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On the Original Meaning of the Gladiatorial Games

Athanasios Anastasiou

Serres

The gladiatorial combats were a “progressive” and improved form of human sacrifice at the tombs of important persons. To understand the gladiatorial combats one must understand the hidden logic of these rituals. It is important to recognize the primitive forms of belief in the journey of the human soul after its separation from the body. The practice of sacrificing human beings in order to give an escort to the soul of the deceased had been abandoned through slow and painful efforts. Still the idea of escorting the dead continued to persist well into the higher civilization as it appears from the psychopompic roles of deities and demons. So there is nothing improbable about the notion that the purpose of the gladiatorial combats was originally to give an escort to the deathless but feeble and unsettled human soul during its perilous journey through the terrors of the Underworld.

The investigations of many authors support the view that no single reason is adequate to explain the recourse to human sacrifice. Human beings have been sacrificed through the centuries for a number of reasons: to avenge the death of a friend or relative, to provide companions or slaves for dead man in his future life, to honor the dead, at harvest failure or before harvest time to vegetation deities, to protect new buildings or to launch a new canoe, during siege, before or after war, to appease the gods, at the coronation of a king, as scapegoats, before an important and difficult voyage, during famine, pestilence and other calamities and to give an escort to the dead during their journey to the other world.¹ With regard to gladiatorial combats few

¹) For references regarding human sacrifice to avenge the death of a friend or relative see J. BOARDMAN and D. C. KURTZ, *Greek Burial Customs*, London 1971, 202; R. MOSS, *The Life After Death in Oceania*, Oxford 1925, 193; J. MOURATIDIS, *Φιλοσοφία Φνσικής Αγωγής. Εισαγωγή στη Φιλοσοφία*, Thessaloniki 2002, 127–128; E. WESTERMARCK, *The Origin and Development of Moral Ideas*, London 1917, 481–482; W. BURKERT, *Greek Religion: Archaic and Classical*, transl. by J. Raffan, Oxford 1985, 193, 370 n. 43; G. MYLONAS, *Burial Customs*, in: *A Companion to Homer*, ed. by A. J. B. WACE and F. H. STUBBINGS, London 1962, 470. To provide companions or slaves for the dead in his future life see H. R. ELLIS DAVIDSON, *Pagan Scandinavia*, London 1967, 112, 116; E. B. TAYLOR, *Primitive Culture. Research into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art and Custom*, vol. 2, New York 1929, 8–10; H. FRANKFORT, *Cylinder Seals: A Documentary Essay on the Art and Religion of the Ancient Near East*, London 1965, 132; C. WATELIN, *Objets de Fouilles Kish*, in: *Revue des Arts Asiatiques* 6, 1929–1930, 149–150; S. N. KRAMER, *Death of Gilgamesh*, in: *Bulletin of the American School of Oriental Research* 94, 1944, 8–12; W. B. EMERY, *Egypt in Nubia*, London 1965, 154; E. M. ZUESSE, *Ritual Cosmos: The Sanctification of Life in African Religions*, Athens, Ohio 1979, 89. To honor the dead see J. MOSS, *The*

authors, who briefly discussed the reason and meaning of this rite are not in agreement.² They have pointed out that the gladiators fought to the death by the tomb of an important figure to strengthen his spirit with a blood sacrifice,³ or that these bloody fights were proper rites to appease the dead.⁴ One of the aims of this investigation is to suggest that the meaning of the gladiatorial fights was to provide a companion to the soul of the deceased during its dangerous travel to the other world. It is evident that the authors who discuss the meaning of these combats made no attempt to discover the human desire to give an escort to the helpless soul of the dead during its frightful journey to the Underworld. We believe that this is a suggestion well worth considering. The idea that the dead have to walk a long road descending into the depths of the earth before they arrive at their last destination was a common belief of many peoples.

The Mycenaeans seem to have shared with most Mediterranean peoples the natural belief that the deceased went on a journey from their tombs to a lower world. In Mycenaean times occasionally the

Life After Death, Oxford 1925, 193; J. CARCOPINO, *Daily Life in Ancient Rome*, London 1967, 287. At harvest failure or before harvest time to vegetation deities see J. G. FRAZER, *The Golden Bough*, vol. 2, London 1935, 238–248. To protect new buildings or to launch a new canoe see A. GRENIER, *Les religions étrusques et romaine*, Paris 1948, 228. During siege, before or after war see W. H. ROUSE, *Greek Votive Offerings*, Cambridge 1902, 102. At the coronation of a king see D. B. REDFORD, *The Coregency of Thutmosis III and Amenophis II*, in: *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 51, 1965, 121–122; J. G. FRAZER, *The Golden Bough: The Dying God*, London 1911, 56. As scapegoats see J. G. FRAZER, *The Golden Bough*, vol. 3, London 1937, 109–111. To escort the dead during his travel see A. HASKELL, *The New Deal in Old Rome*, New York 1991, 136; F. J. JETTE, *On the Superstitions of the Ten'a Indians*, in: *Anthropos* 1991, 707. For the “long journey” of the dead, cf. P. HAIDER, *Gefolgschaftsbestattungen in universalhistorischer Sicht*, in: F. HAMPL/I. WEILER (Hgg.), *Kritische und vergleichende Studien zur Alten Geschichte und Universalgeschichte*, Innsbruck 1974 (Innsbrucker Beiträge zur Kulturwissenschaft, Band 18), 89–101.

² MOURATIDIS (s. note 1) 130–131. For the gladiatorial games as a religious rite see W. W. LINTOTT, *Violence in Republican Rome*, Oxford 1968, 40; E. ROHDE, *Psyche*, London 1950, 15; A. C. VAUGHAM, *Those Mysterious Etruscans*, London 1966, 116; E. RICHARDSON, *The Etruscans*, Chicago 1964, 229; R. BLOCH, *The Etruscans*, London 1985, 135; for the “Phersu game” and its possible ritual character see J.-R. JANNOT, *Phersu, Phersuna, Persona. À-propos du masque étrusque*, in: J.-P. THUILLIER, *Spectacles sportifs et scéniques dans le monde étrusco-italique*, Collection de l'École Française de Rome 172, Rome 1993, 317. For an alternative point of view regarding the gladiatorial games having no religious rite see G. VILLE, *La gladiature en Occident*, Rome 1981, 9–11.

³ J. LIVERSIDGE, *Everyday Life in the Roman Empire*, London 1976, 96.

⁴ R. AUGUET, *Cruelty and Civilization: The Roman Games*, London 1972, 21; M. MESLIN, *L'homme romain*, Paris 1985, 176.

deceased man seems to continue his voyage beyond the tomb by chariot drawn by supernatural animals.⁵ We know what detailed rules are contained in the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*, rules to which the dead had to obey in order that they might travel safely to the *Fields of the Blessed*.⁶

The Orphic tablets discovered in tombs in Italy, have preserved fragments of another guide to the Beyond.⁷ In early Greek tombs terra cotta shoes and horses have been discovered which were intended to facilitate the long and risky journey to the realm of Hades.⁸ In Etruscan art the passage into the other world has always been conceived of and represented as a journey. The innumerable scenes of departure on Etruscan funerary urns or sarcophagi symbolize the journey of the deceased to the infernal regions.⁹ On Etruscan *stelae* and cinerary urns that represent the journey to the Underworld, the dead are placed like heroes in a war chariot.¹⁰ K. Meuli has already pointed out the similarities between the single fighting (*hoplomachiai*) of the Mycenaean Greeks and the Etruscan-roman gladiator combats: they both were of the same origin or had the same meaning.¹¹ Achilles, in the famous scene of the funeral games for Patroklos (*Iliad* 23.805 ff.), says that "blood should be shed".

Coming now to the dead: Since he must make a journey, his relatives were careful to furnish him with everything that he needed like a living traveler.¹² Often special powers, magicians, spirits and deities were charged with the task of showing the way to the Underworld.

⁵) For the Mycenaeans see E. VERMEULE, *Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and Poetry*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1979, 56, 63, 227 n.4; MOURATIDIS (s. note 1) 128. For the journey to the underworld among many peoples see F. CUMONT, *After Life in Roman Paganism*, London 1963, 150; DAVIDSON (s. note 1) 118, 121, 124.

⁶) For more on the journey of the dead among the Egyptians see G. MASPERO, *Histoire ancienne des peuples de l'Orient classique*, Paris 1922, 180–182, 574–576; W. DECKER, *Sport und Spiel im Alten Ägypten*, München 1987, 88; See also J. A. WILSON, *Ceremonial Games in the New Kingdom*, in: *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 17, 1931, 211; H. WILSDORF, *Ringkampf im alten Ägypten*, Würzburg 1939 (*Körperliche Erziehung und Sport, Beiträge zur Sportwissenschaft* 3), 22.

⁷) CUMONT (s. note 5) 148.

⁸) *Ibid.* 155.

⁹) BLOCH (s. note 2) 158. These are scenes of departure on foot, on horseback, in vehicles and in boats. For more on these scenes see RICHARDSON (s. note 2) 123; D. STRONG, *The Early Etruscans*, New York 1968, 85–86.

¹⁰) CUMONT (s. note 5) 149.

¹¹) K. MEULI, *Der griechische Agon. Kampf und Kampfspiel im Totenbrauch, Totentanz, Totenklage und Totenlob*, Köln 1968, 56–57.

¹²) HAIDER (s. note 1) 90 ff.

The psychopompic role of Hermes and other daemon guides of souls is known; it is doubtful, however, if such psychopompic deities existed in Prehistoric Greece. It has been suggested by E. Rohde that: "It was only a later poet who, in giving the final touches to the *Odyssey*, introduced Hermes, the Guide of the Dead whether this is an invention of the poet's or, as appears more likely, it is borrowed from the ancient folk-belief of some remote corner of Greece, in the complete rounded circle of Homeric belief at any rate it is an innovation and an important one."¹³

Rohde is probably right about the late introduction of Hermes the "Guide of the Dead". It is clear from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* that Hermes is not a fully developed psychopompos. This assumption rather indicates of a Pre-Homeric notion and practice of escorting the souls of important persons into the Underworld. Homer's aversion and disapproval of any form of human sacrifice possibly betrays the poet's "invention" of Hermes psychopompos.

Since the idea of the journey of the dead existed in early Greece, it is reasonable to assume that the provision of an escort to the disembodied soul was also in some cases a duty for the relatives of the dead. Thus, a slave or a number of prisoners, who possibly fought in single combat accompanied the dead on his journey to the frightful infernal regions.¹⁴ This kind of human sacrifice has some similarities with the well known killing of attendants to serve the dead king in his next life, but it is different in the sense that the escorting prisoners do not serve the dead king in the Underworld, they simply make his difficult voyage safer and easier. In Homer such a sacrifice appears meaningless since the poet strongly disapproves any kind of similar ritual killing as it becomes clear from the sacrifice of twelve Trojan prisoners by Achilles in the pyre of Patroclus.¹⁵ E. Vermeule explains the Homeric

¹³) ROHDE (s. note 2) 9.

