *Claud.* 25.5; Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 14.4.

⁵⁷ N. M. Kennell, "ΝΕΡΩΝ ΠΕΡΙΟΔΟΝΙΚΗΣ," *AJP* 109 (1988): 239-51.

⁵⁸ Susan E. Alcock, "Nero at play? The emperor's Grecian odyssey" in *Reflections of Nero: culture, history, & representation*, ed. Jas Elsner and Jamie. Masters (Chapel Hill: University of California Press, 1994), 98-111.

⁵⁹ Kennell, "ΝΕΡΩΝ ΠΕΡΙΟΔΟΝΙΚΗΣ," 239-51.

emphasis on sport was on spectatorship and the viewer who came either for fun (*ludus*) or to receive the game as a gift (*munus*), which is in opposition to the Greek emphasis on personal competition (*ἀγών*). While it is true that his predecessor Tiberius competed in an equestrian event, he did so in the old aristocratic way: by sponsorship rather than personal participation. Furthermore, Nero's reported triumph through Rome after his victories in the Panhellenic Games was a further bastardization of Roman *virtus*, as it was a mockery of the military glory that this event usually honored and celebrated.⁶⁰ His use of the Hellenic culture, then, was in opposition to Augustus' emphasis on moderation and Attic glory.

His successor Vespasian rescinded Nero's Flamininus-inspired proclamation, returning Achaëa to its provincial status.⁶¹ It was also under the reign of Vespasian that an earthquake struck the Corinthian plain, causing him to refound the colony under the name of *Colonia Iulia Flavia Augusta Corinthiensis*. Renewed centuriation occurred at this time, which David Gilman Romano links to the emperor's interest in repossessing underutilized agricultural land in order to increase taxation revenues.⁶² But he and his successors' actions in Greece, like so many of their policies in the rest of the empire, were in direct opposition to those of Nero. Titus and Domitian both held archonships in Greek cities and, as we shall see, Domitian in particular undertook building projects in both Olympia and Delphi and developed his own agonistic festival in Rome, which I will discuss in the next chapter.

⁶⁰ M. De Souza, "Néron, une brèche dans la muraille de Rome" in *Neronia VII : Rome, l'Italie et la Grèce : hellénisme et philhellénisme au premier siècle après J.-C. : actes du VIIe Colloque international de la SIEN (Athènes, 21-23 octobre 2004)*, ed. Y. Perrin (Brussels: Éditions Latomus, 2007), 74-81.

⁶¹ Paus. 7.17.4.

⁶² Romano, "Romanization in the Corinthia: urban and rural developments," 163-68.

3.3. *Hadrian*

Hadrian's so-called love of Greece and, particularly, of Athens has often been described as one of his most defining characteristics as a Roman emperor. Called "Graeculus" as a child, Hadrian was archon of Athens in 111/12 CE, named an eponymous hero in 124/5, and spent more of his reign in Athens than any other city of his empire except Rome.⁶³ Additionally, he gave the city of Athens many gifts, including a completed Olympieion, as well as an aqueduct, his extravagant "Library" and restorations to the court of the Roman Agora. Finally, and most significantly for our purposes here, Hadrian established in Athens the festival of the Panhellenion.

The Panhellenion, founded in 131/2, the same year he dedicated the Olympieion, was a religious, cultural, and political cult.⁶⁴ It was instituted mainly to run the Panhellenia Games, honor the imperial house and cult of Hadrian Panhellenion, and celebrate the Greek cities' ancestry. In addition to the Panhellenia Games, he elevated the status of the Panathenaic Games, and added two others: the Olympieia and Hadrianeia.

Strikingly, the Panhellenion was open only to cities that could prove their Greek ancestry, and that could show good relations with Rome and benefactions from the emperor.⁶⁵ The focus on genealogical ancestry in the membership of the Panhellenion is significant, considering that *paideia* had been and continued to be the benchmark for a

⁶³ Mary T. Boatwright, *Hadrian and the Cities of the Roman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 144.

⁶⁴ A. J. Spawforth, "The Panhellenion again," *Chiron* 29 (1999): 339-52; Ilaria Romeo, "The Panhellenion and ethnic identity in Hadrianic Greece," *CP* 97 (2002): 21-40; A. J. Spawforth and S. Walker, "The world of the Panhellenion. I. Athens and Eleusis," *JRS* 75 (1985): 78-104; A. J. Spawforth and S. Walker, "The world of the Panhellenion II. Three Dorian cities," *Journal of Roman Studies* 76 (1986): 88-105; Panagiotis N. Doukellis, "Hadrian's *Panhellenion*: a network of cities?" in *Greek and Roman networks in the Mediterranean*, ed. Ian Malkin, Christy Constantakopoulou and Katerina Panagopoulou (London: Routledge, 2009), 285-98; C. P. Jones, "The Panhellenion," *Chiron* 26 (1996): 29-56.

⁶⁵ Romeo, "The Panhellenion and ethnic identity in Hadrianic Greece," 21-40; A. J. Spawforth and S. Walker, "The world of the Panhellenion. I. Athens and Eleusis," 78-104.

Hellenic cultural identity for centuries, as we have seen with Hadrian's contemporary Favorinus. This genealogical emphasis established by the Panhellenion indicates the tension that still existed in the second century C.E. between acquired and inherited identity. This redefinition would have challenged the Hellenic identity of men such as Favorinus and Aelius Aristides, who considered themselves to be more Greek than the Greeks by virtue of their Hellenic education, and shows the complicated nature of defining cultural identity in the Roman Empire.⁶⁶

While Hadrian's personal preference for Athens may not be in question, the interpretation presented above is not sufficiently nuanced.⁶⁷ The philhellenism demonstrated by the emperor can also be interpreted as imperial policy. Like many of his predecessors, Hadrian was influenced by the rule of Augustus.⁶⁸ Examined under the model of the Augustan use of Hellenism presented above, Hadrian's interest in Athens and his Panhellenion can also be interpreted as an official promotion of a particular type of Hellenism, encapsulated, again, in the Athenian dominated *paideia* and Greek athletic culture.

During the reigns of the so-called Five Good Emperors, Greek elites, such as Herodes Atticus, Plutarch, and Pausanias, further fashioned models of Hellenic culture based on an idealized Classical past with strong roots to a classicized form of Attic Greek.⁶⁹ As we have seen, this trend actually began in the Augustan period, with his

⁶⁶ Hall, *Hellenicity*, 226.

⁶⁷ See for example Caroline Vout, "What's in a beard? Rethinking Hadrian's Hellenism" in *Rethinking revolutions through ancient Greece*, ed. Simon Goldhill and Robin Osborne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 96-123.

⁶⁸ Spawforth, *Greece and the Augustan cultural revolution*, 242-44.

⁶⁹ There is a wealth of recent scholarship on the Second Sophistic. Notable recent works, with accompanying bibliography, include Thomas Schmitz, *Bildung und Macht: zur sozialen und politischen Funktion der zweiten Sophistik in der griechischen Welt der Kaiserzeit* (Munich: Verlag C.H. Beck, 1997);

attention to Attic declamation and an idealized brand of philhellenism. A large focus of this period, often called the Second Sophistic, has been on rhetoric, but there were other avenues of elite competitions which it encapsulated, including athletics and gymnasium culture. These pastimes, like rhetoric, were elite activities for those with the leisure and money to devote themselves to such nonessential skills.⁷⁰ These elites also competed with each other through the dedication of large monuments in their home towns, but also in the important cities and sanctuaries around the Greek world.

Pausanias, the second century author of the *Periegesis*, will be cited extensively throughout this dissertation.⁷¹ Pausanias' route encircled mainland Greece, beginning and ending in the north. The first chapter begins in Attica, and the last chapter is his description of Phokis. This organization is by no means an accident; he begins and ends with two of the most important tourist and religious regions for the life of Greece: Athens, which was also the home of the Eleusinian Mysteries, and the sanctuary of Apollo in Delphi.⁷² The author has a propensity to ignore significant monuments, in terms both of size and cultural importance, from the Roman period. These include the

Swain, *Hellenism and empire*; Tim Whitmarsh, *The Second Sophistic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

⁷⁰ König, *Athletics and literature in the Roman Empire*, 15-16.

⁷¹ In the past decades, several books devoted to Pausanias and his role in pilgrimage in the ancient world have been published. For most recent work and accompanying bibliography, see Christa Frateantonio, *Religion und Städtekonkurrenz: zum politischen und kulturellen Kontext von Pausanias' Periegesis* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009); Vinciane Pirenne-Delforge, *Retour à la source. Pausanias et la religion grecque*, Kernos Supplements 10 (Liège: Centre International d'Étude de la Religion Grecque Antique, 2008); William Hutton, *Describing Greece: landscape and literature in the Periegesis of Pausanias* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Susan E. Alcock, John F. Cherry and Jas Elsner, *Pausanias: travel and memory in Roman Greece* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Christian Habicht, *Pausanias' Guide to ancient Greece* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Domenico Musti and Jean Bingen, *Pausanias historien: huit exposés suivis de discussions: Vandœuvres-Genève, 15-19 août 1994* (Genève: Fondation Hardt, 1996); K. W. Arafat, *Pausanias' Greece: ancient artists and Roman rulers* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Jas Elsner, "Pausanias: A Greek pilgrim in the Roman world," *Past and Present* 135 (1992): 3-29.

⁷² Jas Elsner, "Structuring "Greece": Pausanias' *Periegesis* as a literary construct" in *Pausanias: travel and memory in Roman Greece*, ed. Susan E. Alcock, John F. Cherry and Jas Elsner (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 6.

Temple of Roma and Augustus on the Athenian Akropolis, as well as the Stoa of Attalos and the Odeion of Agrippa in their agora; of the Philopappos monument, Pausanias only writes, “afterward a monument was built here for a Syrian man”.⁷³ Previous arguments that Pausanias hated Rome, however, do not give justice to the complexity of his situation. Through his description of pre-Roman Greece, Pausanias was constructing a new cultural memory for the region, by choosing to remember certain monuments while deliberately forgetting others. By traversing the space and landscape of various religious, as well as civic, centers of Greece, he was forming a cultural identity for Greek-speakers, evoking the myth-history of a free Greece. In addition to Roman, Pausanias also tends to ignore Hellenistic monuments, preferring to describe those statues and other artifacts from c.350 B.C.E. and before. His focus on pre-Hellenistic monuments, especially those that harken back to the Persian Wars, can be viewed as a by-product of the Augustan emphasis on ‘old Greece’ and the resultant emphasis that places like Athens, Sparta, Plataea and Olympia had received.⁷⁴ His treatment of all of the different regions of the province of Achaëa in one text brought them together as a united whole as they never were in historical actuality, and provided them with a Panhellenic myth-history of their own classical past.

The euergetic and architectural trend of the Second Sophistic is best exemplified by the Athenian Herodes Atticus, who constructed elaborate dedications throughout the Greek mainland and at many of the sites discussed throughout this dissertation. Herodes Atticus (Lucius Vibullius Hipparchos Tiberius Claudius Attikos Herodes) was a leading

⁷³ Paus. 1.25.7. This is not to say, of course, that Pausanias only describes pre-Roman monuments, as he also discusses the Olympieion of Hadrian and baths and various other monuments in many other cities and sanctuaries.

⁷⁴ Spawforth, *Greece and the Augustan cultural revolution*, 140.

Athenian born in the early second century C.E., with prominent ties to Rome. He taught rhetoric to Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus; his wife Regilla might have been related to the wife of Antoninus Pius; and he was a priest of the imperial cult.⁷⁵ He and his family shrewdly advertised their Marathonian connections, including descent from Miltiades and Kimon, while also taking part in Spartan military training, thereby presenting themselves as a distilled version of the Augustan-approved Hellenic identity.⁷⁶ As a Roman citizen, too, he was a prime example of the layered cultural identities of elite Hellenes of his day. Fortunately, much of his life is recorded by Philostratus.⁷⁷

As an elite Hellene, with both an active interest in the history of his ancestry and an active role in the Roman political world, Herodes Atticus had a strong presence at many of the sanctuaries discussed in this dissertation. The aqueduct and nymphaeum in Olympia, dedicated by Regilla, were the only new construction within the Altis in the Roman period, situated directly between two of the oldest monuments on the site, the Heraion and the Metroön. Its locale, though necessarily at one of the highest points of the sanctuary for the flow of the water, positioned it in the symbolic heart of the sanctuary near to the altars of these goddesses and the ash altar of Zeus, and near some of the earliest sites of worship in the sanctuary, created a nexus between the Greek and Roman phases of the site, and would have stressed the importance of the new monument. The monument also, by creating and stressing both a Greek and Roman identity for Herodes Atticus, would have brought to mind similar dynamics for the other visitors to the

⁷⁵ W. Ameling, *Herodes Atticus* (Hildesheim: G. Olms 1983); Jennifer Tobin, *Herodes Attikos and the city of Athens : patronage and conflict under the Antonines* (Amsterdam: Gieben, 1997), 291.

⁷⁶ Spawforth, *Greece and the Augustan cultural revolution*, 101.

⁷⁷ Philost. *V S* 2.1

sanctuary of Zeus, as they wrestled with the antiquity of the sanctuary and games at Olympia, while acknowledging the Roman presence and power on the site.

Olympia was not the only site where Herodes Atticus created such enigmatic monuments. He also had a presence at Delphi, where he reconstructed the stadium above the site. The stadium was constructed along Greek architectural models, but a Roman arch was positioned at its entrance, drawing together Greek and Roman architectural genres. At Isthmia, he dedicated a chryselephantine statue group of Poseidon and Amphitrite in a four-horse chariot, flanked by two golden tritons and Palaimon on a dolphin.⁷⁸ The statue base was decorated with a scene of the sea holding the infant Aphrodite, flanked by Nereids.

His building projects were magnificent and his particular type of euergetism is interesting. As opposed to his father Atticus, who funded feasts and festivals, Herodes constructed massive expensive structures that would stand and be remembered for much longer than gifts of food and wine. Furthermore, his structures were a form of self-representation of his role as an active member of the Roman world and as a descendant of his fifth century Athenian ancestors, who also may have taken part, as athletes and spectators, in the Panathenaic, Pythian, and Olympic Games. Herodes Atticus is, then, the best model of a second century figure using architecture and sculpture to establish and communicate his Hellenic and Roman identities in the Roman province of Achaëa, especially in the Panhellenic sanctuaries.

4. Conclusion

These models of elite Hellenic and Roman cultural identity show the complexity of formulating individual identities in Greece in the Roman period. This particular and

⁷⁸ Paus. 2.1.7.

approved brand of Hellenism espoused by the emperors highlighted the role of Athens and Sparta in the Persian Wars, but the athletic festivals also fell under this rubric as it was believed that the games were established as a means to prepare oneself for war, which fit well with the Augustan emphasis on *virtus*. The antiquity of the festivals, and their status as institutions of ‘old Greece,’ too, were important. In the next chapter, I will discuss athletics in Roman period and role of festival culture in the Greek East.

Chapter 3:

Hellenic festivals and games in the Roman period

1. Introduction

With the spread of Greek *paideia* discussed in the last chapter, Hellenic athletic festivals became prime venues for the promotion of a Hellenic cultural identity throughout the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Greek athletics, including gymnasium culture, provided a means for elite males to link themselves to the culture of the classical Greek past, as well as encourage local patriotism. The four original Panhellenic Games were ideal platforms for this representation because they had been bastions of Hellenic identity from the sixth century B.C.E. onwards, places where Greeks celebrated their shared values, as well as competed for preeminence. The foundation of hundreds of additional athletic spectacles throughout Asia Minor and the Greek East, many on the Olympic and Pythian model, were a channel by which cities both inside and outside of mainland Greece could tie themselves to this Classical tradition.

The expansion of the festival calendar resulted in increased professionalization among athletes and other performers. Both the quantity and the geographical range of new contests required more infrastructural organization to ensure that the festivals were supplied with the appropriate personnel to make them a success. These guilds provided security for their members and fostered relationships first with the Hellenistic kings, and then with Roman officials and emperors. Their association with Greek-style religious festivals, which the emperors used as vehicles for their own imperial representation,

elevated the status of athletes and performers compared to other guilds and garnered them many rights and privileges.

Throughout this dissertation, we shall see that Roman emperors lavished particular attention to the festival circuit and to the games in Greece in particular. While this may have been due in part to a genuine interest in Greek athletics, political motivation were always behind these acts as well. From Augustus on, the emperors realized that they could manipulate the social and political situation in Greece through patronage of the Panhellenic Games, as well as ingratiate themselves to the Greek people, and those who travelled to participate and watch the games, through imperial benefactions.

In recent years, there has been a flourishing in scholarly work conducted on the role of Greek athletics in the Roman Empire, especially by Jason König, Onno Van Nijf, and Zahra Newby.¹ König has centered his research on the first through the third centuries C.E., focusing on the contradictory early imperial responses to athletics. Van Nijf examines the epigraphic record, especially from Roman Asia Minor, to glean information about professional associations, as well as the elite role of athletic culture,

¹ Jason König, "Favorinus' Corinthian oration in its Corinthian context," *PCPS* 47 (2001): 141-68; Jason König, *Athletics and literature in the Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Jason König, "Greek athletics in the Severan period: literary views" in *Severan culture*, ed. Simon Swain, Stephen Harrison and Jas Elsner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 135-45; Onno Van Nijf, "Athletics, festivals, and Greek identity in the Roman East," *PCPS* 45 (1999): 176-200; Onno Van Nijf, "Inscriptions and civic memory in the Roman East" in *The afterlife of inscriptions*, ed. Alison E. Cooley (London: Institute of Classical Studies, School of Advanced Study, University of London, 2000), 21-36; Onno Van Nijf, "Local heroes: athletics, festivals and elite self-fashioning in the Roman East" in *Being Greek under Rome: cultural identity, the Second Sophistic, and the development of empire*, ed. Simon Goldhill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 306-34; Zahra Newby, *Greek athletics in the Roman world: victory and virtue* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). Additionally, Andrew Farrington, "Olympic victors and the popularity of the Olympic Games in the Imperial Period," *Tyche* 12 (1997): 15-46; Andrew Farrington, "The origin of victors in the Isthmian Games" in *Roman Peloponnese III: Society, economy and culture under the Roman Empire: Continuity and innovation*, ed. A. D. Rizakes and C. E. Lepenioti (Athens: National Hellenic Research Foundation, 2010), 421-9 on the evidence for victors in the Roman Empire.

both through those elites who financed the local festivals and the athletes who had training in the elite gymnasium culture. Newby, meanwhile, has concentrated some of her research on the artistic representations of athletes in mosaics, sculptures, and other media, but again stresses the literary record and Roman and Greek responses to these images. Linking the archaeological data of the venues of these games to this Roman and Greek interchange, however, has been a relatively understudied aspect of the recent scholarship of Greek games in the Roman period.

2. Athletic competitions in Archaic & Classical Greece

The most important agonistic competitions in mainland Greece were those held at Olympia, Delphi, Isthmia, and Nemea. The Panhellenic sanctuaries and the games that were celebrated there had great importance for the entire Greek world from an early date. Though the Olympic Games were established earlier, the periodic festival circuit was developed in the course of the sixth century B.C.E.: the Pythian Games in 586, the Isthmian in 580, and the Nemean in 573. These games became a form of Hellenic self-definition, as only Greeks were eligible to take part. It was thought that the games were also created in order to help train men for war. The Greek word for athletics, ἀγών, reveals that these contests were a test of suffering and triumph over difficulty, and that victory was a symbol of the strength of one's character.²

While these four Panhellenic crown games were the most esteemed, they were by no means the only agonistic festivals celebrated in Greece. From the sixth century B.C.E. onward, numerous cities throughout the Greek world sponsored festivals with athletic competitions, most of which awarded cash prizes to the victors, as opposed to the four

² David S. Potter, *The victor's crown : a history of ancient sport from Homer to Byzantium* (London: Quercus, 2011), 88.

stephanic games which awarded crowns instead. The most famous and studied of these ancient Greek chrematitic contests was the Panathenaia, celebrated in Athens to commemorate the birthday of the city's eponymous goddess. The festival was celebrated each August with a procession, sacrifice, and the presentation of a new peplos to Athena Polias. In the sixth century B.C.E., the Great Panathenaia, which included games, was celebrated every four years, like the festivals at Olympia and Delphi.

The prevalence of these games, and the inclusion of prizes of intrinsic value, caused debate among scholars regarding professionalism in ancient Greek sport. The prejudice of earlier sources, both Victorian and ancient, against professionalism and professional athletes in the Olympic Games and other competitions has, by now, been well refuted.³ A cook and goatherd, for instance, were among the earliest recorded winners of the Olympic Games.⁴ While the authenticity of the early Olympic victors list is, of course, highly questionable, it is at least significant that the earliest victors had these, or indeed any, occupations. And while the lower classes may not have been able to hire special trainers initially, as their aristocratic competitors did, many were able to compete and establish prolific careers in sport.⁵ The one arena in which aristocrats always held the monopoly was the equestrian events. Only they could afford the required care and upkeep of the horses, and they usually employed jockeys and charioteers to race their horses for them. Isokrates reports, for instance, that Alkibiades withdrew from the

³ Donald G. Kyle, "Games, prizes, and athletes in Greek sport: Patterns and perspectives (1975-1997)," *CB* 74 (1998):103-27; Henri W. Pleket, "The participants in the ancient Olympic Games: Social background and mentality" in *Proceedings of an international symposium on the Olympic Games, 5-9 September 1988*, ed. William D. E. Coulson and Helmut Kyrieleis (Athens: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Athen, 1992), 147-52; David C. Young, *The Olympic myth of Greek amateur athletics* (Chicago: Ares, 1984).

⁴ Young, *The Olympic myth of Greek amateur athletics*, 99.

⁵ See Potter, *The victor's crown*, 137-152 for good summary of training and trainers for Greek athletics.

gymnastic competitions at the Olympic Games in contempt of the lower class men with whom he would have had to compete, and so only participated in the equestrian events.⁶

While the prizes for the four stephanic games had no intrinsic value, being composed of either laurel or oak or celery or pine, there were other ways for athletes to obtain money through competitions. Festivals such as the Panathenaia offered valuable cash prizes to the victors, even sometimes to the second, third, or fourth place contestants.⁷ The winner of the stade race at the Great Panathenaia, for instance, would receive one hundred amphorae filled with high quality olive oil, which was a hugely substantial prize.⁸

For victors at the stephanic games, additional financial awards could also await them at home. Socrates famously railed against athletes receiving some of these honors, such as free meals at the prytaneion.⁹ Solon is credited with reducing the reward for Athenians who were victors at the Olympic Games from an unknown figure to 500 drachmas and to 100 drachmas for Isthmian victors.¹⁰ This amount of money would, at least temporarily, thrust an athlete into a high economic class. Whether he stayed there was another matter, based on how he applied that money and if he won other athletic victories. So, many victors in the first centuries of the Panhellenic Games were professionals in the sense that they were making money from the competitions, but were

⁶ Isoc. 16.33.

⁷ IG II² 2311.

⁸ Young and Stephen Miller, especially, have computed dollar amounts for the various prizes earned at the Panathenaia. Their accounts, however, are widely divergent. Miller suggests that the cash value of stade win would have been \$39,600 (Stephen G. Miller, *Arete : Greek sports from ancient sources* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 82-83), while Young's figure is over \$121,000 (Young, *The Olympic myth of Greek amateur athletics*, 126).

⁹ Pl. *Ap.* 36d.

¹⁰ Plut. *Vit. Sol.* 23; Diog. Laert. 1.55. Young points out that the Isthmian Games were not supposed to have been founded until after Solon's archonship, but the salient point is that someone at some time must have reduced these prizes (Young, *The Olympic myth of Greek amateur athletics*, 128).

not necessarily professionals in the sense of making a career solely from their participation.

The original four Panhellenic crown games were bastions for Greek identity, as they were places where people from the many poleis in Greece gathered together at least once every year. Furthermore, they helped to create Hellenic cultural identity, as only those who were considered “Greek” enough were allowed to compete. The ostensible prize was a crown of olive, laurel, pine, or celery leaves, depending on the competition, but wealth could be earned from one’s polis after a victory. In the course of the Hellenistic period, however, professionalism among athletes increased as many cities and sanctuaries throughout the Greek East founded more games, both themides and others modeled on the crown games.

3. Hellenistic expansion of the athletic program

Vast numbers of athletic festivals were founded throughout the Greek East in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. The increased number of competitions required enhanced infrastructural organization of the athletes and actors who competed and performed at these games, leading to the creation of professional associations. This proliferation of festivals was due to the shared Hellenic background of the Hellenistic kingdoms, which was based, in part, on religious festival culture. Cities in Greece continued to promote their Hellenism through athletic traditions, while others throughout the Greek East linked themselves to the *paideia* and culture of the Panhellenic ideal of athletic competitions. Even in the Roman period, festivals were a way to proclaim one’s own and one’s city’s Hellenism to the rest of the Hellenistic world.

Alexander, as befit his Greek *paideia*, enjoyed Greek athletics and organized many celebratory athletic contests for military victories and other momentous occasions.¹¹ After his death, his successors continued to support and encourage Hellenic agonistic competitions. The Ptolemies, in particular, competed in horseracing and established their own Greek-style games in Alexandria.¹² Through participation in the Panhellenic Games, and the creation of new agones, Hellenistic kings showed their support of, and connection to, Greek culture and portrayed themselves as its ultimate champion.¹³ Their patronage, in turn, would pave the road for Roman officials and emperors in the coming centuries.

Parallel to the Hellenistic interest in Greek athletics, the gymnasium held a deep significance in the Greek East. It was used throughout the Hellenistic, and then the Roman, period to bolster both individual and civic Hellenic identity, as a tie to the Greek *paideia* education and culture, even as far away as Ai Khanum in Afghanistan.¹⁴ Though the ephebic ideals which it championed no longer had the same social relevance they had before Greece and the East were subsumed within the Roman Empire, the gymnasium was a primary venue for activities involving these, usually elite, youths.¹⁵ Newby posits that the importance ascribed to these military values, relatively obsolete once the province of Achaëa fell under the *pax Romana*, implied a continuity with the past that linked these elite men and ephebes to their classical forbearers, legitimizing their role in

¹¹ Arr., *Anab.* 2.24.6; 3.1.4; 3.5.2; 3.6.1; 4.4.1; 5.3.6; 8.3; 16.9; 25.1.

¹² Ath., *Diep.* 203a. See also, Mark Golden, *Greek sport and social status* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), 16-23.

¹³ Potter, *The victor's crown*, 171.

¹⁴ Louis Robert, "De Delphes a l'Oxus. Inscriptions Grecques Nouvelles de la Bactrine," *Opera minora selecta* 5 (Amsterdam: A. M. Hakkert, 1989), 510-51.

¹⁵ Cf. Newby, *Greek athletics in the Roman world*, chapters 5 and 6 for a thorough discussion of ephebic culture in Roman Sparta and Athens.

the Greek world and bolstering their status as elite Greeks.¹⁶ They also provided opportunities for individuals, and the communities of which they were a part, to advertise their Greek identity to the broader world.¹⁷

König argues that the archaistic features of the gymnasium, and the fact that the militaristic training that the gymnasium provided for Greek youths was practically “useless,” was actually a positive feature of the athletic culture, which would therefore only be accessible to those with the leisure and wealth to spend a significant part of their day training for a civic army that was now irrelevant.¹⁸ The gymnasium, therefore, became a truly elite Hellenic phenomenon used to assert elite identity.

The gymnasium culture was directly linked to the many games that were established in cities throughout the Greek East in the Hellenistic period, the spread of which was caused in part by royal interest in an expanding Hellenic world. In addition to the games founded by the Ptolemies and other kings, cities founded many new competitions in search of the kings’ favor, attention, and benefaction. The establishment of these games was also a way for elites to reinforce their own importance and primacy within their cities, and to the elites of other cities, as well. These festivals broadcasted the cities’ “Panhellenism” across the Hellenistic world, thrusting them into a tradition dating back to the Olympics and the Panathenaia.

Most of these competitions were akin to the local athletic festivals that had been celebrated throughout Greece for centuries and offered prize money to victors. One of the best known examples of this phenomenon is the promise and proposal for a new game endowed by C. Iulius Demosthenes of Oenoanda in the Hadrianic period, which will be

¹⁶ Newby, *Greek athletics in the Roman world*, 200.

¹⁷ König, *Athletics and literature in the Roman Empire*, 60.

¹⁸ König, *Athletics and literature in the Roman Empire*, 59.

discussed below. Other cities, however, sought an elevated status for their festivals on par with the Panhellenic cults, modeling themselves on the original Panhellenic games. Many were called Isolympic and Isopythian games, ostensibly modeled on the two most important of the circuit, the Olympic and Pythian.¹⁹ Sofie Remijsen has recently shown, through a careful and systematic study of the terminology of *agones*, that the categorization of these games in the Hellenistic period was subjective, with each individual city determining how they would value another city's games.²⁰ Furthermore, the dichotomy between games with prizes versus those with crown is a modern interpretation, and the lines between the two were much more blurred in antiquity. In the process of founding these games, cities requested permission of both the Hellenistic rulers and other cities to regard their festival as sacred. This meant that the award, like at the Panhellenic festivals, would be a crown and that the victors would be recognized by their home towns as *ἱερονίκαι*, or sacred victors. This increased the prestige of the city's games, while the victors, who did not receive a cash reward for their win, were eligible for certain rights and privileges from their home cities as a result of their success, such as an honorarium, honorific inscription, the right to a triumphal entry into the city, and more.²¹

These performers were given status and the prestige early in the history of the games, as we have seen with the comments of Socrates and the honoraria given to victors in Athens. This prestige carried over to their home cities. In fact, cities granted citizenship to successful athletes in order to associate their town with his victory. This

¹⁹ Farrington, "Olympic victors and the popularity of the Olympic Games in the Imperial Period," 32-43.

²⁰ Sofie Remijsen, "The So-Called 'Crown Games': Terminology and Historical Context of the Ancient Categories for Agones," *ZPE* 177 (2011): 97-109.

²¹ Plin. *Ep.* 118-19. Also, Onno van Nijf, "Athletics, *andreia*, and the *Askesis*-culture in the Roman East" in *Andreia: studies in manliness and courage in classical antiquity*, ed. Ralph Mark Rosen and I. Sluiter (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 271.

had been true throughout the earlier history of the Greek Panhellenic Games, but increased in the more global climate supplied by the Hellenistic kingdoms and then, later, the Roman Empire. The Nemean victor Athenodorus, for instance, was named a citizen of Ephesus when he was still competing as a boy, and, like other victors at the Panhellenic Games, was given money by the city.²² This was due, in part, to the manliness, or *andreia*, which that athlete would bring to the city by association.²³ Later, in the Augustan period, this would be conceived of as the important Roman principle of *virtus*.

Furthermore, the athletic life of a competitor in this period became more and more grueling. Especially for those in the combat sports, like boxing, wrestling, and pankration, the convalescence time between competitions became shorter and shorter. While some athletes were known to have long careers, the unforgiving nature of these sports meant that a competitor might have a shorter career span than in the past, when he would have had several months to recuperate between major contests. This may have been part of the reason for the creation of the athletic guilds, which sought rights and protection for their members.

4. History of professional associations

The considerable increase in agonistic festivals throughout the eastern Mediterranean in the Hellenistic period ultimately spurred an increase in professionalism, and professional guilds became an important part of the entertainment and festival industry in the Hellenistic and Roman worlds. The new festivals, as well as the new

²² L. Robert, "Sur des inscriptions d'Ephèse," *Opera minora selecta* 5 (Amsterdam: A. M. Hakkert, 1989), 354-72.

²³ See Van Nijf, "Athletics, *andreia*, and the *Askesis*-culture in the Roman East," for discussion of *andreia* in Greek athletics in the Roman East.

theaters and athletic venues constructed over a wide geographical range in the eastern Mediterranean, required qualified performers and competitors, and an extensive level of organization, to ensure that these many contests were outfitted with entertainers when and where they were needed.

The earliest athletic guilds were preceded by professional actors' guilds by two centuries. They were created to help protect entertainers from the dangers of travel and the problems inherent in working in communities in which they had no citizen rights.²⁴ Athletes were already supplied with this sort of protection from institutions such as the so-called Olympic truce and the official delegations of *theoria*, which worked to ensure the safety of the competitors as they travelled to the competition sites. Because these institutions had been established centuries beforehand, the athletes already had an infrastructure of protection established.

The earliest evidence for the syndication of actors and other performers is a thorough agreement sanctioned between four cities of Euboea sometime between the years 294 and 288 B.C.E.²⁵ This contract established the earliest known guidelines for providing for actors, though it does not explicitly refer to these entertainers as members of a guild. In it, the cities established an agreement to provide actors and other entertainers for each other's festivals. The inscription stipulated that agents (ἐργολάβοι), under oath, would hire the performers, take guarantees from them, and make arrangements for them during the festivals. The inscription lists the amounts due to each of the performers, which allowed for a daily ration to everyone, including both a comic

²⁴ Charlotte Roueché, *Performers and partisans at Aphrodisias in the Roman and late Roman periods: a study based on inscriptions from the current excavations at Aphrodisias in Caria* (London: Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, 1993), 50.

²⁵ Arthur Wallace Pickard-Cambridge, John Gould and David M. Lewis, *The dramatic festivals of Athens* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 281, 306-308.

and a tragic actor, a flute player, a costumer, trainer, and members of the choruses. As with other public contracts, in order to guard against defaults, the ἐργωλάβοι, τεχνῖται, and their guarantors could be fined in case of a breach of the stipulated agreement.

From about 280-270, more evidence for professional associations appears, including two decrees discovered at the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi guaranteeing rights to an Isthmian and Nemean association (κοινῶ τῶν τεχνιτᾶν τοῖς ἐς Ἴσθμὸν καὶ Νεμέαν συμπορευομένοις)²⁶ and an Athenian one (οἱ ἐν Ἀθήναις τεχνῖται).²⁷ These guilds, in addition to others centered in Alexandria and Western Anatolia, appear to have been similar to each other in composition and purpose. Like other professional associations or guilds, they worked to ensure the continued success and protection of their actors by negotiating contracts with cities for their members to perform at civic festivals, and fining members if they did not live up to the obligations of either these contracts or their membership in the guild.²⁸

4.1. Development of athletic synods

Athletic guilds, or *synods*, first appear in the first century B.C.E., already with similar organization to the actors' guilds. They also protected their members, contracted work, dedicated statues, and honored their officers and athletes. Some of the earliest evidence comes from a first century B.C.E. inscription from Erythrae on which a man,

²⁶ SIG³ 460; Pickard-Cambridge, et.al., *The dramatic festivals of Athens*, 282. Another inscription, *Iv.O.* 405, records their presence at the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia. Its date is in question, but it mentions the guild and a proxenos. For the most recent and thorough examinations of the early histories of these associations see Sophia Aneziri, *Die Vereine der dionysischen Techniten im Kontext der hellenistischen Gesellschaft : Untersuchungen zur Geschichte, Organisation und Wirkung der hellenistischen Technitenvereine* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2003), 21-124 and B. LeGuen, *Les associations de technites dionysiaques à l'époque hellénistique. Vol. 2, Synthèse* (Nancy-Paris: Association pour la Diffusion de la Recherche sur l'Antiquité, 2001), 14-37.

²⁷ IG ii² 1132; André Plassart, *Fouilles de Delphes III: Epigraphie: Inscriptions de la terrasse du temple et de la région nord du Sanctuaire: Nos 276 à 350, les inscriptions du temple du IVe siècle* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1970), no. 68; Pickard-Cambridge, et.al., *The dramatic festivals of Athens*, 282, 308.

²⁸ Van Nijf, *The civic world of professional associations in the Roman East*.

perhaps an athlete, is honored by the demes of Erythrae and Elis, mother city of the Olympic Games, in addition to two groups: οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς οἰκουμένης ἀθληταί and οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς οἰκουμένης ἱερωνῖκαι.²⁹ Beneath these titles, three crowns are carved.

From their inception, these guilds were associated with the highest levels Roman authority. A letter from Marc Antony, dated to 41 B.C.E., provided a group of athletes with a privileged status.³⁰ In a petition, the group, referred to as “ἡ σύνοδος τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς οἰκουμένης ἱερωνικῶν καὶ στεφανειτῶν,” had requested privileges, including the confirmation of previously received (προυπάρχονια) and new rights, such as exemption from military service, immunity from liturgies, security during festivals, the right to wear the color purple, and, finally, permission to inscribe these rights on a bronze tablet to be displayed in public.³¹ The use of the word “προυπάρχονια” assumes that some of these honors had previously been guaranteed to this synod, perhaps by Julius Caesar,³² and implies an earlier formation of the guild. This continues a precedent in which Julius Caesar and also Sulla had removed civic responsibilities from intellectuals, actors, and now athletes.³³ The decree is presented to the “commonality of the Hellenes in Asia” rather than to the guild of victors itself, which indicates that the members were probably

²⁹ J. Keil, "Forschungen in Erythraia I," *ÖJh* 13 (1910): 70-79; Clarence A. Forbes, "Ancient athletic guilds," *CP* 50 (1955): 246-7.

³⁰ *P. Lond.* 137. F. G. Kenyon, "A rescript of Marcus Antonius," *CR* 7 (1893): 476-8; Carl Georg Brandis, "Ein Schreiben des Triumvirn Marcus Antonius an den Landtag Asiens," *Hermes* 32 (1897): 509-22; Potter, *The victor's crown*, 164-67.

³¹ The various incongruencies and changes in the titles of these groups do not indicate that there were several different associations of victors in the Greco-Roman world. Rather, there was probably only the one guild of victors and one guild of athletes and the terminology used varied through time and space. What seems clear is that there is one group that refers to itself as “sacred victors” and one that does not. It has also been suggested that this synod may have referred to both xystic and performance guilds, but that has been largely refuted by Pleket and Pickard-Cambridge, on account of the lack of reference to Dionysus or to τεχνῖται and to the use of the word ἀλείπτης, the title of the intermediary to Marc Antony, which specifically denotes a teacher in a gymnasium (Pickard-Cambridge, et.al., *The dramatic festivals of Athens*, 297; H. W. Pleket, "Some aspects of the history of the athletic guilds," *ZPE* 10 (1973): 201).

³² Potter, *The victor's crown*, 296.

³³ Robert K. Sherk and Paul Viereck, *Roman documents from the Greek East; senatus consulta and epistulae to the age of Augustus* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969), n.49.

natives of this region, perhaps having banded together during competitions in the many festivals established throughout Asia Minor in the Hellenistic period.³⁴ This document then guaranteed that wherever in Asia Minor they would convene and compete in the future, these guarantees would be respected. The right to wear purple, additionally, raised them to a stature of men of the highest status. Furthermore, the letter relinquished these athletes from many of their civic duties, elevating them to a pan-Mediterranean position.

5. Athletics in the Roman period

In the previous chapter, I discussed Augustus' use of Hellenic culture and his emphasis on *virtus* to promote an imperially-approved brand of Hellenism that included an advocacy of manliness. Greek athletic contests and games were an aspect of this Hellenism, with their emphasis on the ἀγών which produced strength of character. As such, there was another florescence of games in the early years of the Julio-Claudian era and renewed imperial and Hellenic interest in the original four Panhellenic Games. The Latin words for contests, in contrast to the Greek ἀγών, were *ludus* and *munera*, which emphasized the Roman preference of spectatorship, rather than participation. The peace and stability that resulted from Augustus' reign after the chaos of the preceding decades, and his own approval and promotion of Greek athletics, resulted in a proliferation of celebrations in honor of the new emperor and those close to him.

Augustus himself initiated this trend through the establishment of the Actian Games celebrated at Nikopolis. In addition to his battle memorial, Augustus instituted Greek-style agones and built athletic accoutrements in the city to commemorate his victory over the last of the Hellenistic rulers and his philhellenic rival, Cleopatra and Antony. This was the first athletic festival added to the periodic circuit, immediately

³⁴ Pleket, "Some aspects of the history of the athletic guilds," 201.

elevating and equating their status to that of the most important contests in the festival circuit. As we shall see in Chapter Five, he also elevated the status of his new city by reorganizing the Amphiktyonic League, manager of the Pythian Games, and providing Nikopolis with a majority of seats.

In addition to the Actian Games, new stephanic games were also established in Naples in the Augustan period. They were modeled on the Olympic Games, but with striking variations, such as a sacrifice to the emperor and cash prizes for musical events. An inscription discovered at the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia documented the rules and regulations of these games.³⁵ It was probably set up in order to legitimate, as well as advertise, the new games' existence to the athletes present at Olympia. Both of these games, as well as the many newly founded and formerly established games, were "Sebasta," vehicles for the spread and celebration of the imperial cult. Local games, especially, were part of the civic life of the city, and the celebration of the imperial family along with the other gods of the city brought the emperor into the fabric of the community.

Corresponding to the continuing imperial interest in the Augustan period, there were further developments to the professional guilds of athletes and other performers. The individual Athenian, Isthmian/Nemean, and other performance guilds were gradually replaced by a larger, supra-regional association. This trend gained momentum when the reigning emperors became the patrons of the guilds. In the Julio-Claudian period, a new international synod of *technitai* (οἰκουμενικός) was instituted, which was granted unidentified favors by Augustus.³⁶ Local guilds did continue to exist, but were

³⁵ Iv.O. 56.

³⁶ Suet. *Aug.* 45.3

subordinate to this official, international group, and may have eventually been subsumed into the larger organizations.

These synods, both athletic and performance, had flexible infrastructures and served many purposes, such as negotiating with festival organizers, and Roman officials and emperors. They mirrored the organization of other professional guilds, protecting their members' economic interests, as can be garnered from the texts discussed above.³⁷ Their rights and privileges were negotiated with men of high authority, originally the Hellenistic kings, but Roman officials, like Marc Antony, and emperors replaced them in their patronage.

These privileges were carefully guarded: victories in specific festivals were necessary in order to qualify, and the emperors themselves determined which games were considered "sacred" and which were not.³⁸ Athletes were then required to have proper documentation that proved they had been victorious at these sacred festivals and so were eligible to receive these privileges. Papyrological evidence from Egypt, especially, shows the important role of the emperor Claudius in this process.³⁹ His name appears in the dossiers compiled by both athletes and actors from Egyptian cities who were seeking these privileges, even in the age of Vespasian. In fact, the dossiers for actors explicitly state that Claudius was only sanctioning rights and privileges originally instated by Augustus. No corresponding statement, however, is made for actors. This evidence indicates the extent of bureaucracy in place in the athletic profession by the first century C.E. Membership in these associations was highly regulated on a local, but also empire-

³⁷ Onno van Nijf, "Global players: athletes and performers in the Hellenistic and Roman world," *Hephaistos* 24 (2006): 225-35.

³⁸ Sofie Remijsen, "The So-Called "Crown Games"," 107.

³⁹ Peter Frisch, *Zehn agonistische Papyri* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1986), 6.8-31. See also Potter, *The victor's crown*, 280-81.

wide, level, with direct influences by the emperors themselves. The important and sought after privileges for which these athletes were eligible were closely protected and exclusive to members of the guilds. The dossier of the boxer Herminus from Hermopolis, for example, elucidates the complex process of gaining these rights. The papyrus was written out by a scribe with spaces left open for the applicant to write his personal information. It records that Herminus paid an initiation fee of four hundred sesterces to join the Sacred Athletic Travelling Hadrianic-Antoninian-Septimian Guild of Worshippers of Hercules and Agonios and the Emperor Caesar Lucius Septimius Severus Pertinax Augustus. For his victory, the city of Hermopolis would pay him a monthly pension of 760 sesterces, and more for other victories he achieved. David Potter points out that this single victory enabled the athlete to accrue the equivalent pay of half the minimum annual income that was required of a Roman senator.⁴⁰

Membership in these guilds was so lucrative that more and more people tried to lay claim to these benefits. Not only athletes, but also wealthy benefactors sought these privileges. These wealthy men would buy administrative posts within the athletic guilds, which would therefore exempt them from civic obligations. It became such an issue that Diocletian and Maximian stipulated that exemptions could only be for those truly professional and lifelong competitors, who, without corruption or bribery, had won three or more crowns at sacred games, at least one of which was in Rome or Greece.⁴¹

The athletes and performers crafted and achieved this higher status for themselves in many ways. Like their craftsmen counterparts, members of these guilds were often referred to as τεχνῖται, and like bakers or blacksmiths, they were hired specialists and

⁴⁰ Potter, *The victor's crown*, 281-2.

⁴¹ Mitteis, *Chrest.*, No. 381. For discussion, Forbes, "Ancient athletic guilds," 242.

professionals. Their status, however, was in large part due to the inherent glamour of their profession and especially the connection that it provided them with the religious life of ancient Greek cities. Their work was inherently a celebration to the gods through their athletic performance and participation in religious festivals.

As with all professional organizations, the athletic and performance guilds had a cultic aspect, but the patron deities of actors and athletes played a significant and particular role in furthering their connections with these rulers who, beginning with Alexander the Great, associated themselves with Greek athletic festivals and so, therefore, with those who competed at them. The patron deity of the performance guilds was the god Dionysus, from whom many Hellenistic kings claimed descent. The athletes likewise honored Hercules, a favorite hero of Alexander and many of his successors. This divine patronage provided a layer of protection and divine aegis to the travelling performers, but it also stressed the fact that the actors' role and purpose in providing their skills to festivals was to honor that god, thereby making their contribution to the festival an act of piety.⁴²

The guilds accrued extra strength and protection from the patronage of Hellenistic kings. Guilds from the second century B.C.E. in Egypt and Cyprus named the local rulers, in addition to Dionysus, as their patrons.⁴³ As Rome gained power, the emperor took the place of the Hellenistic kings and the synods also became vehicles for the imperial cult. In addition to the priest of Dionysus and Hercules, a high priest of the imperial cult was now among the ranks of the officials of the synod. For instance, a letter from the emperor Claudius gave permission to this group to set up statues of him for the

⁴² Roueché, *Performers and partisans at Aphrodisias in the Roman and late Roman periods*, 50.

⁴³ Pickard-Cambridge, et.al., *The dramatic festivals of Athens*, 287, 310-11.

imperial cult. In an inscription from Miletus, Claudius also accords “to the sacred victors and the actors of Dionysus” the same sorts of privileges.⁴⁴

Of all of the emperors, Nero was the most active and most universally disparaged in regards to athletic festivals in Greece. He had a particularly strong fascination with Greek culture that has long been labeled as mania, but more recent scholarship has suggested that it may have been legitimate and deliberate policy. He famously delayed the games so that he could take part in the contests themselves, an unprecedented event, and inserted musical contests in the Olympic program.⁴⁵ Previous members of the imperial family had participating in horse racing contests, which did not require the actual physical participation of the horse owner. Nero, on the other hand, raced his chariot himself and competed in many other competitions besides.

Nero also brought his appreciation of Greek culture to Rome. He instituted the Neronia festival, which was celebrated in 60 and 65 C.E. in baths and a gymnasium built by the emperor close to the Baths of Agrippa in the Campus Martius.⁴⁶ Tacitus, particularly, also disdained these contests and reports on the harmful effects that they had on the Roman population, indicating the ambiguous role that Greek athletics continued to play in the Roman Empire. This was the earliest attested Greek-style festival established in Rome itself, but it did not survive the emperor’s death.

After Augustus, the next emperor to permanently add a set of games to the periodic circuit was Domitian. He also established Greek agones in Rome - the Capitoline Games, founded in 86 C.E. These were the first permanent Greek style games in Rome,

⁴⁴ *BGU* 1074; Viereck, *Klio* 8 (1908); Rehm, *Milet.* 1.3, no. 156.

⁴⁵ For Nero at Olympia, see Suet., *Nero* 22.3; 24.2; 25.1; Paus. 5.25.8; 5.26.3; Philostr. *V A* 4.24; 5.7; 5.8; Lucian, *Nero* 2; 6; Hieron. *Chron.* a.2084.

⁴⁶ Suet., *Nero* 12.3-4; 21; Tac. *Ann.* 14.20.47; Cass. Dio 62.21; See also Newby, *Greek athletics in the Roman world*, 28-31.

with evidence to suggest that they continued to be celebrated well into the fourth century. It is striking that Nero's games were truncated soon after his death and most of Domitian's other acts were revoked by the Senate after his death. At the inaugural celebration of this festival, it was reported that he, serving as the *agonothete*, or president of the games, wore a crown decorated with Capitoline Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva.⁴⁷ The *Flamen Dialis* and *Flaviales* wore the same triad, in addition to Domitian's image on their crowns, indicating an imperial cultic aspect to these games. Domitian constructed an odeion and stadium that were purpose built for the Capitoline Games in the present day Piazza Navona. Major differences between the Capitoline Games and those celebrated in Greece were that a circus was used instead of a hippodrome and the charioteers raced in factions, as was the norm in Rome. The establishment of this festival by Domitian ensured that Romans could enjoy Greek athletics without having to leave the capital city. It represented an increased interest and acceptance of Greek athletics and firmly set Rome at the heart of the Greek athletic festival circuit.⁴⁸

The emperor Hadrian seems to have been especially interested in the world of Greek athletics, as befit his philhellenic persona. Furthermore, a series of letters dating from 134 C.E. from Hadrian were recently discovered in Alexandria Troas that shed light on the status and rights of athletes' and artists' guilds in the second century C.E. In these letters, the emperor secures many privileges for the entertainers, protecting their standing in the world of professional performance. A total of three letters were addressed to associations of actors, and two specifically to the synod of the Traveling Theatrical Associations of Artisans of Dionysus; all clearly also pertained to professional athletic

⁴⁷ Suet., *Dom.*4.

⁴⁸ Newby, *Greek athletics in the Roman world*, 33.

organizations.⁴⁹ One letter details the festival circuit in the Hadrianic age, perhaps composed to promote the new games in Athens. The number of major contests *per year*, numbering up to seven, demonstrates the vast expansion of the festival athletic program since the sixth century B.C.E. This may have been in response to the establishment of the Panhellenic Games, as well the rest of his Athenian circuit (Panathenaia, Olympieia and Hadrianeia), which established Athens as a center of athletic competition and added festivals to the already busy festival schedule.

Another letter concerns the reorganization of festivals, especially in order to accommodate Hadrian's extended athletic program in Athens, as well as the implementation of certain rules and regulations to benefit the athletes and ensure that they were not taken advantage of by the, apparently sometimes corrupt, cities and officials organizing the Games. For example, regulations are set in place to guarantee that cities did not misuse the funds that were set aside for the games; if they were found doing so, the contestants would be permitted to divide the prize money amongst themselves without actual competition. The letters implemented fines to cities if they did not supply the appropriate prize money to the athletes, as well as established guidelines for the agonothetes to count and produce the prize money before the events took place and for that money to be presented immediately to the victor, suggesting that administrators of the Games were shirking some athletes.⁵⁰ These regulations reveal the corruption of some cities and agonothetes, corruption that was enough of a problem for the emperor to make

⁴⁹ For translations and discussion, see Georg Petzl and Elmer Schwertheim, *Hadrian und die dionysischen Künstler: Drei in Alexandria Troas neugefundene Briefe des Kaisers an die Künstler-Vereinigung* (Bonn: Habelt 2006); C. P. Jones, "Three new letters of the Emperor Hadrian," *ZPE* 161 (2007): 145-56; W. J. Slater, "Hadrian's letters to the athletes and Dionysiac artists concerning arrangements for the 'circuit' of Games," *JRA* 21 (2008): 610-20; and David S. Potter, "Appendix: Two documents illustrating imperial control of public entertainment" in *Life, death, and entertainment in the Roman Empire*, ed. David S. Potter and David J. Mattingly (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), 351-71.

⁵⁰ Potter, "Appendix," lines 8-28.

these pronouncements, while also revealing the power and influence of the guilds to gain the attention of and benefits from the emperor.

This letter also lays out further financial rights of the members of the guilds, especially their freedom from civic liturgies and the date their pensions should be implemented. Hadrian orders that their pensions were to be paid immediately after the athletes' home city received word of the victory, not when the athlete *returned* home. This was a reversal of a Trajanic law which ordered that athletes could only receive them upon their return,⁵¹ which would, of course, require them to leave the athletic circuit in order to collect. All three of these Hadrianic letters make clear that the athletic and artistic synods were held in high regard by the emperor and they were important enough to be protected.

More details about athletic festivals in the Hadrianic period come from an inscription that documents the establishment of an agonistic festival in Oenoada.⁵² Founded by C. Iulius Demosthenes, the text that documents this foundation is in five parts: a letter from Hadrian endorsing the contest; the promise of Demosthenes, which includes extensive details concerning the games' organization and financing; a preliminary proposal by three members of the city's council further regarding the organization; a resolution of the council and city to the provincial governor requesting confirmation of tax privileges for the games; and the subscript of the governor. This inscription describes the elite euergetism prevalent in cities of the Greek east at this time, as Demosthenes explicitly states that he founded these games "as I have loved my dearest

⁵¹ L'Année épigraphique 2006 n.1403.

⁵² Michael Wörrle, *Stadt und Fest im kaiserzeitlichen Kleinasien : Studien zu einer agonistischen Stiftung aus Oinoanda* (München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1988); R. Ziegler, *Städtisches Prestige und kaiserliche Politik. Studien zum Festwesen in Ostkilikien im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert N. Chr.* (Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1985); Stephen Mitchell, "Festivals, games and civic life in Roman Asia Minor," *JRS* 80 (1990): 183-93.

home land since earliest youth, and have not only maintained but thoroughly surpassed the generosity of my ancestors towards it.”⁵³ It also provides us with many details about the agonothele, or president, of the games, including what he is to wear, financial exemptions he is to be given, and the power he possesses over choosing other personnel for the games. Unlike many other games, such as the Isthmian, this agonothele’s duty was more organizational than financial, since the games were endowed in perpetuity by Demosthenes. His term of office was also quite long, five years, in order to give him adequate time to organize the festival and prepare the next agonothele. It was a priority to ensure that the festival was well organized and financed in order to attract athletes who were competing within an already busy athletic festival schedule. The evidence of this festival also hints at the complex negotiations, and disputes, between various parties on several levels in the creation of these festivals, from the dedicator, to the city, to the governor, to the emperor himself.⁵⁴

In the second century C.E., the headquarters of the athletic guilds was also moved from Asia Minor to the city of Rome.⁵⁵ Antoninus Pius granted the athletic guilds a *τόπος* and an *οἶκημα*, situated on the Esquiline Hill near to the Baths of Trajan, making Rome the administrative capital of the athletic world. The man most responsible for this building seems to have been M. Ulpianus Domesticus. It was he who had requested the land and building from Antoninus’ predecessor Hadrian, who had granted but, for an unknown reason, had not accomplished it. Domesticus acquired the title of high priest of the group, here referred to as *ὁ τε σὺμπτος ξυστός*, and became the director of the imperial baths,

⁵³ Mitchell, "Festivals, games and civic life in Roman Asia Minor," 183.

⁵⁴ Guy MacLean Rogers, "Demosthenes of Oenoanda and Models of Euergetism," *JRS* 81 (1991): 91-100.

⁵⁵ IG 14.1109/1054

which may have been something like the *gymnasiarch* in Greece.⁵⁶ A later inscription honors another high priest who also had the title of director of the imperial baths, so it appears that this was an honor reserved for this official.⁵⁷ This move was advantageous to both the athletes and the emperor. The athletes could be closer to the emperor, who could give them further privileges and honors, and the emperor could have stronger control on the agonistic festivals, which promoted his imperial cult throughout the empire.

6. Conclusion

The Greek Panhellenic Games explored in this dissertation operated within the rubric of the professional athletic organizations discussed in this chapter. Despite the prolific number of athletic competitions that were celebrated throughout the Greek East during the Roman imperial periods, the periodic competitions remained the most celebrated. The Olympic, Pythian, Isthmian, and Nemean Games were some of the most honored of all athletic victories and are an important place to study the changes to the Greek athletic venues in the Roman period. As we shall see in each individual case-study, the direct physical evidence for these professional athletic organizations, whether epigraphic or archaeological, is rare. The sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia provides the most evidence, which consists of a few inscriptions honoring various individuals that were sponsored by these different guilds and perhaps a guild clubhouse to the southwest of the sanctuary. The victory inscriptions of victorious athletes discovered throughout Greece and the Greek East give further weight to the many victories that were achieved in these four Games. Indirect, corresponding changes to these sanctuaries, however, can sometimes be discerned as the Panhellenic Games became increasingly professional and

⁵⁶ Newby, *Greek athletics in the Roman world*, 35.

⁵⁷ IG 14.1105

a modern audience of spectators from throughout the Roman Empire came to them to watch athletes compete for their sacred crowns.

Chapter 4:

The sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia: Conservatism and change in a Panhellenic sanctuary

1. Introduction

The sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia was arguably the most important sanctuary in the ancient Greek world (figure 4.1). Since the eighth century B.C.E., it was host of the Olympic Games and gradually became a bastion of Hellenic identity and a place for Greeks to come together and compete through athletic events and prestige dedications. As such, Olympia provides an essential case-study in how the infrastructure and bureaucracy of ancient Greek sanctuaries were altered and how the sanctuary was used by the indigenous Hellenes, Romans, and other visitors in the Roman period.

The prestige of the Olympic Games continued in the centuries following the subjugation of Greece to the Roman Empire. The games played into the Augustan program of *virtus* and 'old Greece' discussed in Chapter Two. We have already seen that the emperor instituted new games at his colony of Nikopolis that were elevated to the same status as the other Panhellenic games. While there is no evidence that Augustus himself travelled to the venerable sanctuary of Olympia, his general and son-in-law Agrippa financed renovations to the temple of Zeus, and Augustus' statue was erected in the temple of the mother of the gods and an inscription was set up honoring him in front of that temple. An idealized version of ancient Greece was upheld by these games, which

reinforced a sense of panhellenism and Hellenic cultural identity among those who took part, whether spectators or participants.

Following Augustus, emperors such as Tiberius and Nero participated in the competitions of the Olympic Games, and the traveler Pausanias, in addition to many other pilgrims, athletes, and spectators, made the journey to visit the sanctuary. Olympia continued to be a place for prestige dedications, such as the Nymphaeum provided by Herodes Atticus. Furthermore, recent archaeological excavation has proven that the games were still celebrated into the late fourth century C.E.¹

The sanctuary's continued use and popularity throughout the Roman period resulted in a large number of modifications undertaken to make the sanctuary more hospitable to its many visitors. Herodes Atticus, for instance, financed an aqueduct with a monumental Nymphaeum at this terminus. While it has primarily been studied as a glorious display of statuary and elite identity, the resultant effect of its ready supply of fresh water to the sanctuary, which, in turn, provided hydraulic infrastructure for several baths around the perimeter of the sanctuary, is often overlooked or underemphasized. Guesthouses were also renovated and constructed throughout the Roman period and as late as the third century C.E. Most of these Roman alterations were located outside the temenos, but the landscape and visual focal points of the sanctuary itself were also altered by the addition of an arch and other features that adjusted and reshaped the visitors' approach to the sacred space. Unlike Delphi, the landscape of Olympia provided more wide and varied viewings of monuments, so the insertion of new monuments, even along the perimeter of the Altis, dramatically altered the view-sheds of the site. The new arch,

¹ Ulrich Sinn, "Olympia: pilgrims, athletes and Christians. The development of the site in Late Antiquity", in *Proceedings of the XVth International Congress of Classical Archaeology: Classical Archaeology towards the Third Millennium: Reflections and Perspectives* (Amsterdam: Allard Pierson Series, 1999), 378.

especially, served to guide the viewers' attention toward certain architectural features of the sanctuary, including the Temple of Zeus, but also the Metroön, which now housed statues of the imperial family.

Despite the Roman physical changes to the site, the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia, and its administrative center, Elis, remained relatively autonomous and conservative throughout the Roman period.² The small city retained its control over the sanctuary, and its residents still provided the officials and priests. The games continued to be the most important athletic festival in the ancient Greek world, as seen by the prominent place they held on athletic honorary inscriptions. Furthermore, a bronze plaque discovered in the recently excavated Southwest Building proves that the games were not only celebrated into the fourth century C.E., but the organization of the games had stayed relatively unchanged through the course of the Roman control of Achaëa.

The Olympic Games were still considered a crucial element of Hellenic identity in the Roman era.³ The study of this site can give a fuller picture of the complexities of how the sanctuary changed to accommodate its Roman period guests and its new place in the Roman world, while it also maintained traditional aspects of the Archaic and Classical Olympic Games. The organization of the games themselves remained relatively fixed, while the physical framework of the site, especially outside of the Altis, was "Romanized" with many constructions. I will show that athletes, emperors, elites, and others visited and honored the site, and sought to increase their own prestige through

² This is in contrast to some of the other *periodic* sanctuaries during periods of the Roman Empire. Isthmia, for instance, was still administered by Corinth, but this city was now a Roman colony and the capital of the Roman province. The Nemean sanctuary was not even in use during this period and the Games were celebrated in its administrative city, Argos.

³ Nigel B. Crowther, "The ancient Olympic games through the centuries," in *Onward to the Olympics: historical perspectives on the Olympic Games*, ed. S. R. Wenn and G. P. Schaus (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2007), 8.

their associations and benefactions to Olympia. They benefited from the archaism and conservatism of the site and used their presence there to tie themselves to the antiquity of an archetype of Hellenic identity.

1.1. History of scholarship

The sanctuary has been extensively excavated by the German Archaeological Institute since 1875.⁴ Excavations have particularly focused on the Bronze Age, Early Iron Age, Geometric, Archaic, Classical, and Hellenistic phases of the sanctuary, including the temples and altars, and also the treasuries and offerings that were dedicated by poleis, victorious athletes, and other individuals to the many gods, goddesses, and heroes worshiped at the site. A tremendous amount of scholarly attention has been paid to the inception of the cult and the famous games at the sanctuary.⁵ Countless books and articles on the festival, the dedications, and the buildings constructed on the site in the Archaic and Classical periods have been written.⁶

Less attention by far has been paid to the Roman phases of the sanctuary. The literary evidence is partly to blame for this. Ancient written sources, such as Suetonius and Cassius Dio, paint a grim picture of the state of Greece in the Roman imperial period, and of Olympia in particular.⁷ Both claim that the sanctuary was treated roughly when Nero paid his famous visit to compete. He is accused of sacrilegiously moving the date of the games in order to allow himself the opportunity to participate in all the Panhellenic

⁴ For excavation reports, see volumes of *Bericht über die Ausgrabungen in Olympia* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter) and *Olympia Forschungen* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter), as well as preliminary reports in *Nikephoros* and *JdI*.

⁵ For bibliography, see Nigel B. Crowther, *Athletika : studies on the Olympic games and Greek athletics* (Hildesheim: Weidmann, 2004); Ulrich Sinn, *Das antike Olympia : Götter, Spiel und Kunst* (München: C.H. Beck, 2004); Catherine Morgan, *Athletes and oracles: the transformation of Olympia and Delphi in the eight century B.C* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

⁶ See Michael Scott, *Delphi and Olympia: the spatial politics of panhellenism in the archaic and classical periods* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) for most recent bibliography.

⁷ Suet. *Ner.* 23-24; Cass. Dio 63.11.1.

competitions, and of adding musical performances to the schedule of the Olympics, which had always eschewed such artistic competitions. These texts remained unchallenged for a long time, resulting in claims of the deterioration of the athletic contests due to professionalization and erroneous assumptions that Greece fell in decline during the Roman period. The Roman construction phases of the sanctuary, therefore, were largely ignored in favor of its more glamorous and “unadulterated” Classical Greek history. The Roman buildings on the site were cursorily studied and published, and the Roman phases of Greek buildings were ignored in favor of lengthy discussions of Archaic and Classical dedications and architecture in order to pursue the study of the pure ancient Greek ideal of sports and the “traditional” Olympic festival.

A few buildings in the sanctuary did escape the persistent anti-Roman sentiment of scholars, most notably the Nymphaeum of Herodes Atticus. Recent work on the so-called Second Sophistic and Herodes’ role in Greece during the second century C.E., as well as a recent resurgence in the study of nymphaea and other Roman fountains, has increased the scholarship on this building.⁸ Its sculpture has received the most attention, as it combined messages of Greek and Roman cultural and political identity as Herodes Atticus attempted to define his cosmopolitan place in the Roman Empire. Beyond its decoration, however, the Nymphaeum served as a fountain to supply water brought by an aqueduct financed by Herodes. This costly undertaking must not be underestimated and will be discussed more fully below.

⁸ R. R. R. Smith, "Cultural choice and political identity in honorific portrait statues in the Greek east in the second century A.D.," *JRS* 88 (1998): 56-93; Jennifer Tobin, "The monuments of Herodes Atticus" (PhD diss, University of Philadelphia 1991); Renate Bol, *Das Statuenprogramm des Herodes-Atticus-Nymphäums* (Berlin: Walter der Gruyter, 1984); Susan Walker, "The architectural development of Roman nymphaea in Greece" (PhD diss. University of London, 1979).

The Metroön has also received a good bit of scholarly attention. Pausanias briefly mentions it as a small Doric temple that “they still in my day call the Mother’s sanctuary, preserving its ancient name,” but which no longer had a statue of the goddess and instead was now used to house statues of the imperial family.⁹ In the Augustan period, an architrave block of the Metroön was inscribed to read that Augustus was “savior of the Greeks and the entire inhabited world” and a colossal statue of Augustus was placed within the temple.¹⁰ Further statues of the imperial family were dedicated in the Metroön over time, including statues of Claudius, Titus, Agrippina the Younger, and perhaps Domitian, Domitia, and Julia Titi, connoting the durability of imperial rule across successions (figure 4.2).¹¹ While the presence of these statues in a temple insinuates imperial cult, the Olympic Games did not incorporate a Sebasteia component, in contrast to the Isthmian, Nemean, and many other contests in the Greek East, which indicates the veneration and archaism that was upheld for the Olympic Games.