¹⁴) Herodotus 1.167.1–2; Tertullian, *De spectaculis* 11–12.

¹⁵) The immolation of the twelve Trojan youths must be placed in the same category as the killing of an enemy in revenge for a friend or relative lost. As becomes clear from the *Iliad* the sacrifice of the twelve Trojan captives may have been more a matter of sheer revenge and anger than ritual, M. POLIAKOFF, *Combat Sports in the Ancient World*, New Haven and London 1987, 149–150. For this and more see BOARDMAN/KURTZ (s. note 1) 118; BURKERT (s. note 1) 192–193; see also Herodotus 1.167 for the killing of the Phocaeen prisoners by the people of Agylla. For an alternative point of view see ROHDE (s. note 2) 45. The duty of the blood-revenge was in the first place regarded by many ancient societies as a duty to the dead because his spirit was believed to have no rest until the injury had been avenged. The disembodied soul carried into its new existence an eager desire for revenge and till the crime had been duly expiated, fluttered about the earth, tormenting the murdered or trying to force its own relatives to take revenge on him. For these see

notion of the journey and escort of the dead: "In Homer, no strange voyage is needed with the obvious exception of Odysseus' trip. The psyche is able to wing its way to Hades' house easily and simply; the dying is often curiously effortless, and the psyche need not struggle or lose its way as it penetrates the earth's crust; it goes like a homing pigeon without any guide or fear. If the dead traveler is pictured as still wearing a body, like the suitors in *Odyssey* xxiv, then he must walk and may need a guide like Hermes, and may take his physical defects with it."¹⁶

Homer's attempt to suppress or even abolish the primitive and unusually cruel ritual of giving a human escort to the soul of a dead is a victory for humanity and human ethics, but a victory that his heroes may had not enjoyed. It is unlikely that the Homeric notion regarding the journey and the escort of the dead to the Underworld reflects the Mycenaean reality. It is true however, that the idea of providing an escort to the dead friend or relative survived in the *Iliad* where Deiphobos, son of Priam makes it clear that he killed Hypsenor first to avenge the death of his friend Asios and then to provide to him an escort.¹⁷ The concept of the "living body" is a huge topic, which cannot be thoroughly presented in this paper. One should add, though that this concept was widely spread among Indo-european people but also among others¹⁸ provides an analytical overview of the 19th and 20th

ROHDE (s. note 2) 14; WESTERMARCK (s. note 1) 481–482. Victim of murder was believed by the Greeks, belonged to a category of the restless and unpeaceful dead, their main characteristic being anger that was directed both against their slayers and against their relatives who did not avenge their killing. For more see R. GARLAND, *The Greek Way of Death*, London 1987, 92–94; see also Tertullian, *De spectaculis* 12 for the origin of the *munus* and the appeasement of the dead. For instances in Greek history of human sacrifice to appease the dead see POLIAKOFF (s. note 12) 150. For more and interesting comments on this see MEULI (s. note 11) 56–57.

¹⁶ VERMEULE (s. note 5) 35. It has been pointed out that a piece of hair cut from the living body represents the whole man, who thus offers himself as the escort to the dead. (See W. LEAF, *The Iliad*, London 1902, 481. Also see J. EDWARDS, *The Iliad*, Cambridge 1906, 38.)

¹⁷ *Iliad* 13.414–416.

¹⁸ W. BURKERT, *Homo Necans. Interpretationen altgriechischer Opferriten und Mythen*, Berlin/New York 1972 (Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten, Band 32), 8–20; G. LORENZ, *Ehrfurcht vor dem Leben der Tiere bei frühen Griechen und Römern und bei den Naturvölkern?* in: F. HAMPL/I. WEILER (Hgg.), *Kritische und vergleichende Studien zur Alten Geschichte und Universalgeschichte*, Innsbruck 1974 (Innsbrucker Beiträge zur Kulturwissenschaft, Band 18), 233 ff.; G. LORENZ, *Vergleichende Religionsgeschichte*, in: F. HAMPL/I. WEILER (Hgg.), *Vergleichende Geschichtswissenschaft. Methode, Ertrag und ihr Beitrag zur Universalgeschichte*, Darmstadt 1978 (Erträge der Forschung, Band 88), 88 ff.

century literature on the pioneers of the comparative history of religions with references to the “living body” concept.¹⁹

The idea of giving an escort to a dead arose from the belief that his journey was difficult and perilous; thus the soul needed a companion and a guide, a belief shared by many: Plato spoke of the existence of the demon leader (*hegemon*) of the dead, and the same world is applied to the *psychopompos* whether demon or god, not only by Neo-Platonist philosophers but also in epitaphs.²⁰ Thus we read in an inscription of a sailor, who died at Marseilles:

Among the dead there are two companies;
one moves upon the earth, the other in
the ether among the choruses of stars.
I belong to the later for I have obtained
a god for my guide.²¹

The secret cults of ancient Greece claimed to provide the soul with a guide to lead it during its dangerous voyage through the whirlwinds of air, water and fire and the moving spheres of heaven.²² The belief in the escort of the deceased to their subterranean abode has arisen independently in many places without the need of transmission from one place to another. The Kayans at Borneo islands used to kill one to three slaves at the death of a chief, and nail them to the tomb that they might go with him on his long journey. Sometimes the victim is allowed to starve to death in accordance with the theory that violent deaths would go to a separate division of the Underworld thus being useless to the dead chief.²³ In Melanesia during the funeral of a king a strong man was killed to accompany the dead chief in order to secure the guardian while the latter passes by.²⁴ The Ten’a Indians of the Yukon believed that a soul recently departed for the underworld needs a companion with whom to walk to the Na-radenitnata and will try to

¹⁹ See also BURKERT (s. note 18) 8–9.

²⁰ CUMONT (s. note 5) 163. For Plato see *Phaedo* 107 D, 108 B.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ MOSS (s. note 1) 196. Also see 180–181, 191–192, 196. Among the Muskewiki Indians at the end of mourning the dead is guided toward the prairies of the next world by a young armed man who takes the name of the dead person, gallops for many miles, makes a detour, and returns. (For references see A. VAN GENNEP, *The Rites of Passage*, transl. by M. B. Vizedom and G. L. Caffé, Chicago, 1960, 160.)

²⁴ For references see MOSS (s. note 1) 201.

take with him some other soul from the place.²⁵ Among the Marquesans of the Pacific Ocean when a great chief died, two commoners were sacrificed in order to escort him to the abode of bliss.²⁶ In Marshall Islands of Micronesia as soon as the dead chief was deposited in the grave, a relative of the deceased called out: "Bring him an escort". If the kinsfolk do not succeed in calming him, an adult person is at once killed and laid close beside the deceased.²⁷

The idea of armed combats, and sham fights that sometimes resulted in a number of deaths at funerals of important persons, has been observed in many cultures. This style of combats is already met in primitive societies. The death of the one of the opponents in this combat was usually taken as a sign from the Gods and their decision regarding the outcome of the combat.²⁸ In antiquity the Thracians burned or buried their dead and having raised mounds over their remains they held games of all kinds on the spot, assigning the major prizes to victory in single combat.²⁹ Since the Thracians practiced human sacrifice it is reasonable to assume that these single combats were not totally bloodless. Also the ancient Iberians shared the same custom, although it is not certain whether the result would or should be that bloody. Diodorus (23.21 a) provides us with the specific information.³⁰ Plutarch is also describing a fight to death,³¹ but it is rightly argued since a long time now that this idea of being someone killed in a single combat (even for a ritual purpose) had been long before Plutarch's time rejected by the Greeks, with the only possible exception of the Macedonians.³² By the Classical period, the Greeks have replaced these combats with the "hoplomachiai", i. e. dances of armed warriors, not ending in the same result as the "old" combats of their heroic times.³³ Finally, as far as the Greeks are regarded, the single fights we are hearing about during the Hellenistic period had nothing to do with the original ones. They were totally rationalized

²⁵) JETTE (s. note 1) 707.

²⁶) FRAZER (s. note 1) vol. 3, 366.

²⁷) Ibid. 91.

²⁸) MEULI (s. note 11) 41.

²⁹) Herodotus 5.8. For more on this Thracian custom and the armed dueling as a form of human sacrifice see POLIAKOFF (s. note 12) 154–155. For a similar practice among the inhabitants of Old Samoa see J. G. FRAZER, *Aftermath: A Supplement to the Golden Bough*, London 1936, 314.

³⁰) The reference in MEULI (s. note 11) 43.

³¹) Plutarch, *Quaestiones convivales* V.2, 675 c.

³²) MEULI (s. note 11) 44–45. For the surviving custom of a bloody fight in Macedonia, s. Diyllos' reference in Athenaeus IV.41, 155 a.

³³) MEULI (s. note 11) 46–47 and 52.

and harmless.³⁴ Since their purpose had been changed: they were part of an entertaining scene and not a ritual, thus being closer to the later Roman games' spectacle.

Combat fights are, as said, met also in other cultures: Among the Tahiti of Polynesia was customary an armed fight which resulted in a number of deaths and injuries at the death of a chief.³⁵ In Mexico, in some cases human sacrifice was actually preceded by a combat, the victim having a chance to save his life if he succeeded in slaying all slaves who wanted to fight him.³⁶ A number of 8th century A.D. tomb-stones from Gotland show the journey of the dead and some other interesting scenes. The top panel of one grave-stone shows a rider with spear, hunting dog, flying figure, woman with horn and "two warriors fighting". It is believed that the rider is the dead man arriving in the other world as depicted on Roman and Etruscan tomb-stones. The female figure holding up a cup or a drinking horn suggests the reception of the dead hero in Valhalla, as in 10th century poems from Norway.³⁷ What do the "two warriors fighting" represent? The unusual height of this grave-stone (284 cm) and the scenes depicted on it rather indicate that the dead was an important person. It is probable and only probable that these two "warriors" fought to the end at the grave of this important figure (fig. 1).



Fig. 1: H. R. ELLIS DAVIDSON, *Pagan Scandinavia*, London 1967, Pl. 54, s. note 54, p. 200

³⁴) MEULI (s. note 11) 40.

³⁵) C. HANDY, *Polynesian Religion*, Honolulu 1927, 252.

³⁶) W. H. PRESCOTT, *History of the Conquest of Mexico*, London 1843, vol. 1, 69.

³⁷) DAVIDSON (s. note 1) 124.

L. Malten pointed out that the gladiatorial combats had their place originally in the cult of the dead in Etruria proper, even if it was by way of Campania under Etruscan rule, that reached Rome. In addition he compares the gladiatorial games of the Etruscans with the contest in armor between Diomedes and Ajax in the funeral games of Patroklos and sees in the first a continuation and an evolution of the second. In other words he suggested that the gladiatorial games of the Etruscans were an evolution of a custom in the cult of the dead.³⁸ Malten's suggestion has been carried one step further. It has been pointed out that no description of the origin of gladiatorial combats would be clear without allusion to the funeral games of early Greece.³⁹ In fact it is suggested that this problem could not be considered within only the realm of the Italic tradition of funeral customs and that once this becomes apparent then the need for new pathways and interpretations is unavoidable.⁴⁰

It has been suggested by many writers that funeral games were staged in Greece at a very early date.⁴¹ Greek tradition is unanimous about the existence of funeral games in prehistoric Greece⁴² and declares that all major Panhellenic Games had been funerary in their origin.⁴³ Mycenaean and geometric Greek art clearly shows that fu-

³⁸) L. MALTEN, *Leichenspiel und Totenkult*, in: Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Römische Abteilung 38–39, 1923–1924, 304–305, 328–330. For a detailed account on the origin of the gladiatorial combats see J. MOURATIDIS, *On the Origin of the Gladiatorial Games*, in: Nikephoros 9, 1996, 111–134.

³⁹) MOURATIDIS (s. note 27) 117–118.

⁴⁰) Ibid.

⁴¹) See ROHDE (s. note 2) 15–17; N.E. GARDINER, *Greek Athletic Sport and Festivals*, London 1910, 30; J. FONTENROSE, *The Ritual Theory of Myth*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1971, 48; P. KAHANE, *The Cesnola Krater from Kourion in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. An Iconological Study in Greek Geometric Art*, in: N. ROBERTSON (ed.), *The Archaeology of Cyprus: Recent Developments*, New Jersey 1971, 180–184; H.G. WUNDERLICH, *The Secret of Crete*, transl. by R. Winston, New York 1974, 257; G. MYLONAS, *Homeric and Mycenaean Burial Customs*, in: *American Journal of Archaeology* 59, 1948, 56; A.J.B. WACE and F. STUBBINGS, *A Companion to Homer*, London 1962, 483; BURKERT (s. note 1) 106, 193, 390 n.74; VERMEULE (s. note 5) 227; J. MOURATIDIS, *Greek Sports, Games and Festivals Before the Eighth Century B. C.*, Diss. Ohio State University 1982, 193–203; MOURATIDIS (s. note 27) 118; W. DECKER, *Sport in der griechischen Antike*, München 1995, 26.

⁴²) See *Iliad* 23.257–895; *Odyssey* 24.85–92; Pindar, *Ol.* 7.77–78; Philostratos, *Imag.* 225; Pausanias 8.4.5; Apollonios Rhodios 1.160; Apollodoros 2.4.4.

⁴³) For references see L. E. ROLLER, *Funeral Games in Greek Art*, in: *American Journal of Archaeology* 85, 1981, 108; FRAZER (s. note 1) vol. 6, 94, 103; GARDINER (s. note 28) 27; ROHDE (s. note 2) 117, 141 n.22; BURKERT (s. note 1) 193; J. MOURATIDIS, *Ιστορία Φυσικής Αγωγής*, Thessaloniki 2000, 259, 264, 266;

neral games in honor of the dead warriors were common practice among the Greeks. The archaeological evidence that we have supports the view that the burial customs were homogeneous throughout prehistoric Greece and that funeral games were staged after a burial.⁴⁴ In fact games in honor of the dead completed the burial ceremonies.⁴⁵

It is known from the literary and archaeological sources that armed combats were practiced in some funeral games of early Greece. Fragments of frescoes from Pylos and the well-known sarcophagus from Tanagra depict duels between men with swords. It is suggested that these duels should be reckoned as sports rather than warfare and that they find an echo in the duel of the funeral games of Patroklos.⁴⁶ A Geometric cup from Athens, now at the Copenhagen Museum depicts funeral games.⁴⁷ On one side there are two naked men preparing to stab each other with swords. This scene reminds us of the single combat between Ajax and Diomedes in the funeral games of Patroklos. It is possible that by the time of Homer this “sport” lost a great part of its cruel character since none of the contestants in the funeral games of Patroklos was killed, even though they were not far from it. This scene also reminds us of the nude gladiatorial representations in Etruscan and Samnite art.

Human sacrifice has had a history of development and as it becomes clear from ancient authors it was the practice to sacrifice cap-

for a very good discussion and more references see D. G. KYLE, *Athletics in Ancient Athens*, Leiden 1987, 15–19.

⁴⁴) MYLONAS (s. note 29) 56–57; POLIAKOFF (s. note 12) 151, 153; W. DECKER, *Sport in der griechischen Antike*, München 1995, 32 ff.; W. DECKER et J.-P. THUILLIER, *Le sport dans l'Antiquité, Égypte, Grèce, Rome*, Paris 2004, 77, 78.

⁴⁵) For references and more information see MOURATIDIS (s. note 27) 118 ns. 31, 32, 33, 34.

⁴⁶) See T. B. L. WEBSTER, *From Mycenae to Homer*, London 1958, 55. For more on these painted frescoes discovered by Blegen at Pylos see C. BLEGEN, *The Palace of Nestor. Excavations of 1954*, in: *American Journal of Archaeology* 59, 1955, 31–37; C. BLEGEN and M. RAWSON, *The Palace of Nestor at Pylos in Western Messenia*, vol. II, New York 1969, 72–73. On one Geometric *prothesis* vase there is a representation of fighting. Of this scene are only preserved parts of two falling figures in reversed identical position; the right-hand figure rendered in the attitude of removing a spear that has pierced his body. For more on this see G. AHLBERG, *Prothesis and Ekphora in Greek Geometric Art*, Göteborg 1971, 209. For the Sarcophagus from Tanagra see T. SPYROPOULOS, *Terracotta Sarcophagi*, in: *Archaeology* 25, 1972, 207; W. DECKER, *Ο αθλητισμός στην ελληνική αρχαιότητα*, transl. in Greek by A. Makatsori, Athens 2004, 38, 42, 43, figs. 8 a, 8 b, 45; MOURATIDIS (s. note 27) 118, 119, 120, figs. 1, 2, 3, 4.

⁴⁷) For more on this Geometric cup depicting funeral games see H. LORIMER, *Homer and the Monuments*, London 1950, 272. Also see G. FERROT and C. CHIPIEZ, *Histoire de l'art dans l'Antiquité*, vol. VII, Paris 1898, 181, fig. 66.

tives on the tombs of brave warriors.⁴⁸ When the cruelty of this custom became apparent it was decided to stage gladiatorial fights before the grave.⁴⁹ Thus the origin of the gladiatorial fights lay in the softening of practices by which people still enslaved to the old superstitions gave, if one may so put it, a proper form to human sacrifice.⁵⁰ In other words, these bloody combats owe their origin to a funeral rite, an attenuation of the human sacrifice that in a number of early societies accompanied the death of important figures; for a gladiatorial fight the stronger or the abler of the contestants had a chance of survival.⁵¹ This chance given to one of the gladiators may even be considered “an advance in humanity”.⁵² Thus the institution of gladiatorial games was regarded as a “progressive” form of human sacrifice because instead of immolating captives on the tomb, they were made to combat against each other in front of it, which gave one of them a chance.⁵³ Needless to say that the gladiatorial combats, this strictly funeral rite for the dead, became during the glorious days of Rome a spectacle for the entertainment of the living.⁵⁴

⁴⁸) See F. SCHWENN, *Die Menschenopfer bei den Griechen und Römern*, Gießen 1915 (Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten, Band 15.3), 104–121 for the “prehistory” of human sacrifices in ancient Greece. The practice was held also (or imitated) by the Romans, who had similar practices (such as the *Ver Sacrum*), see SCHWENN 141–181.

⁴⁹) MESLIN (s. note 4) 176; AUGUET (s. note 4) 21; J. HEURGON, *Daily Life of the Etruscans*, transl. by J. Kirkup, London 1964, 210–211.

⁵⁰) AUGUET (s. note 4) 21; MESLIN (s. note 4) 176.

⁵¹) M. PALLOTTINO, *The Etruscans*, transl. by J. Cremona, Bloomington and London 1975, 180.

⁵²) F. POULSEN, *Etruscan Tomb Paintings*, Oxford 1972, 14.

⁵³) HEURGON (s. note 35) 210–211.

⁵⁴) For the Gladiators in general, see M. GRANT, *Gladiators*, London 1967; M. D. REEVE, *Gladiators in Juvenal's sixth Satire*, in: *Classical Review* XXIII, 1973, 124–125; E. J. JORY, *Gladiators in the Theatre*, in: *Classical Quarterly* XXXVI, 1986, 537–539; T. WIEDEMANN, *Emperors and Gladiators*, London/New York, 1992; D. G. KYLE, *Rethinking the Roman Arena: Gladiators, Sorrows, and Games*, in: *Ancient History Bulletin* 11 (2–3), 1997, 94–97; J. C. N. COULSTON, *Gladiators and Soldiers: Personnel and Equipment in ludis and castra*, in: *Journal of Roman Military Equipment Studies* 9, 1998, 1–17; J. NYÁRY, *Die Gladiatoren; zum Töten erzogen, zum Sterben bestimmt*, Düsseldorf 1982; L.-M. GÜNTHER, *Gladiatoren beim Fest Antiochos' IV. zu Daphne (166 v. Chr.)?* in: *Hermes* CXVII, no 2 1989, 250–252; M. JUNKELMANN, *Das Spiel mit dem Tod: so kämpften Roms Gladiatoren*, Mainz 2000; F. MEIJER, *Gladiatoren: das Spiel um Leben und Tod*, München 2004.

Early combat sports rituals in China and the rise of professionalism (475 BC–220 AD)

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Early wrestling rituals commemorating the legendary fight between the Yellow Emperor and Chiyou the bull-monster were held in the northern parts of China. Combat sports competitions became increasingly popular following the modifications of the military starting from the Warring States period to the Han dynasty. Strong individuals were promoted in the armies' hierarchy by showing their skills in combat sports or by their outstanding prowess of strength. The enrollment of Western mercenary troops influenced by the Hellenistic world of Central Asia will include their traditions of combat sports as an imperative exercise for close combat and warfare training. Greek professional acrobats and jugglers will arrive as well all the way from Roman Egypt and perform at the court of the Chinese Emperor. They will contribute to professionalism in acrobatics, combat sports and juggling entertainment in the Chinese world.