In manipulating this venerable temple, the power of the past was harnessed for the purposes of the imperial families.¹² By taking over Greek monuments, the original purpose of the structures was subverted. In this case, the *pater patriae* of Rome had taken up residence in the temple of the mother of the gods in the sanctuary of the father of gods and men. Furthermore, the colossal statue of Augustus in the guise of Zeus, with a scepter

⁹ Paus 5.20.9.

¹⁰ Dedication for statue of Augustus: Iv.O. 367; Architrave: Iv.O. 366.

¹¹ S. R. F. Price, *Rituals and power: the Roman imperial cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 161. Statues of the imperial family were also dedicated throughout the sanctuary, including the Temple of Zeus.

¹² Jean-Louis Ferrary, "Rome et la géographie de l'hellénisme: réflexions sur "Hellènes" et "Panhellènes" dans les inscriptions d'époque romaine" in *The Greek East in the Roman context: proceedings of a colloquium organised by the Finnish Institute at Athens: May 21 and 22, 1999*, Papers and monographs of the Finnish Institute at Athens 7, ed. Olli Salomies (Helsinki: Suomen Ateenan-instituutin säätiö, 2001), 19-35; Susan E. Alcock, *Graecia capta: the landscapes of Roman Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 178.

and thunderbolt, in the temple would have drawn conceptual parallels with Phidias' famous chryselephantine statue of Zeus.¹³ I believe that this meant to signify that Augustus, and subsequent emperors, was now capable of, and perhaps responsible for, nurturing his subjects as the mother of the gods once was. Furthermore, this was no new temple, but a Classical temple in the middle of the Altis in which the imperial family was now placed. This created an antiquity for the imperial cult at Olympia and elevated the importance of the imperial family, by its inclusion in an ancient temple at the most venerable sanctuary in Greece.

The recent renaissance in the study of Pausanias has brought an increased attention to the two books of his *Periegesis* devoted to the sanctuary.¹⁴ The sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia is the only site to comprise two books, numbers five and six, which are directly in the middle of the *Periegesis*. His description of Olympia is striking in that, rather than touring the site and documenting what he sees, Pausanias divides the sanctuary into thematic headings, and perambulates the site several times to describe the monuments in each specific heading.¹⁵ Beginning with the Temple of Zeus and Phidias' cult statue (5.10.1-5.12.8), he proceeds to the altars (5.13.1-5.15.12), then the Temple of Hera (5.16.1-5.20.5), the statues of Zeus (5.21.2-5.25.1), the votive offerings (5.25.2-5.27.12), the victor statues (6.1.3-6.18.7), the treasuries (6.19.1-6.19.15), and then finally

¹³ A.J.S. Spawforth, *Greece and the Augustan Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 222.

¹⁴ W. Hutton, *Describing Greece : landscape and literature in the Periegesis of Pausanias* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Jas Elsner and Ian Rutherford, *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman & early Christian antiquity : seeing the gods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Susan E. Alcock, John F. Cherry and Jas Elsner, *Pausanias : travel and memory in Roman Greece* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); K. W. Arafat, *Pausanias' Greece : ancient artists and Roman rulers* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Christian Habicht, *Pausanias' Guide to ancient Greece* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

¹⁵ Jas Elsner, "Structuring "Greece": Pausanias' *Periegesis* as a literary construct" in *Pausanias : travel and memory in Roman Greece*, ed. Susan E. Alcock, John F. Cherry and Jas Elsner (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 11-17.

the Hill of Kronos and the racecourses (6.20.1-19). Moreover, Pausanias is able to symbolically travel to cities and regions throughout the Hellenic world by telling stories of individuals, groups, and cities that had set up statues and dedications in the sanctuary. Through his descriptions of these monuments, the entire Hellenic world was condensed and distilled in this one, most important, sanctuary. Pausanias makes Olympia, therefore, positioned in the middle of his work and straddling two books, a metonym for all of Greece.¹⁶

In addition to renewed attention to the literary sources about Roman Olympia, the German Archaeological Institute has recently undertaken a study focusing on this neglected Roman period, which they called the “Olympia während der römischen Kaiserzeit” project.¹⁷ Like the East Isthmia Archaeology Project, Ulrich Sinn and his team performed a reexamination of previously excavated Roman material from the sanctuary, but also undertook new excavations of Roman buildings. Because of the perfunctory manner with which much of the Roman material had previously been handled, especially in the early years of excavation, many records were incomplete or poorly recorded. Also, Roman buildings and Roman remodeling of earlier constructions were seldom subjected to the same detailed examination or publication as their Greek counterparts.¹⁸ This is especially true of buildings unearthed in the early history of the excavations, when dating was largely based on a typology of the construction techniques developed by general observation and with minimal documentation or archaeological data. The various members of Sinn’s project, however, did an admirable job utilizing the

¹⁶ Jason König, *Athletics and literature in the Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 159-160; Jas Elsner, “Structuring “Greece”,” 17.

¹⁷ As of now, the final reports of this project have not been published. Preliminary reports can be found in *Nikephoros* 5-10 (1992-1997) and *AR* (1986-2004).

¹⁸ Ulrich Sinn, et.al, “Bericht über das Forschungsprojekt, ‘Olympia während der römischen Kaiserzeit und in der Spätantike’ V. Die Arbeiten im Jahr 1995,” *Nikephoros* 9 (1996): 204.

legacy data and reevaluating the architecture and finds, such as the Leonidaion and the Roman sculpture and wall paintings. For the excavations, Sinn focused especially on the infrastructural framework of the site throughout the Roman imperial period. He and his team excavated the area northwest of the Prytaneion and the area southwest of the Leonidaion in order to determine the extent to which pilgrims still visited Olympia in the Roman period, and when the sanctuary finally went out of use.

The work undertaken by Sinn and his team has enabled further study of the Roman changes to the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia. At Olympia, the major Roman period architectural modifications were in the areas around the Altis and largely are in the form of infrastructural buildings. By studying his reports, as well as the literary and epigraphic records, a fuller picture of the experience of the Roman period visitor to the sanctuary and games can be created.

1.2. History of Roman Olympia

Studies of the history of the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia during the Roman imperial period often center on the grievous injustice done to the sanctuary by visitors such as Sulla and Nero, as well as the euergetism performed by others, like Hadrian and Herodes Atticus. Much of the scholarship has been tainted by the view of decline of the games due to increased professionalization, as discussed in the preceding chapter. The sanctuary was visited by many visitors, and various structures were built throughout the Roman period, but, when compared with the other Panhellenic sanctuaries, the relative autonomy of Olympia and its mother-city, as well as the conservatism of the games throughout the history of the sanctuary, are striking.

After the Second Macedonian War (200-197 B.C.E.), Elis, the mother-city of Olympia, joined the Achaean League, which used the sanctuary at Olympia, always a bastion of Hellenism, as a platform to thank and honor the general Quintus Marcius Philippus with an equestrian statue.¹⁹ Roman generals, too, honored Olympia; Lucius Aemilius Paulus, for instance, visited the sanctuary at the end of the war and was reported to have been moved by the chryselephantine statue of Zeus and to have given offerings to the gods.²⁰

The late Hellenistic period at Olympia was a tumultuous time in the sanctuary's history, and it suffered a series of misfortunes. Most famous was Sulla's harsh treatment of the sanctuary, when he plundered statues and dedications as reparations for the war in which he had been engaged in Greece, and transferred the 175th Olympiad (80 B.C.E.) to Rome for the occasion of his triumph.²¹ Not as much is made of Mummius' role; rather than taking plunder out, he dedicated twenty-one gilded Greek shields as spoils of war, which were subsequently hung on the Temple of Zeus.²² He also dedicated two statues of Zeus, one of which was bronze, both of which were paid for by Greek spoils.²³ These dedications, however, were *booty* that he had captured from the Greeks during his battles against them on their own mainland, such as the brutal sack of Corinth. It was a common occurrence for triumphant city-states to dedicate the spoils of war at the sanctuary, but it must have been an indignity to the Greeks for a Roman general to dedicate the shields that he had captured from them in the greatest of their own Panhellenic sanctuaries. Like many city-states, Mummius appropriated the shields of the Greeks and put them on

¹⁹ Iv. O. 318.

²⁰ Livy 45.28.4-5.

²¹ Plut. *Vit. Sull.* 12

²² Polyb. 39.17.

²³ Paus. 5.24.4

display at Olympia for his own victory monument, but his victory was over all of the Greeks themselves.

Olympia fared better after the Civil Wars of the late Republic ended. Augustus, through his acclamation of support of Greek sport through the institution of games at Nikopolis and Naples, indicated his approval of games. And the Olympics, as the most venerable and ancient of the Greek *agones*, received particular attention and assistance. While there is no evidence that Augustus himself visited Olympia, both Agrippa and King Herod the Great gave money to help rebuild the sanctuary, especially after it was damaged by an earthquake in 40 B.C.E.²⁴ Agrippa financed repairs to the temple of Zeus, and the Roman Arch in the southeast corner of the sanctuary may have been constructed for his visit. Other buildings, such as the South Portico and the Echo Stoa, were rebuilt in the Augustan era. The Echo Stoa in particular was constructed on the foundations of the original building with reused columns and capitals.²⁵ While there may have been economic reasons for the use of this spolia, the use of older, Classical structures made allusions to the antiquity of the sanctuary site, paralleled by the addition of the statue of Augustus as Zeus in the venerable Metroön.²⁶

The stadium was also enlarged in the Augustan era, and Tiberius and Germanicus were both champions in the quadriga at the games, in 4 B.C.E. and 7 C.E. respectively.²⁷ There continued to be various affronts by emperors on the sanctuary, such as when Caligula attempted to have Phidias' chryselephantine statue of Zeus removed to Rome,

²⁴ Iv.O. 913; Joseph *BJ* 1.427

²⁵ Paus. 5.21.17; Pliny, *HN* 36.23. W. Koenigs, *Die Echohalle*, *Olympische Forschungen* 14 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1984), 4-6; F. Willemsen, *Die Löwenkopf-Wasserspeier vom dach des Zeustempels*, *Olympische Forschungen* 5 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1957), 82.

²⁶ Spawforth, *Greece and the Augustan Cultural Revolution*, 222; Ferrary, "Rome et la géographie de l'hellénisme," 19-35.

²⁷ Hans-Volkmar Herrmann, *Olympia: Heiligtum und Wettampfstätte* (Munich: Hirmer, 1972), 184, 259.

stalled only, according to legend, because it began to shake and the workmen heard haunting laughter when they climbed onto the scaffolding, scaring them away.²⁸

Nero delayed the Olympic Games so that he could compete in all of the crown games during a trip to Greece, reportedly bringing home 1,808 crowns, in addition to hundreds of plundered statues.²⁹ Despite these irreverencies ascribed to him by the ancient literary sources, Nero was generous in some of his benefactions to Greece, including his declaration at Isthmia that the Greeks should again be free. He has also been credited with the construction of two massive building projects in the sanctuary, one of which was completed by the emperor Domitian, also a lover of sport and the founder of the Capitoline Games.

Because of Hadrian's love of Greece, a love of Olympia has often been assumed, and contemporary Roman refurbishments of several structures at Olympia were thereby credited to him.³⁰ There is, however, no evidence, literary or archaeological, for any benefactions or attention to the sanctuary by Hadrian. In fact, despite the amount of time the emperor travelled through Greece, there is little evidence that Hadrian ever visited the sanctuary at Olympia. The reinstatement of Elean coinage in 121 C.E. had been cited as part of Hadrian's munificence, but this was actually struck *before* his visit to Greece.³¹ An inscription by the Arcadian federation discovered at Olympia has been interpreted as proof of his visit, but could just be a sign of their loyalty to the emperor.³² Rather, his attention was spent on the Amphiktyonic League, as we shall see in the next chapter, and on the Panhellenion. He chose Athens as the site of the cult and, like Augustus,

²⁸ Dio Cass. 59.28.3-4; Suet. *Calig.* 57.1

²⁹ Dio Cass. 63.20; N. M. Kennell, "ΝΕΡΩΝ ΠΕΡΙΟΔΟΝΙΚΗΣ," *AJP* 109 (1988): 239-51.

³⁰ Alfred Mallwitz, *Olympia und seine Bauten* (Munich: Prestel-Verlag, 1972), 252.

³¹ P. R. Franke, "Olympia und seine Münzen," *AW* 15 (1984): 23-26.

³² Iv.O. 57; Sinn, et.al., "Bericht über das Forschungsprojekt "Olympia während der römischen Kaiserzeit und in der Spätantike" v. die Arbeiten im Jahr 1995," 210-211.

reestablished that city as the cultural epicenter of the Greek world, indicating her role as the cradle of Greek civilization.³³ It is logical that the emperor would desire the Panhellenion to be celebrated in a metropolitan area, and not in a place like Olympia, in a sanctuary administered by a small and remote town in the Peloponnese. In so doing, however, he largely ignored the prestigious games and drew some attention away from the sanctuary at Olympia.

While Hadrian's attendance or interest in Olympia may not be proven, his contemporaries *were* interested in this sanctuary. Throughout the second century C.E., Olympia was visited by distinguished Roman and Greek philosophers and writers. It was during this time that Herodes Atticus built the Nymphaeum, Pausanias visited the site, and the stadium was again modified to allow more spectators.³⁴ In contrast to the stadium at Delphi, the Olympic never received seats and always remained an earthen embankment, again indicating the archaism that was maintained for these games. The sanctuary may not have benefited from direct imperial benefactions as previously supposed, but it was still a site of major importance to Greeks and others throughout the Mediterranean.

Until Ulrich Sinn's study of the latest surviving evidence for the cult and games, many scholars assumed that the sanctuary fell into general decline after this florescence in the second century C.E. The last inscription recording Olympic cult officials dates to 265 C.E.,³⁵ and those honoring members of the imperial family begin to fall off in the

³³ This new cult brought about a florescence of games in Athens, adding the Olympieia and Hadrianeia to the Panhellenia and Panathenaia.

³⁴ Herrmann, *Olympia*, 190.

³⁵ Iv.O. 59.

early third century C.E.³⁶ These facts, in addition to the Olympic victory list that peters out in the late third century, led to the assumption that the games and the sanctuary fell gradually into decline and the buildings were ransacked for materials to construct a fortification wall to protect the inhabitants of the area from the Herulian invasion (267 C.E.). This three meter thick wall connected the Temple of Zeus and the South Hall and was built out of spolia from many buildings in the sanctuary, including the Prytaneion, Pelopion, Metroön, treasuries of Megara and Gela, Bouleuterion, and Leonidaion (figure 4.1).³⁷

Evidence from more recent excavations, however, has shown that there were new constructions in the third century and later, such as the bath to the south of the Leonidaion outfitted with an advanced heating system. Furthermore, a bronze plaque discovered in the Southwest Building confirms that the games were still being celebrated until at least 385 C.E. The roof of the Zeus temple was also embellished with twelve lion-head spouts during the reign of Diocletian, perhaps as a repair after an earthquake.³⁸ The accumulation of this evidence proves that the games were still being celebrated and the sanctuary was still in use throughout the third and fourth centuries.

1.3. Elis, mother-city of the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia

After struggles over the sanctuary with neighboring Pisa, the city of Elis, located 36km northwest of the sanctuary and about 57km by road, was the administrative heart of the sanctuary from the fifth century B.C.E. onward (figure 4.3).³⁹ The city and sanctuary

³⁶ Some exceptions are Iv.O 387, honoring Julia Domna, who is known for her attempts to revive old cults, and Iv.O. 386 which honors Caracalla, the last emperor to be so venerated.

³⁷ Mallwitz, *Olympia und seine Bauten*, 110. The Heraion, Philippeion, and treasury of the Sikyonians were spared, perhaps because of their limestone construction, which may have been considered not suitably strong enough to withstand an invasion.

³⁸ Willemsen, *Die Löwenkopf-Wasserspeier vom dach des Zeustempels*, 115-120.

³⁹ Strabo 8.3.2; Dio. Sic. 11.54.10.

were closely linked, despite the distance between them. A copy of the Elean *leges sacrae* from the sixth century B.C.E. was discovered in the Altis, for example, and the bouleuterion and prytaneion in the sanctuary were probably used to conduct some of the city's administrative activities.⁴⁰

The city of Elis was relatively modest and small throughout the Roman period, as it had been in the Archaic, Classical, and Hellenistic periods.⁴¹ Elis was a member of the Achaean League, but dissociated itself soon before Mummius' sack of Corinth.⁴² After the dissolution of the Achaean League, the Romans awarded Elis with a large *chora* of about 2,660 km².⁴³ The economy of the region was based on agriculture, dominated by Elean estate holders who were famous for their horse-breeding. Elis was also famous for its high quality flax, which, according to Pausanias, was only grown in this area.⁴⁴ Two of the best ports in the western Peloponnese were also under Elean control, those at Kyllene and Pheia. While extensive survey has not taken place, baths, cemeteries, and other architectural features, all with ample amounts of Roman pottery, have been found throughout the area surrounding Elis.

Dedications to the imperial family and other Roman dignitaries are found in the sanctuary, but few of the Eleans were themselves members of the imperial aristocracy.

The only known senior Roman official to come from Elis was L. Vettulenus Laetus, who

⁴⁰ Susan Guettel Cole, *Landscapes, gender, and ritual space: the ancient Greek experience* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 83.

⁴¹ Sophia B. Zoumbaki has recently published analyses of the prosopographical evidence of Eleans in the Roman Empire. Sophia B. Zoumbaki, *Elis und Olympia in der Kaiserzeit: das Leben einer Gesellschaft zwischen Stadt und Heiligtum auf prosopographischer Grundlage* (Athens: Kentron Hellenikes kai Romaikes Archaiothetos, 2001); Sophia B. Zoumbaki, "Elean relations with Rome and the Achaean Koinon and the role of Olympia" in *Roman Peloponnese III: Society, economy and culture under the Roman Empire: Continuity and innovation*, ed. A. D. Rizakis and C. E. Lepenioti (Athens: National Hellenic Research Foundation, 2010), 111-27.

⁴² Polybius 38.16.3.

⁴³ Zoumbaki, "Elean relations with Rome and the Achaean Koinon and the role of Olympia," 114-15.

⁴⁴ Paus. 5.5.2.

was a knight in the second half of the first century C.E.⁴⁵ No Eleans are recorded as administrators or priests in the Panhellenion.

This small city maintained firm control of the sanctuary and its festival throughout its history. Most of Elis' interactions with Roman magistrates and the Roman imperial family were through the Olympic Games. It was not a major city in the Roman province of Achaëa, in contrast to some of the other mother-cities discussed in this dissertation. The administrators of the Olympic Games continued to come from the small town of Elis, which supplied all of the priests and other officials who maintained the sanctuary and presided over the games.

The remainder of this chapter will be a thorough study of the structures and inscriptions from the Roman imperial periods, with a strong focus on the epigraphic records and buildings. I will first discuss the administration of the Roman Olympic Games, focusing on the role of Olympia's mother-city Elis. It will be seen that Elis remained relatively autonomous in its control of the site throughout the Roman imperial periods. I will also examine the epigraphic evidence for the athletes and professional guilds in the Roman sanctuary. As the Roman Empire expands, these participants come from further afield, though largely from the Greek East. Information from a recently excavated victors list proves that the participants in the games at this late date were still coming from classical Greek cities and that the games were still executed in the traditional format established in the Archaic and Classical periods. After this, I will examine the reorganization of the sacred space in the Julio-Claudian period, focusing especially on the Roan Arch. I will then examine the Roman waterworks at Olympia, starting with the Nymphaeum of Herodes Atticus, which provided the necessary

⁴⁵ Iv.O. 436-38; Zoumbaki, *Elis und Olympia in der Kaiserzeit*, 243, B9.

infrastructure for the construction of many new baths throughout the site. The Leonidaion will highlight the next section of this chapter, which will be a study of the various hostels and accommodations that were available to the Roman administrators and visitors to the site. Roman renovations to the Leonidaion had always been assigned to the reign of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius, but recent work has suggested that the closest corollaries to the elaborate garden peristyle installed in the Roman period come from the Flavian period. A recently excavated building in the southwestern section of the sanctuary provides a new picture of the site in the Roman period as it has been suggested that it was a clubhouse for an athletic guild, based on exercise floors in the structure and the bronze victors list which was discovered in one of this buildings' drains. While this is a compelling proposition, the plaque is not in its original place of use and, while the clay floors do indicate that this may have been a space for athletic activity, there is no compelling proof that the structure was reserved for members of an athletic guild specifically.

The examination of the infrastructure of the sanctuary will show the ways it was altered in order to accommodate the many visitors and athletes to the site in the Roman period, while also maintaining important aspects of the traditional Olympic organization and ritual. I will show that the administration of the games remained relatively conservative. As opposed to the other games examined in this dissertation, the organization of the Olympic Games remained comparatively unchanged and the personnel continued to be supplied from the small city of Elis. The area around the Altis, however, was filled with infrastructural complexes designed to modernize the sanctuary in order to accommodate the many visitors and participants coming to the Olympic

Games. Because of the continued importance of these games in the Greco-Roman world, as in the past, elites and athletes, and now emperors, continued to use the sanctuary as a platform to link themselves to a shared Panhellenic identity.

2. Epigraphic evidence for Roman Olympia

The administrative structure of the Roman Olympic Games remained largely intact from the Archaic and Classical periods. Elis continued to provide all of the officials that supervised and organized the Olympic Games. In stark contrast to the bureaucracy of the other three original Panhellenic Games, only slight changes were made to these Olympic posts. I believe that this is because Roman period Elis had a unique position between two worlds. The Olympic Games were continually considered the preeminent athletic festival in the Roman Empire and Elis was the undisputed administrator of the site. Though it held this power, Elis was also a small, politically unimportant city in the hinterlands of the province of Achaëa, not located near enough to any important harbors or cities to make it economically strategic. Elis can thus be compared to the city of Delphi, but the Pythian Games were administered not by the city, but the Amphiktyonic League, the governing structure of which was continually altered in the Roman period. The framework of the Olympic Games remained largely intact through the Roman period. Elis was politically unimportant, and so its citizens were allowed to run their games in their traditional manner with little imperial interference. Emperors and other elites financed building projects in the sanctuary, but the running of the games was largely unaltered.

Inscriptions discovered at Olympia provide most of the information about Roman period religious personnel of the site and its games. The games continued to be

considered the most prestigious in the ancient athletic circuit, and so athletes who had been successful at Olympia proclaimed this proudly on inscriptions throughout the Empire.⁴⁶ Further evidence is provided by a recently discovered bronze plaque which lists the victors of competitions from the Hellenistic through the fourth century C.E. and gives further evidence for the late history of the site and its spectacles. This cumulative evidence shows that the Olympic Games continued to be a focal point of Hellenic identity throughout the years of Roman control of Greece.

2.1. Religious personnel

As opposed to the Pythian and Isthmian Games, the Olympic Games seem to have been less afflicted with imperial interventions to their infrastructure and bureaucracy. The physical framework of the sanctuary outside of the Altis was dramatically altered, but the temenos, as well as the organization and framework of the games, were maintained largely unchanged from the Classical and earlier periods. The core of the games' bureaucracy continued to be a board of Hellanodikai, who had presided over and judged the games since the ninety-fifth Olympiad (400 B.C.E.). There were other less important officials, but, in contrast to Isthmia and Delphi, the office of agonotheite served only as an external financier to the games, with no further responsibilities or duties.

The most important officials at the Olympic festival were the Hellanodikai, who were selected from the Elean citizen population to supervise the games. Sources tell us that the number of these officials varied through the centuries, but had settled to a consistent ten by the Roman period.⁴⁷ These men were named not for their rituals or the sacrifices they performed, but after the secular aspects of their judgments. They refereed

⁴⁶ Luigi Moretti, *Iscrizioni agonistiche greche* (Rome: A. Signorelli, 1953); L. Moretti, "Olympionikai, i vincitori negli antichi agoni olimpici," *MemLinc* 8 (1959): 55-198.

⁴⁷ Paus. 5.9.4-6.

the contests of the Olympic Games, and therefore were the judges of all of Greece. They had many duties throughout the course of the festival: they dealt with late arrivals to the games, examined the athletes' credentials, assigned age categories, punished infractions, and also judged the events. In the previous centuries, they were also responsible for the organization of the Olympic truce, but, under the *pax Romana*, this became unnecessary. Their most important duty in the Roman period, therefore, became their supervision of the training of all athletes in Elis.⁴⁸

The festival took place during the second full moon after the summer solstice, with the full moon occurring at the midpoint of the festival. Ten months previous to this, the Hellanodikai moved to and lived in a building called the Hellanodikaion in Elis. One month before the festival was to take place, the athletes gathered at Elis for their required training.⁴⁹ This extra sacrifice required of athletes and their trainers lent to the prestige of these games. The month spent in Elis was a month where they were not able to compete in other athletic contests and earn valuable prizes in other cities throughout the Mediterranean. The agora of Elis was organized in order to accommodate this training, with a gymnasium, racetrack, and wrestling area for the Olympic hopefuls.⁵⁰

Assisting the Hellanodikai was a larger board of Eleans. This Olympic Boule was a fifty member panel that had general supervision over the games and to whom the athletes could appeal if they disagreed with the Hellanodikai's judgments. These men were also responsible for the overall maintenance of the sanctuary. The Hellanodikai and

⁴⁸ Olympia was not the only sanctuary that had such a truce; most of the Panhellenic sanctuaries imposed them to allow for the safe travel of participants to and from the sanctuary. The best evidence for these truces, however, comes from epigraphical evidence at the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi, and so a more thorough discussion of these truces will appear there.

⁴⁹ Philost. *VA* 5.43.

⁵⁰ Paus. 6.23.

the Olympic Boule continued to hold supreme authority over the games throughout the Roman period.

This is in contrast to the Pythian and Isthmian Games, for which the office of agonothele enjoyed increased prestige and responsibility. As we will see in the following chapters, the Amphiktyonic League and Corinth respectively selected an individual for each festival circuit to finance and preside over their games.⁵¹ There were agonotheses for the Olympic Games, but, in contrast, only two known persons in Olympic history held this post, both for “perpetuity” and both for exceptional benefactions: Herod the Great and a Rhodian man named M. Cocceius Timasarchos.⁵² In 12 B.C.E., Herod stopped at Olympia during an Olympic year and, seeing the games in financial stress, gave an endowment to finance not only that year’s, but all future games.⁵³ It appears that the Eleians *created* the post of διηνεκῆς ἀγωνοθέτης, or perpetual agonothele, for Herod. As opposed to the Pythian or Isthmian Games, for which a different agonothele was responsible for financing each successive game, the benefaction of Herod gave the games financial solvency to continue running for many years. The next recorded agonothele dates to the late second or early third century C.E. This Timasarchos, who held various positions on his native Rhodes, had also served as the archon of the Panhellenion from 197-201 C.E. and, according to an inscription discovered on Rhodes, as the agonothele of the Greek Olympics (τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς Ἑλλάδος Ὀλυμπ[ίων]).⁵⁴ Like Herod, this man

⁵¹ H. W. Pleket, "Olympic Benefactors," *ZPE* 20 (1976): 1-18. Items regularly financed for the Olympic Games include the oath taking by the athletes and trainers, official sacrifices to Zeus and Pelops, public banquets, the oil supply in the gymnasia in both Olympia and Elis, and the cost of the personnel.

⁵² Pleket, "Olympic Benefactors," 6.

⁵³ Flavius Josephus *BJ* 1.426-27.

⁵⁴ Panhellenion: James Henry Oliver, "Marcus Aurelius: Aspects of Civic and Cultural Policy in the East," *Hesperia Suppl.* 13 (1970): 107-109, no. 21 and 22. Rhodian inscription: Giovanni Pugliese Carratelli, "Testi e documenti: Nouveaux fragments d'Hipponax," *PP* 13 (1950): 76. The Greek Olympics here

presumably also endowed the sanctuary with a great sum to receive this honor. We know that the sanctuary was in a financial crisis when Herod the Great bestowed it, but it is not clear if a similar situation compelled Timasarchos to donate the money.

This arrangement especially benefitted the city of Elis, in that it provided the security and freedom to maintain the bureaucratic infrastructure of the Hellanodikai that had been in place for centuries, while other games required considerable reorganization in order to remain financially viable. Instead of turning over the responsibility of the games to a single individual, perhaps even a non-Elean if enough wealthy natives were unavailable, a board of Hellanodikai selected from the city continued to be responsible for the games.

As opposed to the same office at other sites, then, the agonothele at Olympia was a financier of the games who had no real power, only an honorific title, as seen by Herod's and Timasarchos' one time gifts. It is significant that the prestige of the Olympic Games continued to inspire such vast endowments. The games at Delphi and Isthmia, in contrast, relied on the financial obligations of a different individual agonothele for each cycle. This was a prestigious position at these games and it appears that the sanctuaries were reliant on these individuals seeking civic prominence to make their games solvent. Because of the benefactions of Herod and Timasarchos, however, the Olympic Games could continue to run in a manner similar to which they had since the Classical period.

The epimelete was another post that gained increased esteem at some sanctuaries during the Roman period. This post did exist at Olympia, but it was not *as* prestigious or

demarcate those games celebrated in Greece, so Elis, as opposed to other Isolympic games celebrated throughout the Empire.

powerful as elsewhere.⁵⁵ This individual was in charge of the general upkeep of the site, including overlooking the treasures of Zeus. The post of alytarches also received increased status through the Roman period and may have usurped the role of the epimelete at some points in the sanctuary's history. He was the head of the Olympic police and in charge of general law and order of the site.⁵⁶ The importance of this official is stressed by a bronze discus dedicated by a pentathlete named P. Asclepiades in 241 C.E., who dates the Olympiad by the name of that year's alytarches, Fl. Scribonianus.⁵⁷ Olympiads were traditionally named after the victor of the stade race, but using the alytarches as the eponym of the games clearly shows his importance in the Roman period.

An inscription from the 189th Olympiad (28 B.C.E.) details other on-call officials, such as a priest, flautist, libation pourer, a three man group of libation dancers, a woodman, butcher, five bailiffs, a seer, a key holder, and a tour guide.⁵⁸ Some of these men would serve the sanctuary throughout the year, but others might only be necessary during the Olympic festival. Many other officials were required to make the vast organization and management of the Olympic Games possible. This is one among several inscriptions, the earliest preserved from 36 B.C.E., which list Olympic cult personnel culled from the Elean elites.⁵⁹ These inscriptions emphasized the antiquity of the cult, and especially the Elean elites' role in its administration. These lists were not an Archaic or Classical tradition, unless they were originally written on some material that does not survive. These were carved, however, on marble roof tiles sourced from the Temple of

⁵⁵ Pleket, "Olympic Benefactors," 7. Epimeletes at Olympia: Iv.O. 59, 65, 77, 79, 80, 81, 436, 437, 468, 568, 570, 728, 731-35.

⁵⁶ Pleket, "Olympic Benefactors," 10.

⁵⁷ Iv.O. 240-41.

⁵⁸ Iv.O. 64.

⁵⁹ Iv.O. 59-141.

Zeus, presumably on hand from the earthquake destruction, and used the archaistic heading of δῖος ἱερά. Though they were a first century B.C.E. invention, they highlighted the antiquity of both the posts held at Olympia and the Elean aristocratic families who traditionally held them, elevating these men and reminding the spectators coming to the sanctuary of the games long history and the important role of Elis in its organization.

Another inscription, though fragmentary, has been interpreted as a Roman edict regulating transport and housing during the Olympic festival.⁶⁰ It was discovered in Elis and documents something regarding τοὺς ἀφικνουμέ[νους] (visitors) and [κα]ταλύσεις (hostels) during the festival. Peter Siewert dates it to the 3rd century C.E. based on the letter forms. It indicates the infrastructure necessary to organize the Olympic Games and the Roman involvement in their operation.

A final priesthood was that of Demeter Chamyne, who had a special altar across from the judges' table in the stadium, and who was an exception to the rule that married women were not allowed to be spectators at the Olympic Games. In his description of Olympia, Pausanias points out Mount Typaeum as the place from which women were thrown if they trespassed the sanctuary on particular days.⁶¹ Originally chosen from among the Elean women, in the Roman period this prominent priestesshood was open to all aristocratic women who could afford to pay for it. The wife of Herodes Atticus, Regilla, for instance, held the post and the elaborate Nymphaeum discussed below was a dedication by her in this role. The particular duties of this priesthood are unknown.

Pausanias does not mention the goddess' altar in his circuit of the sanctuary. Sinn has

⁶⁰ P. Siewert, "Zwei Rechtsaufzeichnungen der Stadt Elis" in *Forschungen in der Peloponnes : Akten des Symposions anlässlich der Feier "100 Jahre Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut Athen"*, Athen 5.3.-7.3.1998, ed. V. Mitsopoulos-Leon and C. Schauer (Athens: Österreichisches Archäologisch, 2001), 249-52. Inventory number Λ-377.

⁶¹ Paus. 5.6.7.

suggested that, in the Roman period, the office was more of a status symbol for the wives of aristocratic men than an actual religious institution, but, without further sources regarding this post, it is difficult to say more.⁶²

2.2. Roman Olympic victors

Through the Roman imperial period, the Olympic Games continued to be the preeminent athletic festival in the Greek East. Hundreds of cities and sanctuaries founded contests, many of them modeled on the Olympic Games, but an Olympic victory was always hailed as the grandest accomplishment on an athlete's *cursus honorum*. The importance of the Olympics to ancient athletes may be gleaned from a story told by Pausanias. In 93 C.E., an Egyptian boxer named Apollonius protested when he was banned from competition because he had arrived late to the mandatory training period before the Olympic Games.⁶³ He claimed that he was delayed due to adverse weather conditions, but his compatriot Heracleides divulged to the Hellenodikai that Apollonius had actually been competing in other games in Ionia. According to Pausanias, the disqualified boxer was so outraged at this verdict that he attacked Heracleides in his frustration. This extreme reaction is worthy of note, since Apollonius was presumably a professional athlete and had been taking part in other games where he could win cash prizes. Although he could have just had an awful temper, this outburst may also indicate the prestige attached to an Olympic victory, if a professional athlete would exhibit such a violent outrage from being barred from competition.⁶⁴ An Olympic victory meant more

⁶² Ulrich Sinn, "Olympias Spätgeschichte im Spiegel des Demeterkults" in *Olympia 1875-2000: 125 Jahre deutsche Ausgrabungen: internationales Symposium, Berlin 9.-11. November 2000*, ed. Helmut Kyrieleis (Mainz: Von Zabern, 2002), 373.

⁶³ Paus. 4.21.12-14.

⁶⁴ As a side note, this story may also indicate either Apollonius' questionable talents or greed, as presumably the best athletes would have been partaking in the early Olympic training session and so he may not have had as serious or skilled competitors at these Ionian professional games

fame and esteem, an honorarium from one's home city, as well as more money at further professional competitions. A local nobleman in Asia Minor supposedly once gave an Olympic victor 30,000 drachmas to compete at a local competition.⁶⁵ Another indication of the prestige of the Olympic Games is in the lack of standing accorded to Hadrian's Panhellenion Games.⁶⁶ The Olympic agonothete Timasarchos discussed above, in fact, complained to Septimius Severus and Caracalla about the bad attitude athletes had toward competing in the Panhellenic Games. Despite the imperial benefaction and prizes awarded to the victors, it was still difficult to encourage athletes to compete in these games, while the Olympics held their position as the most prestigious.⁶⁷

In the Archaic and Classical periods, the majority of Olympic victors had come from the Peloponnese itself, as well as the Greek colonies located in Magna Graecia.⁶⁸ In the Roman period, however, the number of the recorded victors from these regions falls off steeply. In their place are records of athletes from western Asia Minor, Bithynia, Phrygia, Lydia, Caria, and then areas further east, including Cilicia and Syria (table 4.1).⁶⁹ Egypt also contributed many athletes to the competition, and the numbers of Egyptian athletes increased substantially in the Roman period. We shall see a similar trend at the other Panhellenic sanctuaries. In addition to the sheer numbers of people living in these regions compared to the province of Achaëa, it also indicates an active gymnasium culture in the Greek East that provided a supportive infrastructure to produce athletes with the strength and ability not only to compete, but also to be victorious at the

⁶⁵ Dio. Chrys. *Or.* 66.11.

⁶⁶ Pleket, "Olympic Benefactors," 8.

⁶⁷ Oliver, "Marcus Aurelius," 107-9.

⁶⁸ Andrew Farrington, "Olympic victors and the popularity of the Olympic Games in the Imperial Period," *Tyche* 12 (1997): 15-46. Farrington has compiled all of the epigraphic evidence of victors at Olympia. According to his calculations, we have a total of 22-25% of all Olympic victors from the inception of the games until their end.

⁶⁹ Farrington, "Olympic victors and the popularity of the Olympic Games in the Imperial Period," 18.

Olympic Games. It also indicates the desire among these athletes to travel the distance to Olympia, and gain the prestige of victory, and resultant earnings, at the most famous Panhellenic sanctuary of them all.

The epigraphic evidence for Olympic victors falls off dramatically between 260-270 C.E., which led previous scholars to assume that the games were also in decline at this time.⁷⁰ This theory has been refuted by archaeological evidence at Olympia dating to the third and fourth centuries, discussed below, and by the bronze plaque discovered in a latrine drain of the Southwest Building, which lists athletes who competed in the Olympic Games from the first century B.C.E. through the fourth century C.E (figure 4.4). The plaque now measures 70x40cm, but the left and top were cut down in antiquity (figure 4.5). It was discovered lying in a horizontal position in the latrine drain, amidst the sandy, alluvial layer caused by the flooding of the Kladeos River. Because the cutting allowed the plaque to fit so neatly in the drain, it was probably cut to fit there.⁷¹

Before the discovery of this important artifact, the last Olympic Games were dated according to the Olympic victors list, which ended with the 264th Olympiad, taking place in 277 C.E. Two other names, both dating to the 287th Olympiad (369 C.E.), were mentioned in other sources, identifying Philomenes of Philadelphia and the Armenian prince Varzdates as victors. Because these victories date to almost a century after the Olympic victors list ends and because of the “exotic”, non-Greek origins of the victors, they were considered erroneous additions made by men trying to link themselves to a now defunct Classical past.

⁷⁰ The decline in the number of inscriptions still needs to be addressed. It could have been due to the general decline in the epigraphic habit in the region at this time. For a discussion, see Farrington, “Olympic victors and the popularity of the Olympic Games in the Imperial Period,” 20-22.

⁷¹ Ulrich Sinn, et.al., "Bericht über das Forschungsprojekt "Olympia während der römischen Kaiserzeit": III. Die Arbeiten im Jahr 1994," *Nikephoros* 7 (1995): 234. It has also been suggested that it was hidden in the drain, but I find this less likely.

This plaque, however, has changed these interpretations. It is a rather informal inscription with a total of twenty athletes listed (figure 4.6). Because the top of the inscription is missing, it is impossible to know how many other victors had been recorded. The inscribing appears to be successive, but not in chronological order and over a long period of time, as there are changes in letter forms and spelling.⁷² The earliest victories are from the first century B.C.E., but the majority of them date to the fourth century C.E. The earliest *recorded* entry is that of Tiberius Klaudios Rufos from Smyrna, which dates to the first century C.E. He is one of the only victors listed on the plaque known from other sources: other inscriptions from the sanctuary honor him with Elean citizenship, backed by the Vetuleni family.⁷³ He was thought to have been a great advocate for athletes' organizations, as well as a great athlete himself.

The last entry is from 395 C.E., two decades after Philomenes and Varzdates were supposed to have competed. The victor, a boy who won the pankration, is named Zorypos and was from Athens. This is in stark contrast to claims that the Olympics were either no longer being held or had declined so steeply in popularity that only people from far away locations, such as Armenia, would compete. Furthermore, this document need not record the last year that the Olympics were celebrated, just the last recorded instance of its celebration; we now know, at least, that they were observed deep into the fourth century C.E.

In addition to the crucial proof that the games were still celebrated well into the fourth century, and that victors were still coming from cities associated with the Classical

⁷² Sinn, "Bericht über das Forschungsprojekt "Olympia während der römischen Kaiserzeit": III. Die Arbeiten im Jahr 1994," 239.

⁷³ Iv.O. 54, 55. See also Onno van Nijf, "Athletics, *andreia*, and the *Askesis*-culture in the Roman East" in *Andreia: studies in manliness and courage in classical antiquity*, ed. R. M. Rosen and I. Sluiter (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 263-65.

Greek past, the plaque is also important for the information it gives us about the infrastructure of the games through this time. For each victor, the event, year of the victory, and age group of the event, both light and heavy, are listed. Sometimes the name of the hometown and the victor's patronymic are listed, and some of the later entries are encircled in wreaths. This reveals that the same categories were being held at the Olympic Games in the fourth century C.E. as those that had been practiced in the Classical period of ancient Greece. Several types of competitions are listed: wrestling, boxing, pankration, stade, diaulos, diolchos and pentathlon.

Horse races are conspicuously missing from this list, but we know from inscriptions from other parts of the empire that they were still held at Olympia until at least the early third century. Between 220-225 C.E., an Athenian, T. Domitius Prometheus, was victorious in the quadriga at all four of the games discussed in this dissertation.⁷⁴ There is, though, certainly much less evidence for horse racing in the Roman imperial period than in previous centuries.⁷⁵

There is no archaeological evidence to suggest when the games went out of use. Next to nothing is known about the hippodrome, but the stadium was kept clear until at least the fifth century, though this is, of course, not a clear indication that the games were still practiced here at that late date.⁷⁶ The evidence shows that the structure of the games was not vastly altered in the Roman period and that, again, the traditional structure of the games remained intact. It is more difficult to comment on the scale at which these games were held. As will be discussed below, however, building projects were still undertaken in the sanctuary at this time, including a seventh bath.

⁷⁴ Moretti, "Olympionikai, i vincitori negli antichi agoni olimpici," no.932

⁷⁵ Farrington, "Olympic victors and the popularity of the Olympic Games in the Imperial Period," 22.

⁷⁶ Sinn, "Olympias Spätgeschichte im Spiegel des Demeterkults," 373.

Because of the limited number of victors recorded over five centuries on the bronze plaque, the large number of abbreviations throughout, Sinn and Ebert suggest that this plaque lists members of a particular athletic guild and that the Southwest Building, in which it was found, was actually the clubhouse of the members of the guild.

Compared to the vast amount of epigraphical evidence from Asia Minor, the evidence of athletic and other guilds at the Panhellenic sites in Greece is quite scant. Ulrich Sinn has suggested that the building southwest of the Leonidaion, which will be fully discussed below, was a clubhouse for an athletic guild. Henri Pleket, on the other hand, has argued that there was never an official Olympic athletic guild, but instead an impermanent group of members of the Panmediterranean athletic victors guild who were competing at the games would probably form together at each Olympic festival.⁷⁷ Through a reexamination of the evidence, I hope to gain a better understanding of the understudied presence of athletic guilds and their members at the Panhellenic sanctuaries and how their presence, or lack thereof, may have influenced the functioning of these sanctuaries.

There is some epigraphic evidence of these athletic associations at Olympia. One is an honorary decree for a man named Callias from οἱ ἀ[π]ὸ τῆ[ς οἰκουμένης] ἱερωνῖκα[ι καὶ ἀθληταῖ].⁷⁸ This fragmentary inscription from a monument base has been largely restored, but the ἱερωνῖκα[ι could allude to an athletic guild's presence at Olympia. Pleket argues that there was not an official guild at Olympia *per se*, but that this inscription

⁷⁷ Henri W. Pleket, "Some aspects of the history of the athletic guilds," *ZPE* 10 (1973): 204-205.

⁷⁸ Iv.O. 469.

records an honor given to Callias by a group of athletic victors guild members who were present at this particular Olympic Games.⁷⁹

Another group found on inscriptions is referred to as the “entire xystos,” or ὁ σύμπασις ξυστός, and records a decree for L. Vetulenus Laetus, who seems to have given some sort of gift.⁸⁰ Like other athletic associations, this one is named after the practice track, or xystos, that was found in many Panhellenic sanctuaries. For instance, the one associated with the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia was located in the city of Elis, where the athletes undertook their mandated training before the beginning of the games. This title becomes standard throughout the athletic world, and Clarence A. Forbes interprets it as a temporary athletic guild that was formed by participants of any given festival.⁸¹

So, the epigraphic evidence for athletic guilds at Olympia is scant. It does not suggest a permanent organized guild at the site. A few fragmentary inscriptions document honors that the professional guild of victors bestowed on various people, but there is no evidence that these groups were any different than Pleket has argued, in other words members of the guild that happen to meet at the sanctuary at Olympia every four years, just as they met at any other athletic competition in which they participated throughout the Roman Empire.

3. Julio-Claudian reorganization of the sacred space

There were a total of three main entrances to the sanctuary. Two small gates were positioned at the northwestern and southwestern corners of the Altis. The latter corresponds to Pausanias’ description, in which he states that the Leonidaion stands at the entrance to the Altis where the procession enters the sanctuary. This is a rather small

⁷⁹ Pleket, "Some aspects of the history of the athletic guilds," 205.

⁸⁰ Iv.O. 436.

⁸¹ This title is used on a total of seventeen different inscriptions.

entrance, which Pausanias even refers to it as an alley, rather than a road, stating that “what the Athenians call an alley the Eleans call highways”.⁸² It is interesting that service buildings are located in the immediate vicinity of the Sacred Way, which were previously thought to be at the edges of the sanctuary.

The reexaminations and excavations of the areas around the temenos of Zeus, including the Leonidaion and the Southwest Building (discussed below), brought new information to light about the Roman use of the sanctuary, including the entrance to the sanctuary. The entrance to the Leonidaion is located to the south, facing *away* from the temenos of Zeus, and is mirrored by the Southwest Building, access to which was from the north (figure 4.7). There is evidence of a colonnaded portico that ran along the front of the Southwest Building and continued four meters east of the structure before turning to the south, probably with another road continuing along it. Additionally, the entrance way to the Southwest Building is nearly three meters wide and located along the central axis of its courtyard, affording those passing by spectacular views of the marble walls and statues in the wall niches.

The third entrance was a grander and monumental access to the sanctuary, crossing to the south of the Altis and past the South Hall. This entryway corresponds to a new Roman temenos wall, which roughly followed the course of the Greek period wall for most of its length, but extended the space in the southwest portion of the sanctuary (figure 4.1). Several shrines and other sacred sites located outside both the Greek and Roman temenos wall indicate that the sacred space around the sanctuary was graduated, with the most sacred within the Altis, and other sacred space outside of its boundaries.

⁸² Paus. 5.15.2.

A monumental triple arch was constructed at this southeastern entrance in the first century C.E. Early excavators associated it with Nero, based on its relative location near the so-called Villa of Nero further to the east and Nero's famous visit to the site to compete in the games.⁸³ Mallwitz has recently reevaluated the date of the arch, however, based on the remaining blocks *in situ*, and gives it an earlier date in the Augustan era.⁸⁴ It may, then, correlate to Agrippa's visit to the sanctuary.⁸⁵ He also restored the temple of Zeus, including an elaborate pavement and bronze inscription in Latin on the porch.⁸⁶

It is unclear if the new Roman temenos wall was constructed at the same time as the arch, but all were built during the Julio-Claudian period. The extension of the wall to the south did not enclose any further buildings, but only statue bases and other non-architectural dedications. The southeastern monumental entrance to the sanctuary, however, strongly impacted the view-sheds and the experience of the visitor on approaching the Altis. The two smaller entrances had visual foci of traditional cultic aspects of the site. When one entered through the northwestern propylon, the Philippeion, Temple of Hera and Pelopion were the first buildings seen. The southwestern entrance had a visual focus on the Temple of Zeus. Approaching from the southeast, however, the first building one would visually confront would be the Metroön, one of the oldest temples on the site, and now recently renovated with a colossal statue of Augustus as Zeus.⁸⁷ This new focus was especially assertive. The procession would have entered through this monumental Roman gateway into the most revered, conservative and

⁸³ Mallwitz, *Olympia und seine Bauten*, 207. Another roughly contemporary triple arch was constructed outside of the sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia, which will be discussed in Chapter Six.

⁸⁴ Alfred Mallwitz, *Bericht über die Ausgrabungen in Olympia* (Berlin: Verlag Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1999), 270-74.

⁸⁵ Spawforth, *Greece and the Augustan cultural revolution*, 164.

⁸⁶ Iv.O. 913.

⁸⁷ A. Lo Monaco, "Olimpia e Augusto: evoluzione dello spazio sacro all'inizio del Principato," *ASAtene* 81 (2003): 479.

traditional sanctuaries, and been confronted by a Classical temple now converted to house statues of the Julio-Claudians.

4. Water supply and baths in the sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia

The spread of Roman Baths has been noted almost everywhere the Roman Empire reached. Olympia is no exception. Seven baths were built around the sanctuary of Zeus from the first through fourth centuries C.E. (figure 4.1). The Kladeos Baths are the earliest (2nd c. C.E.), located in the western part of the sanctuary along the Kladeos River, and were built on top of the fifth century Greek baths, composed of hip baths and a large swimming pool. There were also baths in the so-called Villa of Nero (c. 67 C.E.), which were later destroyed and replaced by the East Baths (early 3rd c. C.E.). In the southwestern section of the sanctuary, the South Baths were also constructed in the third century C.E., but most of the remaining structure dates to the Diocletian era renovations. Finally, it was not until the late third or early fourth centuries that the baths to the south of the Leonidaion were built, indicating that the sanctuary required new structures to aid in the entertainment and hygiene of their visitors. The number of baths at Olympia was vast compared to its Panhellenic counterparts, which only had one or two per site. Furthermore, they were much more ornate than their Greek counterpart and featured differently heated rooms, barrel vaulting, and elaborate mosaics. These baths required a huge amount of water, which was in part delivered to many of them via an aqueduct provided by the second century sophist, Herodes Atticus.

4.1. Nymphaeum of Herodes Atticus

The Nymphaeum of Herodes Atticus, located within the Altis on the bank of the Hill of Kronos, is one of the most discussed and analyzed of the Roman era constructions

at the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia (figure 4.8).⁸⁸ It was excavated in 1877-1878, early in the German Archaeological Institute's history at the site. Much of the scholarly interest is owed to the exceptional sculpture that was on display at the water fountain, featuring the families of the emperor and of Herodes Atticus, and the resultant discussions of constructed identity in the Roman East during the second century C.E.⁸⁹

The Nymphaeum is securely identified by ancient sources. Philostratus mentions it amongst Herodes' dedications at sanctuaries.⁹⁰ Lucian also discusses it, although he does not mention Herodes Atticus by name. Rather, he has the famous Cynic Peregrinus mock the fountain for making the Greeks soft by providing water to the sanctuary which was famous for its dryness and plagues.⁹¹

In the recent spate of literature about Pausanias, much has been made of the fact that the traveler does not mention the Nymphaeum, which, as we will see below, was standing by the time he visited Greece.⁹² Even though Pausanias does not mention the monumental landmark in his *Periegesis*, the identification of the Nymphaeum is proven by numerous pieces of epigraphic and sculptural evidence. The statues are of the imperial family and the family of Herodes Atticus, each identified by the full title of the individual and the name of the statue's donor. The entire imperial court statuary was dedicated by Herodes himself, while the Eleans donated the statues of Herodes' family, presumably in thanks for Herodes' generosity in the construction of this structure, in addition perhaps to

⁸⁸ Most recently see Brenda J. Longfellow, "Roman Fountains in Greek Sanctuaries," *AJA* 116 (2012): 133-55.

⁸⁹ For example, Smith, "Cultural choice and political identity in honorific portrait statues in the Greek east in the second century A.D." and Bol, *Das Statuenprogramm des Herodes-Atticus-Nymphäums*.

⁹⁰ Philostr. *V S* 2.551.

⁹¹ Lucian *De mort. Peregr.* 19.

⁹² Susan Buck Sutton, "A temple worth seeing: Pausanias, travelers, and the narrative landscape at Nemea" in *Pausanias: travel and memory in Roman Greece*, ed. Susan E. Alcock, John F. Cherry and Jas Elsner (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 186; Arafat, *Pausanias' Greece*, 37-38.

other financial benefactions of which we are not aware. Finally, a life-size bull held a place of honor in the center of the fountain, with an inscription naming Herodes Atticus' wife, Regilla, as the donor: 'Ρήγιλλα, ιέρεια | Δήμητρος, τὸ ὕδωρ | καὶ τὰ περὶ τὸ ὕδωρ τῷ Δί (IvO 610, "Regilla, priestess of Demeter, (dedicated) the water and the things around the water, to Zeus").⁹³

The dating of the Nymphaeum can be placed in a relatively specific time frame. Because the inscription on the bull credits Regilla as the dedicator during her tenure as priestess of Demeter, it must have been completed before her death in the late 150s C.E. Turning to Lucian, it is probable that Peregrinus was criticizing the structure relatively soon after its construction, when it was still new and open to controversy.⁹⁴ He also announced his intention to commit suicide at the Olympic Games, which he did in 165 C.E. Therefore, he must have raised his criticisms in the 150s C.E. Another woman, Antonia Bebia, held the priestesshood of Demeter in 157, so it could not have been that close to her death.⁹⁵ Therefore, we can postulate a date of 153 C.E. for the priestesshood of Regilla and the dedication of the Nymphaeum.⁹⁶

The Nymphaeum, so impressive in antiquity, is rather unimpressive now (figure 4.9). It was located in the heart of the Altis, on the bank of the Hill of Kronos and between the two venerable temples of Hera and the Mother of the Gods. It consisted of a two-storied hemicycle façade framed by water basins. The statues of the Antonine family and the family of Herodes Atticus were set in two levels of eleven niches in the

⁹³ Regilla's role as priestess of Demeter, as well as the chronology of Lucian's text, will be used below to establish a date for the nymphaeum.

⁹⁴ Tobin, "The monuments of Herodes Atticus," 321.

⁹⁵ Iv.O. 456

⁹⁶ This also correlates with Bol's identification of Marcus Aurelius' children (Bol, *Das Statuenprogramm des Herodes-Atticus-Nymphaeums*) and Walker's (Walker, "The architectural development of Roman nymphaea in Greece") classification of the pilasters as mid-second century.

superstructure.⁹⁷ The lower register was made up of the imperial family, including Hadrian and Antoninus Pius with their wives and children. The men and boys were dressed in cuirasses, signifying their power of imperium. The upper central niche housed a statue of Zeus flanked by Herodes Atticus' family, corresponding to the imperial families in the niches below.⁹⁸ In contrast to the military cuirass, the senior male members of Herodes' family wear togas, except for one, possibly Herodes' father, who wears a tunic and himation. The junior are dressed in the himation, highlighting their civilian, Greek nature. There is much scholarly interest and controversy concerning the placement and identity of individual statues, but this is not central to the topic of this dissertation. More important for my purposes is the imperial message of the Nymphaeum, echoed with the Metroön, which now housed the imperial cult. Its prominent placement was also a deliberate demonstration of the importance of Herodes' gift, which was made more audacious for its placement among the oldest and most holy parts of the sanctuary.

While the sculptural program of the Nymphaeum of Herodes Atticus is exceptionally interesting and revealing, the mechanisms of the structure are much more relevant for the subject of this dissertation. The remains consist of many architectural elements, as well as two water basins positioned on two tiers following the slope of the hill behind. The upper basin is semi-circular with six exterior stone buttresses, while the lower is longer and rectangular with a circular monopteros on either end. F. Adler produced the original restoration, which he called the "Exedra of Herodes Atticus," wherein he reconstructed a half dome in order to account for the buttresses, even though

⁹⁷ Bol, *Das Statuenprogramm des Herodes-Atticus-Nymphäums*, 50-58.

⁹⁸ Smith, "Cultural choice and political identity in honorific portrait statues in the Greek east in the second century A.D.," 76.

no vaulting fragments were discovered in the course of the excavations.⁹⁹ He tied the structure to the nymphaeum in the Canopus of Hadrian's villa at Tivoli and Herodes' nymphaeum in Alexandria Troas. In actuality, however, the buttresses were used to support the height of the building.

The foundations of the nymphaeum were a combination of small stones in mortar and poros blocks. The superstructure consisted of a concrete core faced with courses of square bricks revetted with Pentelic and Carystian marbles. The original publication by Adler suggested that the bricks were manufactured at one of Herodes Atticus' estates.¹⁰⁰ This was based on the discovery of two bricks with the name Herodes and the title “*epimelete*” stamped on them (*IvO* 734: Δ(ιό)ρ. Ἐπιμελητοῦ Ἡ[ρώδου], 735: [Ἐπιμελητ]οῦ Ἡρώδου). The bricks were not found in the vicinity of the Nymphaeum, however. One was discovered in the eastern part of the Temple of Zeus, while the other has no provenance. Additionally, the bricks are rectangular, while those used in the construction of the Nymphaeum are square. W. Dittenberger supposed that the bricks actually belong to a smaller group of stamped bricks that bore the names of *epimeletes*, and that the brick may be in reference to another Herodes who was an Olympian *epimelete* in the first century C.E.¹⁰¹

The water was led to the Nymphaeum via a one kilometer long aqueduct originating at the Kladeos River in the southwestern spur of the Erymanthos Mountain.¹⁰² The water was directed to a settling basin, from which it flowed into an interior canal running around the curved back wall of the semi-circular upper basin, delivered by eleven

⁹⁹ F. Adler, *Olympia Ergebnisse II* (Amsterdam : Verlag Adolf M. Hakkert, 1892), 134.

¹⁰⁰ Adler, *Olympia Ergebnisse II*, 135.

¹⁰¹ *Iv.O.* 734, 735.

¹⁰² H. Schleif and E. Kunz, *Olympischen Forschungen I* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1944), 53.

lion-head spouts. From this upper basin, water gushed from eleven more lion-head spouts into the lower basin. At the bottom of the structure, several holes delivered the water from this basin into a long trough, which carried water to other parts of the sanctuary. Small stone settling basins were positioned at various parts of the sanctuary.¹⁰³

The monopteroi on either side of the longer rectangular lower basin are a matter of some controversy between Susan Walker, Renate Bol, and Jennifer Tobin. Set on square socles abutting the rear wall of the lower basin, they were constructed of small stones and mortar, the same material as was used in the rest of the building, indicating that they are contemporary with the original construction of the Nymphaeum.¹⁰⁴ The socles were covered by a layer of bricks over poros blocks placed to create a circular stylobate. Each stylobate had eight Corinthian capitals and bases of Pentelic marble with columns of Cippolino marble. Walker argues that the capitals are not as finely sculpted as those of the pilaster columns throughout the rest of the Nymphaeum, with a heavier drill work, little modeling, and less detail, and so believes that they might date to a later refurbishment of the structure.¹⁰⁵

All of the above scholars agree that at some point, either at the initial construction of the Nymphaeum or after some modifications, statues of Hadrian and the emperor Marcus Aurelius were placed within the monopteroi. These statues were larger, more finely sculpted, and carved in the round, as opposed to the statues placed in the niches, on which the backs were roughly and cursorily done. One statue, in a toga, was built into a later wall to the west of the Nymphaeum. The other, with a cuirass, was discovered lying directly in front of the eastern monopteros.

¹⁰³ Tobin, "The monuments of Herodes Atticus," 256-57.

¹⁰⁴ Tobin, "The monuments of Herodes Atticus," 258.

¹⁰⁵ Walker, "The architectural development of Roman nymphaea in Greece," 188

Bol, following Schlieff, believes that the monopteroi were originally fountains.¹⁰⁶ This identification is based on diagonal grooves cut through the back wall of the lower basin, from the bottom corner of the upper basin to the lower corner of the lower basin. They believe that these grooves were for the installation of lead pipes which led water to the monopteroi, which is given more weight by the presence of waterproof cement that still adheres to the interior of the stylobate and the position of these grooves behind the marble revetment. Adler identified them merely as drainage pipes for the upper basin and postulates statues of Zeus and Hera in the structures with no justification.¹⁰⁷ Schlieff argued, however, that shallow bowls were originally placed on the stylobates.¹⁰⁸ Unfortunately, the bowl he postulates was discovered in the Heraion and the diameter of its central hole does not match the groove. Moreover, a second bowl has never been discovered. Bol goes on to argue that Herodes Atticus ordered these fountains be dismantled and the statues discussed above installed into the monopteroi.¹⁰⁹ She interprets these statues as a second representation of Herodes himself, in the toga, and the emperor in the cuirass.¹¹⁰

Walker argues that the monopteroi were always for the housing of statues, but that they were constructed some time after the completion of the Nymphaeum.¹¹¹ She cites

¹⁰⁶ Schlieff & Kunz, *Olympischen Forschungen I*, 53-82; Bol, *Das Statuenprogramm des Herodes-Atticus-Nymphaeums*, 61 n.187.

¹⁰⁷ Adler, *Olympia Ergebnisse II*, 136-138.

¹⁰⁸ Schlieff & Kunz, *Olympischen Forschungen I*, 75-76.

¹⁰⁹ Bol, *Das Statuenprogramm des Herodes-Atticus-Nymphaeums*, 49.

¹¹⁰ The statue of Herodes Atticus was 1.96m high, 0.70m wide, and .54m deep. That of the emperor was 2.11m high, 0.81m wide, and 0.48m deep. These statues may have been erected after Herodes' return from Sirmium, where the emperor absolved him of tyrannical allegations. The Athenian was accused of tyranny by the Quintilii and Claudii families and the people of Athens, for various ostensible reasons, but probably to diminish the power and prestige he wielded in Athens. In 174 C.E., he was forced to defend himself before Marcus Aurelius in Sirmium (Philostr. *V S* 2.560-562). He was apparently so overcome that he wept openly, causing Marcus Aurelius to pass the blame onto some of Herodes' freedmen and to send a letter to the Athenians asking them to forgive Herodes because of all of the good he had done for their city.

¹¹¹ Walker, "The architectural development of Roman nymphaea in Greece," 187-89.

the pieces of masonry wedged behind the monopteroi that covered the marble revetments and the quality of craftsmanship on the columns. She instead credits the installation of these monopteroi to Herodes Atticus' son-in-law Vibullius Hipparchos, husband of Herodes' daughter Elpinike, in the late-Antonine period. Tobin's examination of the wedges indicates that they did not bond with the basin or any other part of the structure, and so therefore could have been added at any time.¹¹²

Tobin reconstructs the monopteroi problem in three phases.¹¹³ Initially, there were no monopteroi. Instead, the original construction of the Nymphaeum consisted of basins with some sort of fountains on the stylobates, which would account for the waterproof cement and the pipes. During Herodes Atticus' lifetime, the fountains were dismantled and monopteroi were constructed to highlight statues of himself and the emperor. Later, perhaps under Hipparchos (270s C.E.), repairs were made, including the recarving of three statue bases from the upper basin for himself, his wife and their daughter, Athenias. I find this conclusion the most convincing. Buildings in the ancient world, as in the modern world, were constantly in repair and change.

Understandably, the majority of scholarly attention to the Nymphaeum has been paid to its sculptural ornamentation, the inscriptions, and the debates surrounding the monopteroi. It added to a new modern Roman architectural phase that was applied to the sanctuary and its periphery. The large settling basin in front of an aedicular façade was a modern design.¹¹⁴ It would have towered over the nearby Temple of Hera and Metroön, and the statues of the imperial family would have created a conceptual link to the latter temple, now housing other statues of the imperial family.

¹¹² Tobin, "The monuments of Herodes Atticus," 262-63.

¹¹³ Tobin, "The monuments of Herodes Atticus," 264-65.

¹¹⁴ Longfellow, "Roman Fountains in Greek Sanctuaries," 138.

The Nymphaeum likewise stressed connections between the families of the emperor and Herodes Atticus himself, thereby intimating an imperial nature of this monumental dedication, set up by a private individual and his wife, the terminus of an aqueduct finally bringing fresh water to the sanctuary. Hadrian had recently been responsible for the construction of other aqueducts and fountains in Greece, including in Athens, Eleusis, and Argos.¹¹⁵

The boys of the Athenian's family, however, were clothed in himatia, stressing their position in the elite Hellenic society of the day and the bovine dedication by Regilla was an archaizing feature that stressed the antiquity of the site and Regilla's piety.¹¹⁶ The Nymphaeum's use of sculpture and decoration showed the mixed Greek and Roman nature of Hellenic elites and Herodes Atticus in particular. Like Favorinus, Herodes Atticus could display his Hellenic, specifically Athenian, and Roman identities side by side for a wide audience that visited this Panhellenic sanctuary.

The implications for the sanctuary of having this water source, however decorative and decorated, were huge and have largely been ignored. Throughout antiquity, the harshness of the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia was commented upon.¹¹⁷ The games, which took place in the height of summer, were supposed to be especially grueling because of the flies, the throngs of spectators and athletes, and the lack of drinking water. This was the first systematic effort to pump a large amount of fresh water into the sanctuary, and its aqueduct also made the construction of several Roman baths

¹¹⁵ Brenda Longfellow, "The legacy of Hadrian: Roman monumental fountains in Greece" in *The nature and function of water, baths, bathing, and hygiene from antiquity through the Renaissance*, ed. Cynthia Kosso and Anne Scott (Leiden 2009), 211-32.

¹¹⁶ Longfellow, "Roman Fountains in Greek Sanctuaries," 143.

¹¹⁷ Ael. *VH* 14.18; Diog. Laert. 1.39.

throughout the site feasible, thereby modernizing and Romanizing the space for the visitors and athletes of the sanctuary.

4.2. Kladeos Baths

Roman baths unsurprisingly became much more popular and prevalent throughout the Roman period, and the aqueduct's water allowed for the construction and maintenance of several of the baths that lined the perimeter of the sanctuary of Zeus. The Classical sanctuary at Olympia had fifth century Greek baths built along the bank of the Kladeos River, which consisted of hip baths and a large *piscina* (figure 4.10). They were last refurbished in about 100 B.C.E., and remained in use until the Kladeos Baths were built over them in the second century C.E.¹¹⁸

The Kladeos Baths were excavated in 1876-1881, with a final short campaign in 1940. The river washed away much of the north and west sides of the baths between this time. The initial publication in 1940-41 was further frustrated by the largely uninformative original excavation reports. Furthermore, the dimensions and notes recorded by the original excavator, Fr. Graeber, could not be found.¹¹⁹ Hans Schleif, however, reconstructed the lost portion of the bath and published a thorough description of the different rooms, their mosaics, and the heating systems used in the building.¹²⁰

The baths were entered from the south, through a long pathway that was formed by the west wing of the Kladeos Baths and a latrine and kiln to the east (figure 4.11). This 8m long pathway led into an atrium with a square basin in the center. The room was decorated with mosaic floors formed by a mixture of white and blue mosaic and marble

¹¹⁸ Andrew Farrington, "The introduction and spread of Roman bathing in Greece" in *Roman baths and bathing*, ed. J. DeLaine and D. E. Johnston (Portsmouth: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 1999), 62. This use of Greek baths until Roman ones are built over them in the second century is a phenomenon we will see in the other sanctuaries discussed in this dissertation.

¹¹⁹ H. Schleif and E. Kunz, *Olympischen Forschungen I*, 57.

¹²⁰ H. Schleif and E. Kunz, *Olympischen Forschungen I*, 57-69.

pieces. The floor was sloped between 13cm to 1m toward the center. The basin itself was 35cm deep and paved with marble slabs. Inside was a drain that led south along the entrance passage and swept through the latrine to the east.

From the atrium, a guest could continue only through a doorway to the west, which led to a room called the Central Hall, or *Mittelsaal*, by Schlieff. The mosaic floor in this room was elaborately decorated with an abstract floral design along the border and another complex design formed by half circles in red, black, purple and white in the center. This room also slopes, but only slightly and towards the atrium. There was a catchment basin inserted into the mosaic floor in the east end of the room, which had an underground channel that ran into the atrium's basin. The channel indicates that the basin was a part of the original construction of the building, but it cut rather rudely into the mosaic floor. The room had no water or bathing facilities, so Schlieff reconstructs an open roof to account for this drainage system.¹²¹ The room seems to have served as some sort of staging area, as there are four doorways that led to the other rooms of the bath from it.

The southeastern room was labeled by Schlieff as the apodyterium, based on its simplicity. It, too, had a drainage system. On the east wall, a drain connected to the pipe from the atrium's basin before making its way to the latrine. Based on this feature, and the lack of a water system in this room, too, Schlieff also reconstructed it without a roof (figure 4.12).¹²²

The western doorway of the *Mittelsaal* led to the frigidarium, which was mostly lost to the Kladeos River. A portion of the mosaic survived, and was decorated with hexagons. The walls had marble panels with pilasters. A basin to the west was excavated

¹²¹ H. Schlieff and E. Kunz, *Olympischen Forschungen I*, 59.

¹²² H. Schlieff and E. Kunz, *Olympischen Forschungen I*, 59.

in 1881, but it had already been washed away by the 1940 reexamination of the bath. Schlieff also reconstructs a second basin to the north based on a short section of wall he discovered to the north of the frigidarium.¹²³

From the frigidarium, the bather could enter the tepidarium to the south. The hypocaust is only preserved in the southeastern corner, but shows that the room was equipped with underfloor heating. Additionally, this, and most of the other heated rooms in the bath, had *tegulae mammatae*, a system of wall heating wherein the reverse of the bricks had a nipple or wart.¹²⁴ When tiled to the walls, the space provided by the wart allowed the heat to rise and spread more rapidly behind the wall.

Even though it is mostly lost, Schlieff restores the caldarium to the east, based on Vitruvius' description of Roman baths.¹²⁵ Again, because of the Kladeos River, only the southeastern part of the room survives, but it is reconstructed with three hot water basins, one each to the north, west, and south.

Finally, the laconium was located between the tepidarium and the apodyterium. It, too, is poorly preserved, because it was reused as a cellar of a Byzantine house. It has an unusual extra room to the south which also has underfloor heating. Here, two tongues reached out from the main room. Six small brick pillars were also built against the south wall. Schlieff suggests that the hypocausts in this room may have been made out of stone, or some other material besides brick, which were robbed out before the excavation.¹²⁶

One of the most interesting features of the Kladeos Baths is that there is a second bath complex connected to the structure. The north side of the building is made up of a

¹²³ H. Schlieff and E. Kunz, *Olympischen Forschungen I*, 61.

¹²⁴ H. Schlieff and E. Kunz, *Olympischen Forschungen I*, 69.

¹²⁵ Vitr. *De arch.* 5.10; H. Schlieff and E. Kunz, *Olympischen Forschungen I*, 61.

¹²⁶ H. Schlieff and E. Kunz, *Olympischen Forschungen I*, 64.

small Roman bath, so small, in fact, that Schlieff believed that it was for the use of a single individual.¹²⁷ It, too, was accessible from the Mittelsaal. The frigidarium was entered first, which had a bench to the left of the entrance. The floor of this entrance vestibule was decorated with black, four-pointed stars. The room joined to a cold water basin with the similar floor of marble chips as was found in the atrium and apodyterium of the main bath. Schlieff identified the room to the east as the apodyterium. It, too, had a bench, that stretched around the eastern side of the room. From here, the bather would enter the tepidarium, which was equipped with an elaborate mosaic floor that had a stylized floral-star decoration. The eastern third of this small bath was the caldarium. One entered a vestibule with another decorated mosaic floor. From here, one entered the hot bath to the south, which had another marble chip mosaic floor. A small room to the east was filled with the ash and fire from the fires, and so was perhaps a service area.

This earliest Roman bath in Olympia was a relatively large and ornate. Six more were built throughout the course of the Roman history of the site, many more than at any other sanctuary, transforming the bathing infrastructure of the sacred site almost into that of a city.

4.3. Bath to the south of the Leonidaion

The five other baths that surrounded the Altis in the Roman period were relatively typical Roman baths and will be discussed below. First, however, I would like to discuss the latest of the baths, which is located just south of the Leonidaion complex (figure 4.13). In addition to the bath itself, the discovery of storage vessels and remains of cooking in one of the rooms led Sinn to identify the building as one of the *καπηλεῖα* mentioned in inscriptions, which provided visitors with room and board, as well as shops

¹²⁷ H. Schlieff and E. Kunz, *Olympischen Forschungen I*, 64.

and other personal care needs.¹²⁸ The bath would have provided a place to bathe and eat to those people using the Leonidaion or other visitors in hostels and tents brought from home when it was constructed in the late third or early fourth, century.¹²⁹

The complex consists of a row of four rooms, accessed from an eastern doorway or through a courtyard on the north (figure 4.14). The walls of this northern edge of the building are all rectilinear, while the southern walls of the three easternmost rooms are apsidal. Additionally, there are a total of seven windows on the southern side (three in both Room A and B, 1 in Room C, and perhaps others in Room D). The curved walls and windows provided the bath with economical climatic conditions: the warming sunlight could stream through the southern windows and heat the rooms. The bather would move through the space from east to west, traversing from the unheated anteroom A to the heated room B, to bathe in rooms C and D.

There were also further rooms to the north, which were recorded by soundings conducted by Mallwitz in 1980 and 1982. It was found that these walls were bonded with those of the bath, so the building was constructed in one broad phase. These rooms have not been excavated, however, and so their purpose remains unknown.

For its small size and its late date, the building has an exceptionally high level of technical and aesthetic features. The floor mosaics were a highly proficient repeating cross pattern, alternating red and blue. Furthermore, the wall-heating technique is unlike any other hypocaust systems found in Olympia or the ancient world, consisting of a

¹²⁸ David Blackman, "Archaeology in Greece 1996-97," *AR* 43 (1996-97): 47.

¹²⁹ U. Sinn, et.al. "Bericht über das Forschungsprojekt "Olympia während der römischen Kaiserzeit": III. Die Arbeiten im Jahr 1994," *Nikephoros* 8 (1995): 245.

closed system of vertical heating ducts that were built into the walls of Room B (figure 4.15).¹³⁰

The construction of this building in the late third/early fourth century C.E. is further proof against the assumption that the sanctuary of Zeus was in decline during these periods. The necessity to build a seventh bath in the sanctuary in the fourth century, when sanctuaries across the Greek mainland were slipping into decline, shows the continued popularity of Olympia. The model of the Roman sanctuary in decline needs to be reconsidered now that we know such an elaborate infrastructural building, and one with such advanced technology, was constructed and utilized so late in the sanctuary's history.

4.4. Other bath complexes in the sanctuary of Zeus

On the east side of the Altis, just beyond the Echo Hall, a large villa was constructed in the late first century C.E., called the Villa of Nero (figure 4.16).¹³¹ This structure was identified and named from the discovery of a lead water conduit that bore a stamp of Nero Augustus, clearly dating the building to the Neronian period (54-68 C.E.). It was argued that only Nero, who visited the site and competed in the games, would be so audacious as to build a house along the Altis of Zeus.¹³² The villa presumably dates to 67 C.E., when Nero postponed the Olympic Games by two years for his visit to the sanctuary. In contrast to Hadrian, we know that Nero visited the sanctuary, but this structure stood for two or three centuries after his visit, and most certainly continued to

¹³⁰ U. Sinn, et.al., "Bericht über das Forschungsprojekt "Olympia während der römischen Kaiserzeit": III. Die Arbeiten im Jahr 1994," 245.

¹³¹ See Maria Papaioannou, "Domestic architecture of Roman Greece" (PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 2003) for development of villa style houses in Greece.

¹³² Mallwitz, *Olympia und seine Bauten*, 207.

be used as a hostel for important guests and dignitaries who visited the sanctuary through this time.

This is a difficult building to analyze, since many of the foundations were destroyed during the construction of the later East Baths. The main entrance of the building is in the west, towards the sanctuary of Zeus. The entrance led to an atrium, equipped with a basin. Two passageways from the atrium led to a peristyle hall, with a tablinum constructed between the two stairways. This courtyard (14mx17m) was reconstructed with an Ionic colonnade, on the evidence of the remaining stylobate and two column bases that were discovered *in situ*.¹³³ There was a waterway one meter wide inside the peristyle that may have surrounded a garden, made accessible by stone walkways on the north and south sides. In the southern part of the structure was another bath. More large rooms were to the east and north, but their purpose is unknown.

This villa stood until the late second or early third century C.E., when the East Baths were built on top of it (figure 4.17). The East Baths were the largest bath complex on the site, expanding all the way to the stadium embankment wall and thirty meters further east than the Villa of Nero. Its expansion to the south, however, was halted by a naiskos of the goddess Artemis and perhaps the road leading to the hippodrome. The main entrance of these baths projected from the building and led to an anteroom from which visitors could go to one of two baths, either to the north or east. The eastern baths were more ornate and have a distinctive octagonal tepidarium, called the Octagon. The frigidarium was to the north (O20) and was covered by a cross vault. The tepidarium (O1) was to the east, reached through a small corridor. It was a rotunda, the dome of

¹³³ Full report on so-called Villa of Nero and East Baths, see Helmut Kyrieleis in E. Kunze, et.al., *Bericht über die Ausgrabungen in Olympia* 9 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1994); A. Mallwitz, *Bericht über die Ausgrabungen in Olympia*, 274-76.

which still survives. There were ornate mosaic floors, such as one that may have depicted Poseidon and Amphitrite in a chariot. As in the Villa of Nero, there was a garden courtyard to the north, with more rooms to the east and terraces on the west and north.

Another bath complex was located to the southwest of the sanctuary, to the west of the South Hall. The South Baths may have been constructed in the third century C.E., though most of the surviving walls date to renovations from the Diocletian period.¹³⁴ A bather would enter from the west. There were three barrel-vaulted rooms that would have been heated. The middle one had no pools, and so was probably the tepidarium. There was a large latrine associated with them.

The hydraulic infrastructure installed at the sanctuary of Zeus in the Roman period was quite extensive. These baths were not built at once, but were put up gradually to accommodate more and more patrons from the second century through the fourth century C.E. By the time the sanctuary went out of use, seven baths stretched around the perimeter of the Altis. This is in contrast to either Delphi or Isthmia, which, as we shall see, each had only two: one elaborate and one small. The sheer number of bathing structures on the site was more in keeping with a good sized city showing the popularity of the Olympic Games, and perhaps the importance of tourism outside of the games, as well. In the pre-Roman periods of the sanctuary use, the site had been quite dry. These baths were made possible by the aqueduct constructed by the Athenian orator Herodes Atticus. While the fabulous sculpture that decorated this monument has often been commented on, the Nymphaeum was a fountain for water brought to the sanctuary by an aqueduct financed by that patron. This was an extraordinary gift to the sanctuary, but one at home in the Roman period. The baths and aqueduct are an interesting contrast to the

¹³⁴ Mallwitz, *Olympia und seine Bauten*, 244-46

traditionalism that the bureaucracy of the games held on to. Even as the Olympic Games were held in great esteem for their antiquity, the sanctuary space itself was modernized for the new cosmopolitan audience of the Roman Empire, including the emperors, Roman citizens, and professional athletes, who were now attending the games.

5. Hostels in the sanctuary of Zeus

One of the major areas excavated by the “Olympia während der römischen Kaiserzeit” project was the area north of the Prytaneion and west of the Hill of Kronos. They discovered that after the Kladeos River was diverted in the early seventh century B.C.E., this area was consistently used as a campsite by visitors and athletes for several centuries.¹³⁵ Evidence of tents and shelters, cooking sites, and wells, which contained vessels and lamps, many animal bones, as well as other food remains, was found. Ancient sources inform us that wealthy visitors to the sanctuary would bring elaborate tents and accouterments to ease their own discomfort and to host acquaintances through the course of the week-long festival.¹³⁶ In the Neronian period, a structure was built in this area and featured an attached bath. While the sheer number of spectators and athletes always required that such tents were brought and assembled for the Olympic Games, in the course of the Hellenistic and Roman periods, permanent structures were set up at the sanctuary to accommodate important and wealthy persons, such as hostels to the south of the Kladeos Bath and the so-called Villa of Nero, which was probably used to house prestigious visitors after the emperor’s visit to the sanctuary. I will be devoting my attention in this section to the newly excavated area near the prytaneion and the

¹³⁵ Hector W. Catling, "Archaeology in Greece 1987-88," *AR* 34 (1987-88): 40.

¹³⁶ Cf. Eur. *Ion* 1132ff, Plut. *Vit. Alc.* 14

Leonidaion, originally built in the fourth century B.C.E. but remodeled in the Roman imperial periods, as models of hostels in the sanctuary space.

5.1. Leonidaion

The Leonidaion, located outside of the temenos in the south-western area of the sanctuary, was first excavated by the German Archaeological Institute in 1875, but only the northern half of the structure was cleared at that time. The rest of the building was unearthed by Mallwitz between the years 1954 and 1956 (figure 4.1). Pausanias describes its location as south of the workshop of Pheidias and along the processional route leading into the Altis and gives the etymology of its name as a dedication by a local man, Leonidas.¹³⁷ An inscription with this man's name was discovered built into a nearby Byzantine wall.¹³⁸

According to Pausanias, the Leonidaion was used in his time as a dwelling for the Roman governors of Greece.¹³⁹ A plan of this Roman phase was not presented until Mallwitz' 1972 guidebook *Olympia und seine Bauten*, and the Roman phase of the construction was otherwise largely overlooked until recently (figure 4.18).¹⁴⁰ Because of a lack of strong chronological evidence, it had been assumed that the Roman renovations of the Leonidaion dated to the Emperor Hadrian's visit to the sanctuary, largely based on a comparison between the gardens in the Leonidaion and those at Hadrian's villa at Tivoli and a desire to see the philhellenic emperor's munificence at Olympia, as it was in other

¹³⁷ Paus 5.15.2.

¹³⁸ Iv.O. 651.

¹³⁹ Paus. 5.15.2.

¹⁴⁰ Mallwitz, *Olympia und seine Bauten*, 252-54; S. Specht, "Ein Stück Rom in Griechenland: Der Kaiserzeitliche Umbau des Leonidaion in Olympia" in *Griechenland in der Kaiserzeit: Neue Funde und Forschungen zu Skulptur, Architektur und Topographie*, ed. Christoph Reusser (Zurich: Institut für Klassische Archäologie der Universität Bern, 2001), 33-41.

prominent sanctuaries and cities in Achaëa and Asia Minor.¹⁴¹ As we have seen, however, there is little concrete evidence that the emperor actually travelled to Olympia during his stays in Greece and, in fact, he symbolically demoted the Olympic Games with his creation of the Panhellenion.

The building, like so much of Olympia, was originally excavated and examined for its Greek, rather than its Roman era, history. One of the largest structures on the site, it was originally built in the fourth century B.C.E. and was a hostel for important visitors to the sanctuary. The west side was divided into six dining rooms, each with a porch at the entrance. The other three sides are subdivided into more and smaller dining rooms. The exterior was surrounded by an Ionic colonnade. The entrances to the structure, on the north and south, led into the interior courtyard with Doric columns and from which entrance to all of the other rooms was gained.

The exterior Ionic colonnade and the interior Doric portico of the Leonidaion were some of the only features that were not changed in the Roman period;¹⁴² the rest of the structure was drastically reconstructed. The exterior Greek walls were torn down to their foundations or orthostates blocks and fewer, but more open, rooms were constructed over them. Even the foundations of the interior walls of the west wing were removed and filled in with mortar and broken rocks. New Roman brickwork rose from the Greek foundations throughout the structure. Only the North and South entrances (1, 19) and Room 23 remained relatively unaltered, although their entrances were widened.

Two main halls, Rooms 10 and 24, were located in the center of the eastern and western corridors, both opening onto the central courtyard. The western room, which

¹⁴¹ Mallwitz, *Olympia und seine Bauten*, 252.

¹⁴² The date of this building is controversial and difficult to determine and will be discussed in full below.

united two of the Greek rooms and their porches, was the larger and was framed by a hall on three sides. Mallwitz even goes so far as to suggest that this grand room was for Hadrian and Antoninus Pius.¹⁴³

Overall, the new Roman layout of the Leonidaion was much more airy and light than its Greek counterpart. Most of the rooms opened onto the central courtyard, the exterior, or basins. These basins were located in the northern, eastern, and western corridors of the Leonidaion, complete with colonnades and water basins draining through clay pipes (Rooms 8, 17, 21, 25).¹⁴⁴ These units were not uniform. The northwestern basin (21) was rectangular rather than square and had two more columns in its colonnade. The two northern units (17, 21) each had two rooms opening off of their basins, one towards the interior and one on the exterior with a small anteroom. The southeastern basin (8) only had one subsidiary room, unequipped with a porch, while the southwestern (25) had a large porch that led to the basin and one large room to its south. All of these subsidiary rooms have corridors beside them.

Long passageways dominate the eastern and southern sides (4, 9, 11, 30), leading directly from the exterior of the Leonidaion to the courtyard. One passageway leads to the porch of the southwestern basin (27). There are also a series of six groups of smaller rooms on the south and east sides (Rooms 2-3, 5-6, 12-13, 14-15, 28-29, 31-32), consisting of two units, one opening onto the courtyard and one onto the exterior colonnade. In some groups (2-3, 12-13, 14-15, and 31-32), the larger room opened onto the interior, but for the others, the larger room opened to the exterior. There is no archaeological evidence to suggest that doorways connected the rooms. Stefan Specht

¹⁴³ Mallwitz, *Olympia und seine Bauten*, 252.

¹⁴⁴ Specht, "Ein Stück Rom in Griechenland," 34.

makes a few suggestions as to the purpose of these rooms, either for slaves, or, citing the Domus Aurea in Rome, he suggests that they may have been small dining or sleeping rooms.¹⁴⁵

The courtyard consisted of gardens accented by various water features. An inaccessible, circular island with a fountain in the center was in the middle of the courtyard. It was surrounded by a water channel, which, in turn, was surrounded by another island garden with two brick pedestals in each corner that would have supported statues. Another waterway surrounded this garden, following the concave and convex angles of its exterior edge. Brick bridges on the north and south sides provided access to this peripheral garden. The whole complex was surrounded by a Doric colonnade that was also a feature of the Hellenistic Leonidaion.

The overall outward appearance of the Leonidaion, therefore, remained relatively unchanged in the Roman period. The interior, however, had fewer, but more spacious rooms than the Hellenistic plan, with many small, self contained suites. The courtyard garden would have been magnificently designed with statues and various plants, like courtyard villa architecture found throughout the Roman Empire.

This analysis requires a reassessment of Pausanias' identification of the Leonidaion as the Roman governors' residence. The majority of rooms have direct access from either the courtyard or the exterior of the structure, with a few small porches separating rooms. I am hesitant to believe that the Roman governors' of Greece would require a permanent residence at the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia. While it was a very important sanctuary, it was, after all, controlled by a minor city and located in a remote part of the province of Achaëa. It is likely that they did use the structure during festivals

¹⁴⁵ Specht, "Ein Stück Rom in Griechenland," 36.

and during inspection tours of the province, but the building probably had multiple functions. Besides the governors, it was probably used by other wealthy and important people for public feasting and hosting during the Olympic festival and other events and celebrations at the sanctuary.

The Roman Leonidaion has counterparts in Roman villa architecture, most notably in the addition of the basins and ornamental garden surrounded by a peristyle. Specht draws further parallels to Roman domestic architecture and suggests that the rooms that open up from the basins, in addition to the largest rooms, 10 and 24, could be dining rooms, such as those that join to atria and peristyles in Roman villas, though, of course, it is difficult to assign specific functions to rooms without thorough artifactual evidence.¹⁴⁶ The columnar division of the rooms would have created framed vistas of the gardens and atria. The Leonidaion does not correspond to all aspects of Roman domestic architecture. Rather, the same types of rooms are presented, repeated over and over. This redundancy of space is probably an indication that the Leonidaion was used as a hosting facility for prominent individuals who travelled to the Olympic Games.

The Leonidaion also has comparanda with imperial palace architecture. As stated above, the Leonidaion was previously credited to Hadrian, partially based on the gardens' similarity to his villa at Tivoli. Specht points out, however, that the curved floor plan of the water feature has its closest parallels to the Domus Aurea and the Domus Augustana.¹⁴⁷ The Domus Flavia, built under Domitian, also featured a garden like that of the Leonidaion with the space being dissolved into small shapes.

¹⁴⁶ Specht, "Ein Stück Rom in Griechenland," 35.

¹⁴⁷ S. Specht in Sinn, et.al., "Bericht über das Forschungsprojekt "Olympia während der römischen Kaiserzeit und in der Spätantike" v. die Arbeiten im Jahr 1995," 212.

Therefore, the closest parallels to the Roman Leonidaion come from first century C.E. villa architecture and second century imperial palaces. Specht suggests that an Italian may have been responsible for the renovations, based on his, or his architect's, familiarity with villa and palatial architecture. He even goes so far as to tentatively suggest that it could have been an imperial dedication, again because of these elements.¹⁴⁸ It is tempting to give it a Flavian date, based on other constructions nearby that will be discussed below. A more secure date is impossible to suggest, however, because no datable material associated with the structure to substantiate this date has been published.

The Leonidaion seems to be made up of many public rooms for dining and socializing, while other elements of domestic architecture, such as bedrooms, kitchens, and bathrooms, are absent. The building, therefore, seems to have served the sanctuary as a meeting place for the Roman governors, and other important visitors, to meet and host people in sumptuous comfort. It is interesting and important to note that according to this interpretation, while the layout of the Leonidaion changed dramatically in the Roman period, the *function* did not. As will be shown for many spaces and places throughout the sanctuary of Zeus, there was a strong continuity in function throughout the Roman imperial period, even though the structures were modernized in order to be more appropriate for a Roman model of use.

5.2. Peristyle building north of the prytaneion

This building was one of the first excavated, from 1987-1991, in the German Archaeological Institute's recent project to examine the Roman imperial phases of the

¹⁴⁸ S. Specht in Sinn, et.al., "Bericht über das Forschungsprojekt "Olympia während der römischen Kaiserzeit und in der Spätantike" v. die Arbeiten im Jahr 1995," 215.

sanctuary (figure 4.19).¹⁴⁹ This establishment was built between the Gymnasium and the Hill of Kronos, an area which had been used as a campsite for pilgrims and athletes since the seventh century. It remained a campground for the sanctuary's visitors until the Neronian period, between 50-100 C.E., when a building was constructed measuring 19x19m with a peristyle on the east side. Directly after its first brief use, the building was enlarged by the insertion of a large mosaic. Further alterations were made in the mid-second century C.E. with a series of rooms decorated with large mosaics and slabbed floors surrounding a colonnaded atrium with a pool.

A bath was added to the east of the complex, which included three heated rooms and a praefurnium. The preliminary reports hint at a complex series of repairs and alterations in the heating and water elements, which show the maintenance and on-going modernization of baths throughout the Roman imperial periods, but specifics are not published. The north wing was separated from the atrium at an unknown date. Shallow basins interconnected by pipes and surrounded by water channels were constructed.

The excavators identify it as a *καπηλεῖον*, a food pavilion, with an attached bath.¹⁵⁰ So, this area between the Hill of Kronos and the Gymnasium continued to be used as a place for feasting and drinking, as it had since the seventh century B.C.E., indicating a continuity of use and organization of this part of the sanctuary through the Roman period, but the structure was changed from ephemeral to permanent architecture.

The building went out of use in about 300 C.E., but was reused in the Byzantine settlement as a wine press, and then as a factory for the production of North African style

¹⁴⁹ See H. Kyrieleis, *Bericht über die Ausgrabungen in Olympia*, Volume 12 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2003) for full excavation report.

¹⁵⁰ E. B. French, "Archaeology in Greece 1991-92," *AR* 38 (1991-92): 24.

lamps. This date of initial destruction is significant because it also shows that the bath was still in use decades after the postulated Herulian invasion of 267 C.E.

An overarching similarity of all of the spaces discussed in this section is a continuity of use of space from the Classical into the Roman period. New structures were built and the Leonidaion was massively refurbished, but spaces that had been used for hosting and feasting continued to be used as such. This matches the conservatism discussed in the organizational framework of the games, as things continued in a traditional manner at Olympia, though in a modernized fashion.

6. Southwest Building

The last monument I wish to discuss in this chapter is a large building to the south of the Leonidaion. It was originally identified as a bath because of the barrel vaults that spanned three of its large rooms, a *piscina*, and evidence of a hypocaust. Based on its close proximity to the Leonidaion, it was considered an annex to that structure, even though it does not parallel the plans of any known baths. It was originally excavated by Mallwitz in 1985 for its Byzantine burials, but had been largely ignored until Sinn's "Olympia während der römischen Kaiserzeit" project.¹⁵¹ It consists of a large main hall, with the *piscina*, and corresponding halls to the east (Room 3) and west (Room 1) (figure 4.7). The space was quite lavishly decorated with marble and statues, but the floors of these two halls were composed of tamped down clay. In addition, the bronze plaque

¹⁵¹ Unfortunately, it has not been fully published. For preliminary reports, see U. Sinn, "Bericht über das Forschungsprojekt "Olympia während der römischen Kaiserzeit": I. Die Arbeiten von 1987-1992," *Nikephoros* 5 (1992): 75-84; U. Sinn, G. Landstätter and A. Martin, "Bericht über das Forschungsprojekt "Olympia während der römischen Kaiserzeit" II. Die Arbeiten im Jahr 1993," *Nikephoros* 6 (1993): 153-8; U. Sinn, G. Landstätter, A. Martin, T. Völling, J. Ebert and M. Mathea-Förtsch, "Bericht über das Forschungsprojekt "Olympia während der römischen Kaiserzeit": III. Die Arbeiten im Jahr 1994," *Nikephoros* 7 (1994): 229-50; U. Sinn, G. Landstätter, A. Mallwitz, T. Völling, R. Bol, A. Kankeleit, M. Mathea-Förtsch and M. Wörrle, "Bericht über das Forschungsprojekt "Olympia während der römischen Kaiserzeit" IV. Die Arbeiten im Jahr 1995," *Nikephoros* 8 (1995): 161-82..

discussed above was discovered in a drain. Recent excavations have shown that this building was neither a bath nor a hostel, but the rooms with clay floors were meant for athletic training. This led Ulrich Sinn to identify this building as a clubhouse for members of the athletes' guild. While this is an intriguing proposition, I am hesitant to accept this identification at face value.

The building was constructed in two phases, both in the first century C.E. It was begun in the Neronian period, but construction at that time did not proceed beyond the foundations. This date is evidenced by pottery discovered in these foundations; a well-preserved piece of the so-called Aucissa Painter and an Ephesian red-on-white light fragment and a fragment of South Gaulish Sigillata, were found.¹⁵² This early first century construction was of high quality with some exceptionally worked *opus mixtum*. Its superior craftsmanship suggested to Sinn that it was executed by a workshop from Rome itself and that this building was an imperial benefaction of Nero. While this was a high investment building, there is nothing beyond the workmanship to actually link it to the emperor. The work has an irregular upper edge, which may be a sign of the laborers' abrupt departure from the sanctuary, leaving the building incomplete.

It was finished in a second phase, but on a different plan, as early as 100 C.E., based on fragments of Sigillata plate in the foundations of Room 4 from a well-known workshop of Octavius Salutaris, which was active during the time of Domitian.¹⁵³ A sigillata cup with the potter's stamp that read AUGUSTUS SALUTARIS was also

¹⁵² U. Sinn, G. Landstätter and A. Martin, "Bericht über das Forschungsprojekt "Olympia während der römischen Kaiserzeit" II. Die Arbeiten im Jahr 1993," 155.

¹⁵³ U. Sinn, et.al., "Bericht über das Forschungsprojekt "Olympia während der römischen Kaiserzeit" IV. Die Arbeiten im Jahr 1995," 162.

discovered in the foundations of the fill of the east wing. This workshop is known to have been producing pottery near Rome in the late first century C.E.¹⁵⁴

This date was confirmed by seven marble fragments of two identical inscriptions, four centimeter thick, which name the emperor Domitian as the dedicator (figure 4.20).¹⁵⁵

These inscriptions read:

[Imp Caes]ar Divi Vespasian[i] F Dom[itianus Aug]

[Ge]rma[ni]cus pontif [ma]x tr[ib pot III]

I[mp] VI · [P · P · Cos · X ·]

[.....]IOI [.....]

Because of the use of the emperor's 6th Imperial Acclamation, the inscription can be dated to 84 C.E., agreeing with the general stratigraphy of the second phase.

The opposite side of the inscriptions, however, is not blank, but was decorated with ornate architectural ornamentation (figure 4.21). Because the slabs are only about four centimeters thick, it is not likely that both sides were built into the structure to be seen simultaneously. At some time after its carving, then, the inscription commemorating Domitian's role in the construction were removed, architectural ornament was added, and they were reinserted in reverse, with the emperor's name hidden. It was a deliberate erasure of the emperor's benefaction to the sanctuary at Olympia. This points to an even tighter construction date for the building, based on Domitian's *damnatio memoriae* in 96 C.E.

The Flavians, then, completed this building program that was begun during the Neronian period, maybe by the benefactions of Nero himself, as evidenced by the high

¹⁵⁴ Richard Allen Tomlinson, "Archaeology in Greece 1995-96," *AR* 42 (1995-96): 17.

¹⁵⁵ M. Wörrle in Sinn, et.al., "Bericht über das Forschungsprojekt "Olympia während der römischen Kaiserzeit" IV. Die Arbeiten im Jahr 1995," 168.

quality of craftsmanship and the possible Roman origin of the workers. Because of the imperial patronage, it is not surprising that the building was a luxurious space. Only fragments of the different ornamental marbles have been found, but the system of iron clasps that were used to fasten them to the walls are almost completely preserved in the North Hall. Similarly, large parts of the floor were torn out when the building was abandoned, but enough fragments remain to prove that the floor of this room was also decorated with different colored marbles. Statue niches and bases for further decorations are found throughout the complex. The building was certainly sumptuous.

The Southwest Building was entered by the north main hall, which provided access to the other rooms in the complex. The south wall of the hall still rises about eight meters above the floor, to its full height. At an unknown later period, hypocaust heat was installed in the room, which included the installation of a bench running against the wall which was covered by further marble slabs. This is what led the early excavators to assume that this building was a bath, but it appears that the hypocaust was not associated with any hydraulic infrastructure, but just to heat the room, indicating that this building may have been used not only in the summer, when the Olympic Games were taking place and a heated room would be unnecessary, but in cooler months, as well.

There were two grand rooms that opened onto the north hall. The West Hall (Room 1) has a depth of 7.5m and width of 10.0m. The doorway is quite wide, nearly 3m, providing an impressive view from the North Hall of its marble clad façade and three statue niches. A pair of columns stood at the entrance. A hypocaust was also installed in this room during the later remodeling of the site. The East Hall (Room 3) is also ten meters wide, but ten meters deep, and corresponds closely to the West Hall. It has a

similarly wide doorway opening onto the North Hall. In contrast to Room 1, however, it also had a base stand for an internal roof support.

Sinn identifies the Southwest Building as an Athletes' Guild Clubhouse for many reasons, the first of which is the unusual floors in the East and West Halls. Rather than a marble floor, like in the North Hall, the rooms have clay floors. The building is luxuriously appointed with marble throughout, including the walls of the East and West Halls; it seems that there must have been a particular reason for fashioning these rooms in this way. Sinn interprets these rooms as a training area, or *cremona*, such as can be seen in palaestrae.

There are further rooms (Rooms 4 and 5) on the east side of the Southwest Building that date to the late first century C.E.¹⁵⁶ They must belong to the Flavian phase of construction because the brick course of the annex is bonded into the masonry of the main structure and late first century C.E. sherds were found in the foundations. On the east side of the room, there is a water reservoir, also original to the structure, that measures three meters deep, but only 80cm wide, into which water was pumped by three water conduits. Because of the shape and position of the tank and the corroborating evidence of cooking wares at the bottom of the reservoir, Sinn suggests that it was used for drinking and food preparation, rather than bathing or storage.¹⁵⁷ The pottery dates uniformly to the mid-second century C.E., which is presumably when the basin went out of use. This is particularly interesting in terms of the infrastructural workings of the site, because this coincides with the construction of Herodes Atticus' Nymphaeum. Perhaps the construction of this water supply made the use of this basin unnecessary.

¹⁵⁶ There is little published about the other rooms of the complex. An annex was constructed to the east of the structure and a South Hall had basins heated by individual praefurnium.

¹⁵⁷ French, "Archaeology in Greece 1991-92," 28-29.

Rooms 4 and 5 both have their doorways to the exterior of the structure and do not provide access to the rest of the building. This probably means that they were meant for general use by the sanctuary visitors, as opposed to the grandiose facilities in the interior of the Southwest Building. Room 4 appears to be a latrine, while the use of Room 5 remains unknown. Sinn mentions a narrow space between the latrine and the main building that was probably a kitchen.¹⁵⁸ It was obscured by later use, but there was a lot of cookware found inside.

It would only make sense that there was a professional guild of athletes at Olympia, home of the Olympic Games. As we have seen, however, there is not strong evidence to support this. The bronze plaque was found plugging a drain, not on display. I have already argued above that there was no permanent athletic guild at Olympia, but rather members of the Panmediterranean victors' guild would form a group when they were present at Olympia in order to make dedications at this, the most important of athletic festivals. Furthermore, athletic guilds had strong religious associations, particularly with the hero Hercules, and there is no evidence of a shrine or other such religious space within this building. While the clay floors of this structure do indicate that there was probably some athletic practice going on inside this ornate complex, there is not sufficient evidence to link this specifically to an athletic guild. I would instead see this space as an iteration of a monumental and elaborately decorated gathering and practice space, such as those found in bath complexes in the Greek East. It is a unique construction, but Olympia was unique, too, in the number of bath complexes that surrounded its site and the role that it played in the athletic culture of the Greek East.

¹⁵⁸ Sinn, et.al., "Bericht über das Forschungsprojekt "Olympia während der römischen Kaiserzeit" IV. Die Arbeiten im Jahr 1995," 162.

7. Conclusions

The Olympic Games celebrated at the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia were the preeminent athletic festival in the ancient Greek world, and this remained the case throughout the Roman period. While the sanctuary suffered a series of hardships in the Republican era, it was assisted by imperial and local euergetism throughout the Roman period and into the fourth century C.E. Olympia benefited from a florescence of activity under the Julio-Claudians, with repairs undertaken by Agrippa and Herod the Great. During the Augustan period, an inscription on the Metroön honored Augustus and his portrait, and, later, portraits of other members of the imperial family, were placed inside. Furthermore, the arch at the southeastern entrance to the sanctuary was dedicated in this time, which shifted the visual focus of the visitor to the sanctuary to this old temple with new statues of the emperor.

The emperor Nero, long held as a scourge to the sanctuary because of his audacity in changing the Olympic schedule and competing in the games, initiated a great spurt of building activity. He may have been responsible for the ground-breaking of the Southwest Building, and the so-called Villa of Nero and the Peristyle Building north of the Prytaneion were also both constructed during his tenure.

The emperor Hadrian, in contrast, long celebrated as the most philhellenic of all of the emperors, actually ignored the sanctuary and favored the city of Athens and his new Panhellenion festival over the Olympic Games. He never visited the site and did not initiate the construction of any building projects, as opposed to his euergetism throughout the rest of Greece. During the second century, it was instead up to local aristocrats, such

as Herodes Atticus, to commission elaborate structures in an attempt to link themselves to their own Classical Greek past.

Furthermore, the sanctuary continued to stay in use and be visited into the late fourth century C.E. Baths south of the Leonidaion were constructed in the early part of the fourth century and the bronze plaque found in the drain of the Southwest Building proves that the games were still being celebrated much longer than previously supposed.

The celebration of the games was under the auspices of the city of Elis, which maintained autonomy throughout the Roman Empire to acquire most of the priests and other officials needed for the administration of the games from their own citizen body. The city continued to host a month-long training period in the city and the procession from Elis to the sanctuary at the beginning of the festival period. Continuity is also demonstrated by the use of gathering space. Areas that had been used as hostels or for banqueting continued to be used as such through the Roman periods, such as the Leonidaion and the area to the north of the prytaneion, and, furthermore, the Kladeos Baths, too, were constructed over previous Greek baths.

The baths, hostels, and shops that were constructed around the sanctuary throughout the Roman periods prove continued vibrancy at the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia. The sanctuary remained autonomous, but by partaking in the festival and the games there, the spectators and participants could link themselves to the classical Greeks who had also competed and sacrificed there. The conservatism of the sanctuary was matched by its continued prestige. Portraits of the imperial family inserted into the Classical temple of the mother of the gods linked them to this Classical past. The Nymphaeum, and aqueduct, financed by Herodes Atticus and his wife Regilla, was an

elaborate dedication in the middle of the sanctuary, towering over the treasuries that had been dedicated by entire city-states in centuries past. Pausanias' extensive description of the sanctuary emphasized the important place this sanctuary had in the hearts and minds of the people living in the Mediterranean of his day, and the role the games played is shown in their preeminent placement on victorious athletes' victory monuments. The Olympic Games continued to be an important Hellenic celebration throughout the Roman imperial period, and the sanctuary and its festival continued to be used to link and legitimate oneself to the past, present, and future.

Chapter 5:

The sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi: Pythian Panhellenism

1. Introduction

Delphi was the site of both the Pythian Games and the oracle of Apollo and so was one of the most important sanctuaries in the ancient Greek world (figure 5.1). Additionally, strengthened by its location at the “center” of the Greek world and its control by an Amphiktyony of Greek poleis, Delphi was an active religious and political center from the seventh century B.C.E. onward. Through its oracle, Delphi had played an effective role in both political disputes and Greek colonization, and, every four years, it was the site of one of the four original periodic games. Pilgrims came to consult the oracle, watch and compete in the Pythian Games, and also dedicate treasuries, stoas and other objects along the dramatic expanse of the Sacred Way leading up to the temple terrace.

As such, like Olympia, the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi was a nucleus of Hellenic identity and a necessary case study in the Roman bureaucratic and infrastructural changes to Greek cult spaces. In the Roman period, the sanctuary continued to be used as a meeting place for the cities of Greece, but on a reduced scale from previous centuries. The oracle was still consulted, but the loss of the political

independence of the Greek city-states diminished its relevance.¹ It was no longer used by Greeks to gain sanction for wars, but, as a famous sanctuary and the home of both the Pythia and the Pythian Games, Delphi continued to be visited by throngs of spectators and athletes seeking to connect to the classical Greek past and to proclaim their Hellenic identity.

As at Olympia, Augustus and other Roman emperors used the games at Delphi, and specifically the Amphiktyonic body that controlled them, to reinforce a sense of ideal philhellenism and Panhellenic unity among the cities of Achaea. Augustus dramatically changed the composition of the league by giving a majority of seats to Nikopolis, thereby providing it with a false antiquity and strong influence over the sanctuary and its games. He also introduced two new offices, the agonothete and epimelete, which were dominated by Nikopolitans in the Augustan period. These modifications, however, effectively took away much of the relevant authority, both organizational and fiscal, from the league as these officials divided up the responsibilities of managing the sanctuary and the games. Through these modifications, Augustus managed both to buttress a sense of panhellenism and provincial unity within the province of Achaea through continued participation among various, previously independent, Greek cities, while also stripping the league of much of its traditional power. Nero also rearranged the power structure of the league by giving the majority of power to one of the traditional leaders of the league, Thessaly. By the time of Pausanias, however, the city of Nikopolis and the regions of Macedonia and Thessaly held an equal control in the organization.

¹ Michael Arnush, "Pilgrimage to the oracle of Apollo at Delphi: Patterns of public and private consultation" in *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman & early Christian antiquity: seeing the gods*, ed. J. Elsner and I. Rutherford (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 98.

There were fewer visible architectural modifications to the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi in the Roman period than at Olympia. Herodes Atticus renovated the stadium and built an arch and an exedra with statues of himself and his family. Two Roman baths were installed, including one on the site of the Hellenistic gymnasium and an unusual entranceway to the sanctuary was constructed in the fourth century C.E. Evidence of other Roman period modifications to the sanctuary is slight. An inscription indicates that Domitian financed repairs to the Temple of Apollo, but there is not sufficient archaeological evidence to determine the extent of these changes. As we have seen, this emperor was active in athletic culture in the Empire: he was also responsible for the benefaction of the Southwest Building at Olympia and instituted the Capitoline Games. As at Olympia, there were few major modifications within the temenos of the god, but fewer investigations outside of the sanctuary restrict the picture of Roman Delphi.

Professional athletes at Delphi dedicated statues at the site and victory inscriptions have been found throughout the empire on which athletes boast of their Pythian victories. Contestants also painted prayers asking for the gods' help in their athletic endeavors on the rear wall of the practice track, or *xystos*, in the gymnasium. This, and an inscription that records contracts commissioning workers to prepare the sanctuary for the games, give glimpses to the exciting and bustling arena that Delphi became during the celebration of this festival.

1.1. History of scholarship

The site of Delphi was excavated by the French Archaeological School. A modern village had been built over the site of the sanctuary, which was moved to the west of the site after an earthquake in 1893. Systematic excavations were undertaken until 1935, the

results of which have been published in the series *Fouilles de Delphes*, as well as in individual articles in the *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique*. The majority of excavations have been confined to three areas: the temenos of Apollo, the Marmaria sanctuary, and the gymnasium complex (figure 5.2). In contrast to Olympia, the area outside of the temenoi has remained largely unexplored.² On the model of Olympia and Isthmia, we may assume that there were additional infrastructural buildings beyond the temenos of the god, but proof of this will require further excavation at the site.

1.2. History of Roman Delphi

Like Olympia, the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi was sacked by the general Sulla and Mummius ornamented the temple after the Achaean War.³ Unlike Olympia, however, whose mother-city Elis was a member of the Achaean League, Delphi did not play a major role in the political negotiations with Rome in the late Hellenistic period. The city of Delphi has unfortunately never been excavated, so there is little to say about its makeup in the Roman imperial period. The city of Delphi held some power in the Amphiktyonic League and used the sanctuary as its own political meeting ground, like Elis used Olympia. Plutarch refers to the ancient bouleuterion in the sanctuary near the Rock of the Sibyl, which has been tentatively identified as a badly damaged structure between the Treasury of the Athenians and this rock (figure 5.3, *221).⁴ All that remains are tuff foundations restored with cement, but it is an unusual shape and small size for a council house. Fragments of inscriptions that relate to political matters of the Delphi state were also discovered in the precinct of Dionysus Sphaleotas (figure 5.1) and the theater

² An interesting future project may be to compile a thorough state plan of the site and see which buildings have yet to be identified and work towards that goal.

³ Plut. *Vit. Sull.* 12.4-6; Polyb. 39.17.

⁴ Plut. *De pyth., or.* 9; M. Homolle, "Nouvelles et correspondance," *BCH* 18 (1894): 184; Rougemont in *RA* (1980): 102.

of the sanctuary was also used as a meeting place for the Delphi assembly during the Roman period.⁵

Direct imperial interventions at the sanctuary, however, are better known, and will be thoroughly dealt with through the course of the chapter as they relate to either the epigraphic evidence of the Amphiktyonic League or individual monuments in the sanctuary. Augustus altered the make-up of the league, as he gave the majority of power of this institution to his city of Nikopolis. After him, Nero redistributed Amphiktyonic votes so that Thessaly now had the majority. Both Domitian and Hadrian, however, intervened in disputes between Thessaly and the city of Delphi, generally favoring Delphi and a maintenance of the traditional ways of running the Pythian Games and sanctuary. Beyond these judicial rulings, Domitian also left an inscription indicating that he financed repairs to the Temple of Apollo. Hadrian visited the site twice, between 118-20 and in 125, though, as far as we know, he did not make any architectural additions to it.⁶ It has been argued that Delphi was actually Hadrian's original choice for the site of the Panhellenion cult, where, in 125 C.E. he announced his intention of making a common synhedrion of all of the Greeks.⁷ In actuality, however, the Panhellenion's emphasis on Demeter and the Eleusinian Mysteries indicates that it was probably never the intention

⁵ Helioid. *Aeth.* 4.19; Robert G. A. Weir, *Roman Delphi and its Pythian games*, BAR International Series 1306 (Oxford: John & Erica Hedges, Ltd., 2004), 53.

⁶ Mary T. Boatwright, *Hadrian and the cities of the Roman empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 58.

⁷ D. Willers, *Hadrians panhellenisches Programm. Archäologische Beiträge zur Neugestaltung Athens durch Hadrian* (Basel: Vereinigung der Freunde Antiker Kuns, 1990), 99-100; James Henry Oliver and Kevin Clinton, *Greek constitutions of early Roman emperors from inscriptions and papyri*, *Memoirs of the American Philosophical Society* 178 (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1989), #75-76; R. Flacelière, "Hadrien et Delphes," *CRAI* 115 (1971): 168-72.

of taking an existing organization and elevating it above the other leagues in the province.⁸

The man most closely related to the Roman sanctuary in the minds of scholars is Plutarch, who was the priest of Apollo at the site for at least thirty years.⁹ He was born in the early forties C.E. in Chaeronea, roughly twenty miles east of Delphi. As an upper class man living in Greece, he would have received the traditional Greek education. He was a Roman citizen and lived in Greece for much of his life, serving various political posts, including, again, the priest of Apollo at Delphi. In fact, the city of Delphi and his native Chaeronea dedicated a portrait bust of him at the site (figure 5.4).¹⁰ He set some of his dialogues within the Pythian sanctuary, describing some monuments but, like Pausanias, frustratingly ignoring most of the Roman period dedications.¹¹

2. Epigraphic evidence for the administration of the Pythian Games

The majority of our evidence for Roman period Delphi and its Pythian Games comes from the expansive amount of epigraphic data discovered throughout the excavations of the site. I will discuss the Augustan reforms, particularly the offices of agonothete and epimelete, and the Augustan changes to the composition of the Amphiktyonic League. I will then discuss the resultant disputes between members of the Amphiktyony in the Neronian, Flavian, and Hadrianic periods. Delphi and its organizational confederation were used and changed in the Roman period.

⁸ P. Sanchez, *L'Amphictionie des Pyles et de Delphes: recherches sur son rôle historique, des origines au IIe siècle de notre ère* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2001), 434-5.

⁹ For summary of Plutarch's life and work, see C. P. Jones, *Plutarch and Rome* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 3-64; Simon Swain, *Hellenism and empire: language, classicism, and power in the Greek world, AD 50-250* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 135-186.

¹⁰ Dittenburger Syll³ 843A

¹¹ Plut. *De. Pyth. or.*; *De. E.*; *De def. or.*

In the Archaic and Classical periods, the jurisdiction of the Pythian Games fell under the control of the Amphiktyonic League, a confederation of city-states throughout Greece.¹² The league had many responsibilities in running the Pythian Games, holding similar responsibilities as the Hellenodikai at the Olympic Games. These included judging the contests, maintaining order in the sanctuary, preparing the facilities needed for the athletic competitions, and repairing or constructing other structures in the sanctuary.¹³

The early origins of the Amphiktyonic League are blurred, as it is wrapped up in the nebulous history of the First Sacred War.¹⁴ It was originally a federation of states in Central Greece that met biannually to guard over the sanctuaries of two gods, Pythian Apollo at Delphi and Pylaian Demeter, who had a sanctuary in the Thermopylae pass.¹⁵ According to tradition, the league, headed by Thessaly, Athens, and Sikyon, wrested control of the sanctuary and the plain from the original mother city of Delphi, Krisa/Kyrra, in the early sixth century B.C.E. Throughout the Classical and Hellenistic periods, the league consisted of twelve poleis and ethne from mainland Greece, each possessing two votes for a total of twenty-four.¹⁶ It was used by various powers, especially Philip and the Macedonians and then the Aetolian League, as a vehicle for control over large portions of Greece.¹⁷

¹² More recently, Sanchez has accumulated all of the evidence of the Amphiktyony through time and gives a very thorough view of the institution over its long history (Sanchez, *L'Amphictionie des Pyles et de Delphes*.)

¹³ FD III.1.544; Philostr. *V S* 2.27, 616. A Hellenistic inscription (CID 2.139) also details many of these duties, and will be discussed in full below in the context of the gymnasium.

¹⁴ Catherine Morgan, *Early Greek states beyond the polis* (London: Routledge, 2003), 123-31.

¹⁵ Hdt. 7.200.

¹⁶ The composition of the League changed many times throughout its history, not just in the Roman period. For chart of various members through history: Sanchez, *L'Amphictionie des Pyles et de Delphes*, 518, 524-27.

¹⁷ For example, Arnush, "Pilgrimage to the oracle of Apollo at Delphi."

The city of Delphi had a limited role in the administration of the sanctuary, with two seats out of the total twenty-four. It did, however, provide important personnel to the sanctuary, including the Pythia and the priest of Apollo. The city was also involved in the daily management and upkeep of the sanctuary, due to its close proximity to the site. Residents of the town would also have provided food and accommodation for many of the pilgrims, spectators, and athletes who came to Delphi to consult the oracle and watch or compete in the Pythian Games.¹⁸

A record of the minutes of a second century B.C.E. biannual meeting of the league was inscribed on the wall of the temple of Apollo, which provides information regarding the workings of this council.¹⁹ It begins with an oath of the Amphiktyony, followed by a list of all of the member states and the delegates that were present at that particular meeting. It also records how much each of the member states owed in dues and the boundaries of different sacred territories. After this, the particular business of that meeting was recorded, which included a correspondence to a Roman magistrate, issues regarding a deficit in the treasury, and fines levied against thirteen citizens of Delphi.

The Amphiktyonic League was dramatically altered several times in the Roman period. Our most reliable evidence comes from Pausanias, who records two reforms: one under Augustus and the state of the league in his own day.²⁰ Evidence from the site also reveals that Nero, and perhaps Hadrian, made changes to the league. Additionally, other emperors, including Domitian, Trajan, and Hadrian, interceded in arguments between

¹⁸ For example, M. P. J. Dillon, "The house of the Thebans (FD III, I, 537-538) and accommodation for Greek pilgrims," *ZPE* 83 (1990): 64-88. The *theoria*, envoys of Delphians who went out to announce the Pythian Games, went out of use by the Roman period (Paula Jean Perleman, *City and sanctuary in ancient Greece: the Theorodokia in the Peloponnese*, Hypomnemata 121 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 27), because it was not the emperor's decision as to which festivals were granted *periodikos* status.

¹⁹ *FD III.4.276-285*; Georges Colin, "Inscriptions de Delphes. Actes amphictioniques relatifs à la fortune du temple d'Apollon et aux limites du territoire sacré," *BCH* 27 (1903):104-73.

²⁰ Paus. 10.8.

various members of the league regarding the administration of the games and the sanctuary. As this body was modified, so were its duties and responsibilities toward the administration of the games.

2.1. Augustan Reforms

The emperor Augustus initially changed the composition and power structure of the league in order to bolster an overall sense of panhellenism among the previously disparate city-states of Greece in the new Roman province. Though the Amphiktyony had always been a regional body of Greek cities and ethne, it embodied a more unified conception of Hellenism in the Roman period. Several authors in the Roman period refer to its makeup as a “common council of Greeks,”²¹ and Dionysius of Halicarnassus presents an etiology of its creation by Amphiktyon, the son of Hellen, as a general council of Greeks to ward off the barbarians.²² Augustus, then, promoted an idealized and united model of the Amphiktyony, which followed this Roman period conception of the federated league.²³ He featured his colony of Nikopolis within it, while also stripping the league of most of its official powers.

Augustus reorganized the league by giving ten of the twenty-four total seats to Nikopolis.²⁴ In order to do this, five members of the league, the Magnesians, Malians, Aeianians, Phthiotians, and Dolopes, were stripped of their two seats each, and were absorbed by Thessaly, which maintained its two votes. Their ten votes were allocated to Nikopolis, ensuring that that city, with over forty percent of the votes, would have more

²¹ Cic. *Inv. rhet.* 2.69; Livy 22.25.8; Plin. *HN* 35.35.59.

²² Dion. Hal., *Ant. Rom.* 4.25.3-6.

²³ Sanchez, *L'Amphictionie des Pyles et de Delphes* 462-3.

²⁴ Paus. 10.8.3-4. Georges Daux, "Les empereurs romains et l'amphictionie pyléo-delphique," *Comptes-rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* 119 (1975): 354. Daux was the first scholar to take Pausanias at his word and figure out the composition of votes of the League.

control over the sanctuary than any other city.²⁵ This strategy seems to have worked. In the Augustan period, only Nikopolitans are attested on the surviving honorary inscriptions for individual members of the Amphiktyony, which indicates the importance of this new city's influence in the league and sanctuary of Apollo.

Pierre Sanchez argues that, while Augustus disrupted the organization and votes of the Amphiktyony, he did not dramatically alter the institution itself.²⁶ The number of votes of the league remained the same, and their responsibilities were unchanged. They were to manage the cults and the festivals of the patron god of Augustus, Apollo. This is an incomplete picture. The abolition of the traditional structure of two votes per state dramatically changed the power balance and paved the way for his successors to change the league in other ways.

2.1.1. Changes to the Pythian religious personnel under the Julio-Claudians

Additionally, the offices of the epimelete and agonothete were both installed at Delphi within the Julio-Claudian period and severely altered the way that the sanctuary was run, stripped influence from the league. Both were four-year posts and each made significant financial contributions to the sanctuary and the games, respectively.

The epimelete was the chief officer of the Amphiktyonic League. The earliest attested dates to the reign of Tiberius, but the office might have been a part of the Augustan reorganization.²⁷ The initial five known epimeletes were all from Nikopolis, substantiating the power of that newly found city in the league. This distribution could

²⁵ Makeup of the League was now: Nikopolis = 10 votes; Thessaly = 2; Phokis = 2; Delphi = 2; Dorians = 2; Ionians = 2; Boiotians = 2; Lokrians = 2. There were eight peoples with a total of twenty-four votes.

²⁶ Sanchez, *L'Amphictionie des Pyles et de Delphes*, 427.

²⁷ Sanchez, *L'Amphictionie des Pyles et de Delphes*, 439; Weir, *Roman Delphi and its Pythian games*, 56.

have resulted for a variety of reasons: because they were the only ones so permitted,²⁸ because the vast number of their votes in the league guaranteed that one of their members would be elected, or because the post was appointed by the emperor himself.²⁹ From the Flavian period on, citizens of Delphi and Hypata were also regularly chosen, which corresponds to later redistributions of Amphiktyonic votes discussed below.³⁰

In the Classical and Hellenistic periods, individual members of the league had been occasionally lauded for their outstanding service to the sanctuary. In the Roman period, however, the epimelete's name was eponymous for official acts of the league and the individual epimelete, rather than the league or other individual members, was always credited for the Amphiktyonic erection of buildings, statues, and other dedications in the sanctuary. His responsibilities included the supervision of the league and overseeing the sanctuary accounts, though surely also supplying his own money towards the running of the sanctuary. At the end of his term, he had to provide an account of the sanctuary finances to his replacement. He served as the intermediary between the league and various other parties, including the proconsul to the emperor.³¹ In 90 C.E., for example, the proconsul of Achaëa sent two separate letters to Delphi, one addressed to the league and one to the epimelete himself.³²

Like the epimelete, the agonothete was another important Julio-Claudian addition to the administration of the Pythian Games.³³ The full extent of his duties is uncertain, but he served as the president of the games and supplied a significant amount of his own

²⁸ Sanchez, *L'Amphictionie des Pyles et de Delphes*, 439.

²⁹ Weir, *Roman Delphi and its Pythian games*, 56.

³⁰ Weir, *Roman Delphi and its Pythian games*, 57.

³¹ Weir, *Roman Delphi and its Pythian games*, 55-60.

³² SIG³ 821C.

³³ It can at least be said for certain that the post was not mentioned in any inscriptional or other evidence before this time and this post was created for many other games, like the Isthmian, in the Roman period as well.

money towards the management of the festival. Drawing from the evidence of agonotheses at other games throughout the empire, Robert G.A. Weir suggests a variety of additional roles and duties for which he may have been responsible. These paralleled the responsibilities of the Olympic Hellenodikai, including leading festival processions, starting the events, disciplining the contestants, and keeping general order.³⁴

Both Olympia and Delphi required outside funding in order to run the sanctuary and its games in the Roman period. We have already seen how Agrippa, Herod the Great, and Timasarchos provided financial support to the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia, and it appears that the sanctuary, oracle, and games of Pythian Apollo required similar support. While Herod and Timasarchos supplied Olympia with enough money to fund the games “in perpetuity,” however, the sanctuary at Delphi required more moderate and continuous financial contributions in order to finance its space and its games. This also provided more euergetic opportunities for elites in the surrounding areas to hold these posts and advertise their patronage.

There is little evidence for individual agonotheses of the Julio-Claudian period, but the available evidence for the rest of the Roman era indicates that the majority came from the same range of cities as the epimeletes, including Nikopolis, Delphi, and Thessaly. The earliest attested is named Archenoos and came from Argos, the only Peloponnesian known to have held this post.³⁵ A statue base discovered in Argos explicitly states that he was the first to hold this post after the recovery of “the right of Amphiktyony for his homeland,” an allusion to the Augustan reforms.

³⁴ Weir, *Roman Delphi and its Pythian games*, 64.

³⁵ IG IV 589.

In the later first and second centuries C.E., most who served this post were from the Thessalian city of Hypata to the northeast of Delphi. This city was not particularly politically or economically powerful in the province of Achaea, and it was in one of the regions whose votes were subsumed under the broader territory of Thessaly, but seems to have wielded considerable power within the confines of the Amphiktyony.

This reorganization of the league and the creation of these two posts was a calculated effort on the part of Augustus to strip authority from a previously prestigious and influential body of cities throughout the province of Achaea and give that power to Nikopolis, which had strong ties to the emperor. With the creation of these posts, power was now centered in the hands of individual elites, who, as we have seen, were intermediaries with the imperial authorities and who used these positions to promote their euergetism. The Amphiktyonic League was simultaneously an institution that represented panhellenism in the Roman period. The inclusion of Nikopolis provided that city with a sacred legitimacy, placing it a dominant position associated with one of the most ancient and respected sanctuaries in Greece.

2.2. Possible Neronian reforms

Between the Augustan and Hadrianic periods, the Amphiktyonic League was reorganized again. A Hadrianic inscription recorded on the temple of Apollo details controversies among the league and indicates that it had again been altered, with the Thessalians now possessing a majority of the seats.³⁶ The damage to the inscription makes portions difficult to read, but it states that an unknown city or region had two seats and another had *twelve*.³⁷ Many of the conflicts disclosed throughout the letter involve

³⁶ *FD* III.4.302. This inscription will be discussed in full below.

³⁷ *FD* III.4.302, column I, lines 12-17.

Delphi and Thessaly and arguments regarding changes to traditional aspects of the Pythian Games, which suggests that Thessaly was now in a position of power in the league with the majority of seats.³⁸

Since Augustus had granted Nikopolis ten, one way to do this would be to provide Thessaly with more seats than that city's. This, however, would increase the total number of members of the league from twenty-four to thirty-six. In Pausanias' day, the number had been increased, but only to thirty, with Nikopolis, Thessaly, and Macedonia having six votes each and the other cities and regions maintaining their traditional two.

Whether twenty-four or thirty, the number of Thessaly's votes required that some be stripped from others. All of the traditional cities were still involved in Pausanias' time and Nikopolis was stripped of half its Augustan votes, so it may have been theirs that were cut.³⁹ The other cities/regions had a total of twelve votes combined, which would provide us with the total of twenty-four votes when added to Thessaly's, leaving no room for Nikopolis if the seat number was maintained. As Nikopolis had six votes in the second century C.E., this would raise the number of seats to thirty, leading me to believe that Nero was, in fact, responsible for this change. While Nikopolis no longer held the majority of votes, with six seats, it still maintained a prestige position with three times as many as most other regions.

The inscription is damaged, but the preserved letters of the name of the man credited with these changes are "Ner[". As Augustus personally made changes to the composition of the league, it is probably that only the emperor had this power, which

³⁸ This argument is bolstered by the fact that, by Pausanias' day, Thessaly shared the majority of seats with Nikopolis and Macedonia.

³⁹ It is unclear to me, however, why Thessaly would need to have twelve votes if Nikopolis no longer had its ten.

leaves either the emperors Nero or Nerva. Because of his philhellenism and his famous trip to Greece, it was likely the former.⁴⁰

The motivations behind Nero's changes were an attempt to reassert the traditional power of Thessaly in the league without stripping Nikopolis of all of its power or position.⁴¹ In the early days of the Amphiktyony, Thessaly had dominated the league. In taking votes away from Nikopolis and restoring the position of a former leading power, Nero meant to return the league to its pre-Macedonian and pre-Roman state. In actuality, however, his reforms sparked a tremendous amount of controversy and angst between different members of the league, especially his favored Thessaly and the city of Delphi itself, which required imperial interventions for their resolution.

2.3. Amphiktyonic controversies

After Nero's reorganization of the Amphiktyony, power struggles ensued between Thessaly and the rest of the league, primarily Delphi, which sought to stop Thessalian attempts to alter and move the Pythian Games. The Delphic contingent in the league also sought to establish a more even distribution of votes. Even though Thessaly had the majority, their power was checked by the emperors Domitian and Hadrian.

In a letter from 90 C.E., the Delphians accuse the Amphiktyonic League, headed by Thessaly, of attempting to change the dates of the Pythian Games.⁴² The motivations for the league to make this change are not given, but the emperor Domitian replied that he wished the games to be kept on their traditional dates and according to all of the

⁴⁰ *FD* III.4.302. P. Sanchez, *L'Amphictionie des Pyles et de Delphes*, 429.

⁴¹ Sanchez, *L'Amphictionie des Pyles et de Delphes*, 440.

⁴² SIG³ 821C.

established customs, which was consistent with Domitian's conservative religious policy to not interfere or change customs and laws unnecessarily.⁴³

Hadrian addressed several more conflicts that had been brewing in the Amphiktyonic League in a letter of 125 C.E. inscribed on the Temple of Apollo. Since the Neronian reforms placed Thessaly in a position of power, tensions and conflicts had begun to soar. Delphi appealed to Hadrian about several Thessalian abuses of power. Not to be outdone, the Thessalians also accused the Delphians of using the sacred land and sacred funds of Apollo for their own civic purposes.

The first issue addressed in Hadrian's letter was a Delphic proposal to change the distribution of votes within the league, taking votes away from Thessaly and giving them to other cities, including Athens, which already had one vote, and Sparta, which was not represented in the league.⁴⁴ The proposed purpose of this change was to make the Amphiktyony a league "common to all Greeks".⁴⁵ Hadrian refused permission and, like Domitian before him, chose to maintain the status quo. He did concede, however, that he would deliberate and decide definitively on this matter during a later scheduled visit to the sanctuary.⁴⁶

Next, Hadrian addressed a Delphian accusation that the Thessalians were misappropriating funds from the sacred treasury of Apollo.⁴⁷ In this case, Hadrian argued *for* the Delphians and required Thessaly to return the money and recover that which had already been distributed. In addition, he asked for a list of the names of the officials

⁴³ Sanchez, *L'Amphictionie des Pyles et de Delphes*, 451.