1. Early wrestling rituals; *Jueli* and *Juedi*, a commemoration of the bull-monster

The use of technical skills to overcome wild animals, e. g. hunting and vanquishing a bull, a lion or a bear, has been symbolic of man's superiority over nature since prehistoric times. Traces of ancient bull-wrestling rituals have been discovered in Mesopotamia and in India.¹ In the Mesopotamian tombs of Ur, discovered by Leonard Woolley, the poorer graves are marked with the seal of a heroic hunter defeating an animal or a lion defeating a bull,² and a golden headband or fillet shows a heroic figure grappling with a bull bare-handed.³ On the bull-headed "Lyre of Ur", dating from 2500 BC, a naked heroic figure catches hold of two human-headed bulls, one with each arm

¹) Bull grappling in a cylinder seal, British Museum, N. 116720 from Mesopotamia. For India, see C.L. FABRI, *The Cretan Bull Grappling sports and the Bull Sacrifice in the Indus Valley*, in: Archaeological Survey of Indian annals 1934–1935, 93–100.

²) Z. RICHARD/L. HORN, *Treasures from the royal tombs of Ur*. University of Pennsylvania, Cylinders Seal. Holly Pittmann, Museum of archeology and anthropology, USA 1998, 75–84.

³) Z. RICHARD/L. HORN, *Treasures from the royal tombs of Ur*. University of Pennsylvania, (B16686) (U.8173), Holly Pittmann, Museum of archeology and anthropology, USA 1998, 65.

(Taf. 1/1).⁴ The Sumerian mother-goddess Ninhursag and Inanna, the goddess of war, are also often depicted wearing a horned head-dress. Religious cults in Crete during the second millennium BC were accompanied by bullfights and bare-handed combat, especially in Minoan society, where perilous acrobatics routines involving bulls, together with boxing and wrestling, formed part of a ritual passage to adulthood. The Minoans also performed a sun dance in which the dancers masqueraded as bulls,⁵ and which was followed by acrobatics, boxing and wrestling with the goal of vanquishing the darkness and pleasing the sun god Apollo.⁶ The Minoan Civilization, starting in 2600 BC and finishing around 1425 BC with the destruction of the Knossos Palace by the Mycenaeans left a legacy of public religious-athletic contests. Acrobatics (*kybistema*) were highly developed and very difficult skills such as jumping between spears can be seen on a sword handle excavated in the town of Malia. Deadly jumps over bulls called *Tavrokathapsia* or “bull games”⁷ were also effectuated by the youth of the Minoan kingdom as a ritual passage to adulthood. In the Bronze Age (1700–800 BC), the Mycenaeans were fighting with chariots and colonized most of the Aegean Sea by around 1600 BC building thick city walls with gigantic stones and perpetuating the games and the traditions of the Minoans.⁸ Because the Mycenaeans were very inclined towards warfare and displays of strength as shown by the verses of Homer, they placed their games in a martial perspective with the notion of *agon*, or competition. They added chariot races and running games, aimed as training for war and hunting bulls, lions and other wild animals.

Such rituals may date from prehistoric times; murals from the Trois Frères cave in France from about 13.000 BC show a man performing a shamanic dance dressed in a bull skin, for example (fig. 1).

4) Z. RICHARD/L. HORN, *Treasures from the royal tombs of Ur*, University of Pennsylvania. Great Lyre. Museum of archeology and anthropology, USA 1998, 55.

5) J. MOURATIDIS, *Are There Minoan Influences on Mycenaean Sports, Games and Dances?* in: Nikephoros 2, 1989, 51.

6) Musical plays with the Lyre are known from Minoan and early Mycenaean societies, along with boxing to please the sun god. See J. MOURATIDIS, *Are There Minoan Influences on Mycenaean Sports, Games and Dances?* in: Nikephoros 2, 1989, 51, also *The Homeric Hymns*, 3. *Delian Apollo* 140.

7) The fresco of the Knossos Palace dating from around 1500 BC shows a very clear representation of “bull games” (Taf. 1/2). Various *Rhytons* with the shape of bulls have been found, such as the one found in a tomb in Porti Messara, Crete, dating from the early second millennium BC or that from Kumasa from the same period.

8) See J. MOURATIDIS, *Are There Minoan Influences on Mycenaean Sports, Games and Dances?* in: Nikephoros 2, 1989, 43–63.



Fig. 1: Detail of a painting from the Trois Frères cave of a man dressed as a bull performing a magical dance from the late Stone Age, Ardèche, France, 13,000 BC



Fig. 2: Drawing from the Ming dynasty commemorating Chiyou's dance (1368–1644 AD), *Sancai tuhui* (三才圖會)

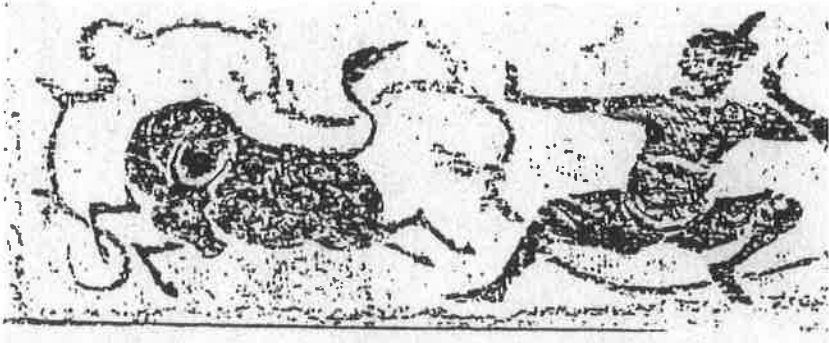


Fig. 3: Bullfight scene from the Eastern Han dynasty on a stone excavated in Henan Nanyang (河南-南陽)

In China, ancient wrestling rituals were likewise linked to the bull, or the mythical Chiyou (蚩尤, the “Great Jester”), a bull-like demon similar to the Minotaur of the Minoans (fig. 2), and acrobatics with bulls may be traced back to the Eastern Han dynasty (25–220 AD), with the depiction on limestone of an acrobat exercising with a bull (fig. 3). According to the “Classic Text of the Mountains and Seas”, the *Shanhai Jing*,⁹ Huangdi (黃帝), the “Yellow Emperor”,¹⁰ ordered the dragon *Ying* (*Yinglong* 應龍) to attack Chiyou in the valley of the nine *Li* (*Jiulizhigu* 九黎之谷):

Here are the Kun Mountains,¹¹ where the terrace of Gonggong is situated. Archers do not dare to shoot in its direction.¹² There is someone wearing green clothes called Nuba, daughter of Huangdi. Chiyou made weapons to attack Huangdi. Huangdi or-

⁹ M. ZHANG (張明華), *Shanhai jing jiaozhu* (山海經校注), *Classic Text of the Mountains and Seas with explanations*. Chap 17, Shanghai 1980, 430–431.

¹⁰ In the *Huainanzi*, chap. 3, p. 88 Huangdi is associated with the earth (中央, 土也, 其帝黃帝, 其佐後土), which is why he is called the “Yellow Emperor”. Chang Tsungtung proposes the name “Blond Heavenly God”, suggesting that Huangdi belonged to the nomadic Indo-European tribes who populated present-day Inner-Mongolia during the third millennium BC. Huangdi’s first name was Xuanyuan (軒轅), which means “carriage”, and supports the idea that he was of nomadic origin. See T. CHANG, *Indo-European Vocabulary in Old Chinese, A New Thesis on the Emergence of Chinese Language and Civilization in the late Neolithic Age*, in: *Sino-Platonic Papers*. Chap 7, University of Pennsylvania, USA, 35.

¹¹ Northern range of the Himalayas, bordering the Tarim basin.

¹² The demon Gonggong (共工) dwelt in the North of the Kun Mountains and it was forbidden to shoot in that direction.

dered the dragon Ying to attack the land of *Jizhou*. Ying hoarded up all the water but Chiyou ordered the Lord of the Winds and the Master of the Rain to conjure up a great storm. Huangdi then called Nuba down from the sky, and the rain stopped. Thereupon she killed Chiyou. Nuba could no longer return to the sky, and wherever she stayed there was drought.¹³

The legendary battle between Huangdi and Chiyou took place in *Jizhou* province, at *Chuolu* (涿鹿) or the “Deer Ford”. In the geographical records (*dilizhi* 地里志) of Shanxi province, Chiyou’s city was traditionally located at the “Fox Spring” (Huquan 狐泉) also called the “Hill Spring” (Banquan 阪泉), situated near the present day village of Banquan (阪泉村) in the district of Yanqing (延慶) in Shanxi province (山西), not far from the Great wall of *Badaling* (八達嶺).

Huquan is the historical site of the city of Chiyou. Huangdi killed Chiyou near a lake situated two *li* in the south-east direction. There the blood of Chiyou metamorphosed into many teeth that may be seen around the lake.¹⁴

Represented as a bull-headed stone-eating monster with a copper head and iron forehead, Chiyou had eighty one (or seventy two) brothers.¹⁵ The “barbarians” led by Chiyou slaughtered their victims and were the first to wield battlefield weapons;¹⁶ the large crossbow (*danu* 大弩), the broadsword (*dao* 刀) and the halberd (*ji* 戟);¹⁷ “red energy emanated from them like red banners made of brocade”.¹⁸ A bull’s horn (*Jiao* 角)

13) M. ZHANG (張明華), *Shanhai jing jiaozhu* (山海經校注), *Classic Text of the Mountains and Seas with explanations*. Chap 7, Shanghai 1980, 430–431 張明華.上海 (一九八零年). “有係昆之山者, 有共工者臺, 射者不敢北鄉。有人衣青衣, 名曰黃帝女魃。蚩尤作兵伐黃帝。黃帝乃令應龍攻之冀州之野。應龍蓄水, 蚩尤青風伯雨師, 縱大風雨。黃帝乃下天曰女魃。雨止。遂殺蚩尤。魃不得復上, 所居不雨。”。 p. 430–431.

14) *Compilation of Shanxi essential geographical history in ten manuscripts* (山西志輯要). Ya De (雅德), (*Dezhanglaishizangshuji* 德長瀨氏藏書記). Chap 9. Publication date and place unknown; obtained at Kobe University (神戸大學), Japan, 25: (*Jiaozhouanyi*) (解州安邑) “狐泉, 古蹟蚩尤城監池東南二里黃帝經庠皇帝殺蚩尤血化為齒今之解池是也”。

15) *Shiji*, 史記 [Historical Records of the Great Historian] chap. 1, 3. Annotation *Taiping Yulan*. Chap. 78, *Longyu hetu* (太平御覽卷七八龍魚河圖).