⁴⁴ *FD III.4.302*, column II, lines 1-6.

⁴⁵ This proposal has suggested to some that the proposed changes to the Amphiktyonic League were the hypothetical precursor to Hadrian's Panhellenion and that the emperor originally wanted this cult to be centered in Delphi. This will be discussed more later.

⁴⁶ *FD III.4.302*, column II, lines 16-18, 40-43. In the latter lines, he also mentions something about the Aetolians, which is curious since they had been excluded from the league.

⁴⁷ *FD III.4.302*, column II, lines 11-16, 21-28.

responsible for this act and an account of the money that he would examine when he made his visit to the sanctuary.

Finally, the Delphians also had cause against Thessaly for a competition that they had held at the Demeter Pylaia sanctuary in the Thermopylae pass, at which the victors had been awarded crowns from Apollo.⁴⁸ This section of the inscription is badly damaged, but the argument may revolve around an agonothete, an office which had been monopolized by Thessalians since the latest Amphiktyonic reforms. It is tempting to link this accusation with the letter sent to Domitian decades before in which the Thessalians wanted to hold games at a different date. Perhaps they went against the emperor's decision and, since he refused to allow them to change the date of the games at the Pythian sanctuary, held games at the other sanctuary over which the league had control.⁴⁹ In this case, Hadrian again supported the Delphians and the conventional practice and ordered the other games to be cancelled and the rewarded crowns to be returned and given to those who had competed at the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi.

The Thessalians also participated in these legal squabbles. They accused the city of Delphi of using the sacred funds to pay for *xenia* and of unlawfully possessing land sacred to the god.⁵⁰ The location of this land is unspecified, but may correspond to land around Kirrha and the port of Delphi that Nero had confiscated to give to his veterans.⁵¹ The implications of this for the league are significant. Land that was sacred to the god had been confiscated by Rome, and then given to the city, not the sanctuary, of Delphi. Therefore, it was no longer under the jurisdiction of the Amphiktyony, which could not

⁴⁸ *FD* III.4.302, column II, lines 6-11.

⁴⁹ Sanchez, *L'Amphictionie des Pyles et de Delphes*, 452.

⁵⁰ *FD* III.4.302, column II, lines 28-40; *FD* III.4.353A-B.

⁵¹ Dio Cass. 63.14.2.

financially benefit from it. In the inscription, however, Hadrian indicates that the Delphians had proved that Vespasian had sold them some land and a port for thirty something, probably talents. Because of this proof, Hadrian sides with Delphi against Thessaly, but again promises to review the matter during his visit to the sanctuary.

2.4. Amphiktyony in Pausanias' time

By Pausanias' day, the league has been changed again with the addition of the region of Macedonia and a more even distribution of votes.⁵² According to the traveler, in his day the regions of Nikopolis, Macedonia, and Thessaly had six votes each, with other regions and cities, including Delphi, splitting up the remaining twelve. The power of Thessaly in the league was thus tempered by other economically and politically dominant states in the provinces of Achaëa and Macedonia.

The dating of these changes is difficult to determine. Because of his philhellenism, Hadrian is often credited with them.⁵³ Because Macedonia is not mentioned in the letter of Hadrian, however, these changes might postdate this correspondence. Sanchez links the change in votes to a reorganization of the provinces of Achaëa and Macedonia that took place in the mid-second century C.E. At this time, Thessaly became part of Macedonia rather than Achaëa, a change which has been attributed to either Hadrian or Antoninus Pius.⁵⁴ In fact, Sanchez suggests that these changes took place during Hadrian's subsequent visit to the sanctuary to which he alludes

⁵² Paus. 10.8.4-5.

⁵³ Weir, *Roman Delphi and its Pythian games*, 56; Sanchez, *L'Amphictionie des Pyles et de Delphes*, 432-34.

⁵⁴ J. A. O. Larsen, "Roman Greece from Augustus to Gallienus" in *An economic survey of ancient Rome IV*, ed. T. Frank (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1938)438-9; Sanchez, *L'Amphictionie des Pyles et de Delphes*, 433-34. J. H. Oliver and Kevin Clinton, *Greek constitutions of early Roman emperors from inscriptions and papyri* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1989), 189; G. W. Bowersock, "Zur Geschichte des römischen Thessalien," *RhM* (1965): 282-8 doubt the date of this act.

several times in his letter, though this is untenable.⁵⁵ These changes securely shifted the balance of power, once again, reducing the power of Thessaly, which privileging the three major economic powers of northern Greece.

In the Roman period, much of the power and responsibility of the Amphiktyonic League was taken over by the epimelete and agonothete. The votes were redistributed to give different cities and regions a majority of power. The members of the league were no longer equals. Between the direct imperial manipulation of the league and the installation of the new offices, the Roman presence in the administration of the Delphic sanctuary was clear. By siphoning the league's power, Augustus was able to both maintain this venerable Greek institution and use it to promote provincial unity, while also stripping it of its political power.

3. Archaeological evidence

As opposed to Olympia and Isthmia, the architectural fabric of the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi was not significantly altered in the Roman period. There were few striking Roman architectural constructions within the temenos of Apollo. The temple of Apollo was restored by Domitian and the stadium by Herodes Atticus. The gymnasium to the south of the sanctuary was also renovated and a Roman bath was added. Only one other Roman bath was built, to the east of the temenos. We have epigraphic evidence that a library and dining hall were constructed in the sanctuary, possibly in the gymnasium area, but they have not been discovered. Finally, a monumental entrance to the sanctuary was built in the fourth century C.E., which consisted of a colonnaded courtyard lined with rooms.

⁵⁵ Sanchez, *L'Amphictionie des Pyles et de Delphes*, 433.

The imperial cult is not as evident at Delphi as at the other Panhellenic sites. The Metroön at was converted to serve this purpose, and the Isthmian and Nemean Games were celebrated alongside others dedicated to the imperial family. There are individual statue bases to the emperors and their relatives at Delphi, but there were no imperial games celebrated and little other evidence for the imperial cult. Pausanias briefly mentions that one of the buildings in the Marmaria sanctuary housed a few statues of the Roman emperors, but he otherwise hardly mentions any Roman constructions or dedications in the sanctuary.⁵⁶ This is characteristic of Pausanias, who also made no mention of the Nymphaeum of Herodes Atticus. The placement of the statues he describes could parallel the Metroön at Olympia, but the lower sanctuary has continually resisted interpretation.⁵⁷

It is striking that there is so little evidence for imperial cult at one of the most important and most visited sanctuaries in Achaea, even though we have seen that the sanctuary itself received much imperial attention. Delphi and Olympia were the two stephanic games that did *not* integrate imperial components, which indicates the sanctity that was felt toward these two sanctuaries, as two of the oldest and most important on mainland Greece. Augustus, however, had an ambiguous relationship with Delphi. He never consulted the oracle nor did he or his contemporaries restore structures at the site. While he reworked the governing body of the sanctuary, he did not pay the Pythian Games or their sanctuary the same attention as he did Olympia, the original home of stephanic competitions.

⁵⁶ Paus 10.8.6.

⁵⁷ K. W. Arafat, *Pausanias' Greece: ancient artists and Roman rulers* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 125; Nancy Bookidis, "The priest's house in the Marmaria at Delphi," *BCH* 107 (1983): 149-55; L. Lerat, "Les 'énigmes' de Marmaria," *BCH* 109 (1985): 255-64; C. LeRoy, "Pausanias à Marmaria," *BCH Suppl.* 4 (1977): 247-71.

3.1. Domitianic restoration of the temple of Apollo

One of the few Roman renovations for which we have concrete evidence concerns the temple of Apollo, reportedly renovated by the emperor Domitian. An inscription (4.75x0.65m) from the temple terrace records that Domitian “*ἱερῶν Ἀπολλωνίου ἱερῶν ἀποκατασκεύασεν*” (figure 5.5).⁵⁸ Neither Plutarch nor Pausanias, our two greatest sources for Roman Delphi, mention these repairs and no archaeological evidence survives from this renovation, as most of the superstructure of the temple had been stripped away throughout its history. Weir, however, makes many suppositions about this repair.⁵⁹ He assumes that the damage must have been extensive because the emperor, rather than the Amphiktyony, undertook the renovation. He even goes so far as to link the damage to the temple to the earthquake in Corinth in 77 C.E., which required many renovations at that city. It is, however, a dangerous supposition to link repairs at one site to a reported earthquake in another. It is also surprising that other buildings in Delphi did not show similar evidence of repair or damage if a major earthquake had hit the site. Furthermore, without the superstructure, it is impossible to suggest the extent or reason for Domitian’s repairs.

The so-called Emperor’s Monument near the temple provides another possible link to Domitian. This dedication consisted of a rectangular column with an equestrian statue on the top. A dedicatory inscription does not survive, but the other inscriptions recorded on it all date after 89-90 C.E., so it may also have been associated with this

⁵⁸ FD III.4.120.

⁵⁹ Weir, *Roman Delphi and its Pythian games*, 152-58.

particular emperor.⁶⁰ A niche, possibly a fountain, cut out of a Roman wall on the temple terrace, also has been interpreted as a space to house a statue of Domitian.⁶¹

As we saw in the last chapter, Domitian was also partially responsible for the construction of the Southwest Building at Olympia, though the inscription associated with that building suffered from his *damnatio memoriae*. He has a tradition of interest in athletic contests, including his foundation of the Capitoline Games in Rome and his reconstructions to the Colosseum. The emperor clearly had a strong interest in athletic culture. His constructions at Olympia and Delphi, two of the most important stephanic competitions in Greece, may have been attempts to link his own athletic festival to the antiquity of the original Panhellenic games and to associate himself with the two most venerable sanctuaries and contests on the Greek mainland.

3.2. Herodes Atticus in the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi

Like Domitian, Herodes Atticus was also a benefactor at multiple Panhellenic sanctuaries. He dedicated an exedra at Delphi that honored him and his family, and he also restored the Pythian stadium and constructed an arch at its entrance. The stadium, mentioned both by Pausanias and Philostratus, was built with traditional Greek techniques, including no vaulting or concrete, in juxtaposition to the Roman arch nearby.⁶² Like his Nymphaeum, Herodes Atticus' benefactions spoke of both his Greek and Roman cultural affiliations.

The exedra was located behind the bouleuterion, next to the Treasury of the Athenians. It is a small, poorly preserved structure, with a 3.15m radius. Fragments of nine total statue bases that originally held statues of Herodes' family were found

⁶⁰ J.-F. Bommelaer, *Guide de Delphes: le site* (Athens: Ecole française d'Athènes, 1991): 185.

⁶¹ Bommelaer, *Guide de Delphes*, 171.

⁶² Paus. 10.32.1; Philost. *V S* 2.551.

throughout the sanctuary. Only five, however, had matching formulae and were actually discovered in the vicinity of the exedra. Of these, three were probably original to the structure, and were dedicated to Herodes himself, his wife Regilla, and their daughter, Elpinike, all of them either dedicated or granted by decree of the city of Delphi.⁶³ The other two statues of Herodes Atticus's other children discovered in the vicinity had unworked backs, indicating they were probably placed against a wall.⁶⁴ Tobin argues, correctly, I believe, that the statues of Herodes, his wife, and daughter were original to the structure and were lined up along the exedra, and that the other statues were added later, perhaps when these children reached adolescence.⁶⁵ Because of the exedra, it has been suggested that it was another Nymphaeum mirroring Herodes Atticus' construction at Olympia.⁶⁶ Though the structure is badly preserved, however, there is no evidence of hydraulic works connected with it.⁶⁷ This and its small size suggest to me that the exedra was an ornamental base for the statues.

Herodes Atticus also monumentalized the stadium, with the construction of stone seats, a new track, a small fountain, and an arch (figure 5.6).⁶⁸ Seats were built on the north, south, and west sides, divided into twenty-eight sections by twenty-nine sets of stairs. The northern seats relied on the natural earth slope and the southern on an artificial embankment of earlier foundations. Its capacity was about 6,500. There were two special seating areas, presumably for the judges. One was located in the center of the north side in the first two rows of seats and the other was carved into the rock on the eastern end.

⁶³ FD III.3.66, 67, 68.

⁶⁴ FD III.3.69, 70.

⁶⁵ Jennifer Tobin, "The monuments of Herodes Atticus" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1991), 227.

⁶⁶ Jean Bousquet, "Inscriptions grecques concernant des Romains," *BCH* 88 (1964): 392; Weir, *Roman Delphi and its Pythian games*, 111.

⁶⁷ Tobin, "The monuments of Herodes Atticus," 232.

⁶⁸ Tobin, "The monuments of Herodes Atticus," 233-241.

The latter of these was quite unusual, as its view of the stadium was obstructed by the arch. A fountain was located along the north side of the stadium and replaced an earlier Archaic water feature. A natural cleft in the rock was regularized with the addition of brick and a covered barrel vault.

The arch was to the east of the stadium and created a façade against the track, mirroring the arch at the entrance to the Olympic tunnel and serving as a dramatic entrance for the athletes. It had four pillars and was constructed of limestone. Certain features suggest that the structure was quickly and carelessly built. The blocks were cut in varying lengths and widths and the decorative details were unfinished. The mortar used in the structure was uneven, it was constructed of poros rather than marble, and the stadium, too, had irregularly cut blocks. Because of this, it is generally given a date late in the life of Herodes Atticus, perhaps between 174-78 C.E.⁶⁹

This stadium invites comparisons not only to his Nymphaeum at Olympia, but to Herodes Atticus' Panathenaic Stadium in Athens, which was built earlier in the orator's life, for the Great Panathenaia of 143 C.E.⁷⁰ While these arenas had some striking differences: the Panathenaic was constructed entirely of Pentelic marble and seated a massive 50,000 spectators. In contrast to contemporary stadia in the Roman East, however, both of these structures were deliberately classicizing, eschewing vaulting to support seats, complicated systems for circulation in their substructures, the use of

⁶⁹ Pierre Aupert, *Fouilles de Delphes. Tome II. Le Stade* (Paris: De Boccard, 1979).

⁷⁰ For most recent studies, see David G. Romano, "The Panathenaic Stadium and Theater of Lykourgos: a re-examination of the facilities on the Pnyx Hill," *AJA* 89 (1985): 441-54; Julia Louis Shear, "Polis and Panathenaia : the history and development of Athena's festival " (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2002); Jennifer Tobin, "Some new thoughts on Herodes Atticus's tomb, his stadium of 143/4, and Philostratus VS 2.550," *AJA* 97 (1993): 81-9; Katherine Welch, "Greek stadia and Roman spectacles: Asia, Athens and the tomb of Herodes Atticus," *JRA* 11 (1998): 117-45.

concrete, and other features.⁷¹ In the Roman period, the focus on athletic spectacle had shifted from participation to observation for the elites, as stadia became places to *watch* athletic competitions rather than compete in them yourself. But for these stadia, Herodes Atticus consciously rejected Roman features of monumentality to recall the classical past. Just as with the Nymphaeum at Olympia, Herodes Atticus is here using architecture as a means of self-representation and an arena for communicating his Greek identity, while also proclaiming his Romanness through the construction of the complimentary arch.

3.3. East Baths

One of the few new constructions at the site of Delphi from the Roman period was the so-called East Bath located below the terrace of Attalos and, like the various bath structures at Olympia, outside of the temenos proper (figure 5.1). Like the bath near the Leonidaion at Olympia, this bath was a relatively late addition to the sanctuary, with a construction date in the third and fourth centuries.⁷² Though not fully published, it is one of the better preserved buildings from the sanctuary.⁷³ Non-figural mosaic pavements lined the floors of this trapezoidal structure, whose construction was limited and shaped by the topography of the area. The building was constructed in two phases, the earlier in the mid to late third century C.E., with some further work in the fourth. The entrance to the building led to the apodyterium (A) (figure 5.7). The caldarium was located to the south and consisted of three rooms with square anterooms at each end (C1-3), though C1 was the caldarium proper. The boiler was located to the west of the structure. The frigidarium was the central room of the bath (F), with two small plunge baths, one to the

⁷¹ For instance, the stadia at Perge, Ephesus, Sardis, Sillyon, and Aspendos. See Katherine Welch, "Greek stadia and Roman spectacles," 117-131 for a useful discussion.

⁷² Jean Bousquet, "La donation de L. Gellius Menogenes à Delphes et les Thermes de l'Est," *BCH* 76 (1952): 653-60; René Ginouvès, "Thermes romains," *BCH* 79 (1955): 323-30.

⁷³ Bommelaer, *Guide de Delphes*, 196.

south and one to the west, opening up off of it. Other rooms, inaccessible from the bath itself, had their own exterior door and were located three meters higher than the rest of the bath. The water for the bath was supplied from water tanks (R1-3) that were fed from conduits that crossed the Hellenistic Terrace of Attalos above.

One other Roman bath is known at Delphi, which was located in the gymnasium and will be discussed in full below. The presence of these baths indicates that the sanctuary was being modernized to accommodate the Roman period spectators and athletes to the Pythian Games. The sanctuary may not have received the same volume of visitors as Olympia, however, as it only had two baths in contrast to that sanctuary's seven.

3.4. "Roman Agora"

In addition to the East Bath, the other major construction from the Roman period in the temenos of Apollo was the so-called Roman Forum or Roman Agora, located at the entrance to the sanctuary along the Sacred Way (figure 5.8). The buildings that are standing today, the north and northeastern portions of the "agora," date to the fourth century C.E., a relatively unattested time in the sanctuary in terms of the inscriptions and other building activity. A large swath of the natural slope was cut away in order to regularize the space. The space was largely built from spolia, included columns that were taken from the *xystos* track of the gymnasium.

This large (c.500 m²) area was surrounded by stoas on three sides and abutted the western end of the sanctuary's peribolos wall. The eastern end of the "agora" was entered through a forecourt which was constructed at an oblique angle to accommodate the main access road. One entered the sanctuary proper via stairs, also constructed of spolia.

The small rooms along the rear wall of the northern stoas have been identified as shops, which leads to the classification of this space as an “agora”. There was an earlier row of rooms on the site, which probably date to the late second or early third century C.E., one of which, the easternmost in the line, was filled in before the fourth century construction. The space to the west, now the easternmost “shop,” also dates to this earlier phase. The western wall is actually composed of two walls, one of which dates to this earlier construction phase and the other to the fourth century phase. A drain to get rid of the water from the upper terrace was also constructed at this time.

I hesitate to accept the identification of this as an agora. The main features of this space are the stoas on three sides, two exedrae on the rear wall of the northern stoa, and the steps leading up to the sanctuary. The “shops” are unusually shaped and they have unusual axes for shops of this date. Furthermore, identifying any small rooms as shops based on fragments of glass found within is unsatisfying.⁷⁴ This space is more in keeping with monumental entrance courtyards, such as at the sanctuary of Demeter at Eleusis and the Asklepieion at Pergamon, both constructed in the second century C.E. These rear rooms, then, could have served a variety of functions, such as offices or, indeed, shops, but that was not the primary use of the space. Instead, it provided an elaborate backdrop to the entrance of the sanctuary as one began an ascent of the Sacred Way.

3.5. Gymnasium complex and Roman Bath

The gymnasium in Delphi, situated between the Marmaria sanctuary and the Castalian Spring, is the earliest preserved and undisputed gymnasium in the ancient

⁷⁴ Steven J. R. Ellis, "The distribution of bars at Pompeii: archaeological, spatial and viewshed analyses," *JRA* 17 (2004): 371-84; J. A. Baird, "Shopping, eating, and drinking at Dura-Europos: Reconstructing contexts" in *Objects in context, objects in use: Material spatiality in Late Antiquity*, ed. L. Lavan, E. Swift and T. Putzeys (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 413-37.

Greek world (figure 5.2). The antiquity of the gymnasium was felt even in the Roman period, as Pausanias places Odysseus' famous wounding by the boar at this site.⁷⁵ The structure is dated to the late fourth century B.C.E. by two inscriptions: one recording the Amphiktyony's payment to laborers for their work during the archonship of Damochares (334/3 B.C.E);⁷⁶ the other, carved on a foundation block of the palaestra's peristyle, is a signature of a contractor name Daios who was active in the sanctuary in the third quarter of the fourth century.⁷⁷

The original structure consisted of two side-by-side practice tracks (*paradromis*, *xystos*) on an upper terrace and a palaestra and Greek bath (*loutron*) on the lower terrace. The complex was repaired and remodeled in the Roman period, including the addition of a Roman bath on this lower terrace, making it one of the only structures on the site for which we have well-defined Roman evidence.⁷⁸

A Hellenistic inscription found at the site describes infrastructural steps to prepare the gymnasium for the Pythian Games, steps which were probably followed in the Roman period. Finally, Roman period graffiti discovered in the *xystos* give a rare glimpse of the hopes and nerves of athletes before a competition. These Roman repairs, as well as inscriptions and graffiti, provide some of our only evidence for the training of athletes before the Pythian Games, as well as the infrastructure necessary for the implementation of the games. In this section, I will also discuss the other epigraphic data relating to the participating athletes in the Roman Pythian Games, especially from honorary statues and inscriptions set up in the sanctuary and throughout the empire.

⁷⁵ Paus 10.8.8.

⁷⁶ *FD* III.5.58, col. 1, lines 32-41.

⁷⁷ *FD* III.5.58, lines 36-39

⁷⁸ The temple of Apollo was reportedly repaired by the emperor Domitian, which will be discussed below, but since the façade has largely been robbed out, there is no archaeological evidence to link to this repair. Additionally, Herodes Atticus renovated the stadium at Delphi.

3.5.1. *The Greek period gymnasium*

The gymnasium is constructed on two terraces that run in a N-NW to S-SE direction (figure 5.9). The smaller, lower level consists of the Greek bath and, later, the Roman bath, as well as the palaistra. Connected to the upper terrace by two staircases, the rear walls of these three structures were the retaining walls of the upper terrace, on which the two running tracks were situated.

On the upper level of the gymnasium was the *xystos*, or covered practice track. The floor of the *xystos* was long and narrow, measuring 184.83 meters long and only 7.50 meters wide. The floor was of tamped earth, just as the stadium would have been. In the Hellenistic period, the colonnade was constructed of Doric columns, fragments of which have been discovered with architrave blocks and painted cornices which were used as spolia in the rear wall during the Roman repair of the structure. No trace of the entablature has been discovered, so it was presumably made of wood.

To the west and parallel to the *xystos* was a *paradromis*, or practice track, measuring 173.00 meters long and only about six meters wide, even narrower than the *xystos*. It was unroofed and there were starting lines on either end, with a buffer space beyond the southern end to allow the athletes room to stop running.

On the lower terrace, there was a *loutron*, or bath (figure 5.10). It consisted of a deep pool (1.90m) encircled by three descending rows of concentric steps covered with water-tight stucco. The uppermost step, with a low, crowning torus molding, has been robbed out. The pool tipped slightly to the west, to allow the water to drain out. There was a drainage pipe in the northwest wall, which could presumably be shut off when it was not in use. Behind it, there were ten limestone basins along the northern retaining

wall corresponding to eleven spouts that channeled water into the basins from the Castalian Spring and ravine (figure 5.11), the larger of which, in the middle, presumably fed the *loutron* proper. The water overflowed from one basin into another through openings that were cut on their adjoining sides, supplying a constantly refreshed water supply.

The palaestra was situated to the far southeast of the lower terrace (figure 5.10). An eighteenth century convent dedicated to the Virgin was built on top of it, however, and portions have fallen away due to erosion, so it is a difficult building to interpret. It consists of a small peristyle (13.87 m square) with eight Ionic columns on each side, which supported a roof with over four meter deep aisles on all sides. Due to the spatial confinements of the small terrace (c.16x35m), there was space for only four rooms on the northwest and three on the southwest sides of the courtyard. The middle room (B) on the north side had two columns *in antis* and a cross wall that is pierced by a door. Epigraphic evidence indicating shrines dedicated to Herakles, Hermes, Artemis, Athena, Apollo and Demeter have led to suppositions that this area was a cult space to one or more of these deities.⁷⁹ Rooms on either side of it had single doorways entered from the courtyard (A and C). To the southwest of room C a passageway led from the peristyle to the rest of the terrace (D). To its southwest and south were three final rooms: a relatively large space (E), followed by a smaller square room (F), and a last room reconstructed with columns opening onto the peristyle and benches along its other three sides (G). A passageway to the southwest of these rooms (H) provided another access way between the courtyard and

⁷⁹ CID 2.139, line 11, 19-21; M. Homolle, "Le Gymnase de Delphes," *BCH* 23 (1899): 575; Jean Jannoray, *Le Gymnase* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1953), 81-82.

room E. Because of the fragmentary state of the remains, the function and purpose of these rooms is unclear.

Some clue is provided by the so-called “Dion Inscription,” a record of work in the sanctuary under the archonship of Dion (247/6 B.C.E.) that was discovered within the gymnasium complex.⁸⁰ Though this inscription dates to the Hellenistic period, the renovations and preparations were probably consistent with actions needed for every Pythian Game, as well as for other games throughout the Mediterranean world. It records forty-one separate tasks contracted out to roughly twenty-two individuals and the amount of money they were to be paid for each. It mentions three rooms that might have been in the Hellenistic palaistra: a sphairisterion, konima, and apodyterion.⁸¹ According to the inscription, the sphairisterion needed to be dug, raked, and rolled, the konima was to be sifted, and the apodyterion was to be whitewashed. Apodyteria are known from many other bath complexes and were used to ready oneself for exercise or bathing, including undressing and other preparatory activities. The “sifting” of something to do with the konima indicates that the floor was perhaps made of sand. It may have been either a soft floor provided for wrestling or the sand could have been used for the dusting of athletes.⁸² Finally, the name sphairisteria suggests a room dedicated to ball playing. If we accept that these rooms were all associated with the gymnasium, and that the peristyle room was a shrine to one of the gods mentioned above, then that accounts for four of the six rooms in the palaestra. From the available archaeological evidence, however, it is

⁸⁰ CID 2.139.

⁸¹ CID 2.139, lines 15-21.

⁸² Stephen L. Glass, "Palaistra and gymnasia in Greek architecture" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1967), 100.

difficult to assign a specific function to these rooms, though the room surrounded with benches is consistent with a room used either for dining or for lectures.

In addition to the rooms prepared in the palaestra, other parts of the gymnasium were included in the Dion inscription including the *xystos*, which was to be roped off, presumably to allow the athletes space to practice without interruption from the spectators. It also records preparations to the stadium, including the smoothing out of the track and the installation of the turning posts. An odeion and proscenium were to be set up for the musical and artistic competitions. Finally, maintenance was done on the hippodrome to prepare it, too, for the contests. It also records maintenance that was required on the *xystos* and *paradromis* before the Pythian Games.⁸³ The earth surface of both tracks had to be dug up and then leveled, with white earth used to mark out the tracks. The *xystos* was to be fenced off and the palaestra roped off.

The features of this gymnasium were quite small. The tracks were narrow in contrast with the stadium, which was eight to eleven meters wide. The *xystos* had enough room for only two runners, and the *paradromis* for one, at any time. The stadium track, in contrast, was eight to eleven meters wider. The palaestra was also little, only two-thirds of the area of the *courtyard* of the palaestra at Olympia. With such a restricted amount of space, it would have accommodated only a small number of athletes at one time, which seems odd if it was the practice area for all of the athletes coming to compete at the Pythian Games. Again, it is in contrast to the large gymnasium and palaestra at the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia (figure 4.1).

⁸³ CID 2.139 (c.246 B.C.E.).

3.5.2. *The Roman period gymnasium*

In the second century C.E., a Roman bath was constructed on the lower terrace of the gymnasium to the northwest of the Greek *loutron*, which, until recently, it has largely been ignored in publications.⁸⁴ Despite the small size of the bath (22mx15m), the upper terrace wall had to be cut back in order to accommodate its construction. The main structure consisted of five large rooms, with a few small rooms on its northeastern sides. There were two small *caldaria* with hypocaust floors in the center, flanked to the northwest and southeast by two larger *tepidaria*. The final large room to the northeast may have been an elaborate passageway. As there is no *frigidarium*, Weir suggests that the Greek *loutron* continued to be used as the cold plunge bath for the structure.⁸⁵ The furnace was unfortunately lost to erosion.

A date from the late first or early second century has been suggested for the bath, based on the *opus testaceum* of the hypocausts and inscriptions mentioning work carried out by Flavius Soklaros, who was associated with the sanctuary in the 90s C.E.⁸⁶ Homolle interpreted two inscriptions as indications of further work done in the gymnasium by Soklaros, an Amphiktyonic *epimelete* and an *archon* in Delphi around 97-102 C.E. According to one of these inscriptions, he built a library with money from the treasury of Apollo.⁸⁷ Another inscription discovered in the gymnasium area credits the same with constructing something called a *στρουκτώριον*, which Homolle suggests that this was some kind of dining room.⁸⁸ Neither of the inscriptions indicates *where* in the sanctuary these structures were placed, nor have any of the surviving remains yet to be

⁸⁴ Weir, *Roman Delphi and its Pythian games*, 101. In his excavation report, for instance, Jannoray devotes only two pages to it (Jannoray, *Le Gymnase*, 78-79).

⁸⁵ Weir, *Roman Delphi and its Pythian games*, 101.

⁸⁶ M. Homolle, "Le Gymnase de Delphes," 560-83.

⁸⁷ M. Homolle, "Le temple de Delphes. Son histoire. Sa ruine," *BCH* 20 (1896): 720.

⁸⁸ Homolle, "Le Gymnase de Delphes," 573-74.

associated with these structures. The latter inscription was at least found within the gymnasium complex, which gives slight weight to a hypothesized position there, but the placement of the library within the same complex is not substantiated.

In addition to the Bath, other Greek period buildings of the gymnasium continued to be used throughout the Roman period. The *xystos* was repaired and, during this renovation, the eighty-three Doric limestone columns were replaced with sixty marble Ionic unfluted and monolithic columns.⁸⁹

During excavations on the gymnasium in the 1980s, painted inscriptions were discovered on the back wall of the *xystos* that shed new light on the athletes taking part in the Pythian Games.⁹⁰ On the plastered wall, training athletes painted graffitied prayers in which they appealed to the gods for victory in the games (figure 5.12). There are a total of thirteen inscriptions, most of which are prayers to the god Apollo, and one to the goddesses Hekate and Artemis and another Artemis Prothyraia.⁹¹ These were private prayers, asking for good fortune in the coming events. Many were surrounded by painted frames and were further decorated with palm branches. The graffiti were quite formulaic. In most, the athletes named themselves and their event and asked for good fortune. A typical example proclaims “Ἀγ[αθ]ῆ ἡ τύχη. | Τόπος Γερμα- | νο[ῦ] δις Λαδι- | κέως πυθικοῦ | σταδιαδρόμ[ου]. | Εὐτυχ[ῶς]. *palme*” (“To good fortune. Place of Germanos, son of Germanos, Laodicean, child Pythian, runner of the stade. Good luck. (palm branch)”) (figure 5.13).⁹² While this sort of inscription is unique to Delphi, it was probably a widespread phenomenon at other sanctuaries, but through the chance of

⁸⁹ The Ionic columns were moved to the Roman agora in the fourth century C.E., the implications of which will be discussed in full in the description of that area.

⁹⁰ F. Queyrel, "Inscriptions et scènes figurées peintes sur le mur de fond du xyste de Delphes," *BCH* 125(2001): 333-387.

⁹¹ Queyrel, "Inscriptions et scènes figurées peintes sur le mur de fond du xyste de Delphes," 356-359.

⁹² Queyrel, "Inscriptions et scènes figurées peintes sur le mur de fond du xyste de Delphes," 348.

preservation these ones at Delphi have survived.⁹³ These inscriptions were grouped in particular areas of the wall and not randomly placed. This could be an indication that these graffiti were attempts by the gymnasiarchs, athletes, or the professional athletic guilds to copy the official epigraphical language of the sanctuary, but with paint on plaster.

This inscription by Germanos also helps to date these renovations. The running of two footraces are known in connection with an athlete named Germanos from Laodicea, including a victory at an Isopythian Game at Laodicea-ad-Mare, a Roman colony in northern Syria, founded in the early third century C.E, which gives a possible *terminus post quem* for this inscription and the construction of the back wall of the *xystos*.⁹⁴

Though Olympia was held as the highest pinnacle of athletic accomplishment through the Roman period, the Pythian Games were still one of the four original periodic games and held a preeminent position among the hundreds of athletic competitions held throughout the Mediterranean world. As opposed to Olympia, Pausanias does not catalogue the individual athletic statues at Delphi except for one: Phayllos of Kroton, who won many victories, though none at the sanctuary of Zeus. He then dismisses the other musical and artistic victors as “scarcely worthy of serious attention” and asserts that any athlete worthy of note had already been mentioned in reference to Olympia.⁹⁵

Though Pausanias does not deign to describe them, twenty-six inscriptions have been discovered at Delphi, and another fifty-one have been found throughout the Roman

⁹³ The closest comparanda come from the tunnel of the stadium at Nemea, but these graffiti are much more informal. They are scratches rather than painted graffiti, and are quick notes like “I win!” (Graf 2B) or *kalos*-names (e.g., Graf 2D, 14C, 15D). Steven G. Miller, *Excavations at Nemea II: the early Hellenistic stadium* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001) 84-89.

⁹⁴ Queyrel, "Inscriptions et scènes figurées peintes sur le mur de fond du xyste de Delphes," 385-6.

⁹⁵ Paus 10.9.2.

Empire which record Roman Pythian victors.⁹⁶ The overall pattern of these inscriptions matches Olympia, with many of the competitors coming from the province in Greece, Asia Minor, and Egypt. The number of victors from Rome and Italy, however, decreased in the Roman imperial period, perhaps because Delphi was not as close as Olympia or linked to the Roman capital of the province, like Isthmia.

It is unknown who was responsible for these Roman repairs and renovations to the gymnasium. They could have been the result of private, Amphiktyonic, or imperial initiatives. Another issue is to determine who the gymnasium was for. Most scholars place the *xystos* in conjunction with the Pythian Games and a comparable thirty day practice period as was known at Olympia.⁹⁷ Additionally, the epigraphical evidence indicates that the construction and maintenance finances were paid out of the sanctuary's treasury, and not the town's.⁹⁸ Statues that were set up in the gymnasium, however, were in honor of prominent Delphians, not athletes, giving credence to the city's attachment to the structure.⁹⁹ The explanation that the evidence sustains is that the gymnasium was meant for both the city *and* the games, though its small size is still a conundrum. The citizens of Delphi, at least, would probably have used it in the intervening years between Pythian Games. The *xystos*, and the additional information provided by the Dion inscription, provide important information about the training and the infrastructure provided for the athletes who competed in the games.

⁹⁶ Weir, *Roman Delphi and its Pythian games*, 124-9 for catalogue of Roman Pythian victors.

⁹⁷ Philostr. *VA* 5.43; Weir, *Roman Delphi and its Pythian games*, 100.

⁹⁸ *CID* 2.139

⁹⁹ For instance, there was a herm that originally bore the bust of a prominent Delphian, Hippokrates, from the second century C.E. discovered near the *xystos* track (E. Pentazos, "Travaux de l'Ecole française d'Athènes en Grèce en 1994. Delphes. 3. - Gymnase," *BCH* 119 (1995): 652-53.

4. Conclusions

The physical site of the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi was relatively unchanged during the Roman period, especially when we compare it to the sites of Olympia and Isthmia. The repairs to the temple are unfortunately unknown except for the massive inscription left by Domitian. The stadium, however, was refurbished with permanent stone seats, a fountain, and a Roman arch. As at Athens, Herodes Atticus renovated the stadium using traditional Greek building techniques, eschewing the use of concrete or elaborate vaulting as is found on other stadia in the Greek East. The Roman Arch, however, would have firmly placed the setting of the contests in the imperial world. Like his Nymphaeum at Olympia, Herodes Atticus combined aspects of Greek and Roman architecture as a message of both the Greek and Roman identities that he, and surely many others, felt as Hellenes in the Roman Empire.

Outside of the temenos proper, other changes to the sanctuary were largely infrastructural, though an ornamental gateway was added to the entrance of the site. Baths were constructed to the east of the temenos and on the site of the Greek baths in the gymnasium complex. Graffiti on the walls of the gymnasium's *xystos* are from athletes competing in the games, who prayed to the gods for continued success. These, and inscriptions found elsewhere, indicate that the games were still held into the fourth century C.E. and that the Pythian Games continued to be one of the most important contests in the Mediterranean world.

There is a surprising lack of evidence for the imperial cult at the sanctuary, even though that cult is attested at other Panhellenic sanctuaries and major religious centers in the east. Without the epigraphical evidence, in fact, it would be easy to assume that the

sanctuary had been largely ignored throughout the Roman period. The inscriptions littered throughout the site, and the evidence of Pausanias and Plutarch, indicate that there was a lot of focus on the composition and powers of the Amphiktyonic League rather than in the “Romanization” of the physical framework of the sanctuary.

Various emperors tinkered with that venerable institution, changing the number of votes, the distribution of votes, and also taking away a great deal of its power. Augustus and Nero both altered the membership of the league, favoring first Nikopolis and then Thessaly, until, probably under Hadrian, the majority of votes were divided between these two powers and Macedonia. The majority of the actual influence of the league, however, was divided between an epimelete, who presided over the league, and an agonotheite, who presided over the games. While still maintaining the presence of the league, the emperor ensured that the political power of the institution was held by local elites. In contrast to Olympia, these men were not only from the mother city of the site, but also from Thessaly and Nikopolis and showed more of an interest in gaining influence in the broader empire than their counterparts in Elis. The emperors also took interest in the conflicts that arose amongst members of the league and intervened to decide disagreements. The majority of these resolutions favored the traditional way that the sanctuary had been run, voting against changing the date of the Pythian Games, or their locations, and other such matters.

In the Roman period, the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi did not maintain the same autonomy as its counterpart at Olympia. The institution that governed it was manipulated by the emperors to ensure that it could not be used as a force against Roman power. The Amphiktyonic League had too much history, and too close a connection to the Delphic

sanctuary, though, to be completely discarded. Rather, the emperors used its antiquity as a focal point for Hellenic identity, while stripping it of any of its threatening power. The Pythian Games continued to be celebrated, and both Herodes Atticus' traditional renovation of the stadium and the fact that it was always considered one of the preeminent periodic competitions on inscriptions, proves the esteem at which it was still held, but it was not able to govern itself in the way that Olympia maintained throughout its history.

Chapter 6:

Argos and the Nemean Games: A Panhellenic Game in an urban context

1. Introduction

Argos, the host of the Nemean Games, was a relatively large city in the Peloponnese, but did not have the same political or economic power that other city-states, like Sparta, Corinth, or Athens, had during the Archaic and Classical periods.¹ The political prestige of Argos waned in the Roman period, but the city still maintained an important geographical position, as it controlled the Gulf of Argolis and was the major stopping point on land routes to the southern Peloponnese from Corinth through the pass of Tretos, and by sea from Aegina.

Argos was the mother city of the Nemean Games, the last of the four major stephanic competitions founded in Greece (573 B.C.E.). The games which were transferred from the Nemean sanctuary to Argos in the Hellenistic period, and, in the Roman period, were one of many athletic festivals held in that city. These celebrations brought visitors and athletes to Argos, where they were invited to admire its rich mythological and historical past.

The Argolid was the site of the Bronze Age citadels of Mycenae and Tiryns, which were home to such heroes as Agamemnon and Herakles. The city of Argos, itself, was the hometown of Perseus, one of the most important heroes of Greek mythology.

¹ For a good summary of the history and culture of Argos and the Argolid through the Hellenistic period, see Richard Tomlinson, *Argos and the Argolid* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972).

Many Hellenistic kings, following the lead of Philip and Alexander the Great, claimed descent from heroes of the Argive plain. These Hellenistic kings founded cities all over the Mediterranean, which sought to tie themselves to the culture of “old Greece.” The shrine of Agamemnon at Mycenae also had a resurgence in the Hellenistic period.² There is no record of Augustus visiting Argos, but his stand-in Agrippa helped to revive the institution of the Argive *gerousia*.³ Argos was a member of Hadrian’s Panhellenion, as were many of these other cities, which were given antiquity through their mythical connection to the Argive heroes.⁴ Hadrian also gave benefactions to the city, including an aqueduct and nymphaeum, in honor and recognition of the connection that this city had to its classical past.⁵ In the Roman period, as Argos struggled to create their Roman period civic image, they drew on their mythical history to foreground their importance in Hellenic history, claiming to have received even as many gifts from the gods as Athens, the centerpiece of “old Greece”.⁶

The Nemean Games continued to be one of the most important in the ancient athletic circuit because of its standing as one of the four original stephanic competitions. In the Roman period, however, the games were celebrated in a civic context. Some structures in Argos are comparable to those in other sanctuaries in the Roman period, like baths, a theater, and racetrack. The very nature of their location in a city, however,

² J. Cook, “The Agamemnoneion,” *BSA* 48 (1953): 30-68; Carla Antonaccio, *An archaeology of ancestors : tomb cult and hero cult in early Greece* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1995), 147-152.

³ See A. J. S. Spawforth, *Greece and the Augustan cultural revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 169-74 for recent discussion.

⁴ Marcel Piérart, “Argos Romaine: la cité des Perséides” in *Roman Peloponnese III: society, economy and culture under the Roman Empire: continuity and innovation*, ed. A. D. Rizakes and C. E. Lepenioti, (Paris: National Hellenic Research Foundation, 2010), 35; A. J. Spawforth and Susan Walker, “The world of the Panhellenion. I. Athens and Eleusis,” *JRS* 75 (1985): 102.

⁵ A. J. Spawforth and S. Walker, “The world of the Panhellenion II. Three Dorian cities,” *JRS* 76 (1986): 101-102.

⁶ Paus. 1.14.2.

suggests that all of these features could have served multiple purposes, not just for the Nemean Games, but for the other games celebrated in the city and for other civic purposes, as well.

1.1. History of scholarship

The French Archaeological School has been excavating at Argos for over a century, but the footprint of the modern city has seriously curbed their efforts. The post-Bronze Age excavations have focused on a relatively small area in the south-western corner of the modern city, where an ancient theater, odeion, and baths were discovered (figure 6.1). To the east of this area, several buildings dating from the Archaic through the Roman imperial periods were uncovered, which the excavators have identified as the agora of the ancient city, though the account of Pausanias does little to corroborate this classification. The bulk of the scholarship on Argos has been published as individual articles in *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique*, together with some monographs and guide books.⁷

1.2. History of the Nemean Games

In the Archaic and Classical periods, these games were celebrated at the sanctuary of Zeus at Nemea, located in the Argolid and about twenty-three miles north of Argos (figure 6.2).⁸ The Nemean sanctuary displays many similar characteristics to the other Panhellenic sanctuaries discussed in this dissertation: a monumental temple to its patron

⁷ Jean-Charles Moretti, *Théâtres d'Argos* (Athens: Ecole française d'Athènes, 1993); Anne Pariente and Gilles Touchais, *Argos kai Argolida: topographia kai poleodomia: praktika diethnous Synedriou, Athena-Argos, 28/4-1/5/1990* (Athens 1998); Marcel Piérart and Gilles Touchais, *Argos, une ville grecque de 6000 ans* (Paris: Paris-Méditerranée, CNRS Editions, 1996).

⁸ Stephen G. Miller, *Nemea : a guide to the site and museum* (Athens: Ministry of Culture, Archaeological Receipts Fund, 2004), 107. The sanctuary may have been supervised by the nearby city of Kleonai, but the bureaucratic matters of the games were most likely overseen by the more powerful Argos.

deity, a bath complex, treasuries, and a heröon dedicated to the patron hero of the site, Opheltes-Arkhemoros.

For the majority of their history, the Nemean Games were not held at Nemea. After their initial foundation, they were celebrated at the sanctuary until the late fifth century B.C.E., when portions of the site were destroyed and the games temporarily relocated to Argos. This is verified by late first century destruction debris and pottery in briefly-used fifth century wells.⁹ Bronze arrowheads and iron spear points were also discovered in debris from this time period, which Stephen Miller interprets as evidence of a battle on the site.

The site does not show evidence of reoccupation until the 330s B.C.E., when the games briefly returned to Nemea and occasioned a great deal of building activity. The games permanently left Nemea for Argos in the 270s B.C.E., based on the absence of artifacts on the site after this date. No structures were built at Nemea between the Hellenistic period and the fifth century C.E., and Roman inscriptions, pottery, and other finds are almost absent from the site.¹⁰ Miller suggests a specific date of 271 B.C.E. for the return of the games to Argos based on the death of Pyrrhus of Epirus in Argos in 272 B.C.E. and the tumultuous political situation in the Argolid.¹¹ While possible, there is little hard evidence to support this particular conclusion. The salient point for this dissertation is that the games were moved to the city of Argos and the hosting sanctuary was permanently abandoned.

⁹ Miller, *Nemea*, 48-50; 52-53.

¹⁰ Miller, *Nemea*, 32, 66; Pierre Amandry, "Sur les concours argiens," *BCH* Supplement 6 (1980): 248-49.

¹¹ Plut. *Vit. Pyrrh.* 32.1; 33.2-6; Stephen G. Miller, *Excavations at Nemea II: the early Hellenistic stadium* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 93n.213. There was a brief period following 235 B.C.E. when rival games might have been returned to Nemea by Aratos of Sikyon (Plut. *Vit. Arat.* 28.3-4), but the games were celebrated concurrently at Argos.

Pausanias corroborates the abandonment of the sanctuary in the Roman period. During his visit in the second century C.E., he states that the sanctuary was in ruins. In contrast to the two books that he devotes to Olympia, Pausanias' description of Nemea is only two sections of one chapter.¹² He reports that the roof of the temple had fallen in and that the cult statue of Zeus was no longer there. He also describes a grove of cypress trees and the shrine of Opheltes-Arkhemoros, which was still visible and surrounded by a stone wall with altars in the enclosure.

The sanctuary of Zeus at Nemea, then, follows the model of abandonment suggested for many rural sanctuaries during the Hellenistic/early Roman period, and becomes a cult displaced from its original setting.¹³ This was partially brought about by the nucleation of city centers, such as Corinth and Argos itself, at the expense of the surrounding countryside. There were, however, exceptions to this model. In fact, the preeminent extra-urban sanctuary of the Argives was not the sanctuary of Zeus at Nemea, but was the Argive Heraion. Francois de Polignac's classic study demonstrated how the city of Argos used the Argive Heraion to mark and maintain its hinterland in the early years of the polis.¹⁴ Nemea may also have served this function in its time, but the Heraion was in use a full century earlier than the sanctuary at Nemea and, while the roof of the Nemean temple was allowed to fall in and the cult statue was taken away, the sanctuary of Hera was maintained and frequented throughout the Roman imperial period.¹⁵

Pausanias, for instance, describes many dedications left at the Heraion, including by Nero

¹² Paus. 2.15.2-3.

¹³ Susan E. Alcock, *Graecia capta : the landscapes of Roman Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

¹⁴ Francois de Polignac, *Cults, territory, and the origins of the Greek city-state* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 33-40.

¹⁵ Amandry, *Sur les concours argiens*, 249-50.

and Hadrian, which shows that this sanctuary continued to flourish through the Hellenistic and Roman periods.¹⁶

The abandonment of Nemea was in contrast to the other three original stephanic sanctuaries. Olympia continued to be the preeminent center of the stephanic games and generals, leagues, and emperors continued to use the site as a prominent place at which to dedicate buildings and statues, counting on the wide audience of spectators and athletes attending the Olympic Games to see them. Delphi maintained its status through its games, second only to the Olympics, the continued patronage of the oracle of Apollo, and the Panhellenic Amphiktyonic League.

The closest parallel to Nemea was the sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia, which had also been abandoned during the Hellenistic period and whose games were transferred to the city of Sikyon. We shall see, however, that the games returned to Corinth quickly after the refoundation of Corinth in 44 BCE, and the Isthmian sanctuary was reopened in the mid-first century C.E. A major contrast between Isthmia and Nemea, however, was that Isthmia's mother city was now a Roman colony and the capital of Roman Achaia, and the Roman Corinthians used the Isthmian Games and other monuments in the Corinthia that had great antiquity to bolster their own position as the inheritors of ancient Corinth and its traditions.

Argos did not invest in the rehabilitation of the Nemean sanctuary after its neglect in the Hellenistic period, but continued to hold the games in an urban religious context. The city did not receive the influx of Roman citizens that Corinth did. According to the epigraphic and archaeological record, in addition to the lack of mention in historical sources, the Argives maintained a self-sufficient and relatively modest degree of

¹⁶ Paus. 2.17.6-7.

prosperity in the Julio-Claudian period.¹⁷ In order to promote both the Nemean Games and other touristic attractions, the Argives made the city itself the notable attraction, by focusing on the mythological history of the city. This is particularly illustrated by the description provided by Pausanias, who devotes much energy in the description of the numerous shrines, monuments, statues, and tombs of various famous Argives, historic or mythological, that were dispersed throughout the city by the second century C.E.¹⁸ He is largely silent about the Nemean Games, however, briefly mentioning a sanctuary to Nemean Zeus near the agora and, later, the stadium for the Nemean and Heraion Games on the slopes of the acropolis of Larissa.¹⁹

The Argives also attracted tourists and athletes to their city through other athletic contests. There were games dedicated to Flamininus, which were celebrated at least a century after their foundation.²⁰ Furthermore, an athletic festival which had been hosted at the Argive Heraion in previous centuries was also transferred to Argos at roughly the same time as the Nemean Games, at which point its name was changed from the Hekatomboia to the Heraia. This was presumably in order to clarify to whom it was dedicated now that they were not celebrated at the sanctuary of Hera.²¹

When they were celebrated at their respective sanctuaries, these contests had been organized by separate agonothetes. Sometime after their transplantation to Argos, however, the individual agonistic offices were dissolved and the games were

¹⁷ Piérart, "Argos Romaine: la cité des Perséides," 22-23.

¹⁸ Paus. 2.19-24.

¹⁹ Paus. 2.24.2.

²⁰ Plut. *Vit. Flam.* 12.2; SEG 22, 1967, 266; Georges Daux, "Concours des Titeia dans un décret d'Argos," *BCH* 88 (1964): 569-76.

²¹ Amandry, "Sur les concours argiens," 246-47. These games might have been included in the *periodos*, since their prize was not cash, but a shield (A. J. Spawforth, "Agonistic festivals in Roman Greece" in *The Greek renaissance in the Roman Empire: papers from the Tenth British Museum Classical Colloquium*, ed. S. Walker and A. Cameron (London: University of London, Institute of Classical Studies, 1989), 193).

administered by a single unit, consisting of an agonothele and a board of Hellanodikai, perhaps in an attempted connection with the Olympic Games.²² In 209 B.C.E., for instance, Philip V served as agonothele for both of the games, which were both celebrated within the span of mid-June to late July.²³

Imperial contests, or *Sebasteia*, were also added to the athletic program of Argos. Pierre Charneux proposed that these sets of games rotated, with the biennial Nemean Games being celebrated alternately with the imperial games and the *Heraia*.²⁴ Like Isthmia, Argos was a site for the celebration of the imperial cult in Greece. This imperial component was a conscious association with the Nemean Games. As with the Isthmian Games, the celebration of the emperor was incorporated into one of the most venerable institutions of the ancient Greek world, where he was celebrated alongside Zeus. Not only was Greece a relatively large city, but every other year the city attracted huge crowds for their games, which would have promoted not only Zeus, but the emperor, as well. In this way, the Roman cult was linked with the memory of the stephanic competitions, which had been celebrated on mainland Greece by Greeks since the sixth century B.C.E. and before, and was thereby integrated into the social and cultic fabric of the Greek world.

As we have seen, the Roman history of the Nemean Games is not about Nemea, but Argos. It is, in contrast to the other festivals examined in this dissertation, the study of a festival transplanted to an urban and civic fabric, rather than an extra-mural sanctuary which had hosted the games for centuries. Many of the excavated features, for

²² IG IV, 589, 597; SEG XXV, 362, ll.16-18; Amandry, "Sur les concours argiens," 247; P. Charneux, "Inscriptions d'Argos," *BCH* 80 (1956): 609; Ronald S. Stroud, "An Argive Decree from Nemea Concerning Aspendos," *Hesperia* 53 (1984): 204; W. Vollgraff, "Inscriptiones Argivae," *Mnemosyne* 44 (1916): 64-71.

²³ Livy 27.30-31.

²⁴ P. Charneux, "Inscriptions d'Argos," 609.

instance the bath and theater, and, in the so-called agora, a track, gymnasium, palaistra, and nymphaeum, have correlates to the buildings and monuments at Olympia, Delphi, and Isthmia. It is therefore necessary to examine these structures and discern whether the site of the Roman Nemea Games has, in fact, been discovered or if it is still buried somewhere beneath the modern city.

2. *The theater*

The structure that is most securely identified with the Nemean Games in the city of Argos is the theater (figure 6.3). It was constructed in the first quarter of the third century B.C.E., when the games were permanently transferred from the sanctuary to the city. While Delphi and Isthmia both had theaters, the sanctuary of Zeus at Nemea was not so equipped, as theatrical and musical celebrations were not part of the Nemean Games in the Classical period.²⁵ They were added to the contest sometime after their transfer to Argos. Plutarch and Pausanias both report citharodic contests that took place in the theater when Philopoemen visited the games in Argos in 205 B.C.E. and a statue base discovered in Athens shows that citharodic contests were also a part of the Hekatomboia festival to Hera.²⁶ This addition could have been due to the increased popularity of theatrical contests in the Hellenistic period. The games also received increased competition for visitors from the nearby sanctuary of Asklepios at Epidauros, whose popularity grew enormously during the Hellenistic period. The people of Epidauros also held athletic contests at their sanctuary and had built their monumental theater at about

²⁵ This is also the case with the Olympic Games, on which the Nemean Games were modeled.

²⁶ Plut. *Vit. Phil.* 11; Paus. 8.50.3; IG II², 3779. This inscription is the statue base of an Athenian kitharodic champion named Nikokles, who won contests at Delphi, Athens, and Argos, among others. It dates to the third century B.C.E.

this same time. The Argives may have built their theater in order to compete with that sanctuary and draw spectators to the games and other festivals in their city.

The theater was built into the natural slope of the Larissa hill (figure 6.4). The middle quadrants were cut from the bedrock, while the rest of the theater was constructed of cut stone. A total of eighty-three preserved steps lead to the top. The seating was divided into four quadrants with three horizontal walkways of eighty-three preserved steps that divided the sections.²⁷ The estimated capacity was 20,000 spectators. The façade of the Hellenistic proscenium (24.40x2.50m) was decorated with twenty columns, probably in the Ionic order (figure 6.5). A two storied scene (19.10x5.20m) stood behind, with ramps on both sides and a subterranean passage leading to the orchestra. The front of the scene was probably pierced by five bays and there was a Doric stoa behind.

The complex was refurbished in the second century C.E., with an Italic-style scene (figure 6.6).²⁸ The Hellenistic proscenium was replaced by a 35m long stage built closer to the orchestra in order to enclose the entire theater, and elaborated with alternating square and semi-circular niches. The postscenium was decorated with two levels of eight Corinthian columns each, which rested on four massive rectangular plinths. The theater was renovated again in the third and fourth centuries C.E., when the postscenium was extended further to the south and the theater was further elaborated with geometric mosaics and pillars.

This second century benefaction has been credited to the philhellenic emperor Hadrian without much substantiation. The emperor did visit Argos and is credited with dedicating a golden peacock at the Argive Heraion and renovating her sanctuary in the

²⁷ Moretti, *Théâtres d'Argos*. Moretti estimates that there were a total of 90 steps.

²⁸ Piérart & Touchais, *Argos*, 78.

city.²⁹ He also added a horserace to the Nemean Games.³⁰ His interest in the city can also be corroborated by the construction of an aqueduct and nymphaeum further to the north of the theater, also on the slopes of the Larissa, which brought water from thirty kilometers away.³¹ Hadrian's patronage of Argos was part of his attempts to bolster of Greek festivals and cults.³² Argos' antiquity would also have been of interest to the emperor in his creation of the Panhellenion, as many member cities in Asia Minor and beyond traced their foundation from the home of Perseus and used that city to broadcast their Greekness.

The renovations to the theater, however, are tenuously linked with these other Hadrianic projects. This association is based on an inscription that was discovered to the north of the orchestra within the theater complex. W. Vollgraff generously reconstructs it as:³³

[Αὐτοκρά]τωρ Καῖσαρ, [θεοῦ Τραϊανοῦ Παρθικοῦ υἱός],
[θεοῦ Νέρο]υα υἱωνός, [Τραϊανὸς Ἀδριανὸς Σεβαστός],
[ἀρχιερεὺς μέγισ]τος, δημαρχικῆς ἐξουσίας το., ὕπατος τὸ., πατὴρ πατρίδος],
[τὸ θέατρον Ἄργου]ς ὑπὸ ἐμπρησμοῦ δ[ιαφθαρέν ἀπὸ θεμελίων ἀνωκοδόμησεν].

Vollgraff not only supplies Hadrian's entire name, but also the word "theater." Beyond its findspot, then, there is no reason to suggest that the inscription was necessarily associated with that structure. Furthermore, the inscription refers to a fire. Vollgraff suggests some sort of disastrous event, after which Hadrian financed the Roman reconstruction of the theater. As far as I can tell from the published excavation reports, there is no actual fire damage to the remains. Therefore, both Hadrian's participation and

²⁹ Paus. 2.17.6.

³⁰ Paus. 6.16.4.

³¹ SEG XI 340; Susan Walker, "The architectural development of Roman nymphaea in Greece" (PhD diss., University of London, 1979), 97-106.

³² Walker, "The architectural development of Roman nymphaea in Greece," 104.

³³ W. Vollgraff, "Inscriptions d'Argos," *BCH* 68-9 (1944-45): 400-1.

the fire have no real substantiation. Though Hadrian could have reconstructed the theater, there is no real evidence to prove it. It is also possible that local elites financed the renovations, perhaps even to present the space in its best and most modern light before the emperor's visit.

Though the theater was used for the Nemean Games, many religious loci were discovered throughout the theater complex, both pre- and post-dating its construction, for other deities. In the south parados there was a stele dedicated to Zeus Eubouleus and a relief depicting the Dioskouroi. There were also fragments of terracotta dedications to local heroes, including Herakles, found throughout the complex. Two bothroi were discovered, one holding nearly seven hundred terracotta figurines, as well as about three hundred miniature vessels, and dozens of molds.³⁴ Another against the northern parados wall was lined with cut stone and had a stone partition in the middle, separating the pit into two equal spaces, both of which were filled with ash, animal bones, and miniature vases dating from the second half of the fourth to the early third century B.C.E.³⁵ So, the theater was multi-purpose, not just for the worship of Nemean Zeus, but other gods and heroes, as well.

Just 100 meters to the south of the theater, a smaller odeion with about a 1,100 person capacity was constructed at the beginning of the second century C.E. It is relevant to this discussion of the Nemean Games because its orchestra was decorated with a mosaic depicting two agonistic tables laden with all of the prizes available for a victor in a competition, such as palm branches, crowns, vases and shields, the traditional gift for

³⁴ Jean-Charles Moretti, "L'implantation du théâtre d'Argos dans un lieu plein de sanctuaries" in *Argos kai Argolida : topographia kai poleodomia : praktika diethnous Synedriou, Athena-Argos, 28/4-1/5/1990*, ed. Anne Pariente and Gilles Touchais (Athens: Ecole française d'Athènes, 1998), 233.

³⁵ Moretti, "L'implantation du théâtre d'Argos dans un lieu plein de sanctuaries," 235-36.

victors in the Heraia (figure 6.7).³⁶ It replaced a fifth century B.C.E. theater used for Assembly meetings,³⁷ and, in the second half of the third century, was enlarged to accommodate about 1,800 people.³⁸ The smaller size of the odeion suggests that it was could not have been used to accommodate the many spectators who would come to Argos for the Nemean Games. Perhaps meetings in preparation for the games took place in this structure. It is interesting that the city's civic pride in the Argive's control over the Nemean and Heraion Games were so highlighted in the mosaic decoration of this structure.

The theater in Argos was used for the games which had been transferred to the city in the Hellenistic period. In contrast to Isthmia, and to a lesser extent Delphi, the theater also needs to be understood in its civic context. Even though it was a venue for the Nemean and Heraia Games, and may even have been built expressly for that purpose, it was still the largest theater in the city of Argos. Theaters were multi-purpose structures, which were also used for other festivals, and, in the Roman period, these spaces also served as the city's amphitheater.³⁹ Therefore, while it was most assuredly used for the Nemean Games, it needs to be viewed as a structure that served multiple purposes throughout the intervening years between the Nemean Games.

3. The Roman Bath

A monumental Roman bath complex extending eighty-four meters is located immediately to the south of the theater, spanning the distance between it and the Classical agora (figure 6.1). Bath complexes were a common feature of Greek sanctuaries in the

³⁶ Moretti, *Théâtres d'Argos*, 26.

³⁷ Piérart & Touchais, *Argos*, 78.

³⁸ Moretti, *Théâtres d'Argos*, 26.

³⁹ This is indicated by cuttings around the orchestra for nets to protect the spectators from the wild beast hunts and gladiatorial combats.

Roman imperial period, as we have seen. Like the theater, however, the bath would not have been used exclusively by the spectators and athletes of the Nemean and other games, but also by the population of Argos in the intervening years.

The structure was actually converted into a bath in the second century C.E. Originally, the center of the bath was a huge colonnaded courtyard built at the end of the first century C.E, which terminated in a grand staircase (figure 6.8).⁴⁰ Three adjoining rooms (B1, B2, B3) were at the stair's summit, which led to a so-called "crypt," Room A. This room was vaulted and had a subterranean room two meters below the floor level, accessible from the exterior and possibly filled with water. Pierre Aupert interprets this complex as a Serapeion or an Asklepieion, citing the layouts of typical Serapeia excavated in Pergamon and Syracuse, and the close mythological ties between Argos and Egypt in Greek mythology.⁴¹ This is somewhat supported by the fact that two stelai were discovered referring to Serapis and Isis, but they were found to the north of the theater, and so are not directly related to the bath complex. There were also statues of Asklepios and his wife, Hygeia, which were excavated from the building, but these seem to have been from the later history of the site after its conversion to a bath and these gods were often worshipped in bath complexes.⁴² Pausanias does briefly mention an Asklepieion, but it is difficult to tell if he is referring to this particular building.⁴³ By this time, it would have been converted to the bath, but it could have held vestiges of its former purpose. Aupert himself acknowledges that his theory has not been particularly well

⁴⁰ Pierre Aupert, "Un Sérapeion Argien?," *CRAI* 129 (1985): 151-75 and "L'eau curative à Argos," *BCH* Supplement 28 (1994): 193-200.

⁴¹ Aupert, "Un Sérapeion Argien?"; Pierre Aupert, "Architecture et urbanisme à Argos au I^{er} siècle ap. J.-C.," *BCH* Supplement 39 (2001): 439-54.

⁴² Jean Marcadé, "Sculptures argiennes," *BCH* 81 (1957): 415-421.

⁴³ Paus. 2.21.1.

received, but argues that the typology of the building fits that of other Serapeia and notes the lack of other viable theories as to the building's use.⁴⁴

The conversion of the structure to a bath was again credited to Hadrian, but with little any concrete substantiation. The reconstructions are dated to the early second century C.E., with further work completed during the reign of Gordian III (238-244 C.E.).⁴⁵ At this time, the complex was converted into a secular bathing facility (figure 6.9). The three rooms of the original structure along the west side (B1, B2, B3) were preserved, as well as the apsidal room (A1). The courtyard, however, was entirely renovated to house the various rooms required of the bath, with lavish decorations. The apodyterium (D) led to a large frigidarium (F) by way of two smaller transitional rooms (E1 and E2). The frigidarium had rectangular pools on the northern, southern, and western sides. Finally, there were three caldaria (C1, C2, C3) and perhaps two tepidariae (G, H). All of the rooms were lavishly decorated with marble or mosaic floors and marble columns and there were several niches to house statues. Covered palaestrae were constructed to the west and the east of the monumental staircase, which made this a place to both bathe and exercise.

Roman baths were constructed at all of the Panhellenic sanctuaries. Roman baths, however were not only ubiquitous in sanctuaries, but also cities of the empire, where they were centers the athletic life, but also the educational needs of the city.⁴⁶ So while this bath complex was certainly used by spectators and athletes who came to participate in the Nemean Games, it most certainly primarily served as a bath for the Roman city of Argos.

⁴⁴ Aupert, "Architecture et urbanisme à Argos au I^{er} siècle ap. J.-C.," 445.

⁴⁵ Georges Daux, "Les fouilles de l'École française d'Athènes à Argos (1952-1953)," *CRAI* (1953): 459.

⁴⁶ Fikret K. Yegül, *Bathing in the Roman world* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 156.

4. The Agora

To the east of the theater and Roman bath, a series of buildings dating from the Archaic through the Roman imperial period have been excavated by the French Archaeological School (figure 6.1). There have been many controversies over the identification of this area. The excavators have long argued that it is the agora of the ancient city, even though it is difficult to match the buildings discovered with the description that Pausanias provides. Pausanias supplies a copious description of Argos, including many monuments to various gods and local heroes, from Zeus to Kleobis and Biton, the Danaïds, and the spot where the head of Medusa was buried.⁴⁷ He unfortunately gives relatively few solid topographical markers from which to identify specific buildings, besides for the monumental theater. The excavators have wrestled with bringing together Pausanias and the archaeological record.⁴⁸ The strongest evidence for their identification of this area as the agora, however, does not come from Pausanias; inscriptions discovered in the vicinity of the excavations honor various *agoranomoi* of Argos, indicating that the agora which they supervised was probably in this vicinity.⁴⁹

During the course of excavations, buildings consistent with those found at the other athletic venues, such as a race track, gymnasium, and palaistra, were discovered in this area that date to the Roman period. Additionally, there is a nymphaeum that has been compared with the Palaimonion excavated at Isthmia. The possibility that portions of the

⁴⁷ Paus. 2.19-24.

⁴⁸ Marcel Piérart, "L'itinéraire de Pausanias à Argos" in *Argos kai Argolida : topographia kai poleodomia : praktika diethnous Synedriou, Athena-Argos, 28/4-1/5/1990*, ed. A. Pariente and G. Touchais, (Athens: Ecole française d'Athènes, 1998): 337-56; Patrick Marchetti and Yvonne Rizakis, "Recherches sur les mythes et la topographie d'Argos. IV. L'agora revisitée," *BCH* 119 (1995): 437-72; Pierre Aupert, "Pausanias et l'Asclépieion d'Argos," *BCH* 111 (1987): 511-7.

⁴⁹ Inv.E 260 A and B, 261; Anna Philippa-Touchais, et.al., "Argos," *BCH* 124 (2000): 492-94.

Nemean Games could have been celebrated in this area, with the supplementary bath and theater complexes nearby, must be explored.

Pausanias explicitly states that the stadium for the Nemean Games was located on the slopes of Larissa and he mentions a precinct of Nemean Zeus, in which there was a bronze statue by Lysippus, located somewhere near to the agora.⁵⁰ He gives no other details of the shrine, or indications if any portion of the Nemean Games were actually celebrated in this particular spot. No inscriptions or dedications have been discovered in the agora that refer to Zeus, nor has archaeological evidence of a shrine been located. Marchetti and Rizakis, however, postulate its location based on where they believe the sanctuary of Lykian Apollo was located and other monuments they correspond to Pausanias' description.⁵¹ They divide the agora into precincts, one of Apollo and one of Zeus. Marcel Piérart, meanwhile, argues that the shrine may have been located in an unknown position outside of the confines of the agora.⁵² I am hesitant to place a shrine to Nemean Zeus within the agora. The athletic complexes within this area *could* have been used for elements of the games, however, or, which I believe is more likely, for civic athletic purposes as were found in other cities in Greece.

The first changes to the agora in the Roman period date to the first century C.E., after the trauma of the Civil Wars had died away. A monumental colonnade on the northern border of the excavated area of the site was replaced by a commercial space that

⁵⁰ Paus. 2.24.2; 2.20.3. Without further details, it is also possible that this shrine was a satellite shrine to Nemean Zeus, comparable to the Eleusinian shrine to Demeter and the Brauronian shrine to Artemis in the center of Athens.

⁵¹ Paus. 2.19.3; Marchetti and Rizakis, "Recherches sur les mythes et la topographie d'Argos. IV. L'agora revisitée," 440-445.

⁵² M. Piérart, "L'itinéraire de Pausanias à Argos," 344.

retained the same orientation of the earlier building (figure 6.10 – KR).⁵³ More dramatic changes took place to the south. The interior of a classical colonnaded area was replaced with a rectangular colonnaded court measuring 35.70x17.00m (figure 6.10 – PG). Stoa were built against this structure on three sides. An inscription discovered inside dating to the Augustan period refers to a palaistra and three gymnasia and honors the gymnasiarch and *agoranomoi* L. Ingenuus Cornelius, who was given the honors of an agonotheite without explicitly naming him as one himself.⁵⁴ Based on its findspot, it has been suggested that the stoas may have been one of these structures.⁵⁵ No other finds or inscriptions are recorded that relate to a gymnasium or palaistra here. The stoas do bring to mind the *xystos* at Delphi and other sites, so it may be that this is a correct identification, if a tenuous one. If this structure is, in fact, a gymnasium or palaistra, then some of the events of the Nemean Games, or the practice periods in preparation for the games, could have taken place here. Gymnasia and palaistrai were common in Greek cities everywhere, however, and no inscriptions explicitly mention that they were connected to the Nemean Games, so it is probable that these structures were used by the citizen body of Argos.

More significant was the discovery of five *balbis* blocks *in situ* to the north of this structure, dated to the first century C.E., replacing a similar arrangement from the Hellenistic period (figure 6.10). Pariente and others link the rearrangement of this track to the erection of the palaistra, but the blocks of the starting line are older than the first

⁵³ A. Pariente, M. Piérard and J.-P. Thalmann, “Les recherches sur l’agora d’Argos: résultats et perspectives” in *Argos kai Argolida : topographia kai poleodomia : praktika diethnous Synedriou, Athena-Argos, 28/4-1/5/1990*, ed. A. Pariente and G. Touchais (Athens: Ecole française d’Athènes, 1998), 218.

⁵⁴ Pierre Charneux, “Inscriptions d’Argos,” *BCH* 77 (1953): 400 no. 5. Charneux cites other inscriptions in which a man is given honors like an agonotheite, without actually holding the office. This individual is also known from another inscription that deals with professional athletic organizations (IG IV, 607).

⁵⁵ Pariente, Pierart, and Thalmann, “Les recherches sur l’agora d’Argos: résultats et perspectives,” 218.

century.⁵⁶ The track consisted of sixteen lanes divided into two groups. It was in use for only a short time; a drain destroyed part of the starting line, with inscribed stelai placed face down over the pipe to protect it and, in the second century C.E., a fountain (C) was built over the track, blocking a significant portion.⁵⁷

The last monument I would like to discuss is a nymphaeum that was also built in the area in the first century C.E., which had an older, perhaps classical building underneath (figure 6.11).⁵⁸ The base of the structure was a 16m square plinth lined with poros blocks, which also served as the structure's euthynteria. Over this square structure, a circular octastyle building was erected with a winding staircase descending into a subterranean chamber. The building is further identified as a nymphaeum by a dedicatory inscription on an architrave block which reads “τῶν πηγῶν καὶ τὸ νυμφαῖον μετὰ τῶν Δοχε[ῖων]”.⁵⁹

One of the peculiar features of this structure was a channel originating in the center of the building and going north, the floor of which was paved with poros blocks. At the end of the foundations, the tunnel turned eastward to terminate at the north-eastern corner of the building. Patrick Marchetti reconstructs the tunnel to stop at a cistern to the north of the nymphaeum, just to the east of the sewer (figure 6.12).⁶⁰ It seems to have been original to the Classical or Hellenistic structure below, which was reused in the Roman period. The building itself would have completely covered the subterranean feature.

⁵⁶ Pariente, Pierart, and Thalmann, “Les recherches sur l'agora d'Argos: résultats et perspectives,” 218.

⁵⁷ Marcel Piérart and Jean-Paul Thalmann, “Nouvelles inscriptions argiennes (I),” *BCH* Supplement 6 (1980): 256-69.

⁵⁸ Patrick Marchetti and Kostas Kolokotsas, *Le Nymphée de l'agora d'Argos* (Paris: De Boccard, 1995).

⁵⁹ Marchetti and Kolokotsas, *Le Nymphée de l'agora d'Argos*, M7.

⁶⁰ P. Marchetti, “Le nymphée d'Argos, le Palémonion de l'Isthme et l'agora de Corinthe” in *Argos kai Argolida : topographia kai poleodomia : praktika diethnous Synedriou, Athena-Argos, 28/4-1/5/1990*, ed. A. Pariente and G. Touchais (Athens: Ecole française d'Athènes, 1998), 358.

The structure would have looked spectacular (figure 6.13). It was covered in white marble, which led Aupert to tentatively identify it with the memorial on the site of Pyrrhus' funeral pyre, described by Pausanias as a white stone building in the center of the agora.⁶¹ The architrave inscription and the hydraulic architecture, however, negate this theory. Marchetti instead connects it to the Palaimonion at the sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia, discussed in the following chapter. The two buildings do have a resemblance to each other. The Palaimonion also had hydraulic features, indicated by the watertight stucco used in its construction. Its tholos was constructed on a square socle with a tunnel measuring 1.70 meters running through the middle. The Palaimonion's tunnel, however, begins at the eastern end of the temple, turning 35 degrees to the northwest in the center.

Marchetti draws comparisons between the positions of the Palaimonion over the early stadium at Isthmia and the Argive nymphaeum's to the Hellenistic racing track.⁶² He also suggests that the undiscovered temple of Apollo Lycien, which he would like to see on the terrace to the south, would have been aligned to this structure, as the Temple of Poseidon was with the Palaimonion. He draws parallels with the Corinthian Forum, in which a Hellenistic track, also abandoned by this time, was discovered near to the Peirene fountain and the Sacred Spring, and, based on slight evidence, he reconstructs a small monopteros tholos with the Sacred Spring flowing beneath from the apsidal building with the underground passage.⁶³ Therefore, in the Corinthian agora, one would have had a similar construction to Isthmia and Argos, with the monumental temple of Apollo aligned with a race track and a small monopteros. The evidence to connect all of these structures

⁶¹ Paus. 2.21.4; P. Aupert, "Un Sérapeion Argien?," 174.

⁶² Marchetti, "Le nymphée d'Argos, le Palémonion de l'Isthme et l'agora de Corinthe," 360.

⁶³ Marchetti, "Le nymphée d'Argos, le Palémonion de l'Isthme et l'agora de Corinthe," 362.

is slight. The stronger and traditional interpretation of this building as a nymphaeum, based on the water features and the inscribed architrave, is preferable.

Many of the structures and features in the Argive agora have counterparts in the other Panhellenic sanctuaries. All, however, were also at home in the civic structure of an Achaean city in the Roman period. Though some of these structures may have been used during the games, they would also have been used by the citizens of Argos during the intervening weeks, months, and years between Nemean festivals.

5. Conclusions

The Argives moved the Nemean Games to their city in the Hellenistic period, and celebrated them along with contests to one of their most important goddesses, Hera, and the emperor. Our knowledge of Roman Argos is regrettably thin, as it is seldom mentioned in the historical record. Though the primary sources are largely silent about Argos during the Roman imperial period and the epigraphic record is also lacking, especially compared to Olympia and Delphi, the importance of the Nemean Games is demonstrated by its position as one of the major stephanic competitions among the most prestigious of the games throughout the Empire. The Nemean Games and the stories that surrounded Argos played a role in the Roman history of the site, as best seen in the inscriptions of victorious athletes which list Nemea among the most prestigious of contests, their role in Hadrian's Panhellenion, and Pausanias' extended descriptions of heroes and heroics of the Argive Plain.

The Roman history of the Nemean Games is much different than the other four major stephanic games in Greece. It is a story of a transplanted cult that is celebrated in an urban context. Though the archaeological evidence for the Roman Nemean Games is

regrettably slim, various athletic complexes have been discovered in the city, such as the theater and bath and other buildings in the agora. While these were probably used for the Nemean Games, they were certainly also used for civic purposes by the population of Argos in the intervening years between festivals.

Chapter 7:

The sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia: Panhellenism administered by a Roman colony

1. Introduction

The sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia provides a unique case study in the causes, effects, and ramifications of Roman imperial administration on a mainland Greek sanctuary, as well as the results of Greece's responses to Roman control. The Isthmian Games, slightly less prestigious than either the Olympic or Pythian, were celebrated biennially rather than quadrennially. From their inception, the Isthmian sanctuary and its games fell under the administrative control of the city of Corinth, which was reestablished as a Roman colony in the first century B.C.E. and, moreover, became the capital of the province of Achaëa. Consequently, I will show that a Roman influence can be seen more directly on Isthmia than at the other three games discussed in this dissertation. Though Isthmia may not have received as much imperial attention as Olympia or Delphi, the Roman citizen elites of Corinth advertised their sanctuary with the same sorts of Augustan ideals. The redevelopment of the sanctuary and the administration of its games present particularly power examples of the broader phenomenon demonstrated at Corinth from the beginning of its foundation. Corinth's control of the Isthmian Games, and the mythological links of Poseidon to the Corinthia, in particular, played an active role in complicated negotiations of identity between the various participants in the games, including, but not limited to, the Roman citizen settlers

and the indigenous Corinthians. Administrative control of the festival, which had been celebrated elsewhere since the city's sack, was quickly returned to Corinth after its refoundation, where the official language of the games remained Greek. When the games eventually returned to the sanctuary of Poseidon, in the mid-first century C.E., the sanctuary was modernized and the previously architecturally invisible cult of Palaimon was given physical form. The emphasis placed on regaining control over the Isthmian Games early in their history, and the subsequent renovations of the Isthmian sanctuary, indicate the importance of these ancient games to the formation of Roman Corinthian identity.

By examining the archaeological and epigraphic evidence from both Isthmia and Corinth, I will demonstrate the role that the games played in establishing Corinthian identity in the Roman period. Bureaucratic control of the sanctuary and its games was held by the leading Roman citizens of Corinth, initially the colonists themselves, and later by local elites. Like Delphi, an agonothete now presided over the Isthmian Games, and this became the most prestigious position available in Corinth. Though the official language of the early colony was Latin, the language of the games continued to be Greek and the traditional structure of the games remained intact. The new administrators were thus able to stress the antiquity of the games, and therefore the antiquity of Corinth itself. Victors' lists and other epigraphic data reveal the participants of the Isthmian Games, from where in the Roman Empire these athletes were coming, and their participation in the athletic synods of their time.

The Roman period installations at Isthmia indicate the space was modernized with Roman installations, such as the Roman bath and arch. The nature and dates of the major

building projects in the Julio-Claudian period and the second century C.E reveal important aspects of the relationship between the games and the city of Corinth, and the province of Achaëa as a whole. Early renovations indicate the importance of the sanctuary to the citizens of Corinth. While the games returned to Corinth within a few years of its refoundation, the sanctuary itself was reopened after a longer hiatus. The second century renovations reflect a renewed interest among Greek elites, including Herodes Atticus, in using the history of their ancestors to tie themselves to the classical past and reinforce their position in the Roman world. The city of Corinth and the sanctuary of Poseidon were ripe for these rhetorical and architectural assertions.

1.1. History of scholarship

Excavations at the sanctuary of Poseidon began in 1952, when Oscar Broneer uncovered the Temple of Poseidon in his first trench (figure 7.1). Scholars at the University of Chicago, led by Broneer, continued excavations until 1967, exposing the temple, temenos, two dining caves, a shrine to the hero Palaimon, two stadia, and the theater. Most of these architectural discoveries consisted only of foundations, however, since the site had been severely stripped of building materials for the fifth century C.E. construction of the Trans-Isthmian, or Hexamilion, Wall.¹ Other major excavations were undertaken by Paul Clement of the University of California – Los Angeles, who, in 1967, began excavating the Roman Bath, the Northeast Gate, and, in the early 1970s, the area east of the temenos of Poseidon, colloquially called the East Field.²

¹ Timothy E. Gregory, *The hexamilion and the fortress*, Isthmia 5 (Princeton: American School of Classical Studies, 1993).

² The Chicago and UCLA excavations have largely been published in the American School of Classical Studies Isthmia series, presently consisting of nine volumes. Elizabeth Gebhard published her study of the theater under separate cover, Elizabeth R. Gebhard, *The theater at Isthmia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973).

Subsequent excavations have been sparse. Today, excavation of the site is shared by two universities: Elizabeth R. Gebhard succeeded Broneer as the director of the University of Chicago excavations in 1976 and Timothy E. Gregory of the Ohio State University succeeded Clement in 1987. The University of Chicago's permit includes the temenos of Poseidon, the Palaimonion, and the theater, while the Ohio State University has worked on areas outside of the walls, including the Roman Bath and the area east of the temenos. Gregory, Thomas Tartaron, and several other scholars have also conducted an extensive survey extending over the isthmus and areas of the eastern Corinthia to further elucidate our understanding of the changing relationships between the urban and rural communities in the region from prehistory to the present day.³

In 1989, Elizabeth Gebhard and F.P. Hemans undertook excavations within the temenos of Poseidon in order to further elucidate some of the hypotheses and the stratigraphy revealed by Broneer.⁴ These new trenches were purposefully placed in adjacent positions to Broneer's, and sought to garner more precise dating information through advanced recording techniques and a thorough removal and study of the material according to modern fieldwork methods.

Led by Timothy Gregory and Steven Ellis, the East Isthmia Archaeology Project was formed in 2005 to reexamine the area east of the temenos that was originally excavated in the early 1970s. As a member of this project, my role has been to put our

³ Thomas F. Tartaron, et. al., "The Eastern Corinthia Archaeological Survey: Integrated methods for a dynamic landscape," *Hesperia* 75 (2006): 453-524.

⁴ The results of these excavations were published in a series of *Hesperia* articles: Elizabeth R. Gebhard and F. P. Hemans, "University of Chicago excavations at Isthmia, 1989: I," *Hesperia* 61 (1992): 1-77 deals with the early history of the site through the mid-fifth century B.C.E. destruction of the Archaic temple; Elizabeth R. Gebhard and F. P. Hemans, "University of Chicago excavations at Isthmia: II," *Hesperia* 67 (1998): 1-63 deals with the Classical period through the second century C.E. abandonment of the site; E. R. Gebhard, F. P. Hemans and J. W. Hayes, "University of Chicago excavations at Isthmia, 1989: III," *Hesperia* 67 (1998): 405-56 deals with the Hellenistic abandonment through the Roman period use of the sanctuary.

analysis into the broader framework of Greek sanctuaries in the Roman period. It became clear in the first years of the project that the structures were entirely Roman and, though non-monumental, were connected to the use of the sanctuary in some way.

1.2. History of Roman Corinth

The history of the Isthmian Games cannot be separated from that of their mother-city. The Isthmian Games were unique among the mainland Greek Panhellenic contests, because their mother city was a Roman colony. From the early history of the refounded city, the Roman citizens laid claim to the power of the history of Corinth through the religious traditions of their new city.

These new Roman Corinthians did cultivate ties with the ancient Greek city through the religious tradition of their new city. Many of the major Olympian cults in Corinth were maintained, although most of them were dramatically altered from their original Greek form. For instance, the entrance to the prominent temple of Apollo on Temple Hill was reversed.⁵ The Roman colonists built a propylon to the west of the temple, to open onto the road to Sikyon, and they likewise reversed the typical Greek eastern entrance of the temple, to face the new gate. Finally, the ridge on which the temple stood was stripped away, so that the temple became the most prominent part of the landscape. Additionally, the Asklepieion of Corinth was quickly reestablished. The popularity of other Asklepieia, such as at nearby Epidauros, as well as Kos and Pergamon, might have stripped the Asklepieion at Corinth of some of its worshippers, but the popularity of Asklepios in the Roman period may also be one of the reasons that this sanctuary was so quickly reopened.

⁵ Guy D. R. Sanders, "Urban Corinth: an introduction" in *Urban religion in Roman Corinth: interdisciplinary approaches*, ed. D. N. Schowalter and S. J. Friesen (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 22.

The sanctuary of Demeter and Kore on Acrocorinth was also reestablished, but with significant differences. The dining rooms that were originally on the Lower Terrace and the cult building on the Middle Terrace were abandoned, as well as the Theatral Area on the Upper Terrace, which was replaced by three podium style temples in the second half of the first century C.E., all of which faced the north and the rest of the sanctuary below.⁶ In a nearby well, the statue heads of two maidens and one matron were recovered from the sanctuary's destruction in the fourth century C.E., the latter of which was larger than life-sized and had evidence of gilding and inlaid eyes. Fragments of the same type of marble were discovered in the westernmost temple, leading Bookidis to suggest that it belonged to Demeter. Another indication of the dramatic difference in the use of the sanctuary in the Roman period was the appearance of almost twenty *defixiones*, or curse tablets, on the site, which also call on the Morai, or Fates, which may indicate that one of the other temples was dedicated to these goddesses, and perhaps the third to Demeter's daughter Kore.

The dedications offered to different gods and goddesses also changed under the Romans. The miniature ceramic vessels that had been dedicated to Demeter and Kore, as well as the terracotta body parts and other dedications at the Asklepieion, almost cease to be left by worshippers.⁷ This is not to say that these gods were no longer worshipped, or that no dedications were left, but that the nature of the dedications changed and we do not know to what.

⁶ Nancy Bookidis and Ronald S. Stroud, *The sanctuary of Demeter and Kore: topography and architecture*, Corinth 18.3 (Princeton: American School of Classical Studies, 1997), 273-378.

⁷ Only twenty-nine of the figurines, out of a total of more than 24,000 fragments, date to the Roman period. Nancy Bookidis, "The sanctuaries of Corinth" in *Corinth, the centenary, 1896-1996*, Corinth 20, ed. C. K. Williams and N. Bookidis (Princeton: American School of Classical Studies, 2003), 255.

Another place within the city of Corinth where cult changed dramatically was in the placement of the Roman Forum over the sacred temenos where the original Corinthians had several local cults of a chthonic nature, such as an Underground Shrine to Artemis Korinthos, the Sacred Spring perhaps dedicated to Kytoto, two Hellenistic race tracks perhaps dedicated to Athena Hellotis, a Heroön of the Crossroads, and more.⁸ None of these cults survived the sack of the city in 146 B.C.E., and there is no reason to suggest that the native Hellenes would have the power or influence to continue worshipping at these cult sites after the Roman colonists took over the area as their own forum. In the forum, temples, relatively small and predominantly of the Roman podium style, were constructed for gods with strong associations with worship in the Roman Empire, such as one to Venus (figure 7.2).

A striking feature of all of these cults in the Roman city, both native Greek and Roman, is that their official language was Latin. The official documents that were discovered within the sanctuary sites, as well as references to their priesthoods on honorific monuments, were predominantly in Latin, not Greek, until the Hadrianic period, when Greek became more prevalent.⁹ Furthermore, the titulature of these priesthoods and other posts were, again, in Latin. This will be in striking contrast to the designations that were used for the Isthmian Games, which were in Greek.

Betsey Robinson has aptly shown how the mythical tradition of Corinth was used in the early Roman period.¹⁰ The Glauke and Peirene fountains, both located in highly

⁸ C. K. Williams, "Pre-roman cults in the area of the forum of ancient Corinth " (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1980).

⁹ Donald W. Engels, *Roman Corinth: an alternative model for the classical city* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 71.

¹⁰ Betsey A. Robinson, "Fountains and the culture of water at Roman Corinth" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2001); Betsey. A. Robinson, "Fountains and the formation of cultural identity at Roman

visible spots in the new Roman forum, were modernized early in the history of the colony, in the 20s and 10s B.C.E., in a conspicuously Roman fashion, with Roman architectural forms and materials, such as arcaded facades, open courtyards, and arches, drawing on Italian architectural models from the second and first centuries B.C.E.

Robinson argues that these fountains were not randomly picked, but were carefully selected for the mythological themes from the past that they represented. For instance, the tradition that the Glauke fountain was so named because Jason's princess bride threw herself into it, overcome by the poisoned robe given to her by Medea, is first mentioned by Pausanias in the second century C.E., perhaps indicating an invented mythology to tie this water source to the legendary past.¹¹

The Peirene fountain, in particular, had a strong connection to Poseidon and his role in the Corinthia and on the isthmus. It was named for a nymph who was a lover of Poseidon, god of the isthmus. Their children were Kenchrias and Leches, who gave their names to the two Corinthian harbors.¹² In fact, legend had it that Peirene was transformed into a fountain because she had wept so many tears over the death of Kenchrias.

The Peirene fountain had further associations with Poseidon through Bellerophon and Pegasus, his child from Medusa who sprang from her head when she was beheaded. The taming of that horse was said to have taken place at the fountain.¹³ Another tradition that water source sprung up where Pegasus kicked off. This action was commemorated

Corinth" in *Urban religion in Roman Corinth: interdisciplinary approaches*, ed. D. N. Schowalter and S. J. Friesen (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 111-40.

¹¹ Paus. 2.3.6. The most famous account of this myth by Euripides has the girl and her father dying in their palace (Eur, *Med.* 1195-1221).

¹² Paus 2.2.3, 2.3.2; Philostr. *Imag.* 2.16.4; Diod. Sic. 4.74.

¹³ Many ancient sources document this, the earliest being Pind. *Ol.* 13.65-67; in addition to pine wreaths, a symbol of the Isthmian Games, some of the earliest Corinthian coinage features the Pegasus on its obverse (Michel Amandry, *Le monnayage des duovirs corinthiens*, BCH Suppl. 15 (Athens: Ecole française d'Athènes, 1988), Plate II, II), some of which feature an arch as a representation of the fountain.

on some of the earlier coinage of Corinth, but also, and more important for our purposes, some of the earliest coinage of the Roman colony of Corinth. This fountain, then, had an exceptionally strong association with the Isthmian god Poseidon, both through Peirene and through Pegasus.

Beyond Peirene's mythological ties and central location, I believe that a major reason that the new Corinthians made such a huge effort to renovate this fountain was this association with Poseidon and, therefore, with their rightful role as administrators of the Isthmian Games. Poseidon was mythologically tied to the entire isthmus & Corinthia: expanding outward from the center of the Greek city, to the Corinthian twin harbors, and then to his sanctuary at the Isthmus. The Corinthians, in the Roman period and before, were at pains to highlight and showcase that the city and the isthmus were bound together as a whole through the god Poseidon.

Robinson has shown that there was an interesting juxtaposition in these fountains between a proclamation of the *Romanitas* of the new colony, through the architectural reconditioning of the structure and the adaptive reuse of pre-Roman buildings.¹⁴ The city was both championing the mythological tradition of ancient Corinth, but also applying a new, modern Roman face to it, which would only have been appropriate to the Roman commercial center that Corinth was envisioned to be, as well as the administrative city of the province with direct associations with Rome.¹⁵ As we shall see, this applied to the sanctuary at Isthmia and the games, as well.

¹⁴ Robinson, "Fountains and the formation of cultural identity at Roman Corinth," 111-40.

¹⁵ Robinson, "Fountains and the culture of water at Roman Corinth," 50.

1.3. History of the Isthmian sanctuary

The sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia was so named because of its location on the isthmus that connected mainland Greece with the Peloponnese, a 6.3 kilometer wide landmass that separated the Corinthian and the Saronic Gulfs (figure 7.3). Corinth controlled the ports on the eastern and western coasts of the isthmus, and the road that crossed the isthmus, called the *diolchos*. Both the city and the sanctuary, therefore, were located at the crossroads of the Mediterranean and were exceptionally well-visited by traffic coming from the north to the Peloponnese and ships and sailors coming from the east and the west.

The earliest evidence of cult activity at Isthmia comes from c. 1050 B.C.E. and consists of ash, bones, unburnt pottery, and other possible offerings, such as jewelry and figurines, from a deposit in what eventually became the East Terrace of the sanctuary (figure 7.4).¹⁶ This material was dumped here in the eighth century B.C.E., so it is not in its original place of use, but the finds strongly suggest early ritual activity.¹⁷ Catherine Morgan believes that the early sanctuary was used as a meeting ground for the elites of the different emergent communities around the Corinthia, since the sanctuary was ideally placed to afford easy access from several settlements around the area.¹⁸ The first temple was built on the site in the first half of the seventh century B.C.E. and the Isthmian Games were established in the Panhellenic circuit in the sixth century, with a traditional

¹⁶ Catherine Morgan, *The late bronze age settlement and early iron age sanctuary*, Isthmia 8 (Princeton: American School of Classical Studies, 1999), 373.

¹⁷ This is comparable to the layer of similar material at the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia, under what became the Pelopion and the Temple of Hera. The early excavators discovered a thick layer of ashy remains that included hundreds upon hundreds of horse and other figurines, many in bronze. This, also mixed in with sacrificial remains, showed continuity of dedications of the earliest periods of activity at the sanctuary from the tenth century B.C.E. onwards.

¹⁸ Catherine Morgan, "The evolution of sacral "landscape": Isthmia, Perachora and the early Corinthian state" in *Placing the gods : sanctuaries and sacred space in ancient Greece*, ed. Susan E. Alcock and Robin Osborne (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 105-42.

date of 582.¹⁹ The Archaic Doric temple was destroyed by fire in c. 470 B.C.E. and was soon replaced.²⁰ Although it was also struck by a fire (c.390 B.C.E.), it was repaired and stood until it was dismantled as spolia for the Hexamilion Wall.

Isthmia was severely affected by the disorder and constant skirmishes of the Hellenistic period, due to its much trodden location on the isthmus and its relationship with Corinth, meeting place for the Achaean League and used as a pawn in Macedonian and Roman struggles for hegemony. It was in 228 B.C.E. that the Romans were first invited to compete in the Isthmian Games, a right that had previously been reserved just for “Greeks”.²¹ This shows that these Hellenic cultural institutions were beginning to open up to the broader, “global” Mediterranean world.

Severe damage to the temple and the sanctuary occurred at the very end of the third century B.C.E., roughly contemporaneous with the burning and abandonment of the Racchi settlement to the south of the sanctuary (figure 7.5).²² Two deposits of broken inscriptions and architectural fragments, many from the Temple of Poseidon and none dating after c.200 B.C.E., were discovered in the 1989 excavation. Gebhard and Hemans acknowledges the difficulty in associating the destruction and accompanying ceramic record with a particular historical event, but suggests that this damage could be related to Lucius Quinctius Flaminius’ siege of Corinth in 198, based in nearby Kenchreai.²³ He and his army would have controlled the roads through the isthmus and around the

¹⁹ Oscar Broneer, *Temple of Poseidon, Isthmia 1* (Princeton, American School of Classical Studies, 1971), 3-56; Gebhard and Hemans, "University of Chicago excavations at Isthmia, 1989: I," 25-40.

²⁰ Broneer, *Temple of Poseidon*, 57-98.

²¹ Polyb. 2.12.8.

²² Sanctuary: Gebhard and Hemans, "University of Chicago excavations at Isthmia: II," 57-59; Racchi settlement: V. R. Anderson-Stojanovic, "The University of Chicago excavations on the Rachi settlement at Isthmia, 1989," *Hesperia* 65 (1996): 93-94.

²³ Livy 23.23.3-13; App. *Mac.* 7; Gebhard and Hemans, "University of Chicago excavations at Isthmia: II," 58.

sanctuary, and this destruction could have occurred through a resultant skirmish.

Furthermore, weapons excavated within the destruction debris of the Racchi settlement may support this conclusion.

Fifty year later, the Roman general Lucius Mummius sacked the city of Corinth (146 B.C.E.), after which the sanctuary of Poseidon suffered severe neglect. Pausanias informs us that the city of Sikyon took over the Isthmian Games while Corinth lay in ruins (2.2.2), and it is clear that the sanctuary was virtually abandoned during this time.²⁴ The Long Altar in front of the temple was dismantled and was cut through by a series of roads, evidenced by wheel-ruts crossing directly through the center of the altar (figure 7.6). The altar was the most important component of the sanctuary; if it was bisected by traffic, it is reasonable to assume that there was a suspension of public cult in the sacred space. This supposition is reinforced by a lack of pottery and other artifacts in the sanctuary from the two centuries following 146 B.C.E.²⁵ This, of course, does not preclude the possibility that the sanctuary was still used by individual worshippers on a greatly reduced scale, but it is clear that after Corinth was no longer an official civic entity, the games were no longer celebrated here.

After Corinth was refounded by Julius Caesar with Roman veterans and freedmen in 44 B.C.E., regaining control over their Greek predecessors' Panhellenic contest and the return of the Isthmian Games from Sikyon, where they had been held since the sack of the city over one hundred years before, was a priority of the new residents of the city of

²⁴ In Sikyon itself, a theater, temple, stadium, and palaistra have been excavated. All were standing during the time that Sikyon hosted the Isthmian Games, though they were probably not purpose-built for their transfer. The early excavations were unfortunately poor and unclear, but, since 2005, a project to survey the plateau has been undertaken by Y. Lolos, with the University of Thessaly. For yearly reports, see <http://extras.ha.uth.gr/sikyon/en/index.asp>.

²⁵ Elizabeth R. Gebhard and Matthew W. Dickie, "The view from the isthmus, ca. 200 to 44 B.C." in *Corinth, the centenary, 1896-1996*, Corinth 20, ed. C. K. Williams and Nancy Bookidis (Princeton: American School of classical Studies, 2003), 262.

Corinth. The first secure terminus ante quem for the return of the games from Sikyon is provided by an Isthmian victors' list discovered near the Corinthian gymnasium.²⁶ The first line of the inscription gives its date as thirty-three years after Augustus' victory at Actium (ἔτους ΛΓ' ἀπὸ τῆς | ἐν Αἰκτ[ίωι] Καίσαρος νίκης), so 2 C.E.

As early as 43/42 B.C.E., however, those coins depicted Bellerophon and Pegasus discussed above appear from Corinth, which are stamped with an image of a seated Poseidon with his trident (figure 7.7). By 40 B.C.E., a mere four years after the refoundation of the city, coins are issued bearing a pine wreath, the traditional prize awarded to the Isthmian victors, stamped on their obverse (figure 7.8).²⁷ There are at least two possible scenarios at play: either they could be a political message that the Isthmian Games belonged to Corinth and should therefore be returned to that city, or these coins could be an indication of the return of the games to Corinth. Whether the games were returned to Corinth in 40 B.C.E. or later, the numismatic evidence clearly indicates that prestige of control over this panhellenic contest was a main concern of the Roman city of Corinth.

In addition to the Isthmian Games, Corinth hosted two sets of imperial games, which would have been an important feature of the city of Corinth, as a Roman colony and the capital of the province. The quadrennial Caesarea were established as early as the 30s B.C.E.²⁸ Even though they were separate festivals, the years that both the Caesarea and the biennial Isthmian Games were celebrated were called the Ἰσθμια καὶ Καισάρεια, and were presided over by a single agonothete. For example, T. Manlius was agonothete

²⁶ Benjamin Dean Meritt, *Greek inscriptions, 1896-1927*, Corinth 8.1 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931), no.14.

²⁷ M. Amandry, *Le monnayage des duovirs corinthiens*, type IV, pp. 39-40, pl. V:R1-R5.

²⁸ Allen Brown West, *Latin inscriptions, 1896-1926*, Corinth 8.2 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931), 64-66.

of both of these games in about 15 C.E. The inscription credits him as the first man to schedule the Caesarean before the Isthmian Games, perhaps because the imperial cult was being given greater prevalence in Achaëa at this time.²⁹ A third contest, generally referred to as the Imperial Contest, was named after the current reigning emperor. They began under Tiberius and continued at least until Trajan.³⁰ Like the Nemean Games, and many other games in the Greek East, the Isthmian were given an imperial component, following Augustus' approval of athletic endeavors and adding imperial cult to some of the largest and most important festivals in the Greek world.

The early numismatic and epigraphic evidence of Corinthian control of the Isthmian festival discussed above, however, is not an indication of when the games were returned to the Isthmian sanctuary, but only of when the city of Corinth took control of them back from Sikyon. For the first decades of the renewed contests under Corinthian control, the games must have been celebrated in Corinth itself rather than the Isthmian sanctuary. In fact, the numismatic evidence of the games' return predates renewed activity in the sanctuary by almost one hundred years. Oscar Broneer, who perhaps wanted to see the refoundation of Corinth directly and immediately reflected at Isthmia, dated the earliest archeological evidence from the Roman periods, a sacrificial pit (Pit A) associated with the hero Palaimon, to the Augustan period.³¹ The 1989 excavations undertaken by Elizabeth Gebhard and the University of Chicago, however, have redated

²⁹ West, *Latin inscriptions, 1896-1926*, no.81; John Harvey Kent, *The inscriptions, 1926-1950*, Corinth 8.3 (Princeton: American School of classical Studies, 1966), no.154; Corinth inventory # I-71-15; West, *Latin inscriptions, 1896-1926*, 64.

³⁰ Kent, *The inscriptions, 1926-1950*, 28-29 n.25. Kent suggests that the Imperial contests may have continued until the reign of Marcus Aurelius, but there is very little evidence to support this.

³¹ Oscar Broneer, *Topography and architecture*, Isthmia 2 (Princeton: American School of classical Studies, 1973), 100.

the ceramic evidence of the first use of the Palaimonion to the mid-first century C.E.³² In addition, ceramic, architectural, and numismatic evidence does not reappear in the sanctuary itself until the Claudian or Neronian periods, at which time restorations to the theater, terracing to the north and east of the temple, and the construction of new roads also occurred.³³

An inscription recut as a Byzantine half-column records the presidency of an Imperial Game and the Isthmian and Caesarian Games, and distinctly commemorates the occurrence of these games at the isthmus (*ad Isthmum*) (figure 7.9).³⁴ The explicit mention of this fact, which does not occur on any other inscriptions, may indicate that this inscription commemorates the return of the games to the Isthmian sanctuary. Mika Kajava suggests an interpretation of this inscription to correlate closely with the reopening of the sanctuary.³⁵

Only the bottom right side of the inscription survived the recutting; furthermore, as the inscription is currently stored in the courtyard of the Old Museum in ancient Corinth, the letters are more worn than when initially published. It has been reconstructed by Mika Kajava as:³⁶

[Cn. Cornelio]
 [Cn.f. --- Pluchro]
 [aedili praef I D II] vīr et II [vir]
 [quinquennial] agonothele Tib
 [ereon Claudi]eon Sebasteon et
 [agonothete I]sthmiōn et Caesar-
 [eon qui Isthm]ia ad Isthmum egit
 [primus omniu]m col Laud Iul Cor
 [carmina ad Iulia]m diva[m Au]g virgi

³² Gebhard, Hemans and Hayes, "University of Chicago excavations at Isthmia, 1989: III," 445-54.

³³ Gebhard, Hemans and Hayes, "University of Chicago excavations at Isthmia, 1989: III," 416.

³⁴ Kent, *The inscriptions, 1926-1950*, no.153.

³⁵ M. Kajava, "When did the Isthmian Games return to the Isthmus? (Rereading "Corinth" 8.3.153)," *Classical Philology* 97 (2002) 168-78.

³⁶ Kajava, "When did the Isthmian Games return to the Isthmus?," 177.

[numque certame]n insti[t]v[it e]t omnib[us]
[us caerimoniis Cae]sareon novatis Co
[rin]thi sacra vo]to peregit epulumq[ue]
^{vacat} [omnibus co]lonis dedit
[fil -- Cornel]ius Regulus
^{vacat} [pat]ri
^{vacat} [d] d

In addition to overseeing the celebration of the games at the Isthmus, the honoree of this inscription is credited for instituting contests for girls and for the deified Julia, as well as restoring buildings for the Caesarea and hosting a banquet for the inhabitants of Corinth.

The emphasis that the games were celebrated “ad Isthmum,” which does not occur on other inscriptions, and gives a possible terminus ante quem for the games return to the sanctuary for the first time. Based on Gebhard and Hemans’s more recent excavations, Mika Kajava suggests that Corinth, as a Roman colony and so, therefore, different from other cities in the Greek East, would not have deified Livia before the official recognition of her apotheosis by the Roman Senate in 42 C.E., and so there would not be contests dedicated to her in Corinth before then.³⁷ The first Isthmia et Caesarea after that deification would have been in 43 C.E., which, then, may have been the first year that the games were returned to the isthmus.

Corinthian control of the Isthmian festival, therefore, is not an indication of when the games were returned to the Isthmian sanctuary, but only of when the city of Corinth took control of them back from Sikyon. Strabo, for instance, writing between 29-2 B.C.E., refers to Isthmia as the place where the Greeks *used* to convene the games (8.6.22). Consequently, it was a priority for the Roman colony of Corinth to regain administrative control of the Isthmian Games soon after the city’s refoundation, so much

³⁷ Kajava, "When did the Isthmian Games return to the Isthmus?," 171.

so that they advertized their control through their coinage. They were not, however, as concerned about returning them to their original physical location at the actual isthmus.

At the sanctuary itself, renovations were completed in a few broad stages. The earliest of these was in the Claudian or Neronian periods, which mirrors the increased popularity of the games in the Julio-Claudian period and the Claudian role in organizing the guilds, discussed in Chapter Three. Some of the renovations were also perhaps in anticipation of Nero's visit to the sanctuary to compete in the games and his subsequent attempt to dig the canal across the isthmus. At this time, the Roman Arch was probably constructed and sacrificial pits were dug for the hero Melikertes-Palaimon to the south of the temenos of Poseidon. The Roman period Corinthians also undertook extensive infrastructural repairs and changes to the sanctuary in preparation for its reuse, including terracing to repair the damage caused by the Hellenistic roads, as well as the creation of new roads, water channels, and other infrastructural works.

Further modifications to the Palaimonion were carried out between the Flavian and Trajanic periods and two separate temples to this hero were constructed in the Hadrianic and Aurelian periods (figure 7.10 and figure 7.11). In fact, the second century C.E. was a second period of great building activity on the site. In addition to these temples, the Roman Bath was built and stoas were constructed around the perimeter of the temple of Poseidon, restricting the sacred space of the sanctuary. It was following the construction of these stoas that structures appeared in the area east of the temenos, partly in response to the reduced amount of space available within the temenos proper. This area consisted of a mixture of both sacred and secular spaces, including areas for storage

and other services, as well as a large tripartite building featuring an altar and other cultic articles.

There was a startling contrast in the *discontinuity* between the Roman Corinthian and the classical Greek cult practice in the Poseidon temenos and the Palaimonion. The drinking vessels and miniatures that were popular during the Greek period of the site disappear in the Roman period.³⁸ The Palaimon sanctuary, which was all but invisible in the Classical period, though we know that the child hero was worshipped as far back as the fifth century B.C.E., appears with the reopening of the Roman sanctuary, after which the complex received consistent architectural modifications.³⁹

As at many sanctuaries, the later history of the sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia is controversial. Elizabeth Gebhard gives a loose terminus ante quem for the end of the games as 220-240, based on the lack of ceramic evidence from the sanctuary in this period.⁴⁰ Libanios' Oration 14 (362 C.E.), however, indicates that cult continued in Isthmia into the fourth century C.E., as at the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia and other areas of Corinth, including the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore.⁴¹

The more relevant question for this dissertation, however, is not when the sanctuary was abandoned, but when the Isthmian Games themselves lapsed. An inscription dated to the second quarter of the third century C.E. based on the distinctive style of lettering may be the latest dateable reference to the games. John Harvey Kent

³⁸ John W. Hayes, "Provisional thoughts on Roman pottery from the sanctuaries at Isthmia" in *The Corinthia in the Roman period : including the papers given at a symposium held at The Ohio State University on 7-9 March, 1991*, ed. T. E. Gregory (Ann Arbor: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 1993), 113; Gebhard, Hermans and Hayes, "University of Chicago excavations at Isthmia, 1989: III," 444-54.

³⁹ A. B. Drachmann, *Scholia Vetera in Pindari Carmina* (Lipsiae: Teubner, 1903), 3.192, 194.

⁴⁰ Gebhard, Hemans and Hayes, "University of Chicago excavations at Isthmia, 1989: III," 446.

⁴¹ Kathleen W. Slane, "The end of the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore on Acrocorinth," *Hesperia* 77 (2008): 465-96.

reconstructs a statue base honoring an agonothele (figure 7.12).⁴² This inscription, however, is worn and fragmented at crucial places. Kent reconstructs the inscription as:

[τὸν ἀξιολογώτατον καὶ]
[κ]ράτιστον [-----]
Κορνήλει[ον τῶν Καισα-]
ρήων καὶ τῶν Σ[εβαστή-]
ων, τῶν μεγάλω[ν Ἀσκλη-]
πίω, τῶ[ν] Ἴσθμί[ων καὶ τῶν]
[Καισαρήων ἀγωναθέτην]
[-----]

Unfortunately, the words that are most crucial to its association to the Isthmian Games are either missing or incredibly worn. The only securely identifiable letter of the word Isthmia is the “I,” the designation of which I find quite questionable, and the title of agonothele is missing completely. I am therefore unwilling to use this inscription to date a late Isthmian Game.

The latest definitive epigraphic evidence for Isthmian participants are inscriptions recording the victories of the champion of the quadriga, Titus Domitius Prometheus of Athens (c. 225-250 C.E.), and the herald Valerius Eclectus of Sinope (215-257 C.E.), both of whom competed and won in all four of the games discussed in this dissertation.⁴³ There is no securable evidence to prove that the games continued beyond the mid-third century C.E. Before the discovery of the bronze plaque at Olympia, however, the latest known victors on the Olympic Victors List roughly corresponded to the last of the Isthmian sources. We now know that those game continued to be celebrated well into the fourth, and it is possible that the Isthmian were as well.

⁴² Kent, *The inscriptions, 1926-1950*, no.230.

⁴³ For Eclectus, L. Moretti, "Olympionikai, i vincitori negli antichi agoni olimpici," *MemLinc* 8 (1959): nos 934, 938-40; for Prometheus: Moretti, "Olympionikai, i vincitori negli antichi agoni olimpici," no.932; Andrew Farrington, "The origin of victors in the Isthmian Games" in *Roman Peloponnese III: Society, economy and culture under the Roman Empire: Continuity and innovation*, ed. A. D. Rizakes and C. E. Lepenioti (Athens: National Hellenic Research Foundation, 2010), 422.

Furthermore, activity continued in the sanctuary for quite some time. There are over four hundred lamps from the Isthmian sanctuary that date after Gebhard's proposed cessation, including more than two hundred from the fourth through the sixth centuries.⁴⁴ As Oscar Broneer inventoried all of the lamp fragments discovered at the sanctuary, not just a diagnostic sample, these numbers represent a reasonable approximation of the whole. Additionally, there is late third and fourth century pottery in abundance at Isthmia, just not in the temenos proper. The theater was also used through the mid-third century C.E. Its drains were maintained until then, the fill of which are contemporary with the last floors of the central passageway of the theater.⁴⁵ The Roman Bath includes more definitive evidence of continued use. Before the structure's sudden abandonment at the very end of the fourth century, there were renovations in the third and fourth.⁴⁶ The latest material from the site is a collection of ninety-seven coins discovered in the area east of the temenos. All of them date from the second half of the fourth century, the latest minted in 395 C.E. The burial has been associated with the sack of Alaric in 396 B.C.E.⁴⁷ It therefore functioned longer than any other monumental building in the sanctuary. The games were probably over, though, by the fifth century, when the temple and other structures throughout the sanctuary were dismantled and blocks from them were used to build the Hexamilion wall. I believe that the lack of evidence from the temenos, but continued use of the surrounding spaces, indicates that activity shifted away from the main temenos.

⁴⁴ Timothy E. Gregory, "Religion and society in the Roman Eastern Corinthia" in *Corinth in context : comparative studies on religion and society*, ed. Steven J. Friesen, Daniel N. Schowalter and James C. Walters (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 452.

⁴⁵ Gebhard, *The theater at Isthmia*, 133-4, 143-4.

⁴⁶ B. L. Wohl, "A deposit of lamps from the Roman bath at Isthmia," *Hesperia* 50 (1981): 116.

⁴⁷ Ann E. Beaton and Paul Clement, "The date of the destruction of the sanctuary of Poseidon on the Isthmus of Corinth," *Hesperia* 45 (1976): 267-79.

Despite the currently stark outward appearance of the site, due to its ransacking for building material to construct the Hexamilion wall, there is good evidence of the Roman waterworks, roads, and the various building projects that were undertaken in the site, including the construction of a monumental arch, stoas to enclose the temenos, and a large Roman Bath with a magnificent mosaic floor. Combined with the epigraphic evidence, these bodies of evidence provide us with a picture of the Roman period use of the Isthmian sanctuary.

2. Roman epigraphic evidence for the Isthmian Games

The Roman colony of Corinth served as the administrative center of the Isthmian Games and the Isthmian sanctuary. Most of our information concerning the cult personnel and the operation of the sanctuary of Poseidon comes from epigraphic evidence from Corinth, rather than Isthmia itself. Unfortunately, while there have been articles that analyze individual inscriptions, a systematic study of the epigraphical evidence from Isthmia has not been published.⁴⁸ Furthermore, the last Corinth inscription volume was published in 1966, and concludes with those found by 1950.⁴⁹

These inscriptions, however, provide us with the majority of our evidence for the participants in sanctuary events and in the administration of the site. Additionally, some of these inscriptions refer to building projects undertaken at the sanctuary and reveal the various problems and issues with which their benefactors were confronted. In addition to the inscriptions found in the Corinthia, honorary inscriptions to individual athletes have

⁴⁸ Marjeta Šašel Kos, "The Latin inscriptions from Isthmia," *ActaArch* 29 (1978): 346-53 is an exception. This article, however, deals only with the Latin inscriptions, all very fragmentary, found in the UCLA excavations in the East Field, Northeast Gate, and Roman Bath.

⁴⁹ Kent, *The inscriptions, 1926-1950*. There are several *Hesperia* articles that analyze either individual or groups of inscriptions that have been discovered since 1950. The only inscriptions that have not yet been systematically made available to the public are those from the Gymnasium, the area east of the theater, and the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore, which are all in the process of publication.

been discovered throughout the Roman Empire. These provide valuable information regarding the changing geographical distribution of contestants through time, the relative importance of the Isthmian Games, and when the games began to diminish in their popularity.

2.1. Religious personnel

The epigraphic evidence from Corinth for the personnel involved in the Roman Isthmian Games illustrates the complex role that the games played in the establishment of Roman Corinthian identity, and how the memory of the pre-Roman Isthmian Games was used to legitimize the present, as well as to highlight Corinth's connection to its past.⁵⁰ The Isthmian Games had an agonothele and a board of ten Hellanodikai, as did many other athletic festivals in the Roman period. Little is known regarding the other cult titles associated with the games, such as the *pyrophoros* and *isogageus*.

In addition to the high status conferred on its priests and officials, language was another field in which the special status of the Isthmian Games was upheld. The previously Greek names of priesthoods of other official cults in the city were translated into Latin. In contrast to these other cults, however, the language of the Isthmian Games continued to be in the original Greek, such as, the three-sided Isthmian victors' lists discovered in Corinth (figure 7.13). Additionally, when honorific inscriptions to various prominent Corinthian individuals were set up in the early Julio-Claudian period, the inscriptions were written in Latin. But, the names of the officials related to the games were always transliterated, but never translated.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Again, an Isthmian inscription volume has not been published. Šašel Kos, "The Latin inscriptions from Isthmia," catalogues the Latin inscriptions discovered in the UCLA excavations, but they are very fragmentary.

⁵¹ Cf. Corinth 8.3.155, 208, 209, 212, 214.

This use of Latin does not, however, justify a blanket statement regarding the ethnicity of the new Roman Corinthians who were dedicating these monuments. Because the majority of the inscriptions are in Latin does not necessarily mean that the language of the colony was Latin. It is important to note that almost all of these inscriptions were discovered in the Roman forum and the theater area, where the majority of excavations in Corinth have taken place. These were the principal Roman civic areas of Corinth. The purpose of these honorary inscriptions was to celebrate the honoree's role within the city and his euergetism and service to the sanctuaries and civic offices. Latin, therefore, had to do more with the content of the inscriptions and the dedicator's and dedicatee's role in the civic life of the city than their identity.⁵²

The use of Greek for Isthmian inscriptions, however, was in deliberate contrast to these other inscriptions and brought focus to the antiquity of the festival and its place in the ancient periodic circuit of the Greeks. As the traditional mother-city of the sanctuary, the memory of the antiquity and importance of Corinth itself was thus highlighted and, therefore, the importance of its new citizens as well. Through Corinth's ties to the Isthmian Games, and Corinth's role as a Roman colony and the capital of the province, the Roman Empire could indirectly lay claim and achieve a link to one of the most celebrated and acclaimed religious traditions of the classical Greeks through their colony's control of the Isthmian sanctuary.

As at Delphi, the Roman Isthmian Games were presided over by the office of the agonothete, whose name was also used for the eponymous dating of the games. He was responsible for financing the staging of the games, and it was not uncommon for him to

⁵² Ben Millis, "The social and ethnic origins of the colonists in early Roman Corinth," in *Corinth in context : comparative studies on religion and society*, ed. Steven J. Friesen, Daniel N. Schowalter and James C. Walters (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 23.

undertake restorations or building projects in association with his title, as we will see below. The games were sometimes presided over by co-agonothetes, which illustrates the vast financial burden that running these games required.⁵³ Again, this office was the highest honor available in Corinth, ranking beyond even that of quinquennial duovirate in one's *cursus honorum*, and some agonothetes seem to have had close associations with the imperial family.⁵⁴ This individual may have had an office in the South Stoa in Corinth's Roman Forum, which was decorated with an agonistic mosaic.⁵⁵

The inscription discussed above that commemorates the reopening of the Isthmian sanctuary is also important for the information it reveals about the duties and responsibilities of an agonothete (figures 7.9). According to Kajava's transcription, the agonothete discussed in this inscription was Cn. Cornelius Pulcher, who may have been the agonothete of the first games celebrated at the Isthmus after its abandonment.⁵⁶ This politician, known from several inscriptions, came from an aristocratic Epidaurian family with a tradition of service to the imperial cult.⁵⁷ In order to account for the name of the dedicator of the inscription, a member of the Reguli family of Corinth, Kajava suggests a conjectural family tree in which Pulcher married a Corinthian woman of this prominent Reguli clan and gave their son a name that included her eminent cognomen. Kajava would like this Regulus' father to be Cn. Cornelius Pulcher, the agonothete in 43 C.E. Both families were active within the Hellenic elite. It might make sense at this time for

⁵³ Kent, *The inscriptions, 1926-1950*, no.212.

⁵⁴ West, *Latin inscriptions, 1896-1926*, 65-66.

⁵⁵ Oscar Broneer, *The South Stoa and its Roman successors*, Corinth 1.4 (Princeton: American School of Classical Studies, 1954), 132; Betsey A. Robinson, "'Good Luck' from Corinth: A Mosaic of Allegory, Athletics, and City Identity" *AJA* 116 (2012): 112.

⁵⁶ Kent, *The inscriptions, 1926-1950*, no.31.

⁵⁷ A. D. Rizakes, S. Zoumbaki and M. Kantirea, *Roman Peloponnese I: Roman personal names in their social context* (Athens : Kentron Hellenikes kai Romaikes Archaioyotetos, 2001), ARG 116, COR 226.

two prominent Hellenic families, one from Epidauros and one from Corinth, to merge in marriage.

Pulcher was responsible for initiating the poetry contest in honor of Livia, as well as a contest for girls. Kajava also restores the Imperial Contest as the Tiberea Claudiea Sebastea in honor of the emperor Claudius, which would match with the mid-first century date of the Isthmian sanctuary's reopening that the inscription celebrates, and argues that it would have been in 43 C.E. that the Isthmian Games were reinstated at Isthmia.

As the eponymous namesakes of the Isthmian and Caesarean Games, the *agonothetes* were listed on the catalogues of victors.⁵⁸ The *duoviri* of the current year were listed first, and underneath was the name of the *agonothete* of these games and then the board of *Hellandikai*. They counted ten in their number, as at Olympia, and presumably these men served as the judges of the individual events and awarded the victors their crowns. Their roles may have overlapped some with the *agonothete*, as the president of the games.

The evidence for the first *Hellandikai* appears on that earliest Isthmian catalogue of victors from 3 C.E. and continue as late as the second century C.E.⁵⁹ Our evidence is incomplete, but it is an intriguing proposition that the Roman Corinthians added this panel in order to provide a conceptual link between the Isthmian Games and the most preeminent of the Panhellenic circuit, the Olympic Games. By adding this traditional position from the Olympic Games, the Roman Corinthians may have attempted to add a false archaistic importance to the Isthmian Games.

⁵⁸ Meritt, *Greek inscriptions, 1896-1927*, no.14-20; Kent, *The inscriptions, 1926-1950*, no.223, 228; Oscar Broneer, "Excavations at Isthmia, Fourth campaign, 1957-1958," *Hesperia* 28 (1959): no. 4; William R. Biers and Daniel J. Geagan, "A new list of victors in the Caesarea at Isthmia," *Hesperia* 39 (1970): I 2740.

⁵⁹ Meritt, *Greek inscriptions, 1896-1927*, no.15, 16; Kent, *The inscriptions, 1926-1950*, 223, 228.

There are only two other posts associated with the Isthmian Games mentioned in honorific inscriptions. The isogageus may have been in charge of the Imperial Contests, a counterpart to the agonothete took control of the Isthmian and Caesareon.⁶⁰ Additionally, he may have served as the assistant to the agonothete. For instance, an inscription dedicated to Lucius Papius Venereus reads that this individual served as the isogageus to the agonothete.⁶¹ This individual went on to become the pyrophoros, whose title suggests he carried some sort of sacrificial fire.⁶²

Although not formally associated with the Isthmian Games or the sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia, the Corinthian P. Licinius Priscus Iuventianus, an archiereus under the Achaean League, carried out many benefactions to the Isthmian sanctuary during his tenure as the agoranomos.⁶³ Two stelai discovered at Corinth and Isthmia record these benefactions. Stele A was originally seen at Isthmia by Spon and Wheler in 1676, but is now located in Verona.⁶⁴ Two joining parts of Stele B were found in separate locations, one in the South Stoa in Corinth, found in 1934,⁶⁵ and the other in the Hexamilion Wall in 1954.⁶⁶ The stelai represent a single dossier that records the benefactions of Iuventianus to the sanctuary of Poseidon and include a catalogue of Iuventianus' euergetism (A, 1-27), a record of his promise (A, 28-30), a *gnome* of the *senatus populusque* of the Corinthians (B, 1-17), and the proconsul's rescript (B, 17-32).⁶⁷

⁶⁰ Kent, *The inscriptions, 1926-1950*, no.156.

⁶¹ Kent, *The inscriptions, 1926-1950*, no.212.

⁶² There was a similar post at the sanctuary of Asklepios at Epidauros (cf. IG IV, 382, 393, 400, 401).

⁶³ West, *Latin inscriptions, 1896-1926*, no.68.

⁶⁴ IG iv 203. The dates of these inscriptions are controversial and difficult to determine and will be discussed in full below.

⁶⁵ Kent, *The inscriptions, 1926-1950*, no.306.

⁶⁶ Isthmia I 261. A possible third stele has been suggested by Daniel J. Geagan, "The Isthmian dossier of P. Licinius Priscus Iuventianus," *Hesperia* 58 (1989): 349-60.

⁶⁷ Geagan, "The Isthmian dossier of P. Licinius Priscus Iuventianus,"; F. Camia, "IG IV 203: La cronologia di P. Licinius Priscus Iuventianus, Archiereus della lega Achea," *ASAtene* 80 (2002): 361-78.

The date of these stelai has been involved in many debates. West dates them to close after 77 C.E., relating Vespasian's repairs after the earthquake to Iuventianus' reference to repairing the stadium after earthquakes and age had damaged them.⁶⁸ Broneer associates it with the increased economic and social status of Achaia in the Hadrianic period and, in fact, insinuates that Iuventianus was responsible for the increased building activity in the second century sanctuary.⁶⁹ Kent also proposes a second century date, based on prosopographical evidence.⁷⁰ Camia dates it to before the Trajanic period, on the archaeological evidence associated with the Palaimonion complex.⁷¹ Unfortunately, the bulk of Iuventianus' building projects are either archaeologically invisible or undiscovered, so it is difficult to determine an exact date for his benefactions.

These stelai are the only instances of the post of agoranomos at the Isthmian sanctuary, although two other inscriptions from Corinth also refer to agoranomoi, one to an agoranomos of Zeus,⁷² and another which also seems to have some association with a religious society.⁷³ Because of his patronage to the sanctuary, Iuventianus' post may have been associated with the cult of Poseidon, and included control of the commercial transactions, including the allotment of space to vendors and others who came to the sanctuary for the games.⁷⁴ Between this office and that of the archiereus, Iuventianus would have wielded considerable power.

⁶⁸ West, *Latin inscriptions, 1896-1926*, no.54.

⁶⁹ Oscar Broneer. "An Official Rescript from Corinth." *Hesperia* 8 (1939): 181-90.

⁷⁰ Kent, *The inscriptions, 1926-1950*, no.121.

⁷¹ Camia, "IG IV 203: La cronologia di P. Licinius Priscus Iuventianus, Archiereus della lega Achea," 362.

⁷² SEG XI 50.

⁷³ Kent, *The inscriptions, 1926-1950*, no.306.

⁷⁴ Daniel J. Geagan, "Notes on the agonistic institutions of Roman Corinth," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 8 (1968): 75; J. Wiseman, "Corinth and Rome I: 228 BC - AD 267," *ANRW* 2, no.7.1 (1979): 500.

Stele A largely contains a list of the various services Iuventianus provided to the sanctuary of Poseidon. He furnished quarters for the athletes and constructed the Palaimonion, as well as various altars and naoi to Helios, Demeter, Kore, Dionysus, Artemis, and Pluto, many of whom were worshipped in the Sacred Glen, an area located to the west of the sanctuary proper that is only known through inscriptions. He also restored ramps and foundations that had been undermined by earthquakes and age, and set up a stoa near the stadium and provided it with furnishings.

The text of Stele B also refers to a stoa, but names the Stoa of Regulus specifically and documents Iuventianus' restoration of fifty rooms within it.⁷⁵ The final part of this stele is a rescript of a Roman official, presumably the governor of the province of Achaia. He accedes to the proposed decree of the senate and populus, congratulates Iuventianus on all that he has done, and then makes additional provisions regarding the rooms in the stoa, stipulating that they should be free of charge to the athletes. Finally, he transfers the authority of assigning *xenia* from the agoranomos to the agonothete of the games, giving increased power to that post.

There have been suggestions as to why the proconsul was involved in Iuventianus' gifts to the sanctuary. Broneer suggested that the property on which the stoa sat did not belong to the city, but to the sanctuary.⁷⁶ Geagan points out, however, that Iuventianus had seemed ready to buy it from the city and people, and that they seemed prepared to sell it to him.⁷⁷ Roberts instead suggests that the land might have been part of

⁷⁵ Kent, *The inscriptions, 1926-1950*, no.153. The Reguli were another aristocratic Isthmian family that, according to Kent, were involved with one of the first celebrations of the Isthmian Games at Isthmia.

⁷⁶ Broneer, "An official rescript from Corinth," 183.

⁷⁷ Geagan, "The Isthmian dossier of P. Licinius Priscus Juventianus," 357.

the *ager publicus* of the Corinthians, and that the proconsul's stipulations ensured the continued *public* use of the land.⁷⁸

Iuventianus provided significant structures for the infrastructure of the Games, most notably the stoa near the stadium and the rooms to house the athletes. This suggests, not surprisingly, that many of the athletes coming to compete in the Games were not from the Corinthia and needed housing during their stay, which, if the Isthmian Games had a similar training period to the Olympics, could be several weeks. In addition to the more monumental and religious observances, such as altars to the gods in the Sacred Glen and other works having to do with Palaimon, he also considered his infrastructural construction of ramps and foundations worthy of note.

This overview of the personnel involved in the games shows that the organization of the Isthmian Games maintained a veneer of antiquity through their official use of Greek for the priests' and officials' titles, but the actual posts were dramatically changed in the Roman period. The board of ten Hellanodikai was adopted from the Olympic Games and the financial responsibility of the games was taken up by an agonothete. The agoranomos also was known to play a part in supporting the Isthmian sanctuary, as did the isogageus and pyrophoros, posts first documented in the first century C.E.⁷⁹ The administration of the games, then, display a complicated and interesting mix of ancient Greek and Roman constituent parts.

2.2. Roman Isthmian victors

Including the victors known from the victors' lists discovered in Corinth, there are only 226 definite Isthmian victors that have been recorded from the entire history of the

⁷⁸ L. Robert, *Hellenica. Recueil d'épigraphie de numismatique et d'antiquités grecques* (Amsterdam: A. M. Hakkert, 1972 (1940)), 45-8.

⁷⁹ Kent, *The inscriptions, 1926-1950*, no. 156, 212, 214.

Isthmian Games, including those mentioned by authors such as Pindar and Pausanias.⁸⁰

The data pool of these inscriptions only represents about 1.4% of the total victors throughout the entire history of the games and is highly distorted, skewed by the large number that come from references by Pindar and Bacchylides, several centuries before the interest of this dissertation.⁸¹ A study of the geographical range of these victors, however, will shed light on the athletes who participated in the games and the role of the Isthmian Games in the wider Roman Empire.

There are a total of eleven published catalogues of victors, all dating to the Roman imperial period. Of these, three are undateable,⁸² three date to the Julio-Claudian era,⁸³ and five to the second century C.E.⁸⁴ While surely an accident of preservation, it is interesting that they fall into the two time periods from which most of our evidence of the Roman Isthmian Games comes. The Julio-Claudian period being when the games were returned to Corinth and then to the isthmus, which resulted in preparatory building activity at the sanctuary, and the second century C.E. being the second surge of building activity and a time when the Isthmian Games and the other games were used by elite Hellenes to draw attention to the classical Greek past.

The geographical origin of 205 victors of the Isthmian Games, from the sixth century B.C.E. to the end of the games, is known. Through the Archaic and Classical

⁸⁰ Farrington, "The origin of victors in the Isthmian Games," 422. This does not include references to περιοδονίκης, since the Actia, Sebastea at Naples, Argive Heraia, Panhellenion, Hadrianeia, Olympeia and Capitoline Games were included in the circuit in the Roman period, in addition to the Olympic, Pythian, Isthmian, and Nemean. Four victories continued to be sufficient to claim a periodic victory, so an athlete no longer necessarily had to win at Isthmia, but at four of these venues.

⁸¹ This is in contrast, for instance, to the 22-25% of names that survive from the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia.

⁸² Meritt, *Greek inscriptions, 1896-1927*, no.17, 20, Hesp 28, no. 4.

⁸³ Meritt, *Greek inscriptions, 1896-1927*, no.14, 18, 19.