16) *Shiji*, 史記 [Historical Records of the Great Historian] chap. 1, 3. Annotation *Taiping Yulan*. Chap. 78, *Longyu hetu* (太平御覽卷七八龍魚河圖).

17) Long Chinese halberd usually used from chariots.

18) *Shiji* (史記), Sima Qian (司馬遷) *Historical Records of the Great Historian*. Chap 1, 13. *Huanglan* (黃覽曰) “有赤氣出如匹絳帛”。

was sounded to rally the dragons for war¹⁹ and it later became symbolic of the dead Chiyou's horns.²⁰

The *Confucian Records of the three Dynasties* say: Chiyou is the greed of numerous people. Various Records say: Between all the Lords, Chiyou was the worse. *Youguan* says: Chiyou took the gold of the Lu Mountain (廬山) and created the Five Armies. The *Longyu Hetu* says: Chiyou and his brothers, all 81 of them, had the bodies of wild beasts but spoke human languages, their heads were made of bronze and their foreheads of iron, they ate sand and pebbles, and created weapons for their armies: the knife, the halberd (*Ji* 戟), the large crossbow, with the power to shake the world under heaven, killing without mercy, without any love for humanity.²¹

Chiyou, said to be a descendant of Shennong (神農) the god of agriculture,²² had the same origins as Gonggong (共工), another barbaric rival of Huangdi, whose family name was Qiang (羌), the character *Yang* (羊) on top meaning “goat” and symbolizing the western nomadic shepherds, as well as the bearded Indo-European people who formed the “western armies” (*Xirong* 西戎).²³ As they came from western China, near the Valley of the Qiang River (*Qianggushui*

¹⁹) M. Zhang (張明華), *Shanhai jing jiaozhu* (山海經校注), *Classic Text of the Mountains and Seas with explanations*. Chap 17, Shanghai 1980, 432. “帝命吹角作龍吟以禦”.

²⁰) Note the similarity with the Sumerian legend of Atrahasis (also named Utanapishtim), in which the Lord of the Wind and king of the gods, Enlil, planned to kill mankind by sending a flood. The Lord of the Water, Enki (also named Ea), saved Atrahasis by showing him how to build a boat for him and his family.

²¹) *Shiji* (史記), Sima Qian (司馬遷) *Historical Records of the Great Historian*. Chap 1. “應劭曰。蚩尤，古天子。瓊曰。孔子三朝記曰。蚩尤，麻人之貪者。案...此紀云。諸侯相侵伐，蚩尤最為暴。則蚩尤非天子也。又管子曰。蚩尤受廬山之金二作五兵。龍魚河圖云。黃帝攝政。有蚩尤兄弟八十一人，並獸身人語銅頭鐵額，食沙石子，造立兵杖刀戟大弩，威振天下，誅殺無道，不慈仁”。

²²) M. ZHANG (張明華), *Shanhai jing jiaozhu*, *Classic Text of the Mountains and Seas* (山海經校注). Chap 17, Shanghai 1980, 432. “蚩尤神農臣”。

²³) Source: *Shuowen jiezi* (說文解字), *Etymology of characters* (Han Dynasty), Xu Shen (許慎), *Zhonghua Shuju* (中華書局). Chap 4. Beijing 1963, 78. The non-Chinese tribes living within the borders of China generally referred to Chiyou as their ancestor. Usually described as a western ethnic population, the Qiang tribe of Yu's mother are said to come from Sichuan or Tibet, according to the *Wuyue chunqiu*. Chap 6.1 (吳越春秋家) “...與西羌，地曰石紐。石紐在蜀四川也”。 According to the *Liji* it is in Shaanxi that Gonggong was banished through the “Wild goose pass” (*Yanmenguan* 雁門關). Next to this chain of mountains lived a barbaric tribe called the Di.

羌谷水),²⁴ these populations were not under the rule of Huangdi and they played an important role in the development of warfare, Chiyou being described as creator of weapons (*Chiyou zuobing* 蚩尤作兵).²⁵ Huangdi fought with foot soldiers against the horseman of Chiyou and it took him nine battles to defeat them.²⁶

The legends refer to wrestling rituals as a tradition originating from Chiyou “fighting” (*Dou* 鬥) against Huangdi, although this is not necessarily any more credible than the idea of the god Hermes creating wrestling, reflecting a tendency throughout the ages to associate a god with a particular skill. *Dou* (鬥) does not mean wrestling but simply “fighting”,²⁷ but it is significant that Chiyou was of nomadic western Chinese or Tibetan origin (*qiang* 羌), and one can definitively attribute the origin of wrestling in China to the steppe people from the west. The Qin kingdom (778–207 BC) was in close contact with the western tribes (*Xirong* 西戎) and fought and traded with them. The Qin naturally encouraged wrestling, thus rivaling the steppe fighters in strength.²⁸

Chiyou’s association with wrestling is established during the Southern Dynasty of the Liang (南朝梁 502 to 557 AD) by the historian Ren Fang (任昉 460 to 508 AD), which affirmed that an ancient wrestling ritual commemorating Chiyou, called *Juedi* (角抵)²⁹ (the

²⁴ *Hanshu* (漢書). *Han Dynasty annals*. Chap 28 (xia), *Dilizhi* (地理志). *Zhonghua Shuju* (中華書局), Beijing 1979, 1613. “羌谷水出羌中”.

²⁵ *Shiji*, (史記). Sima Qian (司馬遷) *Historical Records of the Great Historian*. Chap 1.

²⁶ M. ZHANG (張明華), *Shanghai jing jiaozhu*, *Classic Text of the Mountains and Seas* (山海經校注). Chap 17, Shanghai 1980, 432. “黃帝與蚩尤戰九不勝”.

²⁷ According to *Shuowen jiezi* (說文解字), *Etymology of characters* (Han Dynasty), Xu Shen (許慎), *Zhonghua Shuju* (中華書局). Chap 3 (下). Beijing 1963, 63. “*Dou* 鬥: means two *Shi* 士 (officers) facing each other, or soldiers fighting with weapons; all things of this nature belong to *dou*” “鬥: 兩士相對兵杖在後象鬥之行凡鬥之屬皆从鬥”.

²⁸ The *Shoubo* and wrestling were practiced mainly by the Qin. The Qin had to face the armies of Li 驪戎 and the western armies 西戎; very precise details may be found in *the Transmissions of Zuo*, the *Zuo Zhuan* (左傳), in the chapter *Explanations on Countries* (*fenguo jiaozhu* 分國校注), Han Xichou (韓席籌). Chap 12. *Longmen shudian* (龍門書店), Hong Kong 1963. *The history of the armies of Li* (驪戎). Chap 5, 245–254. *The History of the Western Armies* (西戎). Chap 12, 702–711.

²⁹ According to Xu Shen, during the Han dynasty, *Juedi* had also the meaning of *chu* 觸 or “knock against”. *Shuowen jiezi* (說文解字), *Etymology of characters* (Han Dynasty), Xu Shen (許慎), *Zhonghua Shuju* (中華書局). Chap 4 (下). Beijing 1963, 94. *Di* 抵 may also be written with the character *di* 舐, which has the same meaning “to resist” or “to butt”. In the *Huainanzi*, (*shuoshan* 說山) the bullfights are described as *chudi* 觸抵 “兕牛之動以觸抵” also indicating the close relationship between wrestling and catching bulls for martial training.

character *Di* [抵] signifies “support” or “resist”) was performed by people disguised as bulls in the province of Ji, where the battle with Huangdi took place. During the Qin and the Han Dynasties (221 BC to 220 AD), Chinese historians began to describe Chiyou as having “curly hair” and “horns on his head”, i. e. superimposing the representation of Alexander The Great during his conquest of Asia and that of Chiyou with his horned head³⁰ as an idealization of martial strength. Chiyou was worshipped as a god by the steppe tribes³¹ and his description in the “Commentary on unusual stories” (*shuyiji* 述異記) supports the idea of a connection with Alexander:

During the Qin-Han times they said that ... Chiyou had hair on his temples like swords and spears, and horns on his head. He fought with Xuanyuan (軒轅) using *Juedi* and nobody could beat him. Today in the province of Ji (*Jizhou* 冀州), Chiyou festivities are held with two or three people together. They wear ox horns on their heads and wrestle (*Xiangdi* 相觶). The festivities of

³⁰) Alexander started to wear a pair of goat horns on his head after his pilgrimage to the Great temple of Amun-Ra in the Libyan desert, in 331 BC.

³¹) During the reign of the Emperor Mingdi (58–75 AD), in the fifteenth year of the *Yongping* era, in 67 AD, the empress went to visit Luoyang, where the permanent imperial secretaries Renshou (仁壽關), Dufu (杜撫), Bangu (班固) etc. were writing the “Explanations of Building Warfare” (*Jianwuzhuji* 建武註記). Linyihoulifu (臨邑侯劉復) came into the room with the others to discuss these affairs. New troops of the steppe people had been enrolled into the Han armies at that time. “After they had prostrated themselves in front of the general and the five officers of the northern armies, the three thousand prisoners of war, and Tunxihemeiji (屯西河美稷) who defended southern Chanyu henceforth took swore allegiance to their new commander. They paid their respects to the general in formal dress bearing their arms, and they made sacrifices to Chiyou. The relatives of the imperial house watched these valorous soldiers with great admiration.” But who was the god Chiyou worshipped by these mercenaries? Was it the same god as described in the Han times with horns on his head and curly hair on his temples and who could not be defeated in wrestling? Or was it another god of the steppes with horns on his head? He may also have been derived from the goddess Inanna, also called the “winged bull”, worshipped from earlier times as shown by some of the Hephtalite Hun *drachma* coins of the fifth century AD discovered in Gandhara, where the king is wearing a “bull head crown” instead of the lion or elephant motifs used by the Indo-Greeks. Moreover, Seleucus and Eucratides, the king of Bactria, had their helmets decorated with the horns and ears of a bull on their coins, perhaps as a way of demonstrating their power over the central Asian steppe tribes of Persian origin. *Houhanshu* [Later Han Dynasty annals] chap. 24 *Majian liezhuan*. 馬援列傳 p. 574–575. 永平十五年，皇後敕使移居洛陽。顯宗召見，嚴進對閑雅，意甚異之，有詔留仁壽關，與校書郎杜撫、班固等雜定‘建武註記’。常與宗室近親 臨邑侯劉復等論議政事，甚見寵幸。後拜將軍長史，將北軍五校士，羽林禁兵三千人，屯西河美稷，衛護南單於，聽置司馬、從事。牧守謁敬，同之將軍。敕嚴過武庫，祭蚩尤，帝親禦阿閭，觀其士眾，時人榮之。

Juedi (角抵) were established by the Han (dynasty) and have been transmitted from that time.³²

The first mention of wrestling in China is to be found in the “Ritual Records”, the *Liji* (禮記), where it is described as *Jueli* (角力) or “Force wrestling”. However, the book was re-worked during the Han dynasty, and the mention of *Jueli* does not necessarily indicate a ritual anterior to the Qin dynasty.