⁸⁴ Meritt, *Greek inscriptions, 1896-1927*, no.15, 16; Kent, *The inscriptions, 1926-1950*, no.223, 228; Inv. no. 2740 (Biers & Geagan 1970)

periods, victors are recorded from the Peloponnese and the rest of mainland Greece, as well as western Greece and various islands in the Aegean, such as Kos and Rhodes, and the Ionian mainland.⁸⁵ Hellenes from Egypt began to show an increased interest in the games at the end of the fourth century B.C.E., and in fact, three of the victors recorded on the earliest Corinthian victors' list from 3 C.E. are from Egypt. As at the other Panhellenic centers, athletes from central and northern Asia Minor made up a significant number of the recorded victors, increasing notably in the second century C.E. By the mid-third century, victors were also coming from the heartland of Anatolia. The furthest afield, however, seems to have come from Syria.

We have seen that there was a similar eastern spread of athletes at the Olympic and Pythian Games. If we follow our limited evidence, however, this movement occurs in Isthmia about fifty to one-hundred years after that at Olympia, perhaps indicating the consistently prestigious position held by the Olympic Games compared to the rest of the athletic circuit.⁸⁶ Again, the presence of athletes from the eastern portions of the Roman Empire suggests that gymnasium and agonistic culture had spread to these regions to the extent that they had the infrastructure necessary to support the training of successful Periodic athletes.

Interestingly, too, while Olympic victors from Magna Graecia and Sicily are fewer during the Roman periods, they are still present at Isthmia. This must be because of Corinth's role as the capital of Achaëa and a trading emporium, and the strong ties the city maintained to the west. Again, this shows that the Roman period Corinthians were

⁸⁵ Farrington, "The origin of victors in the Isthmian Games," 425.

⁸⁶ Farrington, "The origin of victors in the Isthmian Games," 428.

able to capitalize on their control of the Isthmian Games and draw more contestants, and presumably spectators, from the western Roman Empire.

3. The Roman period organization of the sacred space

Several architectural modifications were made to the sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia during the Roman periods. The cult of Palaimon, the child hero of the Isthmian Games, was monumentalized with a temple. Later, a walled precinct dedicated to his worship was constructed over the starting line of the Earlier Stadium, which had been replaced by the Later Stadium in the late fourth or third centuries B.C.E.⁸⁷ The temenos of the god was delimited by monumental stoas on three sides, and a wall to the north.

The position of the Roman period altar of Poseidon is unclear. The Long Altar had been cut to accommodate several roads that ran through the sanctuary in the Hellenistic period, which were not repaired after the sanctuary was reopened. Broneer argued that a square socle to the east of the temple and Long Altar was the Roman period altar, but it was destroyed in the second century C.E. by the construction of the East Stoa (figure 7.10).⁸⁸ Gebhard rightly points out that the altar would have stood in its own separate enclosure during the short time between its construction and destruction, which is atypical.⁸⁹ As we shall see below, she identifies this square socle as the base of an early temple of Palaimon. This reinterpretation, however, leaves the sanctuary without a Roman period altar to Poseidon. Gebhard argues that there was none,⁹⁰ but I believe that

⁸⁷ Gebhard and Hemens, "University of Chicago excavations at Isthmia: II," 43-44. Broneer associated the construction of the Later Stadium with Philip and Alexander, based on historical grounds (Broneer, *Topography and Architecture*, 66), but Gebhard has found that the Early Stadium was still receiving monuments in about 300 B.C.E. The Isthmian hippodrome has not yet been discovered.

⁸⁸ Broneer, *Topography and Architecture*, 73-4.

⁸⁹ Gebhard, Hemans and Hayes, "University of Chicago excavations at Isthmia, 1989: III," 438-9

⁹⁰ Gebhard, Hemans and Hayes, "University of Chicago excavations at Isthmia, 1989: III," 438.

the southern portion of the Long Altar, which survived the Hellenistic roads, could have been used for this purpose.

3.1. The Palaimonion

In his description of the Isthmian sanctuary, Pausanias describes a precinct of the child-hero Palaimon, in which there was an underground adyton where oaths were administered.⁹¹ The foundation of the Isthmian Games was associated with a mythical tradition that the games were funeral games in honor of a child hero, Melikertes-Palaimon. As we shall see, there was an early tradition of this cult at Isthmia, but it was not archaeologically visible until the sanctuary was reopened in the mid-first century C.E.

Plutarch is one of the few ancient authors to credit the Athenian hero Theseus with the foundation of the games after his defeat of the barbarian Sinis on the isthmus.⁹² Another story attributed the Isthmian Games to the funeral rites conducted for the infant, Melikertes-Palaimon, the cousin of Dionysus and son of Ino-Leukothea.⁹³ She threw Melikertes into a cauldron and jumped with it from the Molourian rock to their deaths when Ino's husband, Athamas, was driven crazy by Hera and tried to kill them.⁹⁴ After their leap, Ino-Leukothea became a Nereid,⁹⁵ but Palaimon was picked up by a dolphin and carried to shore. It was there that Sisyphos, the brother of Ino's husband Athamas, found him and established funeral games in his honor.

⁹¹ Paus. 2.2.1.

⁹² Plut. *Vit. Thes.* 25.4

⁹³ Drachmann, *Scholia Vetera in Pindari Carmina*, 3.192, 194; Eur. *Med.* 1282-91; Stat. *Theb.* 6.10-14; Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.9.2, 3.4.3; Lucian, *Dial. Meret.* 8.1; Philostr. *Imag.* 2.16

⁹⁴ For a summary of other variations to the story, see Timothy Gantz, *Early Greek myth : a guide to literary and artistic sources* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), volume 1, 176-80.

⁹⁵ Hom. *Od.* 5.333-35.

The cult of Melikertes-Palaimon is first referenced in a fragment of an Isthmian ode by Pindar: “They ordered Sisyphos, the son of Aiolos,/to establish an honor that can be seen from afar/for the dead child Melikertes”.⁹⁶ An accompanying scholion states, “and then, dancing, the Nereids appeared to Sisyphos and told him to establish the Isthmian Games in honor of Melikertes”.⁹⁷ The first physical evidence of the cult, however, appears with the early Roman reopening of the sanctuary in the form of a sacrificial pit, called Pit A, dated from the material found within it to the first half of the first century C.E. (figure 7.6).⁹⁸ The pit, sunken 1.30 meters into the ground, and measuring 3.70 by 2.00 meters, was lined with rough stones, crumbled and cracked from heat, and filled with ash, burnt animal bones (primarily cattle, but also sheep or goats), pottery, and lamps. There is also evidence in this pit for the carbonized remains of bread, figs, seeds (including pomegranate), and a date pit. This pit was surrounded by a small enclosure wall, which had a doorway to the north, providing access to and from the rest of the sanctuary.

A second pit, Pit B, located three meters to the southeast of Pit A and partially destroyed by the construction of the South Stoa, was built when Pit A was still in use (figure 7.10). It likewise had walls lined with rocks weakened by the heat, and was filled with ash, animal bones, and pottery. The enclosure wall was also enlarged to surround both it and Pit A.

⁹⁶ Drachmann, *Scholia Vetera in Pindari Carmina*, 3.192.

⁹⁷ Drachmann, *Scholia Vetera in Pindari Carmina*, 3.194.

⁹⁸ For the initial publication of the Palaimonion precinct, Broneer, *Topography and Architecture*, 99-112. More recently, Elizabeth R. Gebhard and David S. Reese, "Sacrifices for Poseidon and Melikertes-Palaimon at Isthmia" in *Greek sacrificial ritual, Olympian and chthonian : proceedings of the Sixth International Seminar on Ancient Greek Cult organized by the Department of Classical Archaeology and Ancient History, Göteborg University, 25-27 April 1997*, ed. Robin Hägg and Brita Alroth (Sävedalen, Sweden: Svenska institutet i Athen, 2005), 125-54; Elizabeth R. Gebhard, "Rites for Melikertes-Palaimon in the Early Roman Corinthia" in *Urban religion in Roman Corinth : interdisciplinary approaches*, ed. Daniel N. Schowalter and Steven J. Friesen (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005), 165-203.

In the mid-second century, a third pit, Pit C, was dug fifteen meters to the southeast of Pit B (figure 7.11). Larger than Pits A or B, it was again lined with burned stone and was filled with ash, animal bones, and lamps. The lamps in this pit are unlike any lamps known from the rest of the Mediterranean world, with round bowls supporting a high funnel in the center for a wick, and may have been created specifically for the cult of Melikertes-Palaimon (figure 7.14).⁹⁹

In the Hadrianic period, the cult was monumentalized with the construction of a temple. Gebhard has re-identified Broneer's "Roman Altar" as the first temple of Palaimon.¹⁰⁰ The Hadrianic and Aurelian coins depict this temple with a conical roof ornamented with dolphins supported by an open colonnade; inside there is a statue of a boy lying prostrate on a dolphin (figure 7.15). All that survives from this building is a concrete podium and one course of ashlar facing, but Gebhard reconstructs it with a complete ashlar facing and stairs to the north, based on concrete foundation projections two meters beyond the central core.

In the Antonine period, this Palaimon temple was replaced with another building with a concrete core and ashlar facing constructed to the west of Pit C within the new walled enclosure. It measured about 1.70 meters wide and was covered with watertight stucco. As opposed to the original Palaimonion, this structure had a passageway running through the foundation, which turned thirty-five degrees to the north near the center of the building. This channel may have been the reason that this particular location was chosen for this cult. The Roman channel joined a Greek one that was originally built to

⁹⁹ Oscar Broneer, *Terracotta lamps*, Isthmia 3 (Princeton: American School of Classical Studies, 1977), 3.

¹⁰⁰ Elizabeth R. Gebhard, "The evolution of a Panhellenic sanctuary: from archaeology towards history at Isthmia" in *Greek sanctuaries : new approaches*, ed. Nanno Marinatos and Robin Hägg (London: Routledge, 1993), 89.

supply the Archaic Early Stadium with water.¹⁰¹ M. Piéret has suggested that the Roman period Corinthians accidentally discovered the subterranean reservoir near the site of the Roman precinct, and identified it as an adyton for the hero.¹⁰² When it was discovered by worshippers in the Roman period, Piéret suggests that it would have appeared as a long, wet, narrow cavity and a secret, hidden place, perhaps placed there by a chthonic hero who had been rescued from the sea. Regardless, the presence of enclosure walls, lamps, and Plutarch's comment that the rites of Palaimon took place at night all lead to the supposition that the Roman rites to Palaimon might have been some sort of mystery cult.¹⁰³

The Roman Palaimonion complex, then, localized and provided a physical setting of the classical Corinthian religious history of this hero into a new Roman landscape. Like the Glauke and Peirene fountains discussed earlier in this chapter, the Roman period Corinthians took a mythical tradition and modernized and monumentalized it. The mystery aspect of this cult, with its walled precincts, tunnel, chthonic sacrificial pits, and unique lamps were at home in the Roman period, when these types of religious spaces were more widespread. More importantly, this cult was associated with the foundation of the Isthmian Games, and its presence in the sanctuary drew conceptual parallels to the hero cult of Pelops at Olympia and highlighted the antiquity and importance of the Isthmian contests.

3.2. Roman temenos walls

The various phases of the construction of Roman temenos walls corresponds to the building programs of the Palaimonion precinct. Two series of temenos walls were

¹⁰¹ Gebhard, "Rites for Melikertes-Palaimon in the Early Roman Corinthia," 197.

¹⁰² Marcel Piéret, "Le culte de Palaimon à Corinthe," *Kernos* 11 (1998): 85-109.

¹⁰³ Plut. *Vit. Thes.* 25.4

constructed during the Roman period at the sanctuary of Poseidon. The first dates to the Flavian period, at roughly the same time that Pit B of the Palaimon precinct was in use.¹⁰⁴ The temenos, therefore, was not demarcated for the first decades after its initial reopening. The space was marked by gates: a road passed by a North Gateway of the sanctuary, and there was also an East Gateway that may have survived from the early Hellenistic period, but with no corresponding walls.

This Flavian temenos wall was quite restricted, enclosing the temple within a roughly 44.25 by 88.50 meter space (figure 7.10).¹⁰⁵ The southern wall of the Archaic period temenos wall was similarly confining, only 3.50 meters away from the temple of Poseidon before veering to the south to include the Early Stadium (figure 7.16).¹⁰⁶ No evidence of the entrance to the Flavian temenos has survived, but there had traditionally been eastern and northern entrances. Eastern and Western Sigillata fragments attest to a date in the late Flavian to early Trajanic periods, so 80-110 C.E., for its construction.¹⁰⁷

Following the initial restorations of the Isthmian sanctuary in the first century C.E., the second century was the next period of great building activity at the site. At this time, the construction of monumental stoas was planned on all four sides of the temenos of Poseidon (figure 7.11). Only their foundations now survive, as most of the blocks were systematically removed to build the Hexamilion Wall. The East Stoa was the most intrusive and required a massive reorganization of the sanctuary space. Its erection required the destruction of the first Temple of Palaimon and part of the Northeast Altar Terrace. Parallel to the façade of the temple, the front of the foundations were 31.90

¹⁰⁴ Gebhard, "Rites for Melikertes-Palaimon in the Early Roman Corinthia," 189; Gebhard, Hemans, and Hayes, "University of Chicago excavations at Isthmia, 1989: III," 417.

¹⁰⁵ Broneer, *Topography and Architecture*, 69-73; Gebhard, Hemans and Hayes, "University of Chicago excavations at Isthmia, 1989: III," 433-436.

¹⁰⁶ Gebhard and Hemans, "University of Chicago excavations at Isthmia, 1989: I," 47-8.

¹⁰⁷ Gebhard and Hemans, "University of Chicago excavations at Isthmia: II," 433.

meters away with an overall depth of 7.60 meters. A modest propylon was the main entrance to the sanctuary, situated in the southeast corner of this stoa.

The foundations of the East Stoa continue uninterrupted into the North and South Stoas, indicating that they were planned as a unit and built together. The South Stoa, which also bonds with the West Stoa, crosses over the earlier stadium, whose balbides sills were broken up and removed for the foundations. The original ground level of the West Stoa slopes down sharply to the north, where no signs of the foundations remain. There is, however, a West Gate further to the south, traces of which survive in the rear wall of the West Stoa. It has a total width of 2.94 meters and was very nearly on the axis of the temple. It seems to have been rebuilt several times, and the route of the corresponding road continued on this path through the Roman periods with little change.

Four stoas were originally planned, but the north seems to have been cancelled and replaced by a wall. The ground level of the northern area of the sanctuary is much lower than the rest, and so its foundations needed to be a minimum of 7 meters high in order to reach the level of the rest of the temenos. The corner indicates that it was planned as a unit with the East Stoa. There was a vaulted passage built underneath its western corner to protect the area from flooding.

These Roman period constructions delimited and monumentalized the space surrounding the Temple of Poseidon, similar to the Temple of Apollo at Corinth discussed above. This was accomplished with stoas, an architectural form at home in Greek sanctuaries since the seventh century B.C.E. Such strict regularization of space, however, was a much more modern phenomenon, starting, for instance, in the area around the agora in Athens and continuing in other places in the Greek East, such as the

Roman remodeling of the Asklepieion at Pergamon. The sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia was modernized, but with architectural forms that allude to the classical Greek past.

4. Terracing, roads, and landscaping

The sanctuary of Poseidon was located along the most direct route between the Peloponnese and central Greece (figure 7.3). Additionally, its location was expedient to travel between Corinth and the Saronic Gulf on the eastern end of the isthmus. The road that ran by the sanctuary had a pre-146 branch, Road G, which cut by the Northeast Altar Terrace and stretched southeast through the eastern part of the sanctuary (figure 7.16). Only about 11.50 meters of this road survives, but it appears to have been carefully constructed, with ruts over 0.25 meters deep, indicating the heavy loads that were traversing it. Its subsequent course is unknown, but may have continued parallel to the Early Stadium before turning north towards the Saronic Gulf.

When the sanctuary lay abandoned in the Hellenistic period, the space continued to be a nucleus for traffic through and across the isthmus. Several roads followed the precedent of Road G and criss-crossed in an east-west direction through the sanctuary, sloping down across the sanctuary (figure 7.6). These roads caused extensive damage to the northern half of the Long Altar, as wheel ruts were cut through to allow access across the gentle slope of the site.¹⁰⁸

Because of the damage which these roads wrought, a thorough project of landscaping was required when the sanctuary reopened in the mid-first century C.E. The

¹⁰⁸ Gebhard, Hemans, and Hayes, "University of Chicago excavations at Isthmia, 1989: III," 408-415. All of these roads date to the Hellenistic period, but it is unclear if they were all used concurrently.

northern and eastern areas of the site had required terracing operations throughout its history, dating back to the mid-eighth century B.C.E., in order to extend the area of usable space within and around the sanctuary. The ruts left by the Hellenistic roads, especially Roads D, E, and F, required further terracing in order to make the sanctuary usable again. The earliest Roman activity in the sanctuary is a thick layer of terracing fill in the northern and eastern sections of the plateau, which was covered with a hard, white surface, providing a clean and level area for renewed Roman activity in the sanctuary. It extended the sanctuary to the north as much as seven additional meters.

The northern terracing also had the benefit of providing a wide level surface for a new first century C.E. Corinth-Isthmia road. After the construction of the early temenos wall in the Flavian period, the road was confined to an area outside of the sanctuary, again following an east-west route to the north of the temple and then to the south of the theater, presumably meeting up with the Roman Arch (figure 7.10). After the construction of the monumental stoas around the temple in the second century, the road again crossed through the temenos proper and seems to have passed through a gate in the northeastern corner of the sanctuary and another in the western (figure 7.11).

4.1. Roman Arch

A monumental triple Roman arch, constructed sometime in the second half of the first century C.E., marked the principle eastern approach to the sanctuary (figure 7.5, it was incorporated into the Northeast Gate of the Hexamilion). It was relatively simple and undecorated, with no antae or columns to support the entablature, or architectural niches

or sculpture (figure 7.17). Various architectural peculiarities highlight the carelessness and lack of attention to detail in its construction.¹⁰⁹

A number of different dates for the arch have been suggested by Timothy Gregory and Harriane Mills. The first is the often cited visit of Nero in 66 C.E.¹¹⁰ An imperial visit could explain its hasty construction, and there is a comparandum of another arch in the southwest corner of the Corinthian forum that has also been associated with this visit. The Panhellenic sanctuary of Olympia also had an earlier Julio-Claudian arch, which has recently been associated with Agrippa. There is no evidence that he visited Isthmia, but the arch could have been set up in emulation of the Olympic one. A Flavian date has also been suggested, associated with Vespasian's rebuilding of Corinth after the earthquake of 77 C.E. and his refoundation of the colony.¹¹¹ Gregory and Mills also suggest Domitian, since he is known to have provided funds for eastern building projects elsewhere, including the temple of Apollo at Delphi and the Southwest Building at Olympia.¹¹² Domitian might also have been responsible for the arch on the Lechaion Road in Corinth, as commemorated on coins.¹¹³ Regardless, available evidence points to a date earlier in the Roman era, but whether first or second century C.E. is impossible to tell.

The arch is peculiar in its function and location. It is neither triumphal nor urban, and there was no wall constructed at this spot before the Hexamilion. It could have simply been a monumental façade over the Corinth-Isthmus road, but other major Roman arches in Greece marked important distinctions in the topography, such as the arches that

¹⁰⁹ Timothy E. Gregory and Harriane Mills, "The Roman arch at Isthmia," *Hesperia* 53 (1984): 407-45.

¹¹⁰ Gregory and Mills, "The Roman arch at Isthmia," 425.

¹¹¹ Gregory and Mills, "The Roman arch at Isthmia," 425.

¹¹² Gregory and Mills, "The Roman arch at Isthmia," 425.

¹¹³ Pausanias 2.3.2: gilded statues of Phaethon and Helios. Friedrich Imhoof-Blumer and Percy Gardner, *A numismatic commentary on Pausanias* (London: Richard Clay and Sons, 1887), 22, pl. F: xcvi, xcvi, xcix, c

mark the boundaries to the market-places of Corinth and Athens, Hadrian's Arch in Athens, and the arch at the entrance to the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia.

While the temenos wall, and then later the monumental stoas, marked the most sacred part of the sanctuary, sacred space was graduated, with the most sacred locations nearest to the altar and temple, but other relatively consecrated locations were located throughout the entire sacred space. The temenos at Isthmia was extremely contracted and many buildings associated with the sanctuary were located outside, such as the Roman bath, theater, and stadium. It would make sense, therefore, for this Roman arch to mark the extreme boundary of the sacred space and serve as a warning to visitors that they were entering a sacred space, while also marking the Roman presence at the sanctuary.

5. Water supply in the sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia

Poseidon, as the god of the sea and the father of the namesakes of Corinth's two harbors, had a natural home on the isthmus. As such, there was a strong culture of water at Isthmia from the earliest periods. This tradition continued in the Roman period with the construction of two Roman baths, one of which, as at Olympia and Delphi, was built over an original Greek bath. Additionally, other hydraulic infrastructural works were installed to provide the sanctuary with needed water, such as pipes, water channels, drains, and cisterns.

5.1. Roman baths

Two Roman bath buildings have been discovered at the site of Isthmia. The smaller one was located at the northeastern end of the Later Stadium (figure 7.1). It was identified by Broneer, but unfortunately has not been excavated.¹¹⁴ The two apsidal chambers with hydraulic cement that are visible, however, suggest a construction date in

¹¹⁴ Broneer, *Topography and Architecture*, 3.

the third century C.E.¹¹⁵ This is an interesting correspondence to Olympia, where baths were also being constructed late in the sanctuary's history. A more specific date for the Isthmian bath is not possible at this time, but its construction suggests that the Isthmian Games were still being celebrated, despite the supposed abandonment of the temenos. Its smaller size and location near to the stadium may indicate that this bath was used primarily by the athletes training for the Isthmian Games.

A more grandiose bath was built to the north of the Temple of Poseidon in the mid-second century C.E., during the second major phase of Roman construction on the site. It was excavated by Paul Clement and the University of California – Los Angeles between 1972 and 1980, after which an extensive conservation program was carried out by Timothy Gregory and the Ohio State University beginning in 1989.¹¹⁶

As mentioned above, this bath was constructed over an earlier, mid-fourth century Greek bath. In contrast to the *loutron* at Delphi, this bath was quite large. The surviving portions indicate that it would have been c. 30 meters square and c. 1.4 meters deep (figure 7.18).¹¹⁷ Particularly interesting for the purposes of this dissertation is that its floor, upon which the later Roman Bath was built, was clean, suggesting that it was in use when the Isthmian sanctuary was reopened in the mid-first century C.E. until the construction of the later bath.

The Roman Bath as it stands today was constructed in the late Hadrianic period, between c.140-150. It was renovated in the third century C.E., again indicating the

¹¹⁵ Jayne Huntington Reinhard, "The Roman Bath at Isthmia: Decoration, cult, and Herodes Atticus" (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 2005), 6.

¹¹⁶ Timothy E. Gregory, "The Roman bath at Isthmia: preliminary report 1972-1992," *Hesperia* 64 (1995): 297-313.

¹¹⁷ Gregory, "The Roman bath at Isthmia: preliminary report 1972-1992," 305.

continued use of the space around the sanctuary.¹¹⁸ The bather could enter the complex in one of two ways. The more elaborate entrance was through Room XII, on the southeastern corner of the complex, which was lined with benches on all sides (figure 7.19). This entrance suggests that the bath would be approached from either the Temple of Poseidon or from the theater. From the entrance, the bather would then proceed to Room VII, the apodyterium, which was also lined with benches. The southern side of the bath consisted of five parallel rectangular halls, each covered by barrel vaults, creating an impressive prospect upon a bather's southern approach.

Infrastructural service quarters were located along the southern side of the bath, extending west from the southwestern corner of Room XII. There was a special service entrance at the western end of this area. The service quarters were at the level of the hypocaust floors, to aid in the stoking of furnaces and other such activities. The workers could then stoke the fires and keep the furnaces burning without being visible to the bathers above.

The final room along the southern side of the bath was Room VIII. A mosaic decorated the threshold between Rooms VIII and VI, but the floor of Room VIII as it survives consisted of white clay over a thick red fill. Gregory suggests that the room originally boasted a paved mosaic throughout, which was removed at an unknown date, perhaps in anticipation of renovations that were never carried out.¹¹⁹ A distinctive feature of Room VIII is its off-center doorway, which could be an indication of a banqueting

¹¹⁸ A full excavation report for the Roman bath has not yet been published, but preliminary results were published by Gregory, "The Roman bath at Isthmia: preliminary report 1972-1992"; P. M. Packard, "A monochrome mosaic at Isthmia," *Hesperia* 49 (1980): 326-436; Reinhard, "The Roman Bath at Isthmia: Decoration, cult, and Herodes Atticus"; B. L. Wohl, "A deposit of lamps from the Roman bath at Isthmia"; and Fikret K. Yegül, "The Roman baths at Isthmia in their Mediterranean context" in *The Corinthia in the Roman period: including the papers given at a symposium held at The Ohio State University on 7-9 March, 1991*, ed. Timothy E. Gregory (Ann Arbor: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 1993), 95-113.

¹¹⁹ Gregory, "The Roman bath at Isthmia: preliminary report 1972-1992".

hall, the floor and benches of which were removed in antiquity. Yegül and Reinhard, however, also raise the possibility that the surface was intentionally created of clay in order to serve as an exercise court, like the rooms in the Southwest Building at Olympia.¹²⁰ It therefore became a similar complex to the Roman bath and palaistra at Delphi and the Southwest building at Olympia, which had a bath located nearby. It could also fall into Yegül's category of bath-gymnasium complexes, combining the athletic, educational, and hygienic needs of the heterogeneous visitors to the Isthmian Games of Roman Greece.¹²¹

This door was also deliberately constructed to frame the exquisite monochrome mosaic in Room VI. The floor was decorated with a large mosaic, divided into thirds, with two large figural panels in the center (figure 7.20). These were almost mirror images of each other and depicted Triton with a Nereid perched on his back, surrounded by various sea creatures. They were framed on either side by four square panels with different geometric designs. Like those along the south side of the bath, Room VI was vaulted. The walls were decorated with white plaster in a series of differently sized panels. Raised pedestals were on the eastern and western axes of this room. The eastern was exactly centered on the axis of the room, while the western was offset slightly to the north and had a semi-circular niche behind it (c.1.50m wide; c.0.70m deep). Nothing specifically was discovered within this area, but fragments of colossal marble sculptures, including parts of the fingers, toes, and curls of hair, were found throughout Room VI and elsewhere in the bath. One of these fragments is a phallus, which clearly indicates that one of the figures was male; a gorgoneion and several fragments of drapery suggests

¹²⁰ Reinhard, "The Roman Bath at Isthmia: Decoration, cult, and Herodes Atticus," 26.

¹²¹ Fekrit K. Yegül, *Bathing in the Roman world* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 155-169.

that it was paired with a statue of Athena. Steven Lattimore, who originally published the sculpture from the bath, suggests that the pair could be Apollo and Athena, but finds it strange that there were no statues of the deities one would expect to find in a bath complex, such as Asklepios, Hygieia, or Dionysus.¹²² Reinhard agrees with Lattimore's identification of Athena, but suggests the male figure may be Herakles, based on pieces of a lion's head within the fragments.¹²³

In her dissertation, Reinhard suggests that the bath complex was constructed by Herodes Atticus. She proposes an Athenian influence in the monumental statues of that city's patron goddess and her protégé Herakles. This hero, however, was often represented in bath complexes, and his appearance here does not necessarily indicate an Athenian connection. There was also a western influence, as the Roman Bath bears a resemblance to the contemporary Neptune Baths in Ostia, which Herodes Atticus could have seen when he was employed by Antoninus Pius in Rome. Furthermore, portrait heads of Herodes Atticus' own protégé Polydeukion were discovered within the bath, which she posits topped herms at its entrance. Her theory is that Herodes Atticus was here heroizing the youth as Hadrian had Antinoös, and that both of these youths were associated with the hero Palaimon through their premature, tragic, and, in at least two cases, drowning deaths. As we have seen in Chapter Two, the philosopher and statesman had a strong presence in the Corinthia, and also dedicated a chryselephantine statue group at the sanctuary, so this bath could have been a striking counterpart to his sponsorship of the stadium at Delphi and the Nymphaeum at Olympia.

¹²² S. Lattimore, *Sculpture II : marble sculpture, 1967-1980*, Isthmia 6 (Princeton: American School of Classical Studies, 1996), 56. He indicates that the fragments could have been moved to the bath in order to fire for lime, but the lack of wear or crustation on them suggests that the statues were displayed in the bath.

¹²³ Reinhard, "The Roman Bath at Isthmia: Decoration, cult, and Herodes Atticus," 113-114.

5.2. Roman cisterns

Facilities for water management are one of the most quintessentially Roman features in Greek sanctuaries. Two Roman period cisterns have been discovered at Isthmia, both located in the eastern part of the sanctuary. The Late Roman cistern, however, clearly postdates the destruction of the sanctuary, as the foundations of the East Stoa were removed for its construction, and so is beyond the scope of this dissertation. The brick floor of this cistern suggested a fourth or fifth century date to Broneer.¹²⁴

The earlier cistern, called the Northeast Reservoir, was located about 3.00 meters east of the Northeast Altar Terrace (figure 7.21). Only the northwestern corner was excavated by Broneer, who, through tunneling, was able to determine that it measured 5.57 meters from north to south and over six meters from east to west.¹²⁵ Its preserved depth was 2.70 meters. The lower level of the western wall is constructed of bricks to a height of 1.15 meters and then large poros stones above. A small portion of a vault was preserved on the northern wall, which was constructed of brick and rubble masonry. It began at a height of 2.40 meters. The floor of the cistern was of hard cement. The fill consisted entirely of Late Roman materials, suggesting it was in use until the abandonment of the sanctuary.

Incidentally, during the construction of the Northeast Reservoir, the Northeast Cult Caves, abandoned in the fifth or the very beginning of the fourth century B.C.E., were rediscovered and reused. The eastern entrance was cleaned out and opened and a passage was cut in the wall to provide access between the western and eastern caves.¹²⁶ There apparently were problems keeping debris out of the caves, since various retaining

¹²⁴ Broneer, *Topography and Architecture*, 96.

¹²⁵ Broneer, *Topography and Architecture*, 95.

¹²⁶ Broneer, *Topography and Architecture*, 37.

walls were constructed throughout the Roman period, and the passage cut through the cave wall impacted the stability of the feature, as evidenced by piers that were constructed to reinforce the ceiling. It continued in use after the East Stoa was constructed in the mid second century. Its use is unclear, but Broneer suggests that it may have been a storage space in the Roman period.

5.3. Additional hydraulic infrastructure

The pre-Roman sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia had some water features, such as reservoirs, water channels and the so-called “West Waterworks.” All of the terracotta pipes used for water transport, as well as other covered and open conduits, however, date to the Roman period.

In the Roman period, different types of hydraulic works transported water either away from or towards the sanctuary. The first was a drain, called the Great North Drain, dug across the northern temenos (figure 7.21). The Great North Drain is located between 10.00 to 11.00 meters to the north of the Temple of Poseidon and was accessed by five surviving manholes, both circular and rectangular, spaced roughly thirty meters apart (figure 7.21).¹²⁷ It continued further eastward, but collapsed in antiquity and so its total length is not known. The date of the construction of this subterranean drain cannot be ascertained, but the fill deposited within it indicates that it was in use at least until the late Roman period, perhaps until the sanctuary went out of use. Broneer suggests that its final use was as a drain to carry water away from the northeast corner of the sanctuary. Its original purpose, however, may have been as a water conduit, guiding water into the site, since a pipe, Pipe d, drained into it and because there was a brick-linked channel at the bottom of the rock-cut tunnel.

¹²⁷ Broneer, *Topography and Architecture*, 95-96.

A rectangular pit was discovered to the north of the second manhole of this drain, cutting through a Roman water channel. It was about 0.70 meter deep, measuring 3.25 by 4.06 meters. Both the floor and walls of this pit were lined with roof tiles, which suggest a date no later than the second century C.E. Most interestingly, this pit was filled a quarter of a meter high with clay. This explains its location so close to the manhole of the Great North Drain, as this pit was used for dissolving clay for some purpose. Since there is no other evidence of a ceramics workshop for the production of tiles or pottery in the vicinity, this pit was probably used to make clay mortar.¹²⁸ A second century date would therefore fit comfortably within the great building projects undertaken in the sanctuary at that time.

Connected to the Great North Drain, as well as crossing the site independently from it, were over twenty sections of terracotta water pipes (circular) and water channels (rectangular). The specific purpose of some of these can be deduced, but many are relatively short sections independent of any context to indicate their use. Furthermore, ascertaining absolute dates, let alone relative dates, for the different water features that run through the sanctuary is next to impossible, since the same materials and methods were used in Greece until the introduction of cement and metal in the Modern period. The relative date of some of the water channels, however, can be ascertained based upon their relation to each other and other buildings and structures on the site.

The longest sections of pipe, and the ones that give the best indication of direction and use, are pipes *b* and *c*. These pipes both start at about the same location, in the southwest corner of the South Stoa and run parallel to the north until pipe *c* cuts northeast through the sanctuary proper. Pipe *b* continues north and rounds the corner of the West

¹²⁸ Broneer, *Topography and Architecture*, 86.

and North Stoa. The whole of the pipe is not preserved, but portions of a similar pipe at the North Propylon and further east follow the colonnade of the North Stoa further to the east and seems to veer south in order to drain into the Northeast Reservoir. Pipe *b* follows the course of the stoas quite closely and is laid c.0.30 meters below their floors, and so was probably part of the construction of these in the second century C.E.

Pipe *c* turns to the northeast after following the course of pipe *b*. Its full course is not preserved, but sections appear curving around the northwest corner of the Temple of Poseidon. Since pipes *b* and *c* both originate in the same area of the sanctuary, they presumably both tapped the same water source somewhere to the southwest of the sanctuary. Pipe *b* was presumably damaged, perhaps in the northwest corner of the sanctuary where the ground slopes, and pipe *c* replaced it, traversing a safer course through the middle of the sanctuary. There are various other sections of pipe throughout the sanctuary, but many are isolated from each other and their exact purpose is unclear.

As at the other Panhellenic sanctuaries discussed in this dissertation, the sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia was outfitted with complex hydraulic infrastructure in the Roman period. In addition to the Roman baths, there were water storage systems and many water pipes and channels criss-crossing the site, some quite close together. All of this indicates that there were constant improvements and modifications to the water systems of Isthmia throughout the Roman imperial period.

6. The area east of the temenos of Poseidon

According to Pausanias, “as you go into the sanctuary [of Poseidon at Isthmia], there are portrait statues of athletes who won at the Isthmian Games, and some pine trees

in a line, mostly going straight up”.¹²⁹ Pausanias does not attempt to describe these statues as he did at Olympia, but for three excavation seasons, from 1970-1972, Paul Clement (UCLA), under the auspices of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, excavated the area east of the sanctuary in search of this road and the statues, logically presuming that the main route into the sanctuary would have led through the Southeast Propylon, between the theater and the Archaic stadium (figure 7.1). Instead, he uncovered an agglomeration of Roman walls, mostly of rubble construction and oriented roughly on the cardinal points, which is now colloquially called the East Field. Since its discovery, this area of the sanctuary has consistently defied interpretation. The walls rarely seem to define a complete room, let alone a complete building, and it is often even difficult to discern interior versus exterior walls.

The UCLA project in the early 1970s excavated seventy-five trenches, the majority of which were 3.00 x 10.00 meters and on NW/SE and NE/SW axes (figure 7.22). This grid system was rigidly maintained, even as it became clear that the walls in the area east of the temenos were consistently built on a NS-EW axis. The orientation of the trenches sometimes resulted in the inadvertent partial removal of features or walls that were not recognized as such until later trenches were opened up.

Trench notebooks kept by the site supervisors described and discussed the daily discoveries of the workmen. The stratigraphic units, or “baskets,” however, were not rigidly recorded. For instance, the color of the fill is sometimes described as “continues to be white,” even though the change to that color of soil was never documented. These notebooks inconsistently contain sketches of the architecture and the spatial arrangements of the walls in each individual trench rather than the overall shape of the site. Even

¹²⁹ Paus. 2.1.7.

notebooks that document adjacent trenches often do not make comparisons and correlations between them, but treat them as discrete units that have no relationship with each other. Additionally, the primary concern of the excavation was the stratigraphic location of the artifacts, not the architecture or their relationship to it.

Though Clement did not publish a final report of the area east of the temenos, he did publish useful preliminary reports.¹³⁰ Clement identified the buildings as simple houses, which he inferred from the lightness of the wall construction. He relied on wall typologies and masonry analysis in order to try to date the different phases of construction on the site. He identified three types of walls: rubble and mortar usually of good quality; rubble and earth, either well laid or “very scrappy indeed”; and rubble and earth with plaster facing.¹³¹ The use of different construction techniques in the same wall led him to suggest at least two phases of construction.

The 1990’s OSU excavations also identified the buildings in the East Field as houses or other small establishments. They followed Clement’s methodology, but further subdivided the wall types into nine different construction techniques, dating the earliest of the walls to the second century C.E., with major rebuildings in the mid-third, fifth, and seventh centuries.¹³² They suggested the structures were perhaps facilities for water and food preparation, but determined that it was not possible to understand the precise functions of the buildings or their relationship to the sanctuary. Preliminary reports were

¹³⁰ Paul Clement, "Isthmia excavations," *ArchDelt* 26 (1971): 100-11; Paul Clement, "Isthmia excavations," *ArchDelt* 27 (1972): 224-31; P. Clement, "Isthmia excavations," *ArchDelt* 28 (1973): 143-49.

¹³¹ Clement, "Isthmia excavations," *ArchDelt* 27, 227.

¹³² <http://isthmia.osu.edu/96report.html>

also written, but again, no final report was published.¹³³ Additionally, various finds from the site have been published, including the sculpture and pottery.¹³⁴

So, excavations have discovered that the area east of the temenos was filled with poorly preserved walls of Roman buildings, rather than Pausanias' street lined with honorific statues. These buildings are located immediately outside of the temenos proper and actually extend further east of the excavated area. At Tower 10 of the Hexamilion Wall, low rubble walls, similar to those in the East Field proper, were discovered together with a complementary deposit of pottery.¹³⁵ Due to the similarity of the structures and pottery in these two areas, similar buildings probably stretched this entire area east of the temenos, filling up a wide swath from the temple to the fortress, and from the theater at least as far as the modern road. The full extent of these buildings was vast and there are large portions that could still be excavated.

6.1. East Isthmia Archaeology Project

The East Isthmia Archaeology Project, headed by Timothy E. Gregory (Ohio State University) and Steven J.R. Ellis (University of Cincinnati), was established in 2005, with the goal to reach a spatial, chronological, and functional understanding of the buildings in the East Field, in order to better understand the overall "shape of space" of this area and its role in the operation of the sanctuary. They are trying to determine what kinds of buildings these were, when they went in and out of use, and what kind of

¹³³ <http://isthmia.osu.edu/93report.html>; <http://isthmia.osu.edu/96report.html>;
<http://isthmia.osu.edu/97report.html>

¹³⁴ Lattimore, *Sculpture II*; Jeane Marty Peppers, "Selected Roman pottery, Isthmia excavations, 1967-1972" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1979).

¹³⁵ Jeane Marty, "Three pottery deposits and the history of Roman Isthmia" in *The Corinthia in the Roman period: including the papers given at a symposium held at The Ohio State University on 7-9 March, 1991*, ed. Timothy E. Gregory (Ann Arbor: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 1993), 120.

activities took place in them. I joined the team in 2007 and served to put the buildings into the context of mainland Greek Panhellenic religion.

Our new methodology entails a combination of legacy data and freshly derived data from new field research, without actual excavation.¹³⁶ This is accomplished through a combination of the establishment of the structural and spatial shape of the site and structures through an on-site architectural survey and the digitization and analysis of the original notebooks and photographs. The legacy data, then, has been fully integrated into a database with the new architectural information in order to refit the original data within the rooms and spaces of the East Field. This provides us with a more secure relative building sequence and, ideally, more secure absolute dates once the artifactual material has been thoroughly studied. We have also completed a Total Station survey of the site, in order to bring all of this information together in the most effective manner possible.

One of the most important aspects of this new methodology, and what separates it from previous attempts at investigating this site, is the privileging of the objectively verifiable stratigraphic relationships between the walls (superposition, bonding, etc.), rather than wall types and sub-types based on masonry analysis. We still use multiple forms of information, such as the analysis of construction styles and masonry techniques, to understand building phases, especially those that might be spatially distant from each other, but the relationships between the walls is the most important information for establishing the dates and phasing of the buildings. Ellis, et.al. established a methodology using a “Hierarchy of Abstractions,” which entails the atomizing of evidence into its

¹³⁶ Steven J. R. Ellis, Timothy E. Gregory, Eric E. Poehler and Kevin R. Cole, "Integrating Legacy Data into a New Method for Studying Architecture: A case study from Isthmia, Greece," *Internet Archaeology* 24 (2008).

constituent, abstract parts (figure 7.23).¹³⁷ Each wall segment was analyzed in order to determine how it intersected with the other wall segments it touched (cut, bonded, abut, overlay/underlay) and the stratigraphic relationship between each wall segment was established from this information. From there, wall construction units, or the construction of a series of walls in a single event in order to create a room, suite of rooms, or an entire building, and typologies of masonry, construction, mortar types, and choices of materials, are formulated in order to create a Sub-phase, or a Harris-Matrix, of the entire site. Through this methodology, we developed a strong relative chronology of the buildings based on the actual physical relationships between the walls rather than on typological analysis of different wall types, without necessitating any destructive or further costly excavations.

After this preliminary investigation, we analyzed the contents of the excavations reports, thereby privileging the physical remains of the site over the sometimes vague descriptions of their exposure. Through the creation of a database, we sifted through the written reports in order to consolidate the information. Work on this database began with an examination of the individual baskets, or discrete stratigraphic units, excavated in each trench. We categorized the basket description, the color and composition of the soil, where noted, and any other relevant data provided in the excavation notebooks, including the emergence of walls and the context of any artifacts. Unfortunately, because of some questionable excavation techniques and lack of attention to detail, some of the most important information concerning each basket, for instance changes in soil color or composition, was intermittently recorded. We were able to ascribe some of this material

¹³⁷ Ellis, Gregory, Poehler and Cole, "Integrating Legacy Data into a New Method for Studying Architecture: A case study from Isthmia, Greece".

by making careful suppositions and comparisons between adjacent baskets and trenches, but some of the information is hopelessly confused. After an analysis of the baskets in each trench, we then expanded our outlook by analyzing the stratigraphy of adjacent trenches to develop horizon levels across the site.

What we discovered was that the stratigraphy of the site was relatively straightforward. Most of the buildings on the site date to a Roman period of construction.¹³⁸ Their relative dates have been analyzed, but further work on the ceramic evidence is still in progress to secure more absolute dates. These buildings were buried by a major destruction phases, which consisted of a thick, white colored layer seen throughout the site. The excavators rarely identified anything as a floor, and sometimes did not indicate where or why they stopped excavating a particular basket, so we are currently undertaking an analysis of context pottery and baskets that are connected with wall foundation trenches, possible floors, and other features which may give us a better idea of the date of the site.¹³⁹

6.1.1. Preliminary results

Our work on reevaluating the wall segments and the relationships between them has allowed us to formulate a fuller picture of the relative chronology of the site and the shape of the space throughout its history. We have discovered that there were many more phases of construction on the site than previously supposed by Clement. Furthermore, the walls make up substantial buildings that extend beyond the excavated area, combining

¹³⁸ At this time, examination of the pottery is still undergoing. Relative dates are possible to be reported, but not absolute.

¹³⁹ A smaller number of walls were built on the site sometime later after the sanctuary had gone out of use and were, themselves, subsequently destroyed.

sacred and secular space, in contrast to their initial interpretations as smaller Roman domestic dwellings.

The creation of a large open structure was the first substantive stage of building activity on the site (figure 7.24: phase 2, sub-phases 2, 2A, 2B, blue).¹⁴⁰ The walls of this structure were constructed in ashlar masonry and decorated with painted plaster, making them by far the best built in the East Field. The orientation of this structure determined the location and position of all subsequent buildings on the site and its large open interior space was maintained throughout its history, indicating the importance of this structure to the site as a whole. Furthermore, this structure lasts through many phases of neighboring structures. Unfortunately, the full east-west expanse of this room cannot be determined, as the eastern termination is beyond the limits of the excavated area. In its original construction, the western end of this building was composed of two wings on the north and south, creating three separate spaces, which suggests a tripartite division of the space that was altered but maintained throughout the history of its use.¹⁴¹

A stone-lined rectangular pit was constructed against the southern wall of this structure. It measured about 2.0 by 3.0 meters, and was 0.70 meters deep. At the time of

¹⁴⁰ The designations of sub-phases with letters or, on occasion, a subphase described as “before” another phase indicate wall segments that are not bonded to the walls under which sub-phase they belong, but still have a close temporal, and often physical, relationship. They are not substantive enough to require their own separate sub-phase, but are still distinct enough to not be grouped in a major sub-phase.

The earliest surviving architectural remains on the site are located in the eastern sector of the excavated area, the footing trench of which was cut into sterile soil (figure 20: phase 1, sub-phase 1, dark grey). One wall continues into the baulk and the other is cut by a later wall. They originally joined to form a corner, but that area was destroyed during the construction of a later tunnel. In fact, the builders of the tunnel seem to have been unaware of the existence of this earlier phase when they dug it. Some traces of a floor connected with these two early walls survived, but they are scant. With only the two sections of wall and no associated artifacts, it is impossible to discern the use of the building. There are no other buildings in the East Field that are contemporary with it.

¹⁴¹ Four other walls may have been constructed at different times, but stood at the same time as this major structure in the area (figure 21: phase 2, subphases 3 and 4, turquoise blue). Unfortunately, very little stratigraphic information can be gleaned about them from the excavations notebooks. They were, however, all destroyed and built over by subsequent buildings that stood contemporaneously with the large tripartite structure.

excavation, it was filled with pottery and roof tiles. In addition to the almost 100 bases, rims, amphora handles and other uninventoried objects, there were twenty-eight coarse-ware vessels dated to the late-third century.¹⁴²

In the eastern and southern sections of the East Field, another series of walls were involved in the early reorganization of the site (figure 7.24: phase 2, sub-phase 7, 7A, before 8). Though they were not physically connected with the tripartite building, they were also maintained through several remodelings and their stratigraphic relationship with later walls that also abut the tripartite structure indicates that they had a similar relative date. These walls served either to help level the area to the north of a fifth century B.C.E. artificial embankment which served as seating for the Earlier Stadium (figure 7.16), or to retain the earth from this embankment.¹⁴³ They adhered to the alignment along the cardinal points of the large tripartite building and the temenos of Poseidon, setting a precedent for all subsequent structures built.¹⁴⁴ This whole area was rebuilt at a later period, and cross-walls were installed to further subdivide the space (figure 7.27: phase 5, subphase 10, pink). A drain and settling basin were installed within this structure, which may be a small domestic structure.

The northern half of the site, closer to the theater, was the next to be built up, which defined the overall spatial framework of the site. The structures filled in and enclosed the area to the west and the north of the large building (figure 7.25: phase 3, sub-phase 5, after 5, 6, after 6, green). Frustratingly, the full extent of these areas cannot be determined, because the area has not been fully excavated. Presumably, the

¹⁴² Peppers, "Selected Roman pottery, Isthmia excavations, 1967-1972," 230.

¹⁴³ Gebhard and Hemens, "University of Chicago excavations at Isthmia: II," 33.

¹⁴⁴ They also have a similar relative date with subphase 7a and phase before 8.

northernmost structure continued north toward the theater and the other further east towards Tower 10 of the Hexamilion.

The space to the west of the large tripartite structure was further defined after the construction of these walls. A wall segment (figure 7.25: phase 3, subphase 9, tan) spans the space between the large open building and the structure mentioned above. A second set of walls to the south were also erected to create a room to the west of the large open building (figure 7.25: phase 3, subphase 8, brown).¹⁴⁵ These were not independent buildings, but attachments to the tripartite building, which further accentuated the tripartite space created by the wings on its western end. It was soon after this, in fact, that these wings were replaced with walls that refashioned the tripartite space into a rectangular shape (figure 7.26: phase 4, subphase with 10 and 11, pink stripe). The western walls, then, preserved the tripartite feeling of the space even after the shape of the structure was changed.

The area to the south and west of the tripartite building was further delineated at roughly this same time by the construction of further small rooms, which probably served as storage or other service buildings for the larger building (figure 7.27: phase 5, subphase 11, pink; subphase 14, orange; subphase 13 and 13a, light orange). Furthermore, they share a similar relative date with the other sub-phases, indicating a quick succession of building activity across the site.

A series of water-works was installed after the constructions so far described (figure 7.27: phase 5, sub-phase 12, yellow). Unfortunately, none of these drains or aqueduct systems have any physical connection, but they share a similar mortar and

¹⁴⁵ They were abutted by the walls of phase after 8, whose use is unclear.

construction type, based on our observations of the matrix of the mortar and its inclusions.

Within the large open structure, this same mortar type was also used in the construction of the masonry features of both a circular altar and the entrance and exit of a tunnel. The walls of this tripartite building are two of the more monumental and well constructed in the East Field and form the largest central spaces on the site. Throughout the above described building phases, other large spaces were subdivided, but the open space between these walls was maintained, perhaps indicating its functional importance. The presence of this tunnel and a circular altar feature, as well as various religious sculptures and vessels, within the large central space of the tripartite building suggests religious activity at this area.

At some point in the third century C.E., a tunnel was cut through the middle of the tripartite structure, marking a major change in this interior space. While it was built at about the same time as the drainage system, it does not have a hydraulic function. There is no waterproofing associated with it, and the presence of lamp holes further points to some other function.¹⁴⁶ The entrance to the tunnel was cut through the center of the room. It was constructed with spolia, including a column drum and a threshold stone, and was originally roofed. The upper part of the walls was lined with brick and mortar facing. Three steps led down into the tunnel itself, ending in a 1.30 meter drop. The tunnel was about 11 meters long, oriented roughly East-West, and measures about 0.5 meters wide and c.1.5 meters high (figure 7.27). It was cut into stereo and there were thirteen lamp holes cut along the walls. There is a slight northward bend at the west end, before the

¹⁴⁶ B. L. Wohl, "Darkness and light. Lamps from a tunnel at Isthmia, Greece" in *Lychnological Acts 1 : actes du 1er Congrès international d'études sur le luminaire antique*, ed. Laurent Chrzanovski (Nyon: Musée Romain, 2005), 211-6.

tunnel terminates at a small vertical opening with more lamp holes and an opening constructed of tile and cement set in a flat arch. This end of the tunnel could have been closed off by a large tile cap found about 0.5 meters away.

The tunnel fill was darker and looser than the general white destruction fill discovered across the site, and was also filled with more rocks and tiles than elsewhere, indicating that the tunnel went out of use and was filled in before the destruction of the rest of the site. There were, however, many interesting finds discovered within this fill, including a large number of lamps, mostly Late Corinthian, as well as a few coins dating to the third and early fourth centuries C.E.¹⁴⁷ Partially burnt fragments of a large vase with plastic snake decoration were discovered in this entrance to the tunnel. In addition to the snake, which winds itself around the mouth of the pot, its head leaning over the rim as if to drink, the pot was decorated with a clay ribbon tied in an elaborate reef knot, with two attached rosettes and 3 pendent leaves and a cluster of grapes decorate the pot. This is quite similar to another snake vessel discovered in the West Waterworks in the sanctuary, which went out of use in the Hellenistic period.¹⁴⁸ Other snake vessels from the Roman period are unknown in Greece, but similar vases are connected with Mithraism in other parts of the Roman Empire. Other finds include a second century small-scale head of Hermes,¹⁴⁹ a head of a grotesque, a fragment of a lizard-like animal, and fragments of a large vase with a plastic hand holding grapes.

The exit of the tunnel faces a circular feature located at the western end of the room. Unfortunately, half of this feature was destroyed by the first excavators, the

¹⁴⁷ Wohl, "Darkness and light. Lamps from a tunnel at Isthmia, Greece," IC 70-67 = bronze coin of Maximian Herculus (286-305CE) found 12cm above the floor; IC 70-75 = bronze coin of Licinius (307-323CE); IC 70-77= antoninianus of Propus (276-282CE).

¹⁴⁸ IP 363.

¹⁴⁹ IS 71-1; Lattimore, *Sculpture II*, 15-16.

missing half exactly corresponding to the terminus of a 1970 trench. The excavators in the trench notebook for trench 70-23, in fact, refer to some rubble that they removed that exactly corresponds to the other half of the Circular Feature discovered in 1971. It is located in the middle of the east-west axis of the room and is roughly aligned with the entrance to the tunnel, highlighting a connection between the two, roughly contemporary, features.

The coin hoard was also found in this room, along with five pieces of possibly associated sculpture, between the altar and the southern corner of the room.¹⁵⁰ The coin hoard, mentioned above in relation to the late history of the sanctuary, dates to the end of the third C.E., at least a century before much of the sculpture associated with it. There were ninety-seven coins in all, all bronze, which were scattered in a small area. A few pot sherds were found in the surrounding area, but do not seem to be directly associated with the coins. The coins slightly overlay the marbles, all of which have possible or absolute cultic associations. These include a second century female head (IS 71-3) and a bearded male head (IS 71-2), possibly of Poseidon. Lattimore suggests that this fragment could be associated with two other fragments of a small-scale left thigh and calf, because they are of the same type of marble and scale and exhibit similar workmanship.¹⁵¹ The other three pieces of sculpture are all relief sculpture and all are clearly cultic.¹⁵² One is an unfinished relief of Asklepios and his companions Hygieia and Telesphoros (figure 7.28). Another pre-Antonine relief was of two Cybeles in twin naiskoi (figure 7.29). Finally, the last relief is of three figures identified as Nymphs (figure 7.30). Interestingly, they were

¹⁵⁰ The coins and sculpture was discovered just south a projecting wall segment of subphase 2b, wall segment 28.

¹⁵¹ Lattimore, *Sculpture II* 13.

¹⁵² Lattimore, *Sculpture II*, 39-50.

carved from a marble roof tile that had been discarded from the Poseidon temple after the fire of 390 B.C.E. Other such tiles were used as drain covers in other parts of the sanctuary. But it is unclear at this time if this was all post-cult imported fill.

These reliefs, then, have various cultic associations. They do not all relate to one cult, but they are all associated with chthonic deities: Dionysos, Poseidon, Asklepios, Cybele and the Nymphs. It is also worth noting the similarity between the tunnels in the East Field and through the Antonine temple of Palaimon, both of which make slight turns to the right at their termination. The cult of Palaimon also has chthonic elements, including its high walled enclosure, the proliferation of unique lamps at the site, and its association with the death of a young hero. The sanctuary of Poseidon, in fact, always had strong chthonic overtones, including the cult caves of the classical periods, one discussed above and the other associated with the theater. It is tempting to suggest that this large tripartite structure, and the altar and tunnel constructed within it, had some association with these chthonic cults.

It is as yet unclear how long these structures stood in the East Field. The next major event on the site, however, was a large scale destruction that devastated all of these buildings. The entire expanse of the East Field was covered by this white destruction layer, although the next phase shows awareness of at least some of the buildings, as it was constructed on the top of the foundations of the northern wall of the tripartite structure (phase 7, subphase 15, red).

An overall conclusion that we can reach at this time, as it should be clear, is that that these buildings are *not* simple and isolated Roman houses. They are large and extensive building complexes that were built over broad stages and a broad area in quick

succession. The drainage system that was installed across the entire site also points to a centralized authority, as does the buildings' organization on the cardinal points, like the temple and other buildings in the sanctuary of Poseidon, and their close physical relationship with the sanctuary. Further analysis of these structures in the coming years will reveal further details, but some of the structures appear to be service buildings, probably relating to the visitors and athletes coming to the celebrate the Isthmian Games and other festivals and sacrifices through the year.

7. Conclusions

The sanctuary at Isthmia, abandoned in the Hellenistic period, was reopened and the games returned to the sanctuary in the mid-first century C.E. and several building projects, both monumental and nonmonumental, were completed in the sanctuary throughout the Roman period and into the third and fourth centuries. The traditional mother-city of the Isthmian Games was now a Roman colony and the capital of the Roman province of Achaia and, because of its position near the isthmus, continued to be a well-travelled and bustling area of the province. By reinstating the Isthmian festival in the hands of the Corinthians, the Roman citizens of that town could forge political and mythological associations with their Greek forbears by laying claim to and achieving a link to one of the most celebrated and acclaimed religious traditions of the classical Greeks, and thereby suggest a false antiquity for the Roman colony of Corinth by linking it to its Greek mythological and actual past. There was an almost immediate campaign to return the games to Corinthian control, which was certainly done by 2 C.E. By their control, they suggested a pseudo-antiquity for the Roman colony of Corinth by linking it to its Greek mythological, religious, and ritualistic past. When the sanctuary itself

reopened, it was modernized and architectural form was given to the cult of Palaimon, which was linked to the original, or rather, mythological, foundation of the games. The early Roman history of the Isthmian Games indicates the political importance to the Roman Corinthians in regaining control of this time-honored Corinthian cult in order to tie themselves to the glorious past of the tradition of the Panhellenic Games of Classical Greece.

There is not a great deal of physical evidence for the presence of professional athletes at Isthmia, but tantalizing bits of information lead us to speculate about their presence at the Isthmian sanctuary. The inscriptions recording the benefactions of Iuventianus refer to a stoa located near to the stadium that would have housed these athletes, but this area has not been fully excavated. Furthermore, the bath located nearby would fit nicely as a nearby exercise and relaxation facility for the athletes during their stays at the sanctuary in preparation for and during the Isthmian Games. The increased building activity at the site, however, shows the continual popularity of the games throughout the Roman period, especially in the second century C.E.

The architectural modifications to the sanctuary again show interactions between Greek and Roman identities in play at Corinth. There are many Roman modifications, such as the elaborate bath, increased interest in hydraulic works, and the stoas that surrounded the sanctuary. The Roman Bath, however, covered a Greek bath that had been in use during the early history of the Roman occupation of the site and the stoa was a typical building common in Greek sanctuaries. The Palaimonion, too, was a cult that had been at the site since the time of Pindar, but was given a new Roman face and strong chthonic aspect. The stoas monumentalized and regularized the space, but through an

architectural form at home in Greek sanctuaries. The area east of the temenos included some service buildings that were unable to be within the temenos due to its restricted space, as well as possible cultic, chthonic spaces as well, sharing some features with the Palaimonion complex. The sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia, then, shows how both the Romans and native Hellenes were using the sanctuary and the games as a link to the Classical Greek past in order to provide links and validity to their present.

Chapter 8:

Conclusion:

The Roman infrastructure and bureaucracy of the Panhellenic Sanctuaries

1. Introduction

The four original Panhellenic Games maintained their significance in the Roman period, even as the world grew larger and more festivals competed for athletes' and spectators' attention. In the Augustan era, Olympia and the Olympic Games, in particular, were subsumed within a broader imperial phenomenon of promoting particular aspects of Hellenic culture that upheld the Roman ideals of *virtus*. The Amphiktyonic League was also preserved, though its power was curtailed, as an idealized version of a Panhellenic council. The Nemean Games in Argos were subsumed within a broader picture of the mythological history of the Argive Plain. And though there is little evidence for direct imperial attention to the Isthmian Games, the Roman colonists of Corinth actively promoted the games and lobbied to have them returned to their city from Sikyon, using them as a link to the ancient Augustan ideals of Hellenism and the religious landscape of the Corinthia.

All of these the sites were modernized and “Romanized” through the Roman period for the celebration of these games in relatively similar ways, with the addition of

baths, aqueducts, and other such features. The bureaucracy of the different games, however, were altered in significantly different ways: Olympia maintained its Elean priesthoods; the bulk of the power of the Amphiktyonic League was transferred to an agonotheite and epimelete; the Isthmian Games elevated the post of agonotheite to one of the highest ranking in the city, and may have added a board of Hellanodikai in order to link themselves conceptually to the venerable Olympic Games. Less is known regarding the Nemean Games, but they, too, had an agonotheite and board of Hellanodikai, and both they and the Isthmian Games added imperial contests to their roster.

2. Infrastructure in the Roman Panhellenic sanctuaries

There were significant changes to the homes of the original Panhellenic Games in the Roman period. Except for repairs and renovations, however, few of these building projects took the form of temples or the polis dedications of centuries past, and most avoided the temenos of the sanctuaries. Rather, the majority of Roman period modifications were to the infrastructure of the sanctuaries, making them more comfortable and modern for the vast crowds that these sites attracted in the Roman period.

Agrippa's visit and benefactions to the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia indicated imperial approval of these most ancient games. With the Augustan creation Greek style agones at Nikopolis and Naples, Augustus signaled his support of these festivals and revitalized this institution as part of an approved brand of Hellenism. His image was installed into the Metroön at Olympia, and his statue recalled that of Phidias' Zeus in the neighboring temple. Agrippa paid for renovations to that temple of Zeus, and installed an elaborate Latin dedication as a memorial to it. Furthermore, it was probably during this

time that the Roman Arch at Olympia was constructed, which framed the Metroön, drawing the viewer's gaze towards this ancient temple that now housed a statue of the *pater patriae* of the Roman Empire in the temple of the mother of gods in the sanctuary of the king of the gods.

There is no evidence that the other sanctuaries discussed in this dissertation received the same architectural modifications in the early Julio-Claudian period as Olympia. Since the refoundation of the colony, however, Corinth had been campaigning to have the games returned to that city from Sikyon. Some of the earliest coins of the colony feature a seated Poseidon or a crown, indicating the eagerness that the colonists felt in taking control of this festival. A victors list from 2 C.E. is the first definitive proof of that festivals return to the city, but the games were not returned to the Isthmian sanctuary for many more decades.

The later Julio-Claudian period saw a huge architectural impact on Olympia and Isthmia. At this time, the so-called Villa of Nero and the hostel north of the prytaneion were constructed, and the Southwest Building was started. From the seventh century B.C.E., the Hill of Kronos at Olympia had been used for feasting, as is shown by evidence of tents, shelters, and cooking sites, in addition to wells filled with discarded animal bones and pottery. In the early Roman imperial period, a more permanent form of these same structures was built in this same area, showing a continuity in the use of space.

It was also at this time that the sanctuary of Poseidon on the isthmus was reopened and extensive infrastructural work was done to ready it for visitors and athletes. The northern and eastern sections of the temenos were terraced in order to repair the

damage that was done by a series of Hellenistic roads that ran through the site during its abandonment. As at Olympia, a Roman Arch was constructed that marked the entrance to the sanctuary site, though it was located some distance from the temenos proper. The worship of the hero-founder of the Isthmian Games, Palaimon, was also given physical form with the reopening of the sanctuary. This, like similar renovations in Corinth proper, linked the Roman citizens of Corinth with the mythical past of the Corinthia, giving legitimacy to their administration of the games.

Most all of these renovations to these sanctuaries have been linked at one time or another to Nero's visit to Greece and his participation in all of the games celebrated on the Greek mainland. This was also, however, a period of economic recovery in the province of Achaëa after the devastation of centuries of internal and Roman civil wars. They may also be linked to the increased popularity of these games in the Julio-Claudian period, sanctified by Augustus, but gaining momentum in the following decades. Athletic guilds had become more regularized, as shown by dossiers from Egypt which invoked Claudius, and which show the bureaucratic lengths to which one had to go in order to receive the privileges of a professional athlete. The rights and privileges afforded to these athletes illustrates the important place they held in the empire-wide festival circuit. The significance of these games is also reflected in the munificence provided to the sanctuary sites, themselves.

Following Nero's visit to Greece, the Flavian period also saw some building activity at these sites. The Southwest Building at Olympia was finished by Domitian, and massive renovations to the Leonidaion may also have been carried out at this time. Even though it was drastically refurbished, this structure continued to be used as a place for

hosting and feasting into the Roman period. This evidence indicates that the organizational infrastructure of these sanctuaries continued to be respected in the Roman periods. These buildings' placement around the perimeter of the sacred spaces, outside of the bounds of the temenos, further reveals the continued sanctity of the rites that took place there. Domitian also undertook repairs to the temple of Apollo at Delphi, though the extent of this is unknown. Finally, it was during the Flavian period that a temenos wall was constructed around the temenos of Poseidon at Delphi. The Flavians followed the imperially-approved philhellenism established by Augustus, but Domitian's interest in sport, including his establishment of the Capitoline Games in Rome, may also have been a reason for the imperial dedications of this period.

The second century mirrors the late Julio-Claudian period in a resurgence in building activity at Delphi, Olympia, and Isthmia. The most significant infrastructural works installed at the sanctuaries discussed in this dissertation were the Roman baths and the hydraulic works that fed them. Roman baths required massive amounts of water with which the sanctuaries needed to be supplied. The resultant hydraulic waterworks could then be used to carry water to other areas of the sanctuary. At Isthmia, for instance, most of the water pipes discovered through the course of excavations date to the Roman period. Because of the shallow topsoil, the full path of most of these pipes is unknown, but they clearly criss-crossed through the entire sanctuary, supplying water to the baths, as well as cisterns and other water features found throughout the site.

At Olympia, this water was in part supplied by the aqueduct of Herodes Atticus. Though this monument has largely been analyzed in terms of the sculptural program of the Nymphaeum, and the nuanced messages that Herodes Atticus was spreading

regarding his Greek and Roman identity, the Nymphaeum was first and foremost the termination of an aqueduct, carrying fresh water to the sanctuary from a kilometer away. This construction was exceptional in its generosity and proclaimed Herodes' importance to the province.

A total of seven baths were constructed around the border of the Altis, spanning from the early second to the fourth century C.E. The earliest Roman bath on the site, located next to the Kladeos River, followed a model also found at Delphi and Isthmia. At all three of these sites, the earliest Roman baths were constructed in the second century C.E., several decades after even the latest of these sanctuaries, Isthmia, was reopened in the Roman period. Furthermore, they were all constructed over or near Greek period plunge baths. The earliest Roman bath at Delphi was constructed in the late first or early second centuries in the gymnasium complex, next to the late fourth century Greek *loutron*, which was used concurrently as the *frigidarium* for the small bath complex. The small size of the bath, and the gymnasium and *palaistra* with which it is associated, points to a probable use by either the small city of Delphi or by some professional athletic guild in the Roman period, a theory backed up by the athletic inscriptions painted on the rear wall of the *xystos*.

The second century Roman bath at Isthmia was also built over a previous Greek bath, the clean surface of which suggests that it was used in the sanctuary over the century between its reopening and the construction of the lavish Roman bath. It has been suggested that this Roman Bath, because of its luxuriousness and some of its sculptural program, was, like the Nymphaeum at Olympia and the stadium at Delphi, constructed by Herodes Atticus, who had strong ties to both Isthmia and its mother-city, Corinth. The

location of these baths indicates a continuity in the use of space from the Greek through the Roman periods, signifying that the spatial organization of these sanctuaries continued to be honored to some extent.

Herodes Atticus was also responsible for the construction of the stadium at Delphi. Like his more monumental Panathenaic Stadium in Athens, it was constructed without the use of arches or other modern Roman features, in an attempt to archaize the structure. This was counterbalanced by the Roman Arch he also built nearby. This archaism is mirrored at Olympia, as the stadium there was renovated several times in the Roman period, but always with the same earthen embankment rather than more modern seating.

The sanctuary at Isthmia was monumentalized, as the space around the temple was regularized in the second century by the addition of stoas that framed the temple on all four of the cardinal points. This standardization of the sanctuary space drastically reduced the area of the temenos, forcing many activities outside of the temenos.

Continuity across the sites is also shown in the construction of other baths in the later history of the sanctuaries, too. The latest bath at Olympia, located across from the Leonidaion, included advanced heating technology, indicating both that the sanctuary still required new entertainment buildings late in its history and that the builders were using some of the latest technology. At Delphi, another bath was constructed just east of the sanctuary, which had lavish decoration. Another, later bath was also constructed at Isthmia near the Later Stadium, but has not been excavated, so little can be said about it. At all of these sites, these late baths indicate that the sanctuaries were not necessarily

falling into decline as has been previously thought, and that these sanctuaries still required new entertainment buildings, even later in their history.

In Delphi, an elaborate space, interpreted as a Roman period Agora, was constructed just to the east of the sanctuary entrance in the Roman period. This area was constructed later in the history of the site, in the fourth century C.E., when inscriptional activity in the sanctuary was in decline. As we have seen at Olympia, however, this is not a sure indication that the games or the sanctuary were going out of use. Before the discovery of the bronze tablet listing Olympic victors into the late fourth century, it was thought that the Olympic Games had died a century beforehand.

The infrastructural changes that took place in these sanctuaries during the Roman imperial periods gradually modernized these spaces, while still often respecting the original function of space from the Archaic and Classical periods. Baths and other touristic structures, as well as roads and water works, were installed around the perimeters of the sanctuaries, respecting the sacred space while introducing new Roman techniques of water and other maintenance. These changes served to update the sanctuaries, while still maintaining their core sacred space.

A major resurgence of physical updates to these sanctuaries all date to around the second half of the first century C.E. This is also the time that the Isthmian Games were transferred back to their sanctuary from the city of Corinth. Further structures were then built through the second, third, and fourth centuries. I believe that this can be linked to both the economic recovery of the province of Achaëa after the beginning decades of Roman rule and also the increased bureaucracy of the athletic guilds, indicating the continued importance of these festivals in the Roman period. As they gained more

political influence in Achaëa, I believe that they also sought to update and modernize their ancestral sanctuaries, which were still popular venues for the four most important Greek athletic competitions in the ancient world. These changes are in some ways mirrored, but often contrasted, by the structure of the priesthoods and other administrative offices of these same games.

3. Panhellenic bureaucracy in the Roman period

In addition to the infrastructural changes to the Panhellenic sanctuaries in the Roman era, the analysis of the bureaucratic organization of these different games is also significantly important in determining the complex cultural negotiations that were being played out in these sanctuaries between the indigenous Hellenes, Romans, Roman Greeks, and the many other groups using these sites. As opposed to the similar types of infrastructural works that were installed at Olympia, Delphi, and Isthmia, such as baths and drainage systems, the organizational structure of the four games in the Roman period were dramatically different from each other. Similarly, the people living around them had different ways to use the space and control their Panhellenic message in order to serve their own needs and political motivations.

The organizational structure of the Olympic Games changed relatively little in the Roman period. The priesthoods and other officials were still supplied from the small city of Elis. Priests were still selected from the landholding aristocracy of the city and that they were relatively uninvolved in the imperial politics of the day. Additionally, the organizational structure of these priesthoods remained the same as they had been in the Classical and Hellenistic periods. The games were still overseen by a group called the Hellanodikai, whose number had been set at ten since the 108th Olympiad in 348 B.C.E. Furthermore, in opposition to the other four games studied in this dissertation, the offices

of the Olympic Games were not supplemented with an epimelete or an agonothete elected for every festival. Rather, a couple of exceptionally rich individuals, Herod the Great and Timasarchos, provided Olympia with financial assistance and were named agonothetes in perpetuity, negating the need to have an individual finance the games every four year. The organizational structure of the earlier Olympic Games, therefore, remained relatively intact. The only significant priesthood that was not selected from the ranks of the local elite was that of Demeter Chamyne. Aristocratic women from elsewhere in Greece, such as Antonia Bebia and Regilla, the wife of Herodes Atticus held this position. The wealth of Regilla, at least, might indicate that this particular priestesshood was for sale to an aristocratic notable. The conservatism in the changes to the Roman Olympic Games indicates that the antiquity of these games and their place in the periodic, Panhellenic circuit were honored. The fact that Olympic Games, organized roughly on the Olympic model, were exported to various places throughout the empire, too, shows a respect for the antiquity and preeminence of these games.

The organizational body of the Pythian Games, however, was drastically and continually changed by several emperors throughout the Roman period. In contrast to Olympia, the Amphiktyonic League was altered by Augustus, Nero, and Hadrian, among others. Augustus' changes enabled his new city, Nikopolis, to have a prominent role in the running of the sanctuary. As the powers in Greece shifted over time, the League was changed over and over again until Nikopolis, Thessaly, and Macedonia, the three most profitable and important regions of the area in the Roman period, had an equal share of power over the games, thereby stripping the role of the more traditional powers, such as Athens and Sparta.

More severe changes to the administration of the Pythian Games came with the installation of the offices of the epimelete and agonothete. These two positions were installed in the Julio-Claudian period and stripped a great deal of the power away from the Amphiktyonic League. Not only did they take over much of the bureaucratic responsibilities of organizing the games, they also shouldered a large percentage of the financial burden. It may have been a function of Augustus and other emperors stripping away political power from the previously powerful, and centralizing, Amphiktyonic League.

The city of Delphi, itself, maintained some role in the running of the sanctuary, by virtue of its close proximity to the sacred site itself and through its role in supplying some traditional priesthoods and its membership in the Amphiktyonic League. Hadrian, especially, sided with the city of Delphi in many of its second century altercations with the region of Thessaly.

The Pythian Games, then, were drastically changed by the direct hands of the Roman emperors, who altered the composition and the powers of the Amphiktyonic League. Under Augustus and the early Roman Empire, this was probably done in order to temper the power of the League and disconnect the cities of the newly formed province of Achaia by giving a majority of the seats to Augustus' city of Nikopolis of whose allegiance he was assured. Over time, more Amphiktyonic power was allocated to the regions of Thessaly and Macedonia, the most powerful regions of Achaia.

Much less is known about the Nemean Games of the Roman period. They were moved to the city of Argos in the Hellenistic period, and were celebrated in conjunction with games to Hera and the emperor in intervening years. Little archaeological evidence

remains that can be explicitly linked to these games. The athletes and visitors must have used the theater and the Roman Bath complex of the city when they came to Argos every other year, but these were certainly also used throughout the year, as well.

As opposed to the Nemean Games, the sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia and its mother-city Corinth provide ample and interesting evidence of changes to a major Panhellenic festival. The administrators of the Roman Isthmian Games were the Roman Corinthians who colonized the previously destroyed city in 44 B.C.E. Within a couple of years of this refoundation, the games were returned to the control of Corinth from Sikyon, and, after being celebrated within Corinth for many years, the games returned to the Isthmian sanctuary in the mid-first century C.E.

The promptness with which the games were returned to Corinth is certainly striking and indicative of the cultural message the new Roman Corinthians were attempting to make with their refoundation of this ancient, venerable Greek city. Their renewed control of the games was a message about the continuity of cult, or at least the appearance of continuity, from the pre-sacked pre-146 B.C.E. Corinth and this new foundation.

This is apparent by the language of the games, itself. As opposed to the other cults in Roman Corinth, the Isthmian Games were conducted in Greek. Latin was the official language of all of the new city's cults, including those newly formed in the Roman Forum, but also the other, pre-146 Greek cults, too. The inscriptions associated with the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore, the sanctuary of Asklepios, and the other Greek cults in Corinth were in Latin and even the cult titles were translated out of Greek.

As we have seen, though, the cult titles of the Isthmian Games remained Greek and were written in Greek. Furthermore, the Isthmian victor's lists were likewise inscribed in Greek. I believe that this was a way for the antiquity of the cult to be stressed, and thereby the city of Corinth's long standing role as the administrator of the cult to be highlighted. Furthermore, the office of agonothele of the Isthmian Games was the highest achievable post in the provincial government, which shows the importance of the role of the Isthmian Games in Achaia. I believe that this was a deliberate cultural message by the Corinthians about the antiquity of the games and, therefore, of their worth. The Roman Corinthians were using their control over the Isthmian Games to indicate their cultural importance in Greece and to associate themselves with the antiquity of the Panhellenic circuit. By doing so, they legitimated their own presence in the province.

The administration of the three Panhellenic Games for which we have significant evidence, the Olympic, Pythian, and Isthmian, were dramatically differently from each other in the Roman period. The Olympic Games maintained its Archaic and Classical structure of priesthoods, which continued to be supplied from the small city of Elis, which did not play a significant part in the wider imperial world. Much of the political power of the Pythian Amphiktyonic League was stripped, with Nikopolis, Thessaly, and Macedonia taking a leading role and much of the administrative and financial duties handed over to the agonothele and epimelete. In stark contrast, the Isthmian Games were now in the forefront of the political structure of the province of Achaia as they were administered by the capital of that province which used the games as a means of elaborating on their ancient Corinthian forebears.

4. Greek athletic festivals in the Roman imperial period

What was the role and importance of Greek athletic festivals in the Roman world? Were they just vestiges of the ancient past or did they provide a more vibrant and pressing solution to some problem? The concept of Panhellenism, at least as observed in the Roman period, was a way to come together and share in a common Greek religion and education, a common geography and history.¹ According to König, whether as spectator or athlete, one was still participating in an “active participatory performance of Hellenic identity.” By visiting the site, people from the Roman Empire could thereby take part in this tradition. The strong Roman presence, felt by the presence of the bath and other newer Roman structures on the sites, the names of the emperors included in the festival names, the imperial cult at most of these major sanctuary sites, would have given a sense of a Roman involvement in the Greek festival circuit and an imperial presence and participation, as if the emperor himself were safeguarding the Hellenic traditions and allowing them to continue by his acquiescence. Indeed, as Price has eloquently shown, the imperial cult was a significant force behind the expansion of Greek festivals in the Roman periods, in Asia Minor as well as Greece.

In the Roman period, the games continued to be great vehicles for self-promotion. The agonotheses recorded the results of the festivals which they had funded. On athletes’ victory inscriptions, the breadth of sites and sanctuaries visited would have highlighted the vast distances that these champions had travelled, and cities boasted of spreading their influence all over the Greek world. In this way, too, the athlete was seen as a panhellenist. No matter from what city he came, he had travelled all over the Greek world.

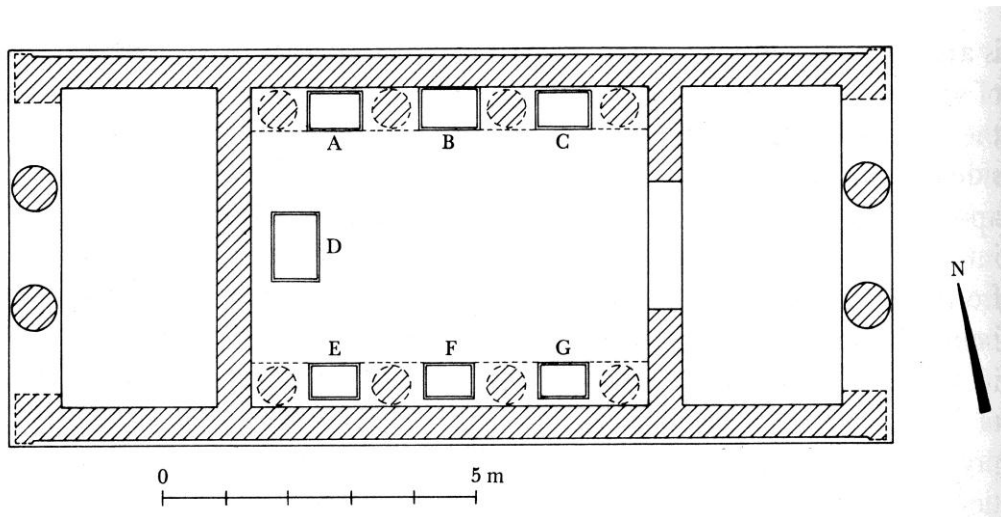
¹ König (2005), 163.

This Panhellenism was a benefit to many who participated in these games. For those indigenous Greeks living in the province of Achaia, it provided a common cultural heritage around which to rally, giving them cultural relevancy in the Roman Empire. For the Roman Empire, Panhellenism was a way to unite the disparate cities of Achaia into a more unified province. And for other visitors and athletes who came to these sites, either to watch or to compete, their participation also linked them to some of the oldest and most venerable of Greek religious institutions.

Figures



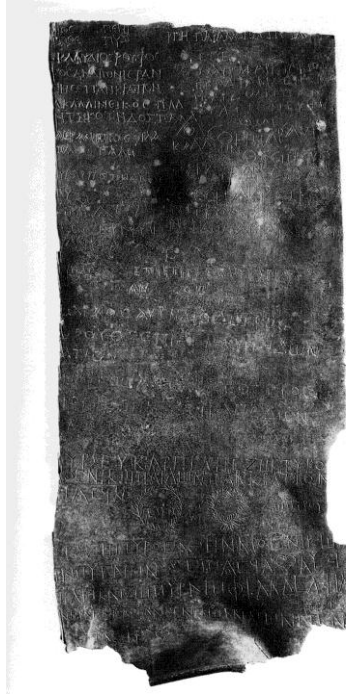
4.1. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia (Wikimedia Commons)



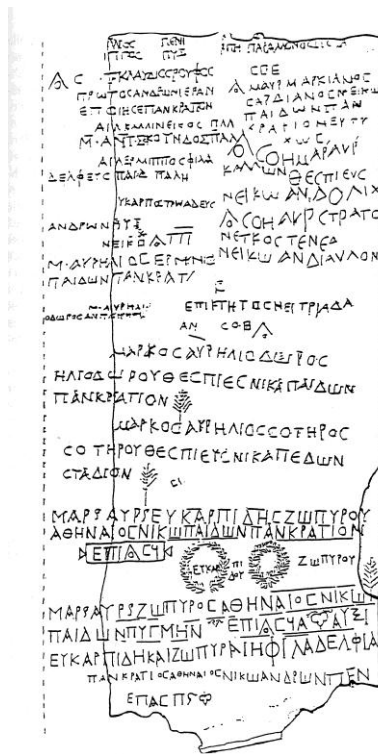
4.2. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Metroön. A = Domitian (?); B = Claudius; C = Titus; D = Augustus as Zeus; E = Domitia (?); F = Agrippina the Younger; G = Julia Titi (?) (Hitzl 1991)



4.3. Map of Elis and Olympia (Barrington Atlas 2000)



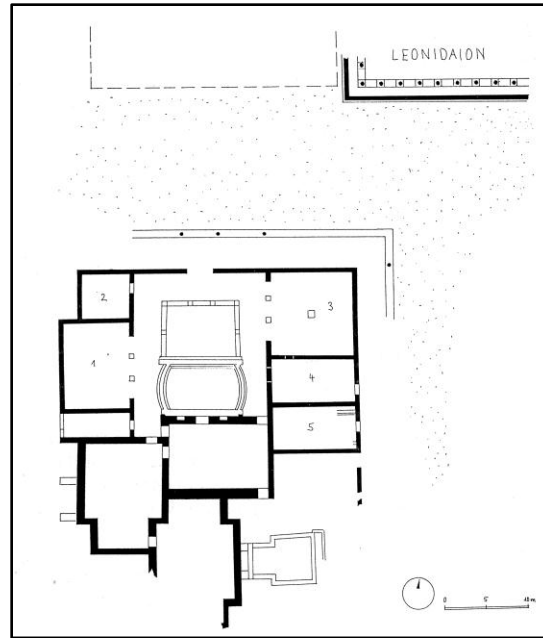
4.4. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Bronze plaque discovered in Southwest Building (Kyrieleis, et.al. 2003)



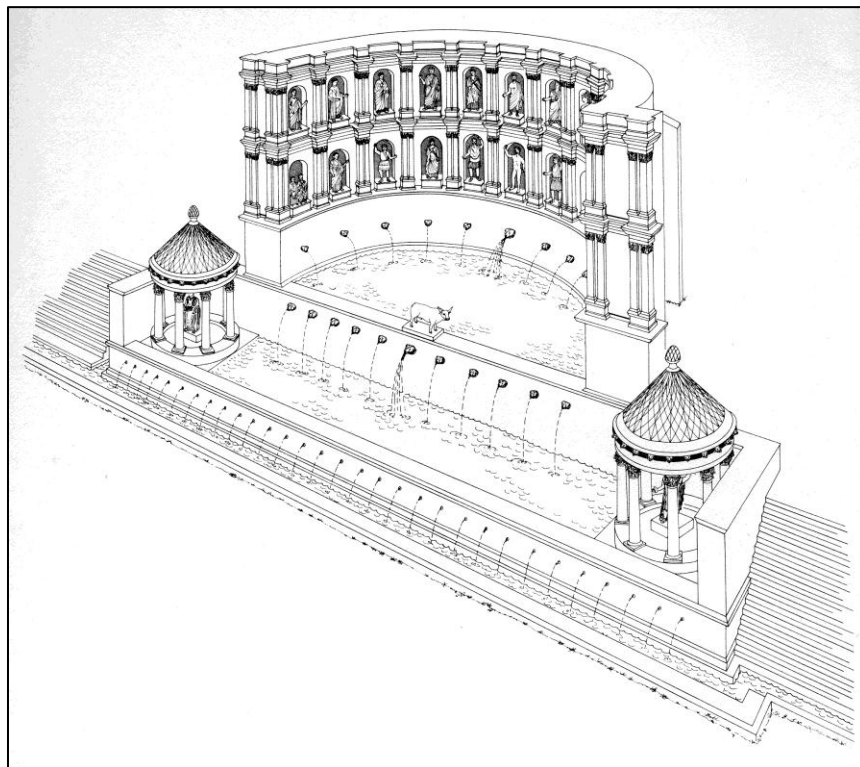
4.5. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Bronze Bronze plaque discovered in Southwest Building, drawing (Kyrieleis, et.al. 2003)

| | | | |
|----|---|--|--|
| | []μιος πέντ. [Φίλι?]ππος πύξ | ρ.[.]. [ρπη' Παράμονος π. στά. σοε' | |
| | ['Ολ. σ '] Τ. Κλαύδιος 'Ρούφος [πρῶ]τος ἀνδρῶν ἱερᾶν 5 [ἐπ]οίησε πανκράτιον. | 'Ολ. Μ. Αὐρ. Μαρκιανὸς Σαρδιανὸς νεικῶ 5 παιδῶν παν- κράτιον εὐτυ- χῶς | |
| | [Αἶ]λ. Καλλίνεικος πάλ. [Μ. 'Α]ντ. Σεκοῦνδος πάλ. | 'Ολ. σση' Μαρ. Αὐρ. Κάλλων Θεσπιεὺς 10 νεικῶ ἀν. δόλιχ. | |
| | [Αἶ]λ. Ἐρμιππος Φιλα- [δελφεὺς?] παιδ. πάλη | 'Ολ. σση' Αὐρ. Στρατό- νεικος Τενέδ. 15 νεικῶ ἀν. δίαυλον | |
| 10 | []υκαρπος Τρωαδεὺς [ἀνδρῶν?] πύξ [.] [ν]εικ[.] 'Ολ. ΤΠ [Μ. Αὐρή]λιος Ἐρμήμιος[ς]? 15 [παιδῶν?] πανκράτ. | [.]? 15 | |
| | [Μ.Α]ἶρ. Ἴλι- Ἐπίκτητος νει. τριάδα [ῶδωρος ἀν. πα]γκρά[τ.] ἀν. ^{ν.ν.} σοθ' 'Ολ. | | |
| | [] Μᾶρκος Αὐρ. Ἡλιοδῶρος [Ἡλιοδ]ῶρου Θεσπιε<ῦ>ς νικᾶ παιδῶν 20 [πανκρ]άτιον [] Μᾶρκος Αὐρήλιος Σότηρος [Σοτή]ρου Θεσπιεὺς νικᾶ πέδων [στάδι]ον | | |
| | [Μᾶρ.] Αὐρ. Εὐκαρπίδης Ζωπύρο[ν] 25 ['Αθ]ηναῖ[ος] νικῶ παιδῶν πανκράτιον [ἐ]πὶ 'Ολ. σφ'. | Εὐκαρ πί- Ζωπύρου δου | |
| | [Μᾶρ. Α]ῦρ. Ζώπυρος Ἀθηναῖος νικῶ 30 [παίδ]ων πυγμῆν ἐπὶ 'Ολ. σφα'. αὔξι, [Εὐκαρ]πίδη καὶ Ζώπυραι, ἢ φιλαδελφία. Πα]γκράτιος Ἀθηναῖος νικῶ ἀνδρῶν πέν. vac. ἐπ' 'Ολ. σπζ'. vac. | | |

4.6.Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Bronze plaque discovered in Southwest Building, transcription (Ebert 1997)



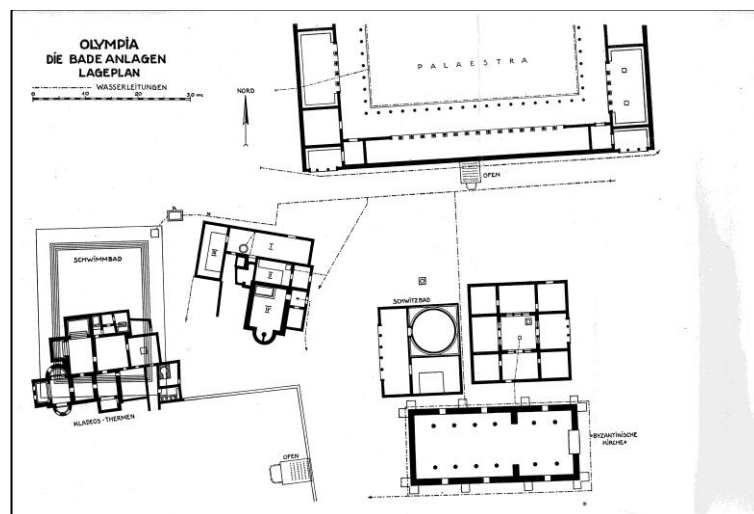
4.7.Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Southwest Building (after Sinn, et.al. 1994)



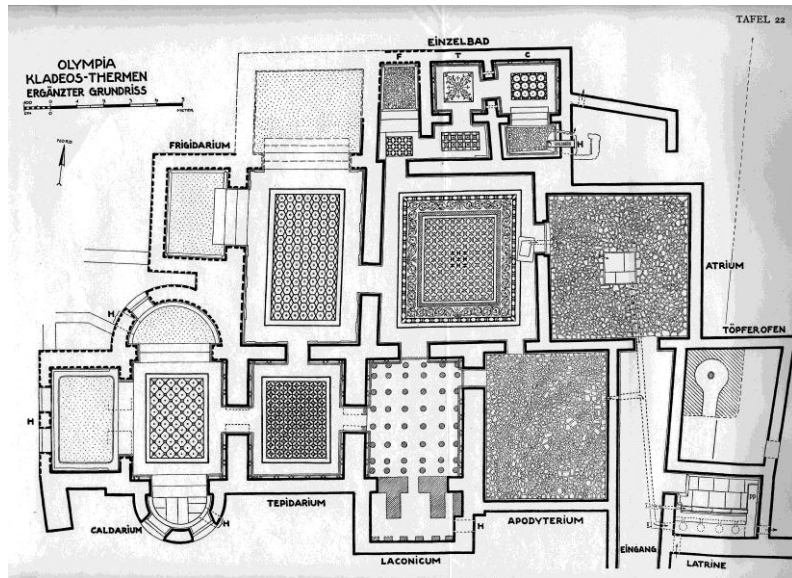
4.8.Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Nymphaeum of Herodes Atticus, reconstruction (Bol 1984)



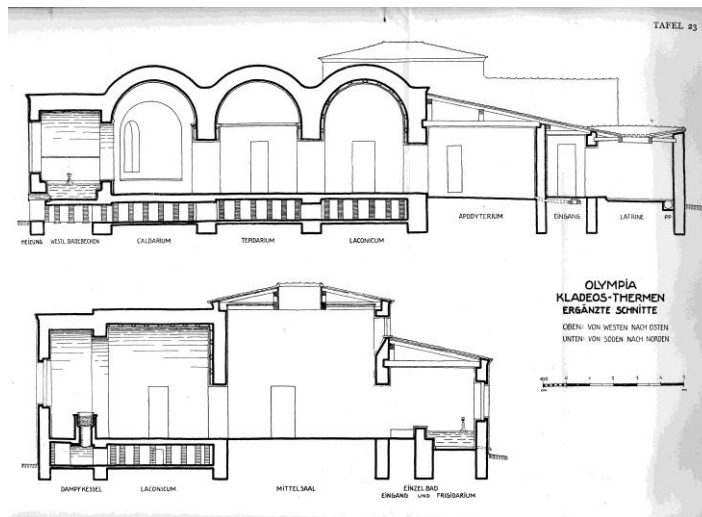
4.9. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Nymphaeum of Herodes Atticus (Karen A. Laurence)



4.10. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Greek baths (Kunze and Schleif 1944)



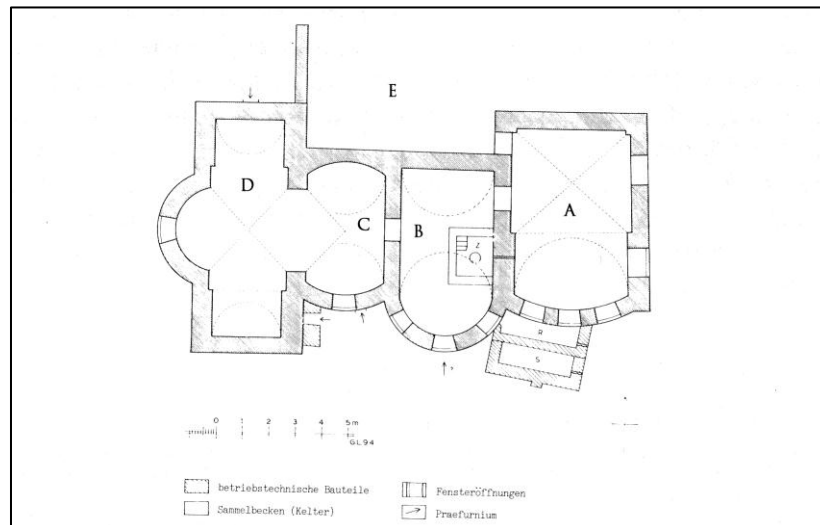
4.11. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Kladeos Baths, plan (Kunze and Schleif 1944)



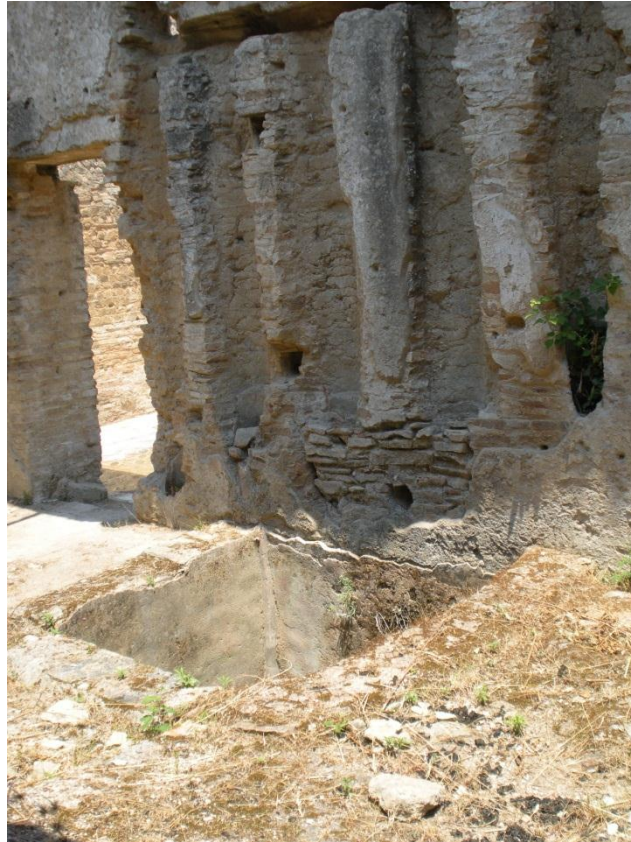
4.12. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Kladeos Baths, elevation



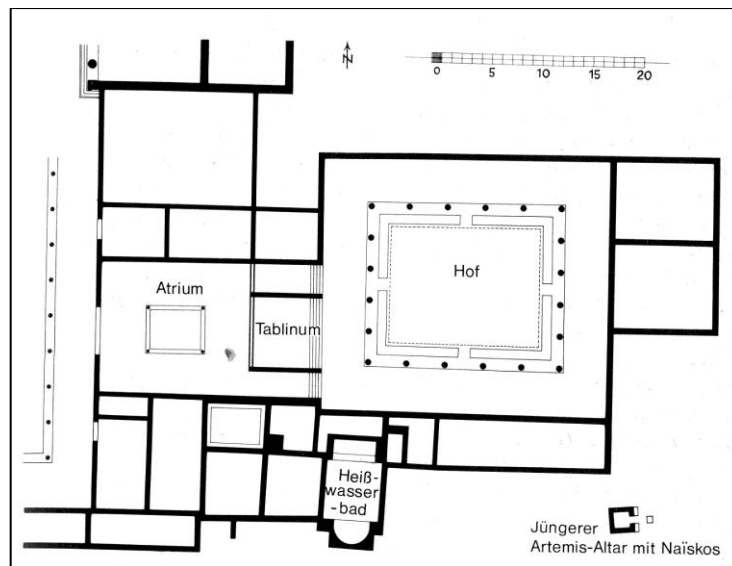
4.13. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Baths south of the Leonidaion with Leonidaion and Southwest Building (Sinn, et.al. 1994)



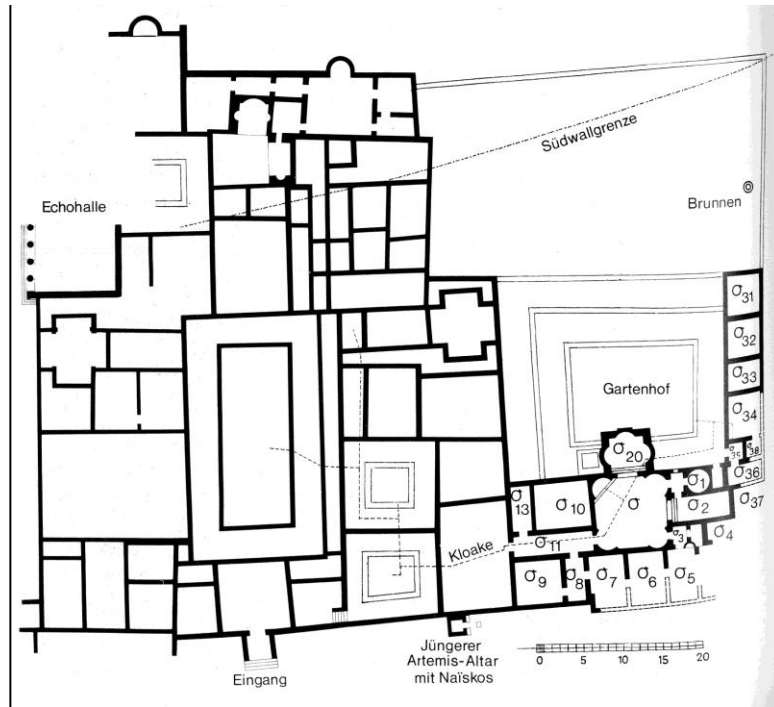
4.14. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Baths south of the Leonidaion, plan (after Sinn, et.al. 1994)



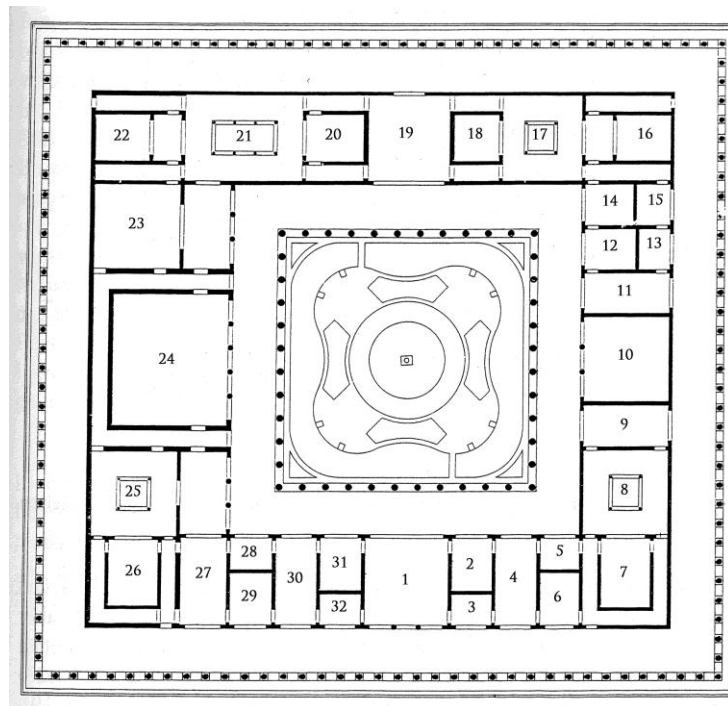
4.15. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Baths south of Leonidaion, heating system (Karen A. Laurence)



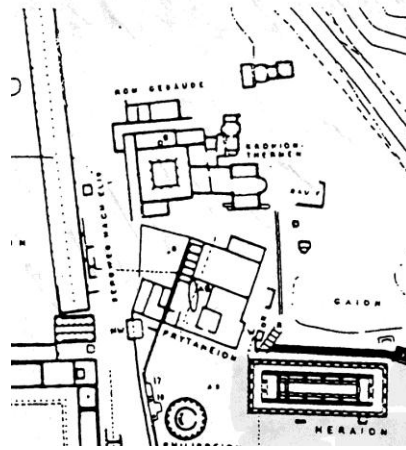
4.16. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: So-called Villa of Nero (Mallwitz 1972)



4.17. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: East Baths (Kunze, et.al. 1994)



4.18. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Roman period Leonidaion (after Mallwitz 1972)



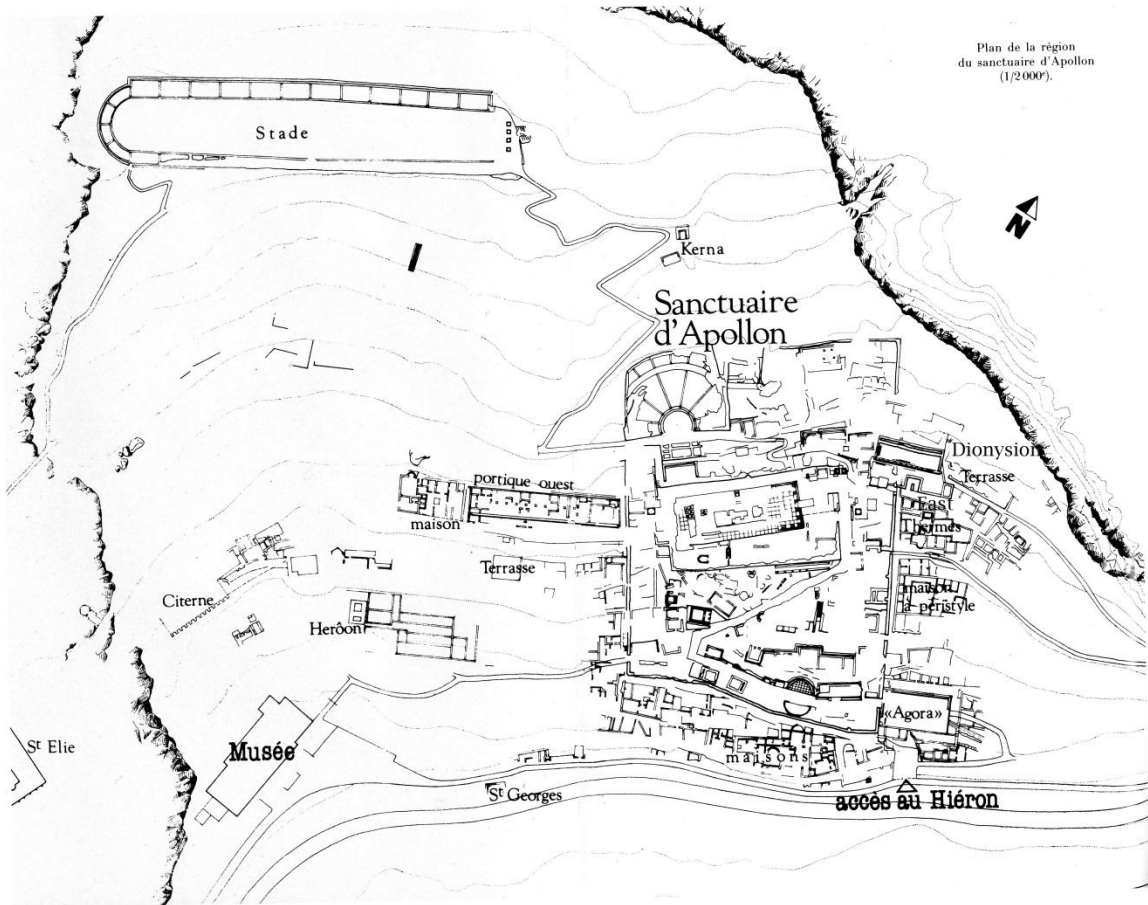
4.19. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia, Peristyle building north of prytaneion



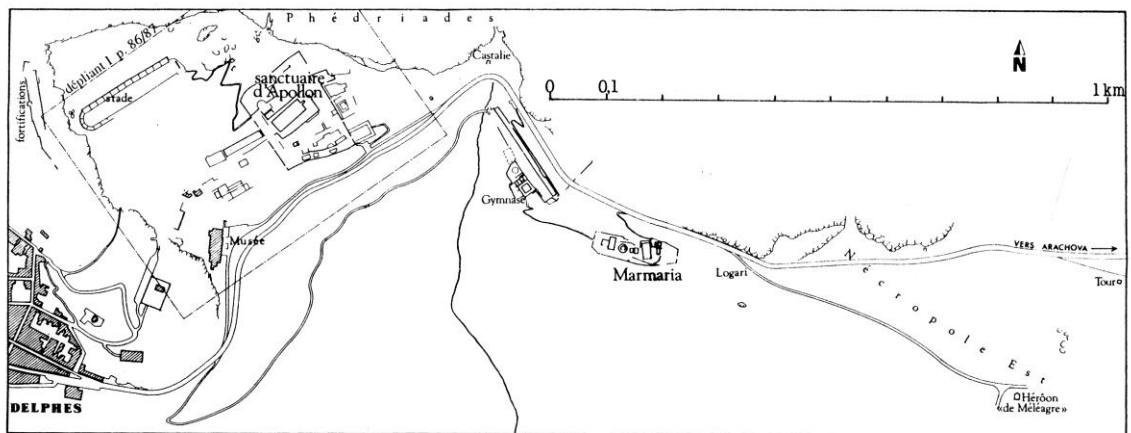
4.20. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Inscription, Southwest Building (Kyrieleis 2003)



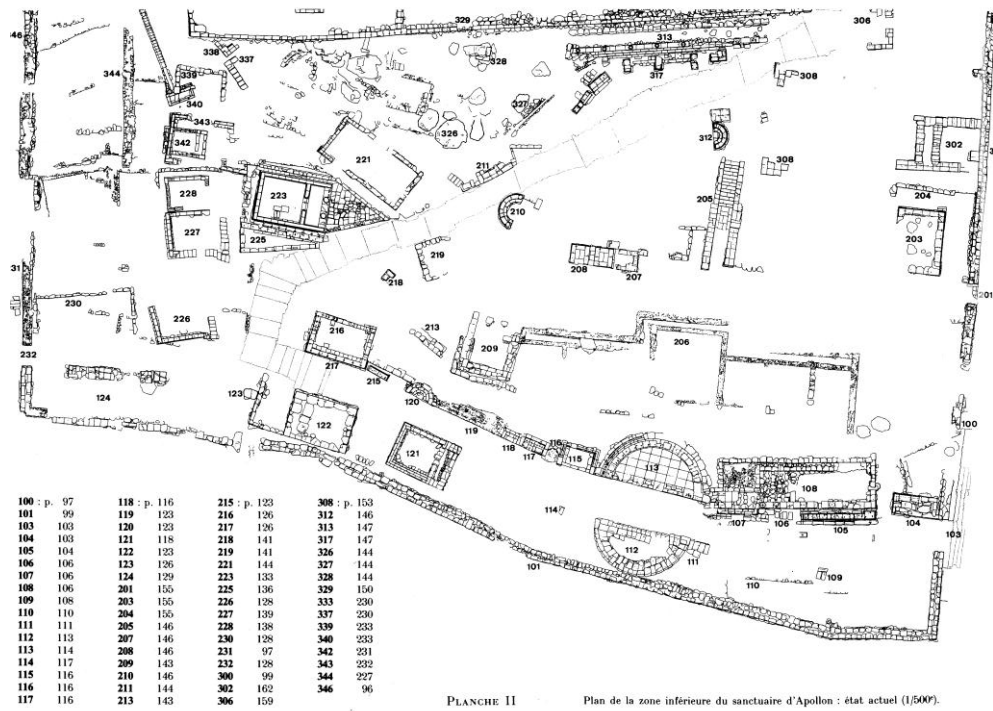
4.21. Sanctuary of Zeus, Olympia: Inscription, Southwest Building, reverse (Sinn, et.al., 1995)



5.1. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi (Bommelaer 1991)



5.2. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi: Major excavated areas (Bommelaer 1991)



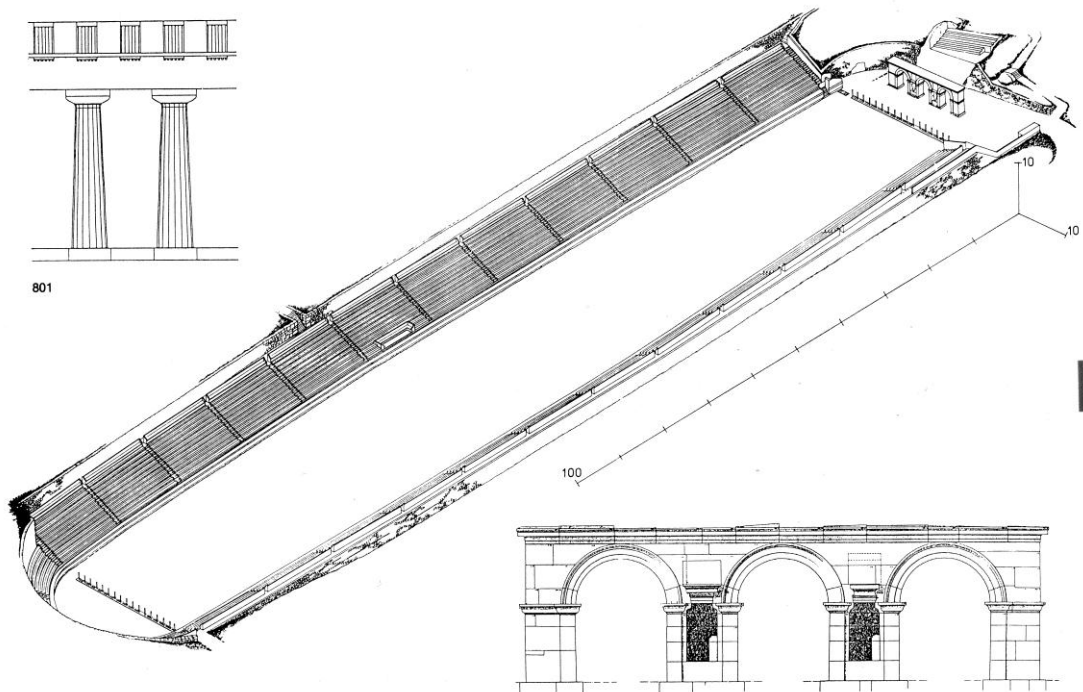
5.3. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi: Bouleuterion, *221 (Bommelaer 1991)



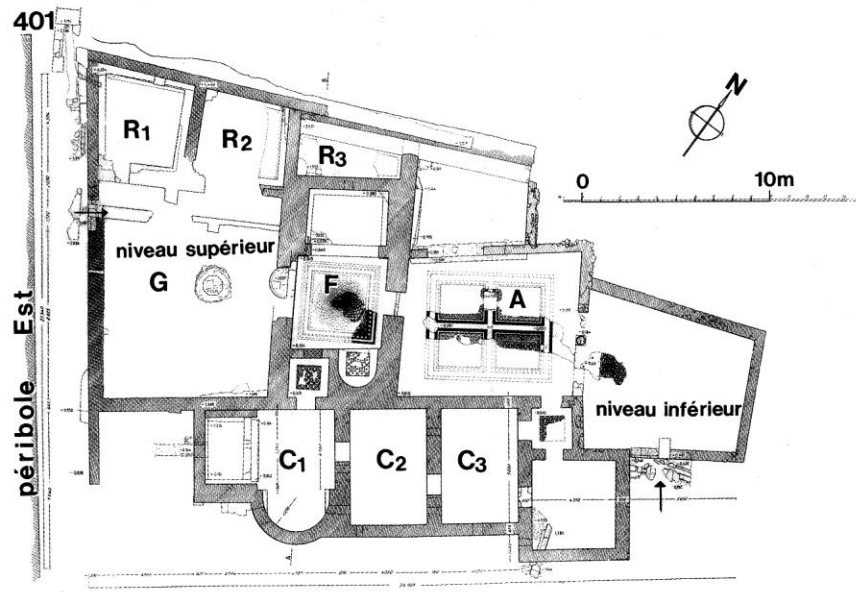
5.4. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi: Inscription honoring Plutarch (Karen A. Laurence)



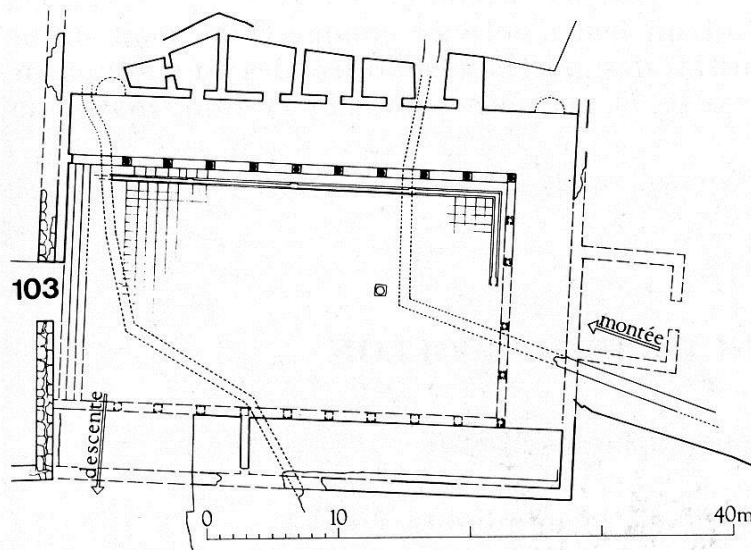
5.5. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi: Domitian (FD III.4.120) (Karen A. Laurence)



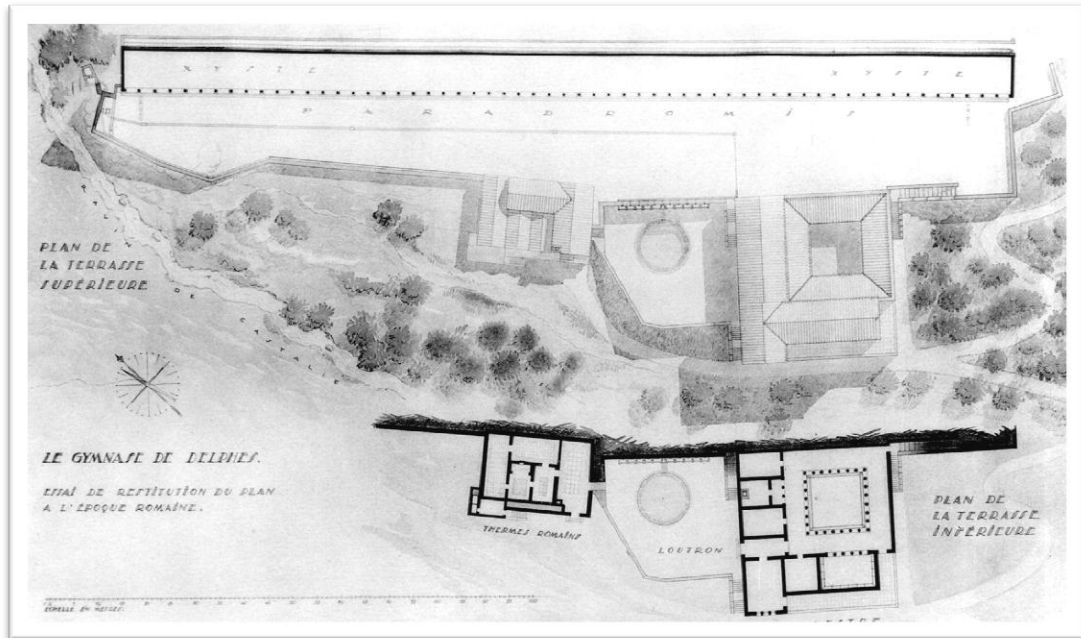
5.6. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi: Stadium of Herodes Atticus (Aupert 1979)



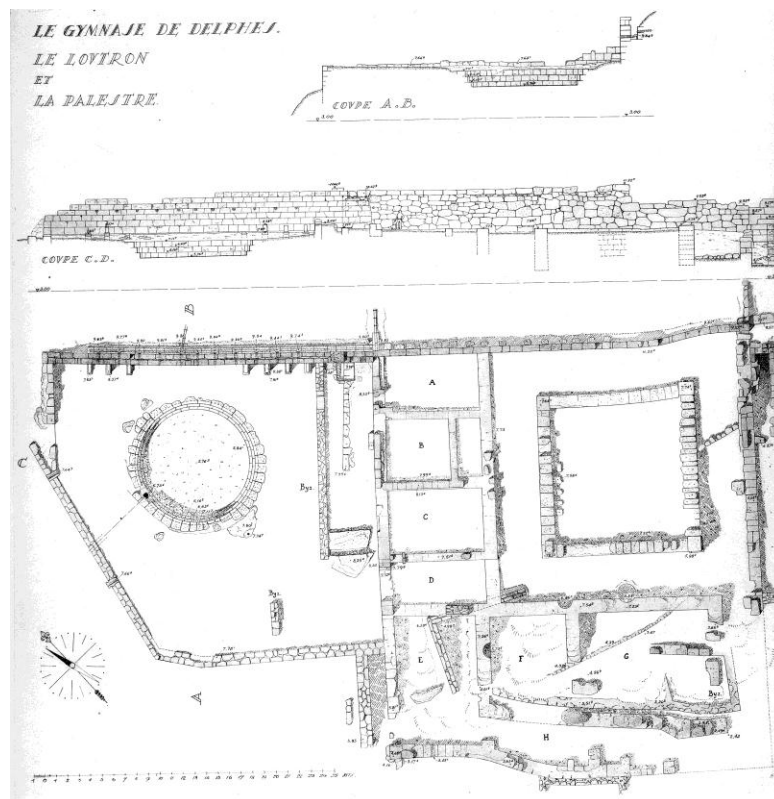
5.7. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi: East baths (Bommelaer 1991)



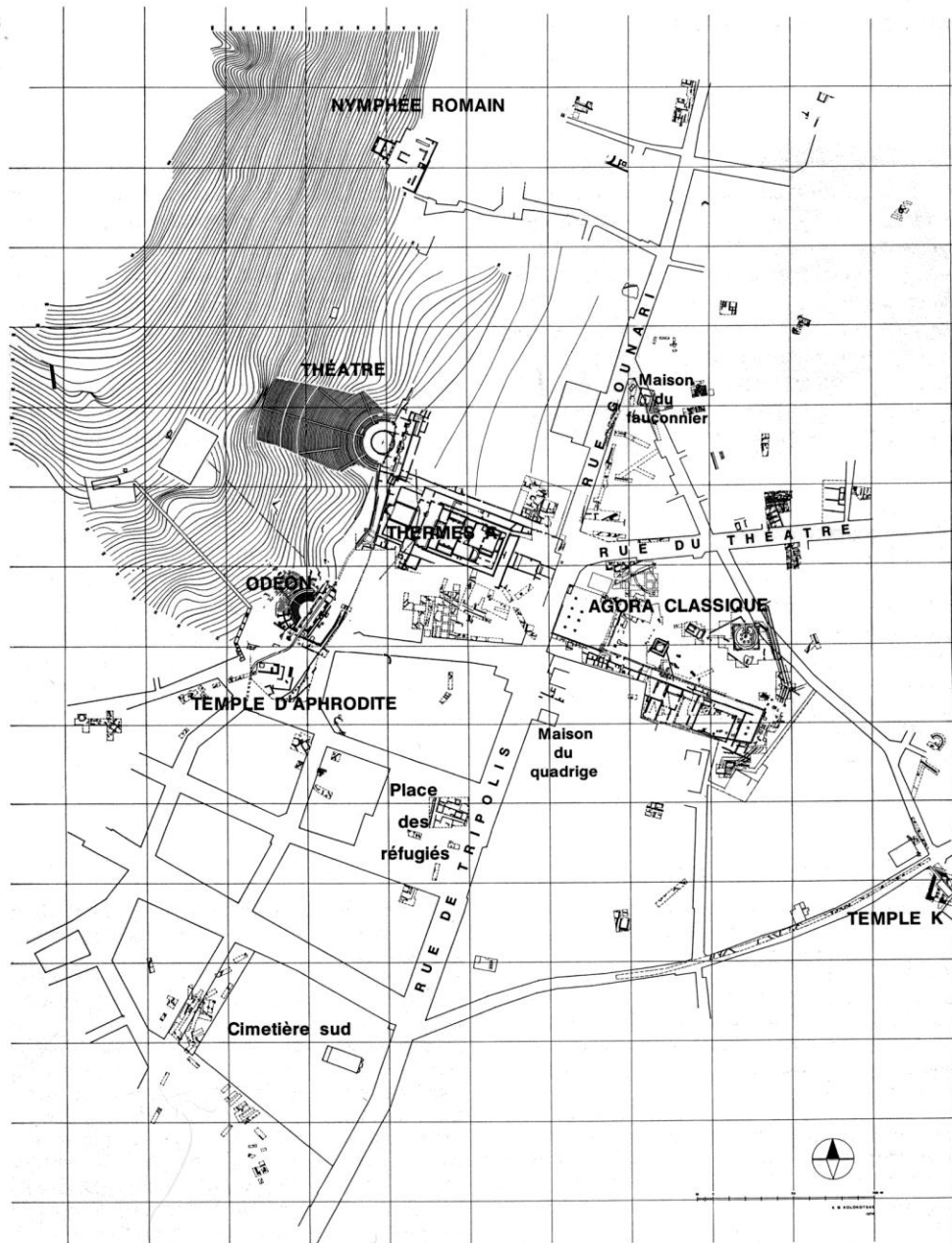
5.8. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi: So-called Roman Agora (Bommelaer 1991)



5.9. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi: Gymnasium (Jannoray 1953)



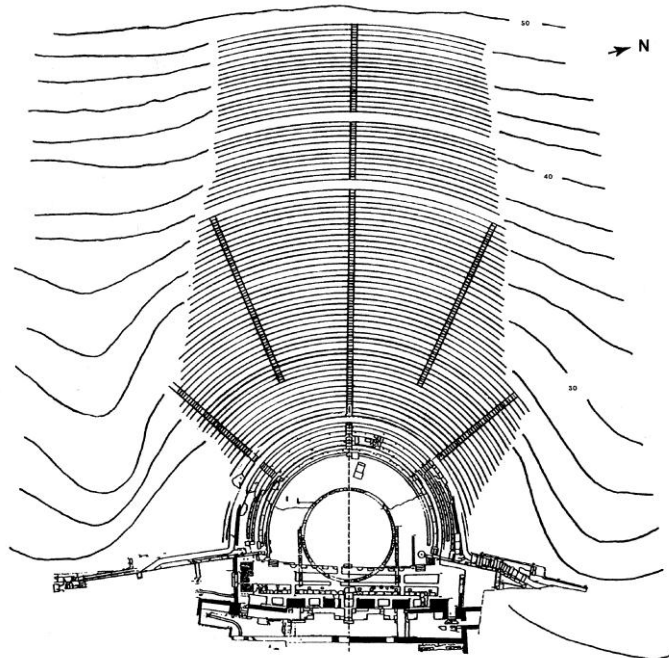
5.10. Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi: Gymnasium, loutron and palaistra (Jannoray 1953)



6.1. Argos: Excavated area (Piérart and Touchais (1996))



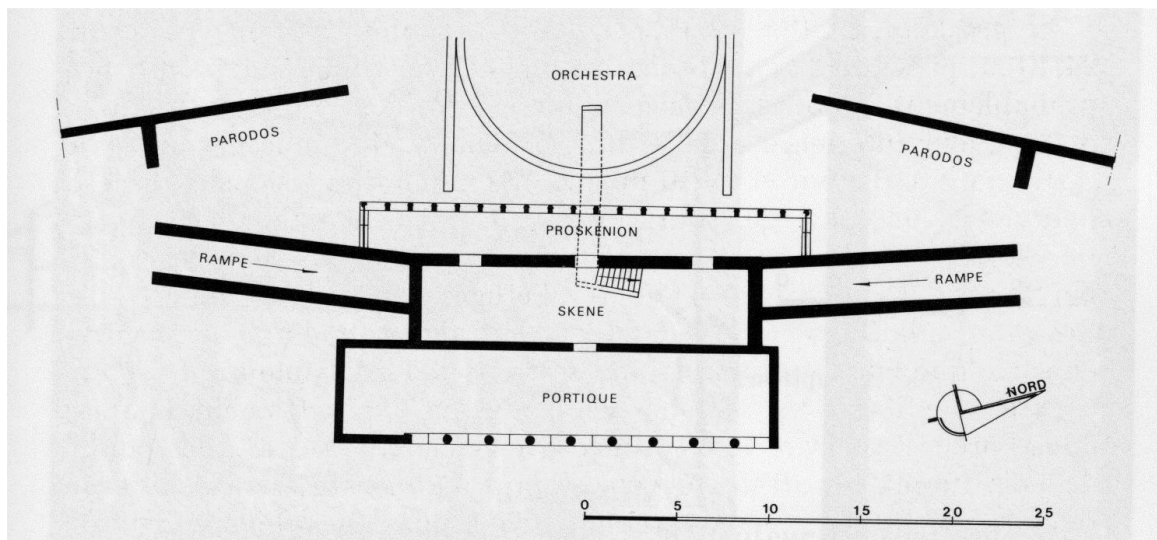
6.2. Map of Argolid, Argos, Nemea (Barrington Atlas 2000)



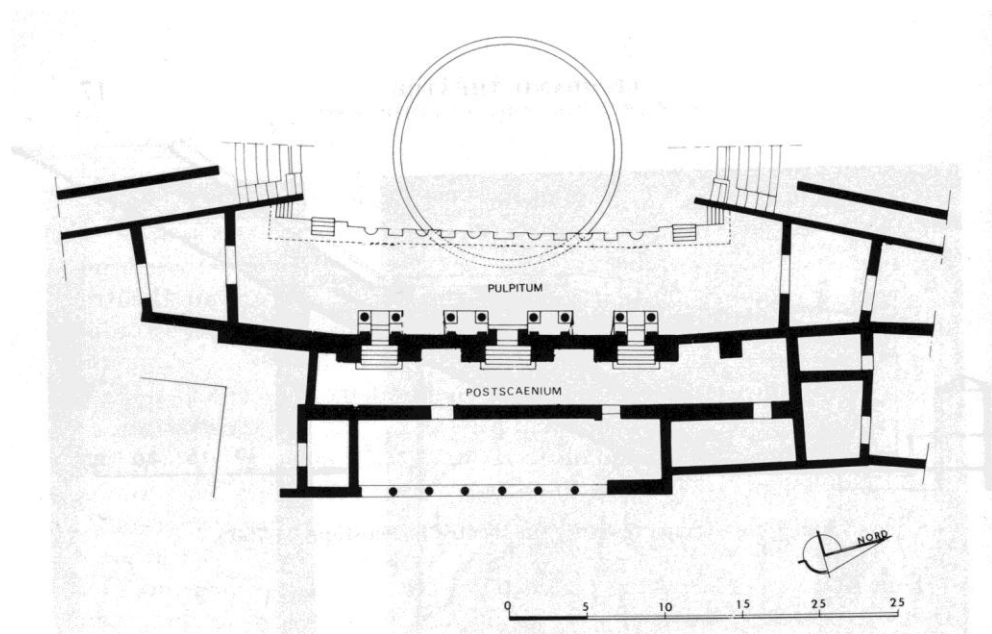
6.3. Argos: Theater (Moretti 1993)



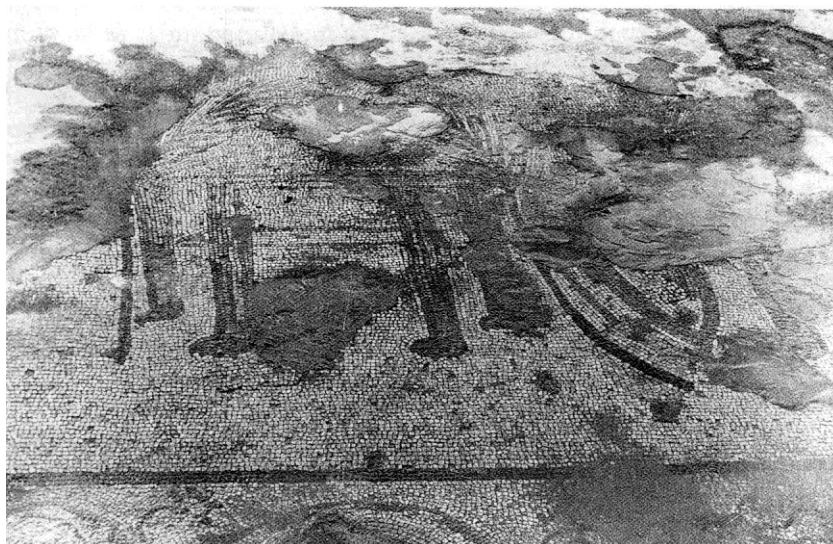
6.4. Argos, Theater (Karen A. Laurence)



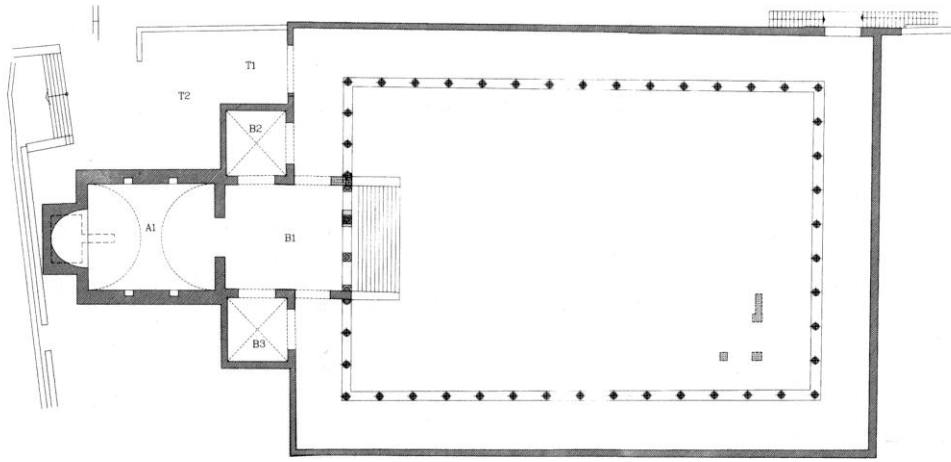
6.5. Argos: Theater, Hellenistic period (Moretti 1993)