The son of heaven orders the masters to practice the military arts; shooting, wrestling (*Jueli*角力). Wrestling attacks and defends with fierce skills. All the shooting (techniques) are used for chariot warfare,³³ while wrestling is used for warfare by the foot soldiers.³⁴

In the “Law Records” of the Han dynasty books, the *Hanshu Xingfazhi* (漢書 刑法志), the chronology of wrestling clearly begins at the end of the Warring States period, and it is confirmed that wrestling rituals appearing in China were a creation of the Qin. The *Taiping Yulan* (太平御覽) or the “Imperial overview of the prosperous era” is consistent with this, indicating that wrestling in China was created during the Warring States period, organized by the Qin kingdom and spread widely as an institution over the whole country during the Qin Dynasty (秦代221 to 207 BC).³⁵

The establishment of large independent kingdoms during the Spring and Autumn, and Warring States periods (*Chunqiu zhanguo shidai* 春秋戰國時代 722 to 221 BC), the incursions of the steppe cavalry from north China in around the eighth and mid seventh centuries BC through the corridor of Gansu, and the evident contacts with the Hel-

³² *Han Wei Congshu* (漢魏叢書), *Collection of Han and Wei Dynasties books*, in: *Shenyi jing* (神異經), *Unusual divine scripture*. Book 2. *Shuyiji* (神異經) *Commentary on unusual stories*. Ren Fang (任昉) Southern Dynasty of the Liang (南朝梁). Shanghai 1925.

“秦漢間說...蚩尤氏耳髮如劍戟，頭有角，與軒轅鬥，以角抵人，人不能向今冀州有蚩尤樂名蚩尤戲其民兩兩三三，頭戴牛角而相抵，漢造角抵戲，蓋遺製也。”

³³ *Sheyu* 射御 was the term used for shooting from the chariot and then later from the horse.

³⁴ *Liji zhujie* (禮記集解), *Rituals Records with explanations*. Sun Xidan (孫希旦撰), *Zhonghua shuju* (中華書局). In: *Lunar day, sixth of the third* (月今第六之三) 491-492. “月今第六之三.”天子乃命帥講武.習射御，角力。...角力，角繫刺之技勇。皆射御以講車乖之武，角力講步卒之武。”

³⁵ *Taiping Yulan* (太平御覽), *Imperial Overview of the Prosperous Era*. (Song Dynasty) Li Fang etc. (李昉, 等) *Zhonghua shuju* (中華書局), 1960. Chap 755, 3352. “角抵...六國所造，秦并天下，而增廣之。”

lenistic world in the fourth and third centuries BC with the kingdom of Qin, strongly influenced the development of combat sports in China. Under the influence of the Western and steppe “war machines”, the modernization of the Chinese armies led to the abandon of the rituals of virtue and politeness of the past in favor of a more individual “competitive” approach, which was also the starting point for shows of strength as entertainment for the ruling classes.

At the end of the Spring and Autumn period, the weaker (countries) had been included in the Warring States, becoming more wealthy and improving their warfare rituals. They competed in trials of strength and organized games. The Qin changed the name of these to *Juedi* (角抵), and they were intended as an entertainment for the King.³⁶

The Qin evolution of wrestling and competitions of strength within the Court festivities would gain increasing interest from the public and the soldiers seeking a higher social rank in the armies. According to the biography of Li Si (李斯 280–208 BC),³⁷ the prime minister of the Qin dynasty emperor, there were famous wrestlers in the palace of Ganquan (甘泉)³⁸ near modern Xianyang in Shaanxi. Of the strengthening exercises that would become popular, one was to carry a heavy bronze vase on one’s shoulders (*Gangting* 扛鼎) and the other was to pull up the city doors (*Qiaoguan* 翹關), both requiring great strength.³⁹ One champion in the *Gangting* exercise was the strong man (*lishi* 力士) Wuhuo (烏獲), famous during the Warring States in the Qin country.⁴⁰ The archetype of mercenaries specialized in shows of strength started to develop mainly during the third century BC, as seen

³⁶ *Hanshu* (漢書), *Han Dynasty annals, Xinfazhi* (刑法志). “春秋之後，滅弱吞小並為戰國，稍增講武之禮。以為戲樂，用相夸視。而秦更名角抵，先王之禮。沒於淫樂中矣。”

³⁷ *Shiji* (史記), *Historical Records of the Great Historian, Lisi* (李斯). Chap 87. “是時二世在甘泉，方作翹角抵優俳之觀。李斯不得見，因上書言趙高之。”

³⁸ Ganquan was originally built in the Qin dynasty, by Huhai (胡亥) the son of the Qin Emperor, in 209 BC. According to the explanation of Fuqian “Ganquan had also the name of Linguang or “Forest light”; Yan Shigu explains: “The Qin palace of Linguang, Huhai made it and then the Han constructed a temple next to it that they named Ganquan.” 服虔曰：“甘泉一名林光。師古曰 秦之林光，胡亥所造，漢又于其旁起甘泉宮。”

³⁹ *Li shang wen yizhu* (李善文選注). *Explanations of Li Shang, Yiwen Yishuguan*, Taiwan 1975. “翹關，扛鼎，皆逞壯士之力也。”

⁴⁰ *Zhang Heng’s poems with commentary* (張衡詩文集校注), *second prefecture capital* (二京賦). *Shiwenjijiaozhu* (Eastern Han), 張衡 *Shanghai Gujichubanshechuban*. 上海古籍出版社出版, Shanghai 1986, 79.

on a sculpted funerary stone discovered in Xuzhou 徐州) (fig. 5)⁴¹ dating from the Western Han (206 BC – 24 AD) with seven people demonstrating their particular “heroic” skills.⁴² The form imitates a Greek pediment scene and shows a relief of standing individuals practicing various displays of strength. The Greek model of physical strength⁴³ was transported together with artistic depictions into China. For the stone found in Xuzhou, we probably have a graphic imitation of a frieze of a Greek temple that passed into the hands of the Chinese of the Western Han dynasty, perhaps in the form of a drawing. The two men on the left are killing a tiger with their weapons; the third one on the left is pulling a tree out of the ground. The one in the middle is carrying a bull on his shoulders,⁴⁴ the first on the right is lifting a bronze ritual vase, the sixth on the right is carrying a deer and the last on the right is lifting a smaller animal. Stone carvings with individuals in action, named *Huaxiangshi* (畫像石) by the Chinese, originated at the end of the Western Han (206 BC– 9 AD) and became fashionable at the middle and at the end of the Eastern Han (25–220 AD) period.



Fig. 4: Bronze belt found in the necropolis of Kensengzhuang, Shaanxi province

⁴¹) Stone discovered in Xuzhou Tongshan, Honglou. 力技圖畫像石。徐州銅山洪樓出土。

⁴²) Note that a natural-sized drawing of the stone was offered to Juan Antonio Samaranch (1920–2010) by the Chinese Olympic Committee before they wished to organize the modern Olympic Games in Beijing in 2008.

⁴³) The physical model of naked beauty and harmony will really appear around the fourth century of our era, with Greco-Buddhist art influence from Gandhara through the Silk road and the representation of *Jingang*, the Chinese version of Heracles-Vajrapani.

⁴⁴) Notice the similarity with the acrobat on fig. 3. They play with a bull, wear a turban with a feather and they are both “Caucasians”, maybe from the same origin; I presume central Asian.



Fig. 5: Pediment-like funerary stele carving unearthed in Tongshan (Xuzhou province) Western Han (206 BC – 24 AD)

2. Professionalism in combat sports under the influence of the Hellenistic world

Jueli (角力) or *Juedi* (角抵) was adapted by the Qin from older rituals called *Shoubo* (手搏), which will be discussed in detail in section 3. This transition is indicative of how the evolution of wrestling was influenced by the propagation of Greek combat sports in central Asia and among the Hellenized steppe tribes moving along the Gansu corridor and across the northern plains of China. A bronze belt dating from the end of the Warring States⁴⁵ or the Eastern Han dynasty (25 to 220 AD)⁴⁶ shows two “western” wrestlers depicted in Scythian style (fig. 4; Taf. 2/1), possibly of Yuezhi (Roushi 月氏) origin, according to Bunker. The horsemen living in the northern plains of Gansu and Shaanxi at the end of the Warring States period were known in Chinese sources as the “Armies of the Black horse” or the Li armies (*Lirong* 驪戎). However, in either case, Hellenized Scythian nomads were wandering the steppes of northern China. The belt also shows two horses, two trees, and a goose holding an object (perhaps an egg) with a human hand above it. According to the Greek mythology, Leda,

⁴⁵) *Sports in Ancient China*. People’s sports Publishing House, Tai Dao Publishing Ltd. Hong Kong, 1986. E. WU (烏恩), *Sports within the northern ethnic minorities* (中國古代北方民族のスポーツ) in: The Silk Roads Nara International Symposium 95. Nara 1995, 63–70. C. XU (徐才), W. ZHANG (張文廣), X. ZHOU (周西寬) etc. *Zhongguo wushushi* (中國武術史), *History of Chinese Martial Arts. Zhongguo renmintiyu chubanshe chuban faxing* (中國人民體育出版社出版發). Beijing 1996.

⁴⁶) B. LIN, *History of Chinese martial arts, Zhongguo Wushu Shi* (中國武術史). Beijing Tiyu Chubanshi (北京體育出版社). Beijing 1994. Y. YI/X. HU, *History of Chinese Martial Arts, Zhongguo wushu shi* (中國武術史), *Renmin tiyu chubanshe*, Beijing 1985.

the queen of Sparta was impregnated by Zeus, who took the form of a goose to seduce her and fell into her arms. From this union, Leda produced two eggs, from which hatched two sets of twins; the Dioscuri (Castor and Polydeuces) and Helen of Troy and Clytemnestra. In Rome, the Dioscuri became the main deities of the cavalry, and an important temple was dedicated to them. Earlier in Sparta, the pear tree was associated with the Dioscuri, and images of the gods were hung in its branches. Polydeuces was one of the principal legendary creators of boxing. He taught the art to the Bebryces of the Black Sea.⁴⁷ The Dioscuri became highly revered patrons of athletic contests among the Scythians (Taf. 2/2). The reverse side of many coins of the Bactrian Greek king Eucratides (175 to 145 BC)⁴⁸ shows the Dioscuri on horseback (Taf. 2/3), and it is evident that combat sports among the Central Asian Scythians were strongly influenced by the presence of the Greeks in Bactria. These Hellenized Scythians, or perhaps Greco-Scythians,⁴⁹ moved eastwards through northern Gansu and Shaanxi in the first century BC and were known as the Lushi “Qin” barbarians in Chinese texts. The Scythians included Greek combat sports in the training of their soldiers after the visit of Anacharsis to Athens during the 47th Olympiads (592 BC) and followed by the colonies of the Black Sea,⁵⁰ but direct contact between the Greeks and the Scythians and their intermarriage in Sogdiana and Bactria would certainly have had a wider impact on their religious combat sports traditions.