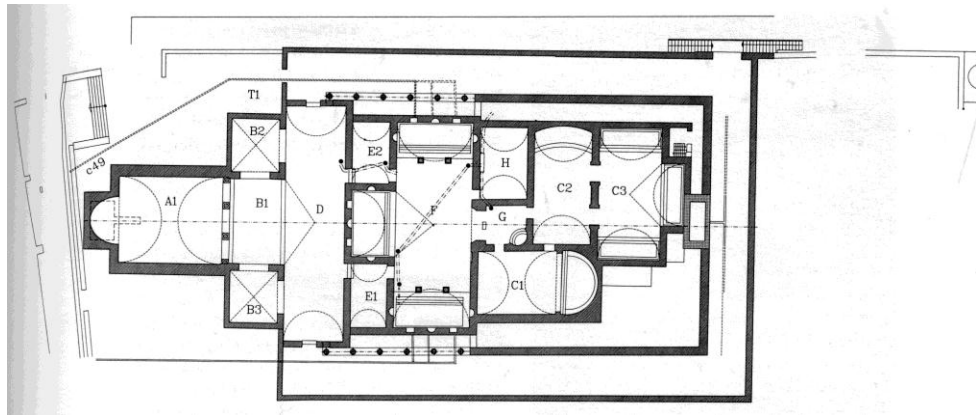
6.6. Argos: Theater, Roman period (Moretti 1993)



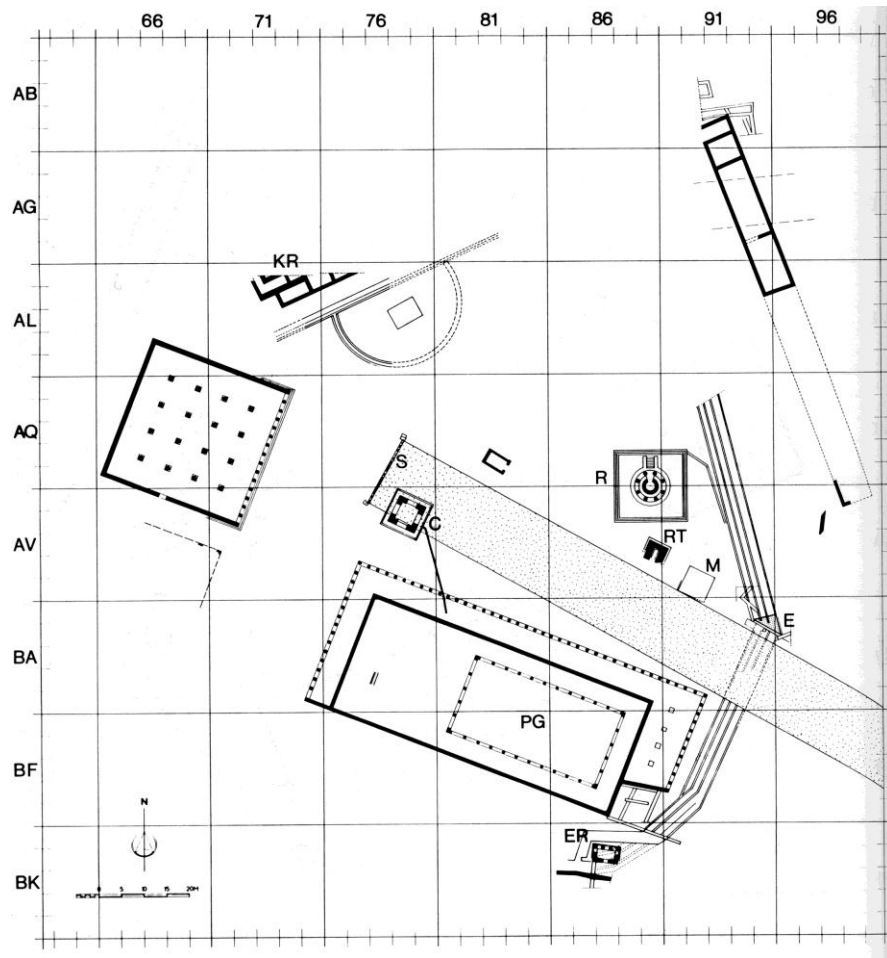
6.7. Argos: Odeion, mosaic (Ginouvé 1972)



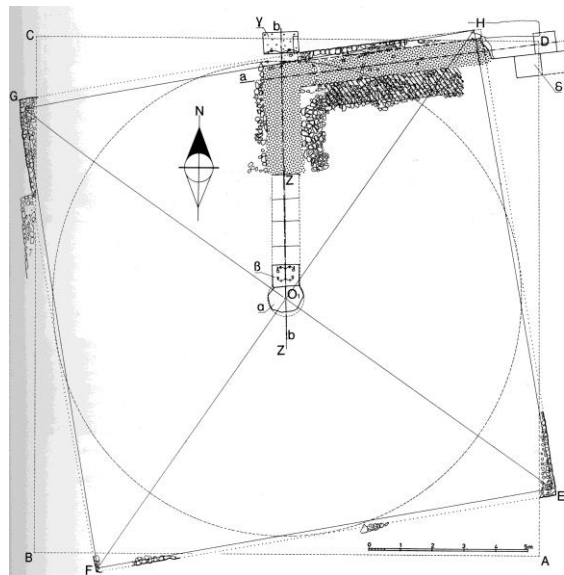
6.8. Argos: Roman bath, original plan (Aupert 1985)



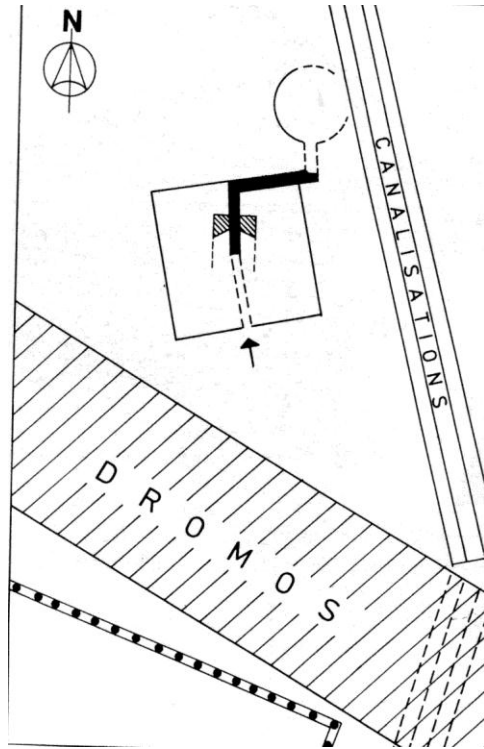
6.9. Argos: Roman bath (Aupert 1985)



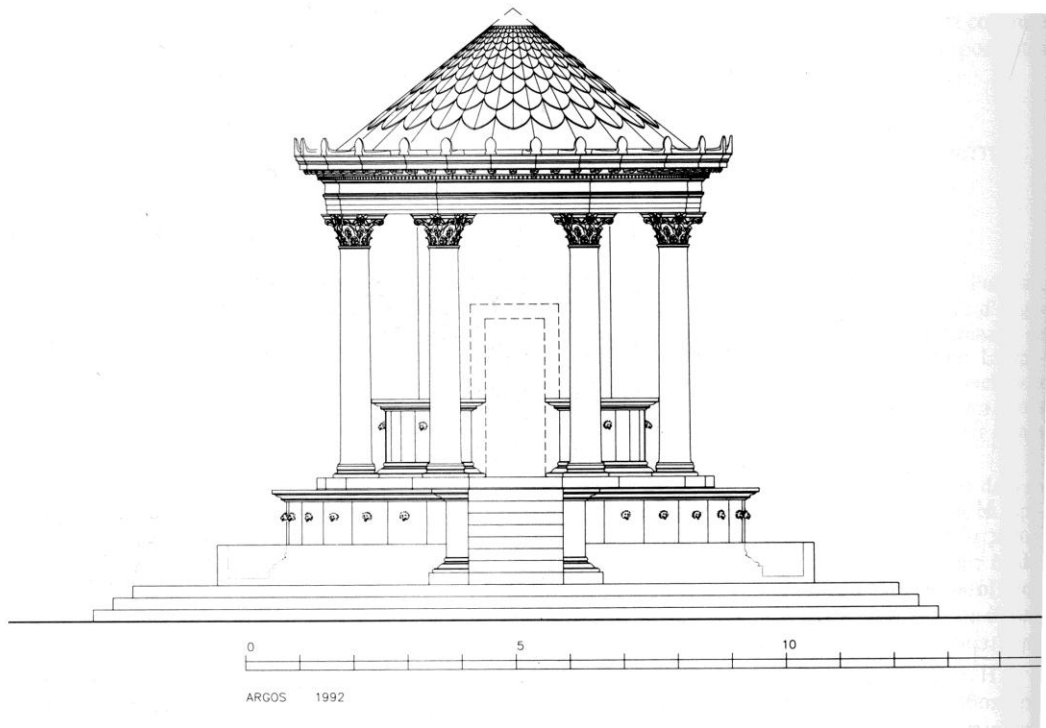
6.10. Argos: Argora (Pariente and Touchais 1998)



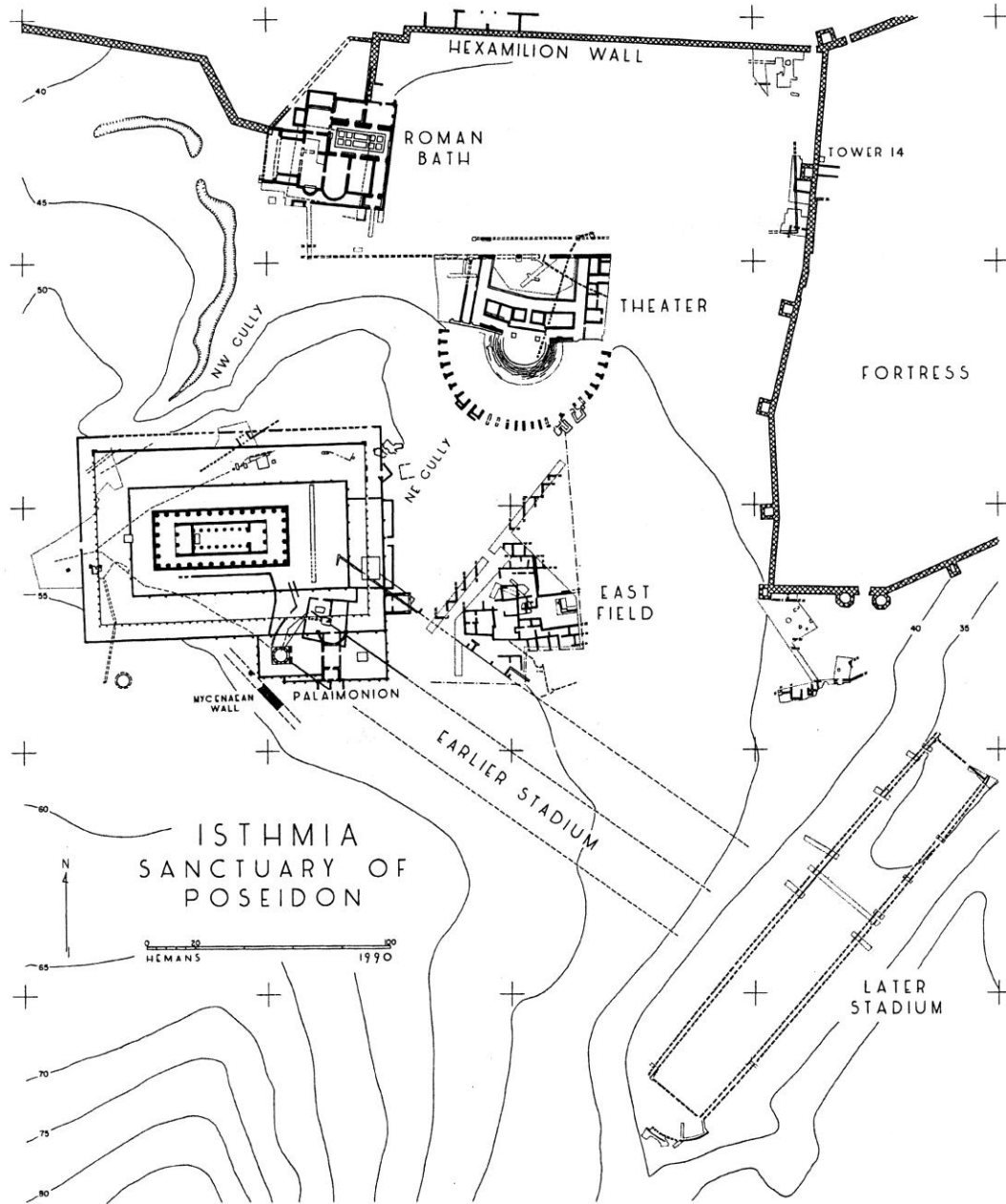
6.11. Argos: Nymphaeum (Marchetti and Kolokotsas 1995)



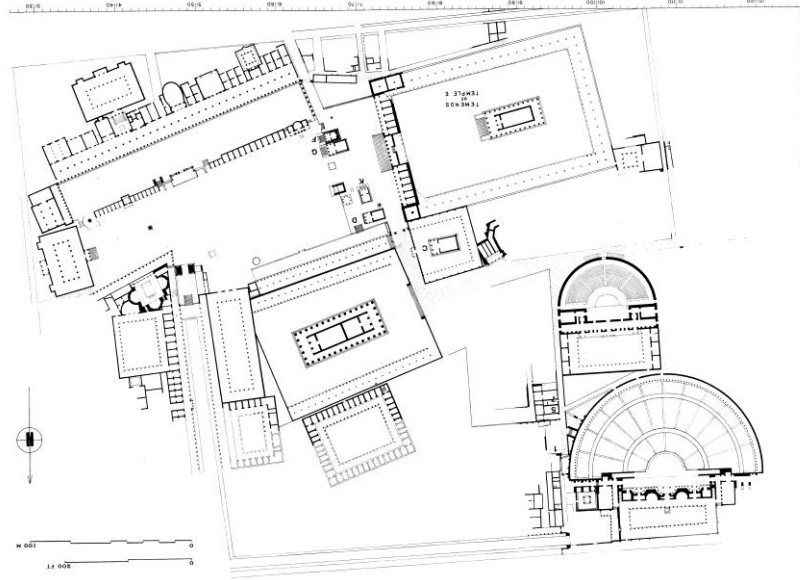
6.12. Argos: Cistern (Marchetti and Kolokotsas 1995)



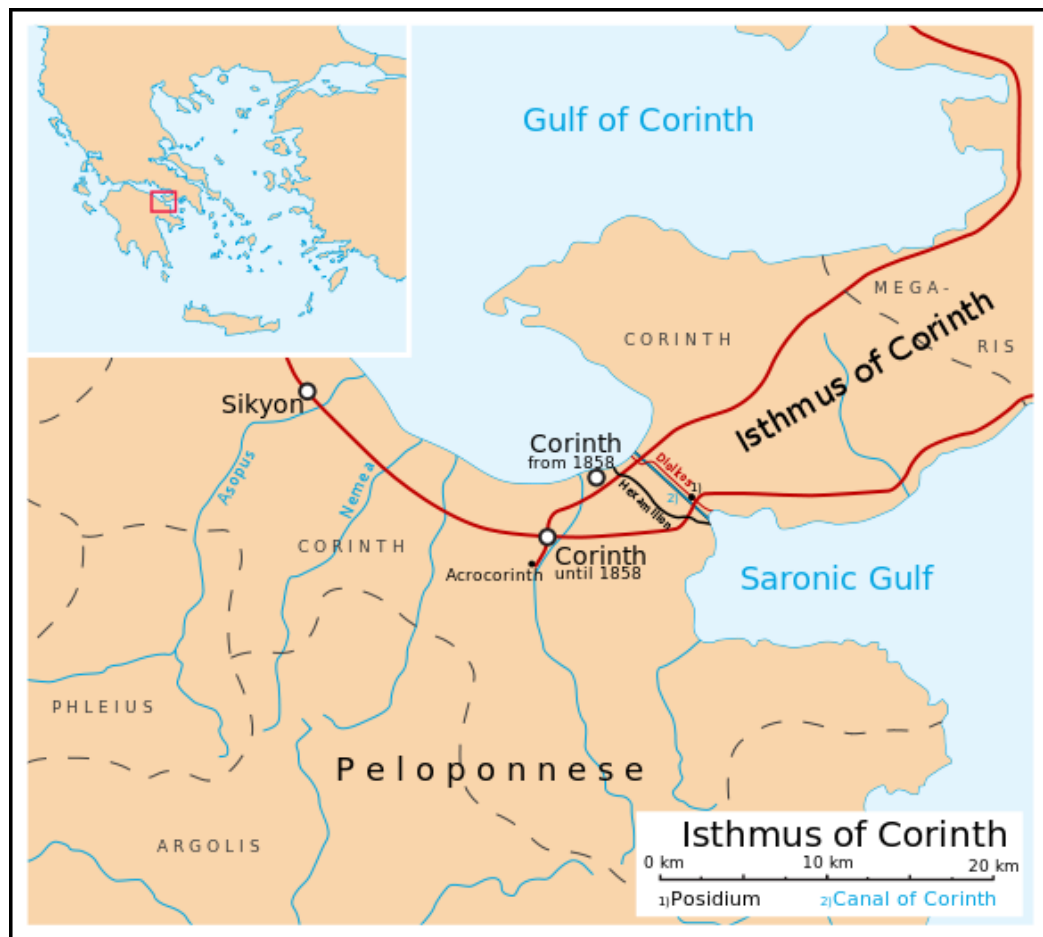
6.13. Argos: Nymphaeum, reconstruction (Marchetti and Kolokotsas 1995)



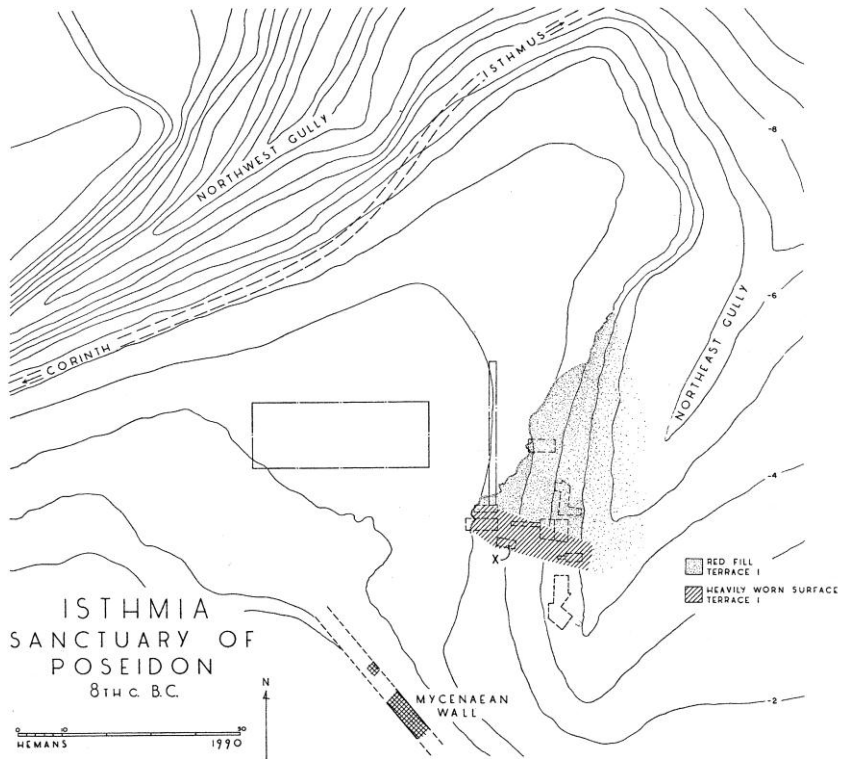
7.1. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia (Gebhard and Hemens 1992)



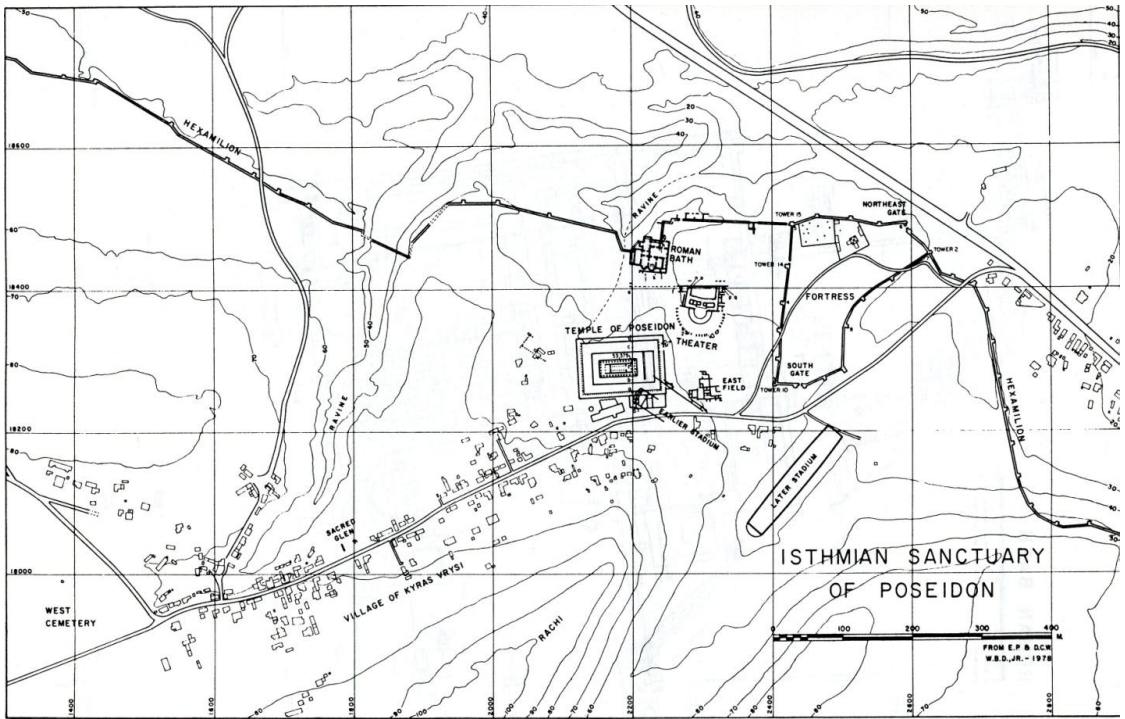
7.2. Corinth: Roman Forum (Williams and Bookidis 2003)



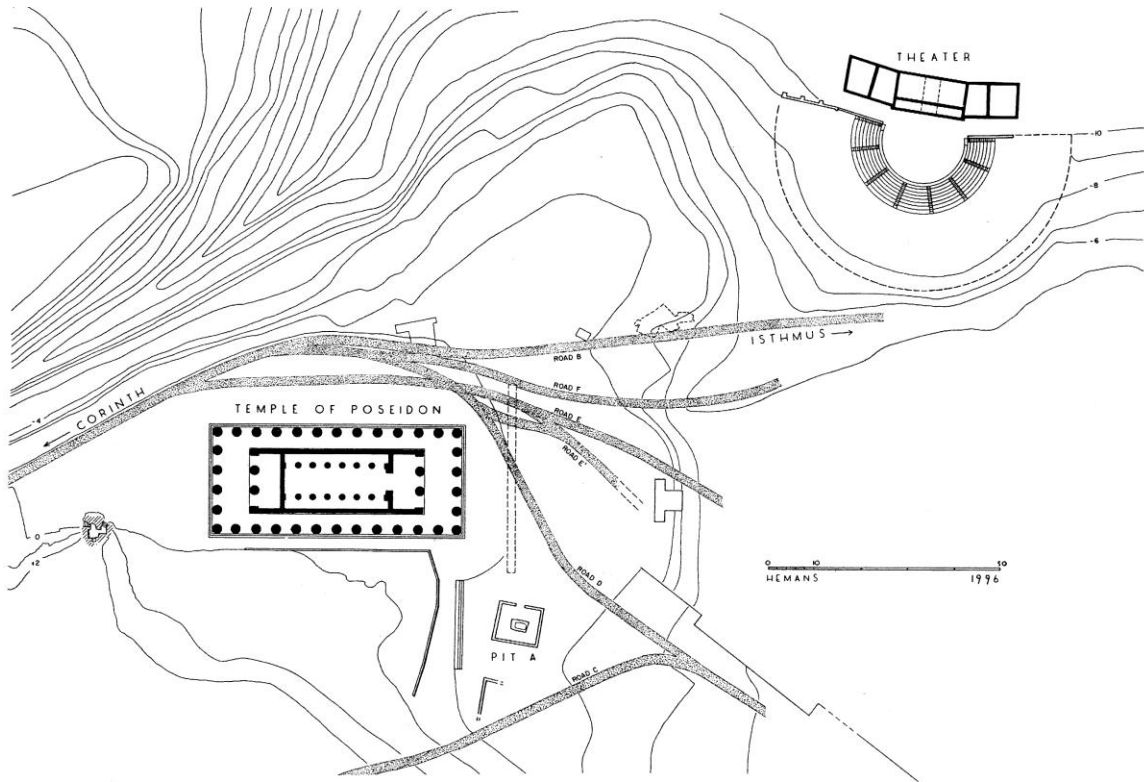
7.3. Map of Corinthia (Wikimedia Commons)



7.4. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: Early Iron Age deposit on East Terrace (Gebhard and Hemens 1992)



7.5. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia (Gebhard, Hemens, and Hayes 1998)



7.6. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: Early Roman sanctuary (Gebhard, Hemens, and Hayes 1998)



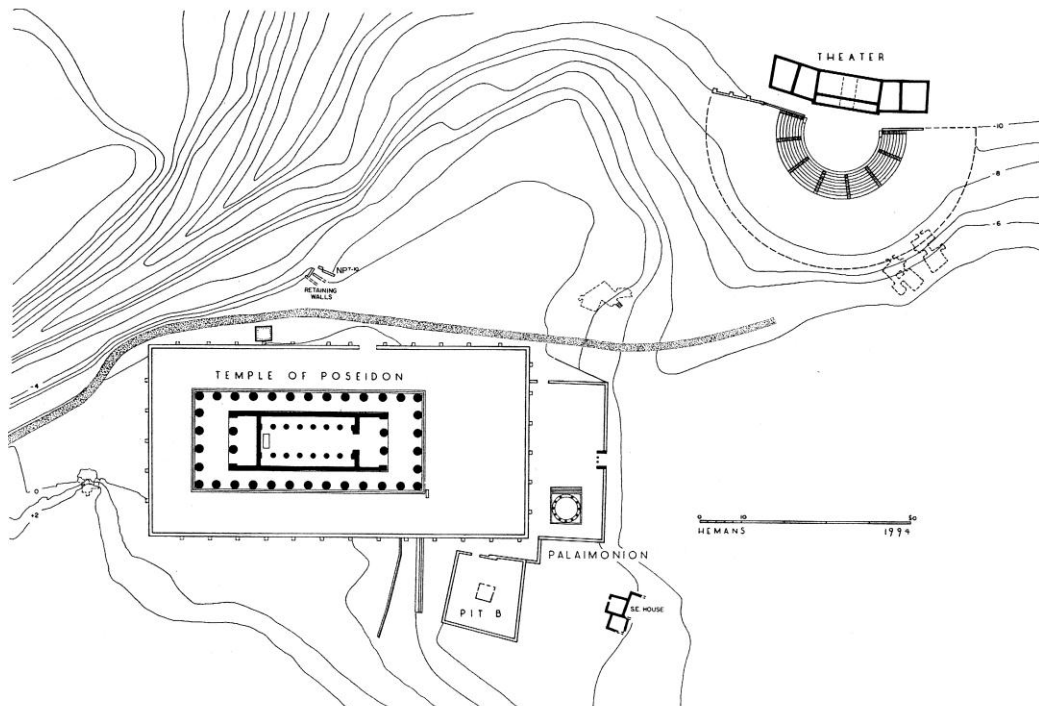
7.7. Corinthian coin issued between 43 and 42 B.C.E. by Corinthian duoviri P. Tadius Chilo and C. Iulius Nikephoros. Reverse: Taming of Pegasus; Obverse: Seated Poseidon (Amandry 1988)



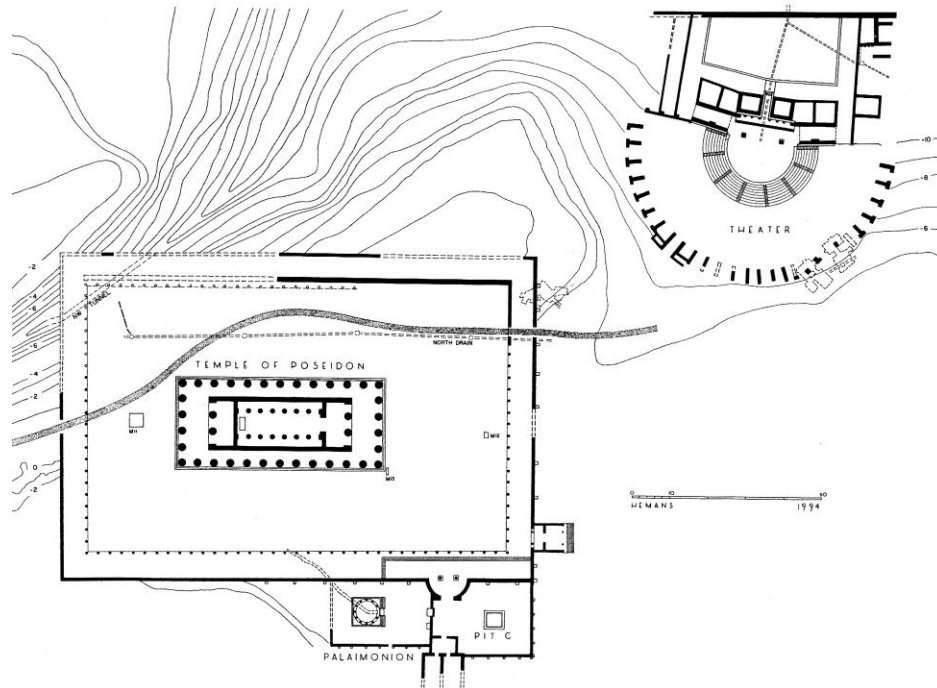
7.8. Corinthian coin issued between 41 and 40 B.C.E. by Corinthian duoviri P. Aebultius and C. Pinnius. Reverse: Pine wreath (Amandry 1988)



7.9. Corinth inscription 8.3.153 (Karen A. Laurence)



7.10. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: Hadrianic period (Gebhard, Hemens, and Hayes 1998)



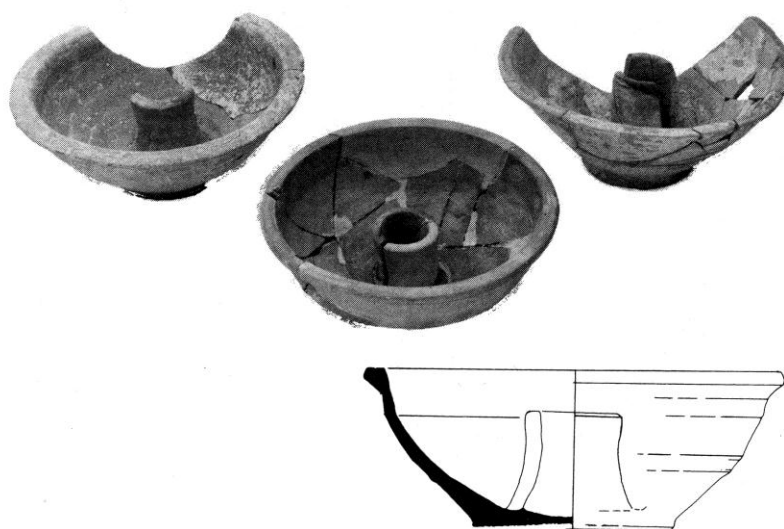
7.11. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: Antonine period (Gebhard, Hemens, and Hayes 1998)



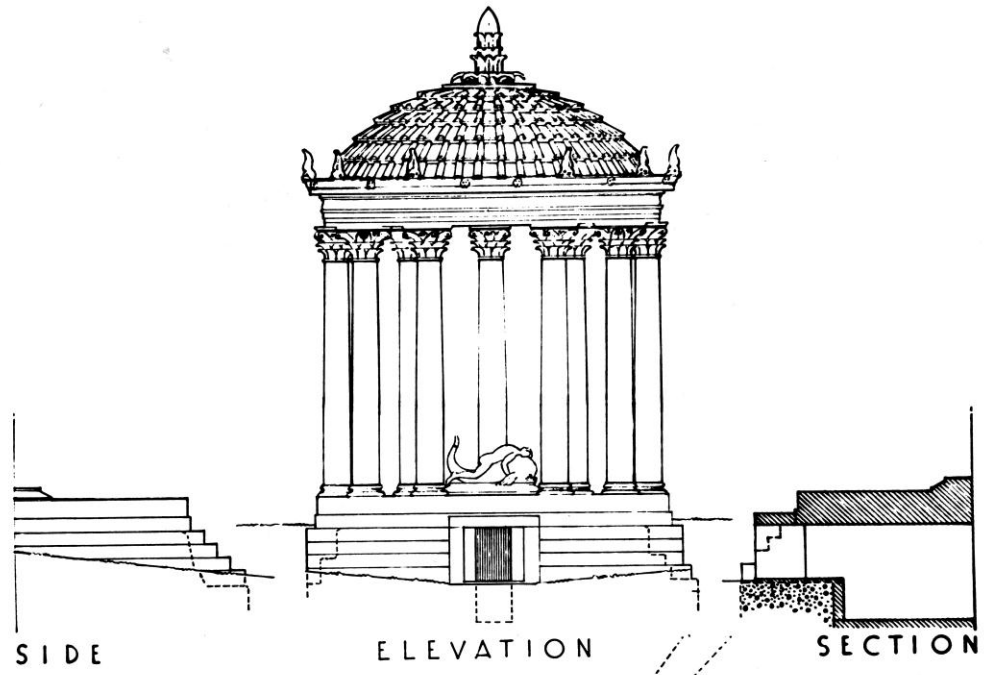
7.12. Corinth inscription 8.3.230 (Karen A. Laurence)



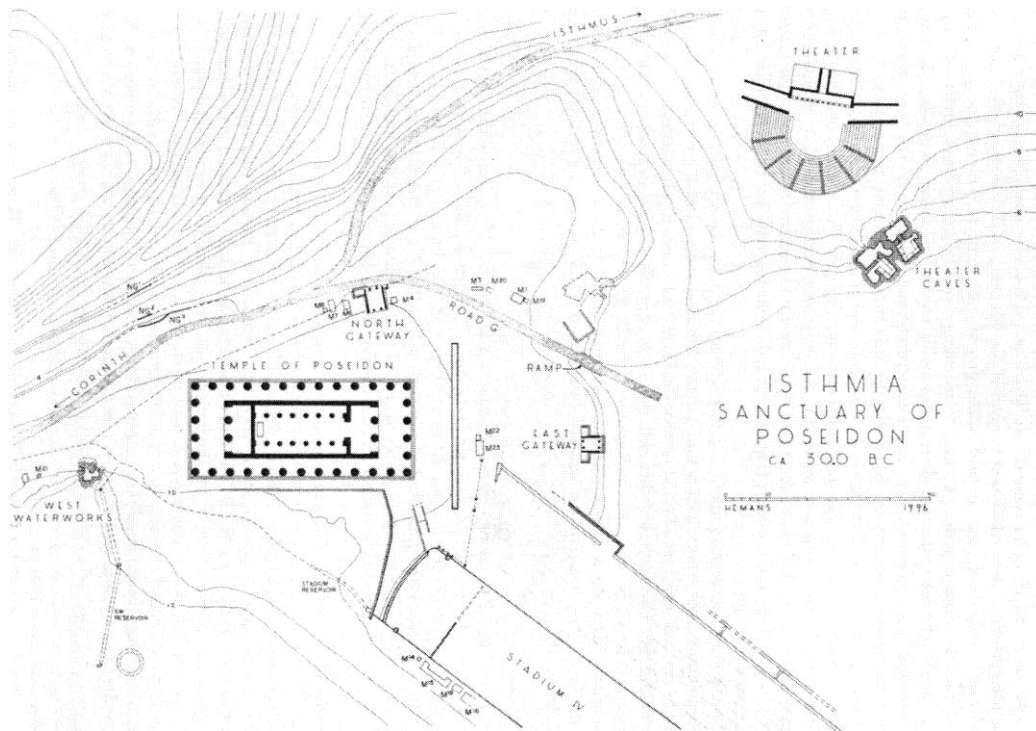
7.13. Corinth inscription 8.1.15 (Karen A. Laurence)



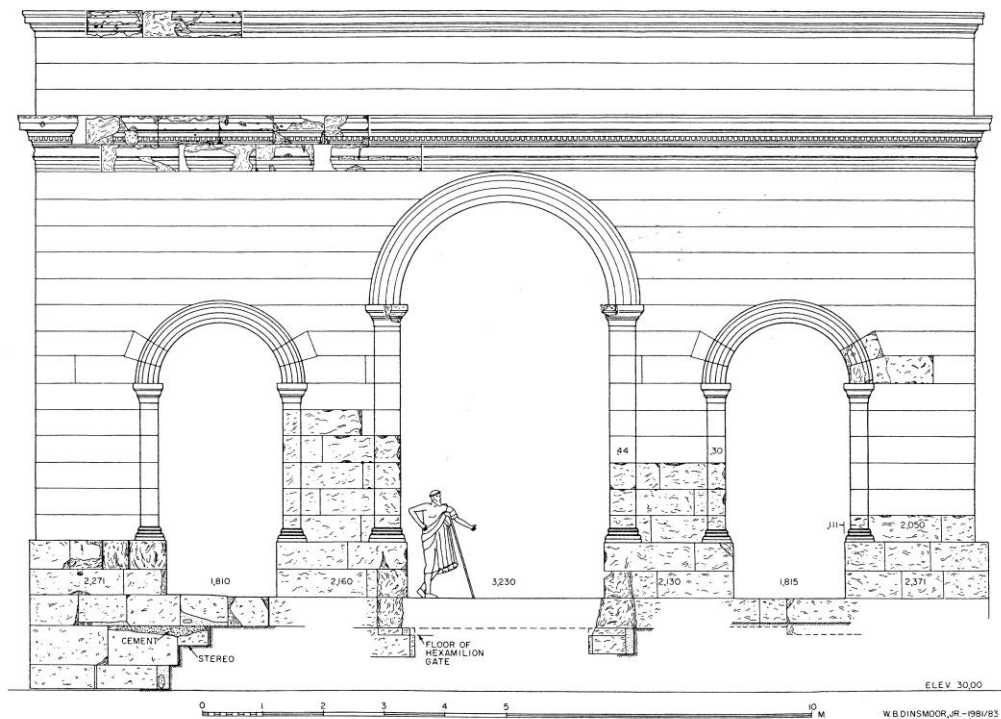
7.14. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: Palaimonion lamps (Broneer 1977)



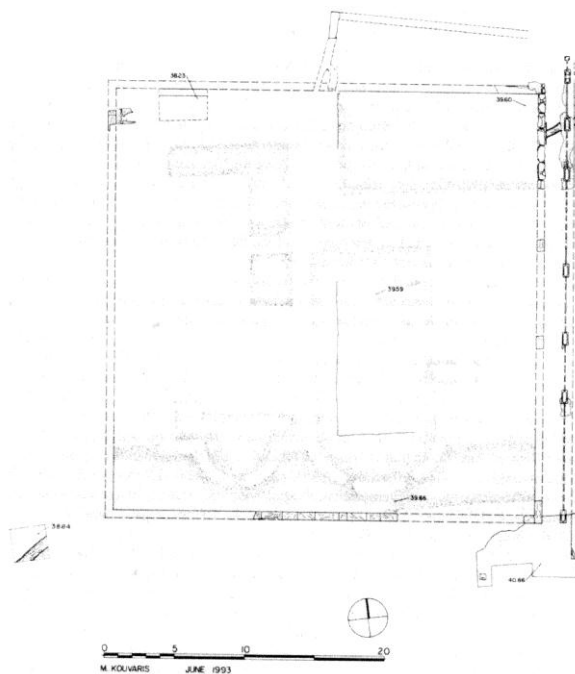
7.15. Reconstruction of Palaimonion temple (Broneer 1973)



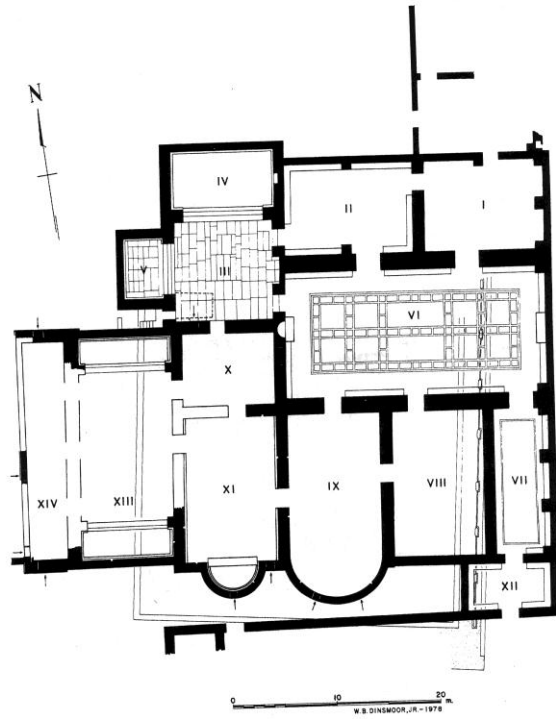
7.16. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: Plan showing Early Stadium and Embankment Wall (Gebhard and Hemens 1998)



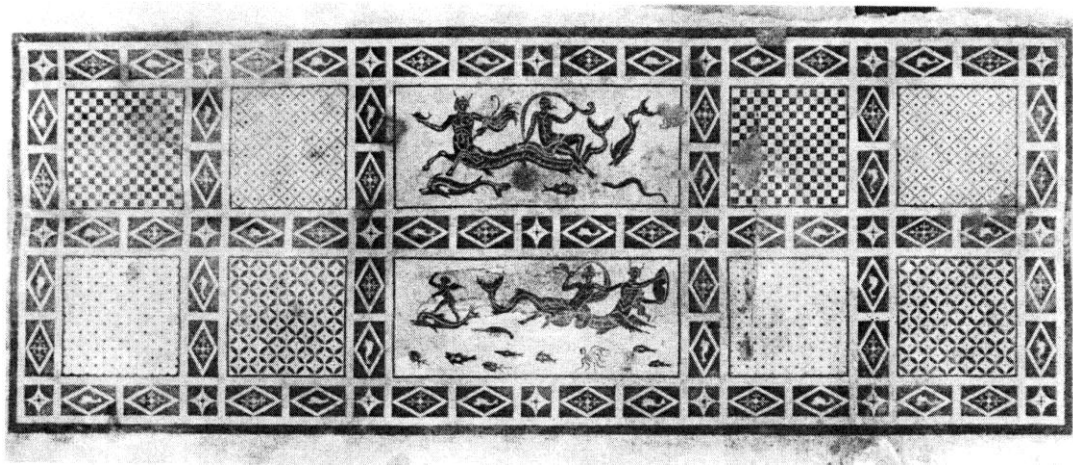
7.17. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: Roman Arch (Gregory and Mills 1984, figure 3)



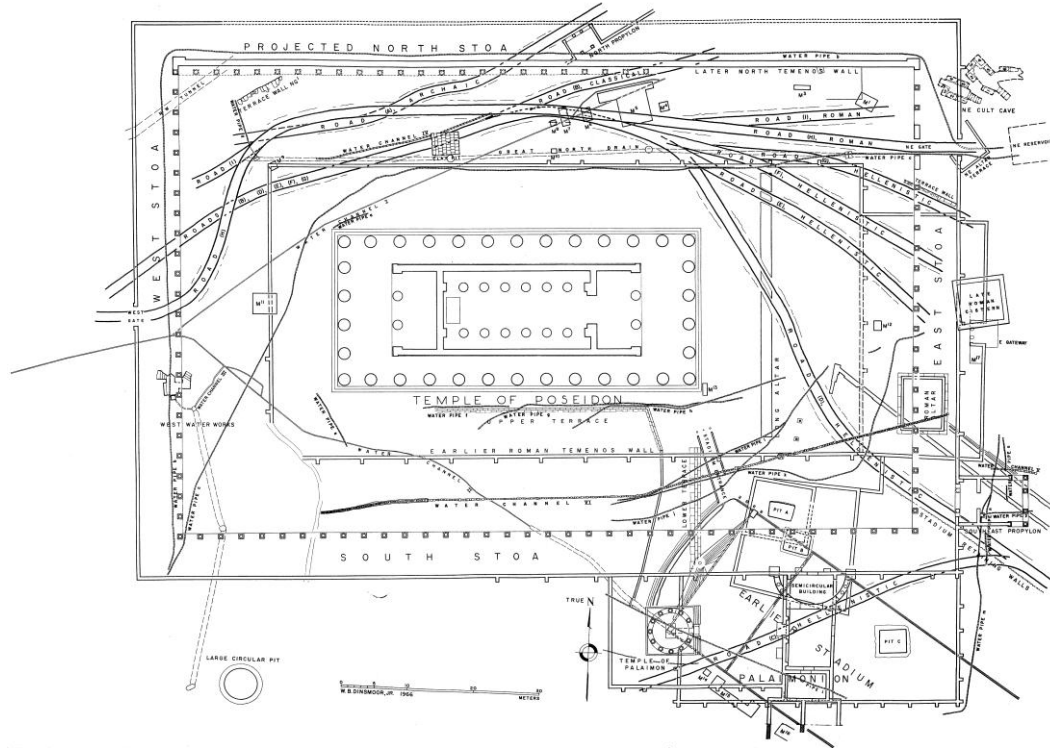
7.18. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: Greek bath (Gregory 1995)



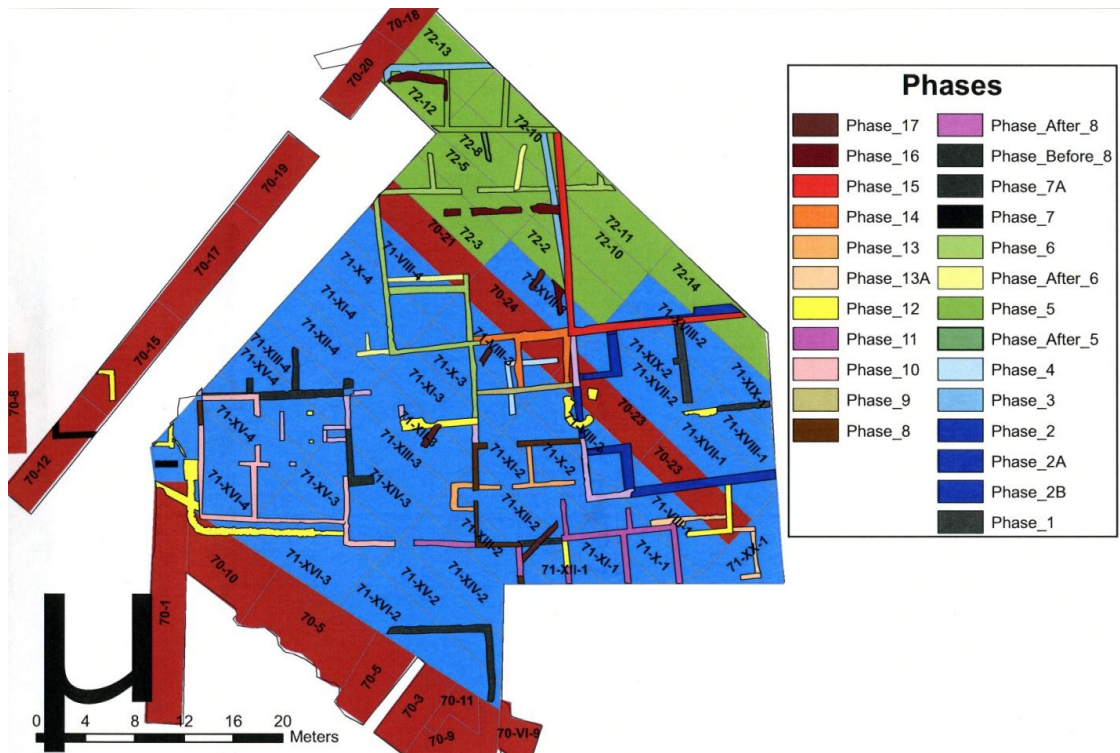
7.19. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: Roman Bath (Gregory 1995)



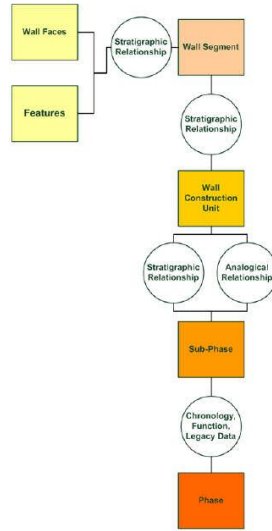
7.20. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: Roman Bath, monochrome mosaic (Gregory 1995)



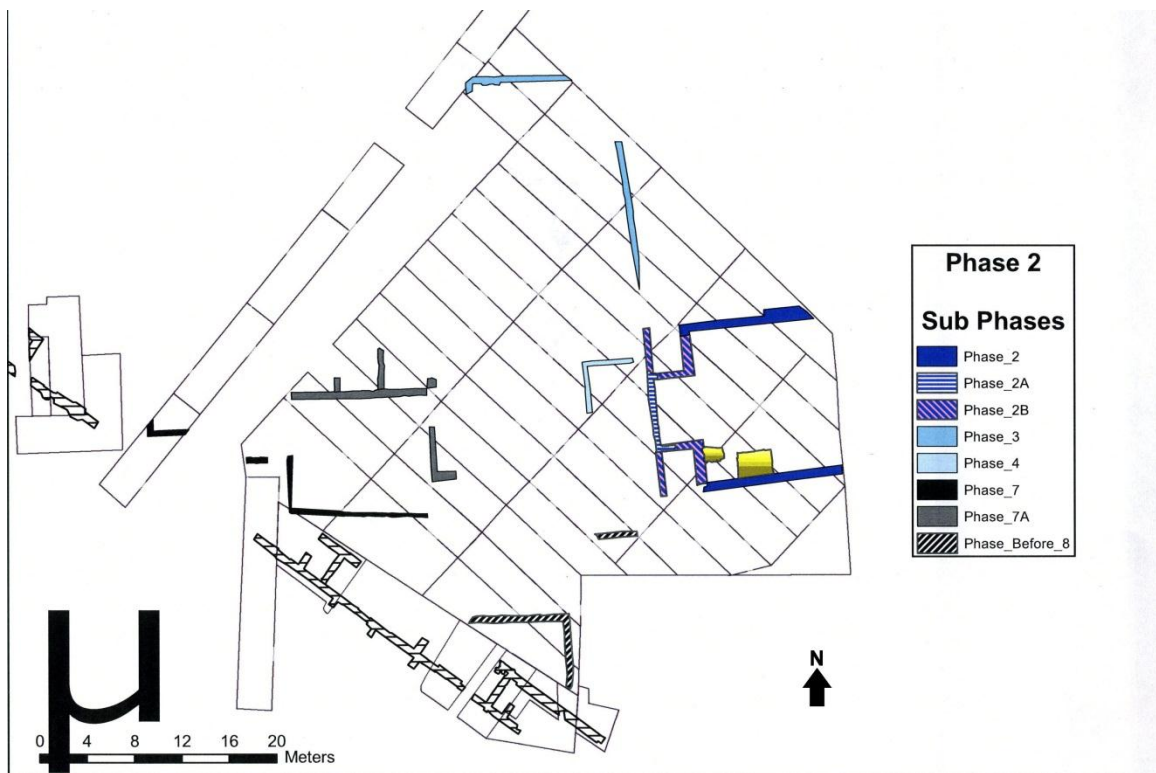
7.21. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: Roman waterworks (Broneer 1973)



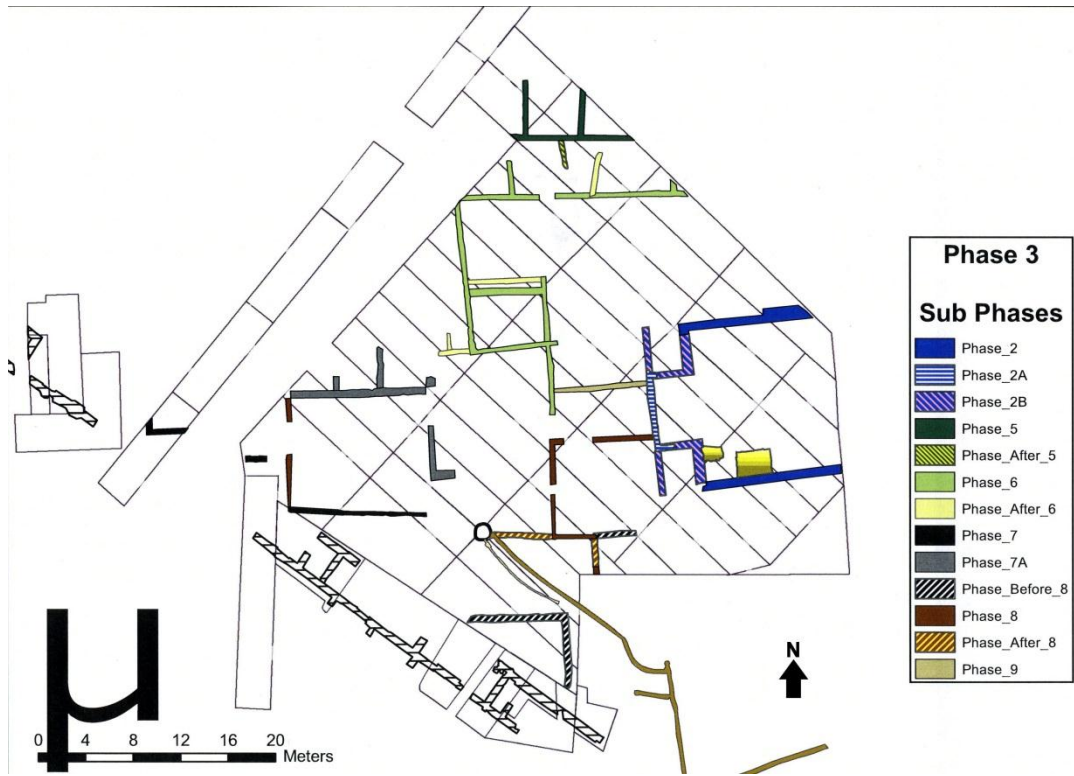
7.22. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: East Field, trenches (1970 = red, 1971 = blue, 1972 = green) (Ellis, et.al. 2008)



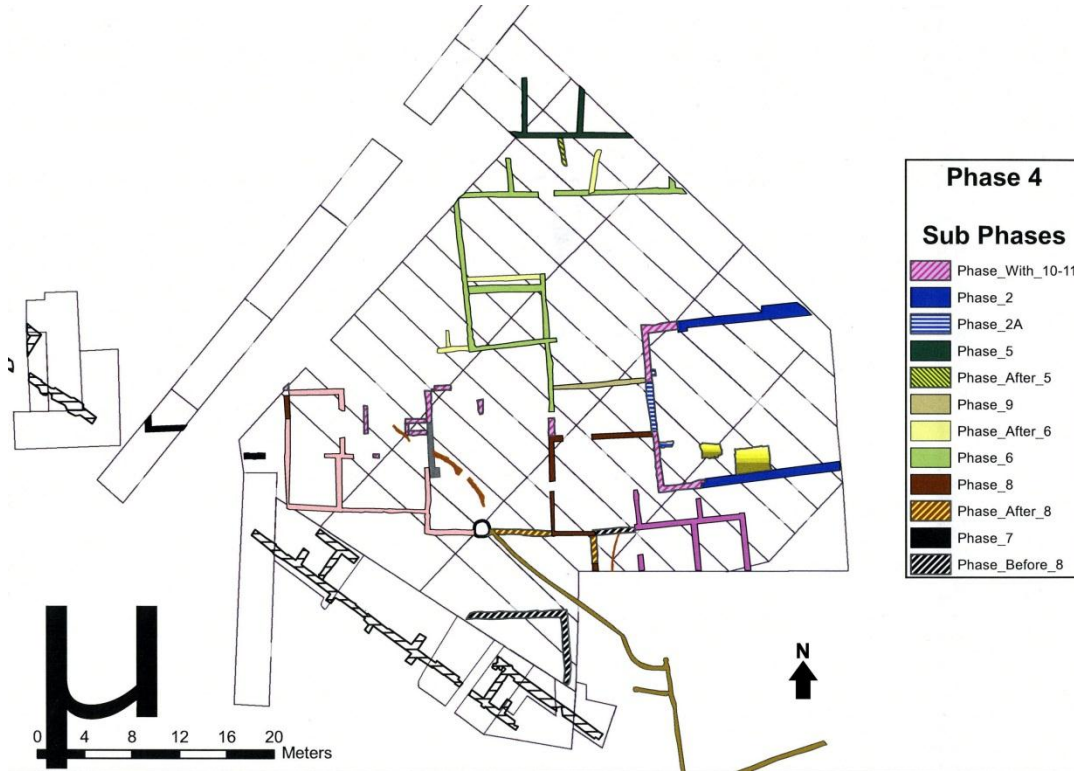
7.23. Hierarchy of abstractions (Ellis, et.al., 2008)



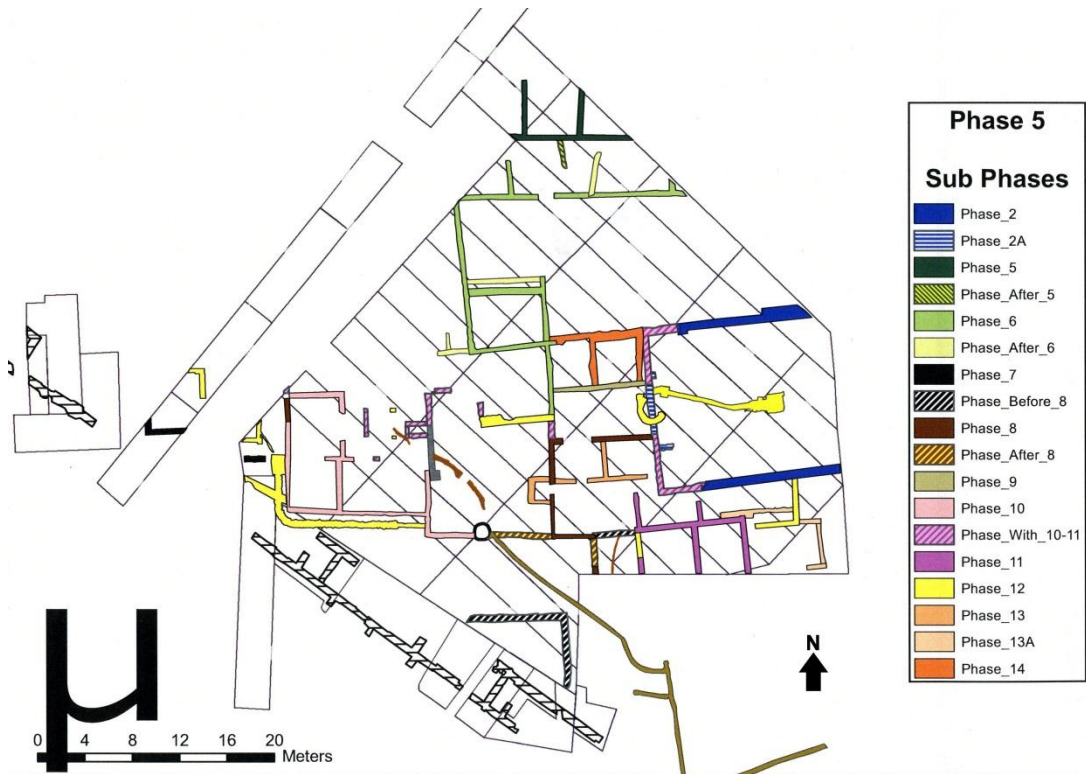
7.24. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: East Field, phase 2 (courtesy of Eric Poehler)



7.25.Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: East Field, phase 3 (courtesy of Eric Poehler)



7.26.Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: East Field, phase 4 (courtesy of Eric Poehler)



7.27. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: East Field, phase 5 (courtesy of Eric Poehler)



7.28. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: relief of Asklepios, Hygeia, and Telesphoros (Lattimore 1996)

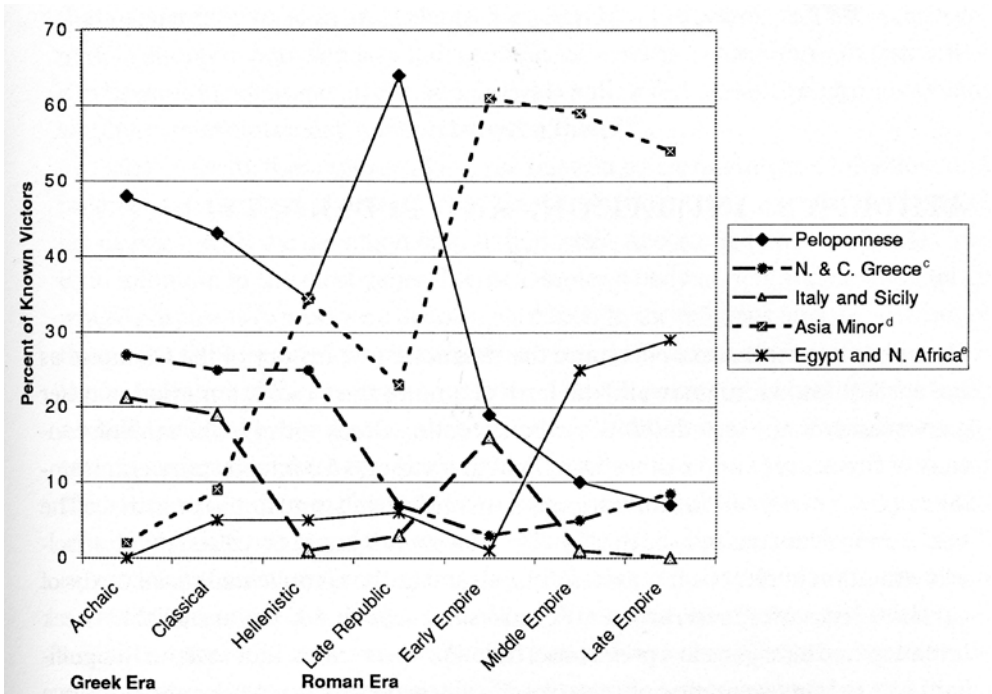


7.29. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: relief of Cybeles (Lattimore 1996)



7.30. Sanctuary of Poseidon, Isthmia: relief of Nymphs (Lattimore 1996)

Table



| Period: ^b | Archaic | Classical | Hellenistic | Late Republic | Early Empire | Middle Empire | Late Empe |
|----------------------|---------|-----------|-------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|
| # known victors | 187 | 236 | 160 | 74 | 71 | 78 | 60 |

(incl. 1 from Crete)

- a. All numbers of victors, determination of regions or native cities of victors, and estimates of the dates of victories are based upon Moretti (1957 and above, note 28, 1987) and Ebert (above, note 59, 1994).
- b. The following concordance of Moretti's numbers with dates has been followed in the compilation of this graph:
Moretti (1957), nos. 1–195 = 776–484 B.C. (Archaic Greece); Moretti nos. 196–461 = 480–336 B.C. (Classical Greece); Moretti nos. 462–639 = 332–148 B.C. (Hellenistic Greece); Moretti nos. 640–718 = 144–40 B.C. (Late Republican Rome); Moretti nos. 719–795 = 36 B.C.–A.D. 67 (Early Imperial Rome); Moretti nos. 796–882 = A.D. 69–177 (Middle Imperial Rome); Moretti nos. 883–942 = A.D. 181–277 (Late Imperial Rome).
- c. "North and Central Greece" includes Macedonia, Epiros, and the cities of Achaea north of Corinth, namely Antikyra, Aigina, Athens, Delphi, Elataia, and Megara.
- d. "Asia Minor" includes the Roman provinces of Asia, Bithynia, Gallatia, Kappadokia, Kilikia, Cyprus, Lydia, Lykia, Mesopotamia, Pamphylia, Pontos, and Syria.
- e. "Egypt and North Africa" includes Aigyptos and Cyrene. Crete, which was included in the province of Cyrene in the Roman era, has not been included in the statistics in the appendix nor in tables 2.1 to 2.4, due to the small number of its Olympic victors and the difficult of assigning it to any one of the geographical regions as defined here. We should in any case note that Crete had 2 known Olympic victors in the Archaic period (Moretti [1957], nos. 158 and 181), 5 in the Classical period (Moretti nos. 274, 296, 367b, 390, 398), one in the Julio-Claudian era (Moretti no. 752), and one in the Late Empire (Moretti no. 906). Its reputation as a haven for pirates in the Hellenistic period and after may in part account for the dearth of known victors from that time on.

4.1. Graph of regional origins of Olympic victors, 776 B.C.E. to 277 C.E. (Scanlon 2002, p63)

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