⁴⁷) Philostratus, *On Gymnastics* 9. Theocritus, *Idyll* 22.53–79.

⁴⁸) Eucratides was one of the most important Greek kings of Bactria. Presumably a cousin of Antioch IV Epiphanes, he overthrew the dynastic family of Euthydemus of Bactria, killing his son Demetrios, the conqueror of India before ruling Bactria and northwest India in 171 BC. Eucratides was finally killed in Bactria by his own son, who even dragged his dead father's body behind his chariot, in around 145 BC.

⁴⁹) At the time of Pliny the Elder (23–79 AD), the Scythians living in central Asia were known as the *Sacas*, this name referring collectively to a multitude of different nomadic tribes. The *Sacae*, *Massagetae*, *Dahae*, *Essedones*, *Astacae*, *Ruminici*, *Pestici*, *Homodoti*, *Histi*, *Edones*, *Camae*, *Camacae*, *Euchatae*, *Cotieri*, *Austhusiani*, *Psacae*, *Aimaspi*, *Antacati*, *Chroasai*, *Oetai* were living on an equal footing with the Parthians. Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* 6.19. (17). 50–51. Like the Parthians, they were more or less Hellenized while living in the area of the Greco-Bactrian Empire. Life in the Greek ruled cities included education in the gymnasium, which was a military centre, and perpetuated it until the Kushana Empire.

⁵⁰) Diogenes Laertius 1,101 (*Anacharsis*); Plutarch, *Life of Solon* 5. Anacharsis may perhaps have been a legendary figure according to some historians, but it does not change socio-cultural impact of the Greek gymnasium institution in the Black Sea region from the seventh century BC.



Fig. 6: Wooden plate representing two wrestlers dating from the Qin Dynasty, excavated in 1975 in Hubei province, at Fenghuangshan in Jiangling

Belts with the motif in fig. 4 and Taf. 2/1 have been found from Kazakhstan to the northern plains of China. Statues of wrestlers and acrobats found near the tomb of the Qin Emperor in 1999 (Taf. 3, Taf. 4, Taf. 5, Taf. 6) have Hellenistic features with an anthropomorphic style that only developed again in China about seven hundred years later during the Wei Dynasty with the rise of Greco-Buddhist fine arts influenced by Gandhara. The wooden piece representing two wrestlers dating from the Qin Dynasty excavated in 1975 in Hubei province at Fenghuangshan in Jiangling (fig. 6) shows common features with many Greek vase representations of wrestlers, with a piece of cloth hanging over the wrestlers.⁵¹ The transmission of Greek athletics in China from the West is referred to in the Han Dynasty historical texts, with mention of two performances of professional jugglers and acrobats from the Greco-Roman world (*Lixuan* 黎軒 – *Daqin* 大秦)⁵² at the Court of the Emperors Wudi (武帝 156 to 87 BC)

⁵¹) For example: Attic amphora representing a wrestling match painted by Andokides, 525 BC, with a cloth hanging over the wrestlers; Staatliche Museen Berlin 1759. Theseus wrestling with Kerykon painted by Kleophrades has a similar representation of a cloth hanging on a tree next to the wrestlers; Museo Archeologico de Bologna. The *Pankration* contest painted by Onesimos, 500 BC possibly shows a leather glove hanging on a metal ring fixed to a wall; New York, private collection.

⁵²) On the Greco-Roman world and China, see F. HIRTH, *China and the Roman Orient*, Chicago 1975 (Phd. Ares Publications).

and Andi (安帝 106 to 125 AD), respectively, in 108 BC⁵³ and in 120 AD. In 108 BC, these itinerant performers caused a great sensation at the Imperial court and were described by the Chinese Han historical records as performing “frightening wrestling and strange games” (*Juediqixi* 覈抵奇戲).⁵⁴ In 120 AD, they performed at the Imperial court of Andi, doing extraordinary things with their bodies, and they claimed to come from Roman Egypt (*Haixi* 海西). Travelling from Egypt on huge ships, this troop of itinerant performers succeeded in reaching Burma after following the “Spice Road” to Sri Lanka. They were then offered by the king of Burma, Yongyou (雍由) as a gift to the Chinese Emperor. Unlike the Romans, native Egyptians or Jews of Egypt, the Greeks had maintained their own specialized gymnastics and athletics institutions in Alexandria.⁵⁵

The first year of *Yongning* (120 AD), the south-western barbarian king of the kingdom of Chan (Burma), Yongyou, proposed illusionists (jugglers) who could metamorphose themselves and spit out fire; they could dismember themselves and change an ox head into a horse head. They were very skilful in acrobatics and they could do a thousand other things. They said that they were

⁵³) Gift of performers of acrobatics and juggling sent to China by the Parthian king Mithradates II to Han Wudi. Probably Greek athletes (*Lixuan* people) taken from the Asian cities of the Parthian Empire, as they were famous there at that time, and had their own gymnasiums in Suza, Babylon or Seleucia-Tigris. *Shiji*, (史記). *Sima Qian* (司馬遷) *Historical Records of the Great Historian, Ferghana transmission* (大宛列傳) Chap 123. *Zhonghua Shuju* (中華書局). Beijing 1999, 2406. “索隱。韋昭云：變化惑人也。按：魏略。犁靳多奇幻，口中吹火，自縛自解” Weizhao explains “they can metamorphose and trick people” and the *Weilue* says “they have many illusionists, they can spit out fire, and tied up, they can free themselves”.

⁵⁴) The Chinese character used here in the *Shiji* for *jue* 角 is *jue* 覈. This is very unusual in the Chinese sources when it comes to wrestling, and perhaps indicates a particular “frightening” acrobatic demonstration of combat sports practiced by professional athletes. Derived from the word “frightening” (*husu* 覈棘) it was added to the word “wrestling” *di* 抵 in *juedi* 覈抵 to denote outstanding combat sports skills and performances. *Shiji*, (史記). *Sima Qian* (司馬遷), *Historical Records of the Great Historian, Ferghana transmission* (大宛列傳) Chap 123. *Zhonghua Shuju* (中華書局). Beijing 1999, 2406. “及加其眩者之工，而覈抵奇戲歲增變，甚盛益興，自此始”.

⁵⁵) Juggling and acrobatics became famous in the Kushana Empire following the Greco-Roman fashion. See M.K. THAKOUR. *India at the age of Kanishka*, 2nd edition. World View, Delhi 1999, 33–47. About a hundred years prior to the performances of these jugglers from Egypt, Apollonius of Tyana, who is traditionally believed to have travelled to India, was described by the Emperor Caracalla (211–217 AD) as a “great juggler and magician”, and he built a shrine in his memory. Dio Cassius, *Roman History (Historia Romana)* LXXVIII.18.4. E. CARY, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, volume IX, 1914–2006, 327.

from the “west of the seas” (*Haixi* – Egypt). The west of the seas is the *Daqin* (Rome). The *Daqin* is situated to the south-west of the Chan country. During the following year, Andi organized festivities in his country residence and the acrobats were transferred to the Han prefectural capital where they gave a performance to the court, and created a great sensation. They received the honors of the Emperor, with gold and silver, and every one of them received a different gift.⁵⁶

The “Comprehensive examination of Literature” compiled in 1317 by Ma Duanlin (馬端臨) goes even further, saying that athletes from the West instructed the Chinese and established the starting point for acrobatic and juggling practices in China.⁵⁷ The clearest evidence of the transmission of Greek professionalism in gymnastics and combat sports can be found in the *Taiping yulan* (太平御覽) or the “Imperial Overview of the Prosperous Era”, written between 977 to 983 AD, with a special paragraph dedicated to wrestling history in China. The paragraph definitively associates the performance of professional athletes and acrobats from the West with the development of combat sports in China.

The *Juedi* wrestling games started within the six countries (the Warring States) and the Qin developed them widely up to the Han, where it naturally continued to improve. They looked to elevate them and to combine them with the strange illusionists (jugglers) of the barbarian (of the four directions) festivities, with their emissaries who looked like ghosts and gods practicing wrestling. Historically, they also named it *Jueli* (wrestling with power), *Xiangdi* (wrestling on the ground) or *chu* (觸) (to butt).⁵⁸

⁵⁶) *Houhanshu* (後漢書), *Later Han Dynasty annals*. Ban Gu (班固). *Zhonghua Shuju*, Beijing 1999, 1973–1974. “永初元年, “徼外僬僿種夷陸類等三千餘口舉種內附, 獻象牙·水牛·封牛。永寧元年, 擲國王雍由調復遣使者詣闕朝賀, 獻樂及幻人, 能變化吐火, 自支解, 易牛馬頭。又善跳丸, 數乃至千。自言我海西人。海西即大秦也, 擲國西南通大秦。明年元會, 安帝作變於庭, 封雍由調為漢大都尉, 賜印綬·金銀·彩繪各有差也。”

⁵⁷) *Wenxian Tongkao* (文獻通考), *Comprehensive Examination of Literature*. Ma Duanlin (馬端臨), *Zhonghua shuju* (中華書局出版). 1986, *Le* 19. Chap 147, 1287. “多幻術皆出西域善幻人至中國後漢安帝時”。

⁵⁸) *Taiping Yulan* (太平御覽), *Imperial Overview of the Prosperous Era*. Li Fang, etc (李昉 等). *Zhonghua shuju* (中華書局) 1960. Chap 755, 3352 “角抵戲角者六國

所造也秦并天下兼而增廣之漢興雖罷然猶不絕至上復採用之并四夷之樂雜以奇幻有若鬼神角抵者使角力相抵觸也”。

Andi saw wrestlers from the steppes as well, but they did not impress him as much as the *Daqin* professional athletes. It happened during the second year of his reign, in 107 AD, thirteen years before the famous “Roman show”, when the allied troops of the Southern Chanyu (*Nan Chanyu* 南單于) together with some Xianbei (鮮卑) and Wuhuan (烏桓) mercenaries performed a *Juedi* wrestling competition in Guangyang city (廣陽), near today’s Miyun in the Beijing district.⁵⁹ During the third year of *Yuankang* (元康三年), in 63 BC, the Emperor Han Xuandi (漢宣帝 73–49 BC) followed his predecessor Wudi by taking foreign guests the Xiongnu and the Wuhan chiefs to participate in the international wrestling competition.⁶⁰ During the fourth lunar month of the fifth year of *Chuyuan* (初元五年), in 44 BC, the pro-Confucianism emperor Han Yuandi (漢元帝 48–33 BC) prohibited wrestling games for a short time.⁶¹ In the third year of *Tianfeng* (天鳳三年), in 16 AD, many foreign warriors came from the Western lands and the Chinese officials prepared a great banquet to receive these allied troops, who organized a huge parade with a brilliant wrestling contest.⁶² Skills development in wrestling were pointed out during the Han Dynasty with the mention of the steppe wrestler Ridi (日磾) throwing down Mangheluo (莽何羅) by seizing him by the neck⁶³ and rolling him out (*wolun* 卧輪) of the fighting ground.⁶⁴ Here the technical description suggests a competitive perspective to combat sports showing the clear transition from the earliest Zhou (周) period, where ritual archery games were effectuated to harmonize heaven with earth

⁵⁹ *Cefuyuangui* (冊府元龜), *The Prime Tortoise of the Record Bureau*. Wang Qinruo etc. (王欽若等), *Northern Song dynasty, book 2. Emperors and king section, enjoying the banquet*. Chap 1. *Cefuyuangui, diwangbu, yanxiang* (帝王部, 宴享). *Zhonghua Shuju* (中華書局), Hong Kong 1960, 1296. “漢安二年六月遣行中郎將節護送南單于守義王凱 數儲歸南庭...廣陽城門外祖會鄉賜作樂角抵”.

⁶⁰ *Hanshu* (漢書), *Han Dynasty annals, The Western Lands transmissions* (西域傳). Chap 96 (下). *Zhonghua Shuju* (中華書局), Beijing 1999, 2878. “元康三年...天子自臨平樂觀, 會匈奴使者、外國君長大角抵, 設樂而遣之”.

⁶¹ *Hanshu* (漢書), *Han Dynasty annals*. Chap 9, *Emperor Yuan’s records* (元帝紀).

⁶² *Hanshu* (漢書), *Han Dynasty annals, The Western lands transmissions*. Chap 96 (下), 1999, 2895–2896. “孝武之世。開玉門, 通西域... 設酒池肉林以饗四夷之客, 巴俞都 盧海中囂極漫衍魚龍, 角抵之戲, 以觀視。”

⁶³ According to the commentary of Jinzhuo in the chapter 68, *Jinridiquan* of the *Hanshu*, “*Hu* (胡) also means neck; he took him by the neck and throwing him out of the palace.” 漢書, 金日磾傳 “晉灼曰: 胡, 頸也, 捽其頸而投殿下。”

⁶⁴ *Hanshu* (漢書), *Han dynasty annals*. Chap 68, *Transmissions of Jinridi* (金日磾傳). *Zhonghua Shuju* (中華書局), Beijing 1999, 2229. “日磾捽胡投何羅殿下... 孟康曰捽胡, 若今相僻卧輪之類也。”

and the four quarters.⁶⁵ Wrestling in Han Dynasty China was more highly esteemed than boxing, just as Philostratus described in the Roman Empire in 220 AD.⁶⁶ In the Han books, it is mentioned that unlike catching and hitting the beasts (*Shoubo*), wrestling (*Jueli*) needs real skills to fight.⁶⁷ In the book of Zhuangzi (莊子), an association started to emerge between the skills of the mind and the techniques of wrestling, just as they were associated in Greece and in the Roman Empire.⁶⁸ As soon as the practice of combat sports became institutionalized in China, earlier philosophical principles will provide the terminology for the workings of the body and its fighting theories.⁶⁹

⁶⁵) During archery rituals of the early first millennium BC, the Son of Heaven had to shoot arrows at the “four quarters” to please the spirits, the five elements and the god of grains (Ji 稷). “Shooting at the four quarters (all directions)” was a ritual made by using arrows attached to long strings to catch birds. Archery festivities lasted for four days and each one had its own rank of noble. The “Ritual Records” or Liji (禮記) gives very precise details concerning the organization of those games. The first day was the very solemn “Great shooting” (Dashe 大射) made for the king together with his lords and ministers. The second day was the no less solemn “Guest’s shooting” (Binshe 賓射) made for the high ranked visitors, followed by the “practice shooting” (Yanshe 燕射); a competition between the nobles proper during the third day. The banquets followed the fourth day together with the “Rural shooting” (Xiangshe 鄉射) designated for the lower ranked soldiers as a joyful ending of the festivities.

⁶⁶) Philostratus, *On gymnastics* 11.

⁶⁷) *Hanshu* (漢書), *Han Dynasty annals, Emperor Yuan’s records*. Chap 11. *Commentary of Sulin* (蘇林). 漢書, 中華書局, *Zhonghua Shuju*. Beijing 1999, 241. “手搏為下, 角力為武戲也” *Shoubo* is for the exited ones, *Jueli* is a martial game.”

⁶⁸) The clearest example can be found in Plato, *Theaetetus*, 169a–b. Mixing the skills of wrestling with philosophy was a particularly Greek characteristic throughout the time of the *Panhellenic* Games and was strongly influenced by Plato’s writings. Wrestling was also compared with the art of rhetoric during the Roman Empire, as with Libianus of Antioch (314 to 394 AD), for example, who also practiced wrestling and “used his wrestling tricks against his mentor” in his dialectic, according to a letter of his relative Bassianus in 360 AD. Nilus Ankyranus (?–430 AD), the disciple of John Chrysostom made the same association of soul and physical combat in his *Narratio* (3.10–14), saying that when teaching young students combat sports, the *paidotribes* should provide them instructions as to how to resist their passions and should “attach them to the rock (of virtue)”, as mariners would attach their boats against the storms (of passion) in the ports.

⁶⁹) The main particularity of Chinese warfare techniques and combat sports will be orientated by the ancient *Taiji* (太極), the *Yin* (陰) and *Yang* (陽) negative and positive theory, the four directions, and the eight trigrams (*Zhouyi*, *Xici*, 周易系辭云. 易有太極, 是生兩儀, 兩儀生四象, 四象生八卦). Later, the notion of Emptiness of (first) intention (*Wuwei* 無為) pointed out by the philosopher Laozi (老子, 400–300 BC?) would be developed by the Daoists. In the chapter eleven of his *Daojing*, he explains how emptiness is imperative for things to move and that it is this emptiness that should be used versus solidity. The use of Laozi’s “Emptiness of (first) intention” (Laozi, *Daojing*, chap. 3. 老子. 為無為, 則無不治) suggests a high

Skilful wrestlers start with *Yang* (vivacity and strength) but always end with *Yin* (masked techniques) to obtain victory.⁷⁰

This philosophical aspect has in my opinion been overemphasized by the modern historians of Chinese combat sports in order to demonstrate a local origin of those.⁷¹ Although the philosophical consideration was important in Zhuangzi's book, the average Chinese fighter did generally not approach combat by Daoist ideals. The king's warriors of the Warring States period were fierce fighters who trained all day and sacrificed their lives for the king, not wise philosophers in search of freedom of thought.⁷² The traditional noble "Master of

level development of individual martial skills along with exercises for maintaining health. This very characteristic Chinese notion of a body that can excel by controlling another with the use of mind-emptiness was mainly pointed out by Zhuangzi (莊子 fourth Century BC) and Liezi (列子 fourth Century BC) with various references to archery, fencing etc. Zhuangzi in his "Art of swordsmanship" uses an apparent emptiness of the mind to attract his opponent's attack in order to be able to anticipate and to strike him first (莊子。說劍。夫為劍者，示之以虛，開之以利，後之以發，先之以至)。Liezi describes the story of an archer who was capable of technical prowess with his bow, but did not possess the emptiness of mind to excel; Standing? near a precipitous cliff, the archer was unable to achieve his skills because he was still thinking about what he was doing (Liezi, *Emperor* 列子黃帝 "是射之射，非不射之射也"). Various breathing and physical health exercises known as *Daoyin* (導引) can be found in the writings of Zhuangzi (*Keyi*); similar to *Yoga* they consisted of breathing with various postures of animal stretching and massaging one's own body by slow movements. With Daoism, some schools of combat sports would focus on the three major concepts of nourishing true nature (*yangxing* 養性), nourishing health (*yangsheng* 養生), and keeping unity (*shouyi* 守一).

⁷⁰) Zhuang Zi with explanations (莊子集釋), *The human world* (人間世). Compilation of Guo Qingfan (郭慶藩輯) organized by Wang Laoyu (王孝魚整). *Zhonghua Shuju chuban* (中華書局出版). Second book (卷二第). Beijing 1978, 158–159. "且以巧鬥力者，始乎陽，常卒乎陰，大至則多奇巧。"

⁷¹) The Chinese researcher Lin Boyuan is focusing on the particularity of Chinese bare hands fighting without recognizing any real influence from outside China, suggesting all the Chinese warfare arts generated from within its own borders in his *History of Chinese martial arts, Zhonguo Wushu Shi* (中國武術史). *Beijing Tiyu Chubanshe* (北京體育出版社), Beijing 1994. Y. YI, and X. HU, make the same conclusion in the analysis of Chinese combat sports in their *History of Chinese martial arts* (中國武術史), *Renmin tiyu chubanshe*, (人民體育出版社) Beijing 1985. J. NEEDHAM, makes a local analysis as well arguing that Chinese boxing is "probably" derived from Daoist health gymnastics in his *Science and Civilization in China*, 6th volume, 2, 1954–1986, 145–146.

⁷²) The Daoists like Zhuangzi in his "Art of swordsmanship" (*Shuojian* 說劍) would not prostrate before the king (*Jianwangbubai* 見王不拜) while in the society of the Warring States, the soldiers were established under a strict hierarchical order and without any other rights than to be dedicated to death for the king. For example, the soldiers of the king of Wu 吳 of the Warring States were so involved in

arms” (*Shi* 士) of the Spring and Autumn period versed in warfare and literate arts (*Wenwu* 文武) was gradually replaced in the Warring States armies by a growing number of strong mountaineers or steppe horse riders; far more effective in “coaching” the troops.⁷³ The institutionalization of combat sports and competitions of strength from the Warring States period had three practical reasons: to enable the officers to produce strong individuals in the armies’ hierarchy; for the infantry troops to be more effective in close combat; to facilitate shows for the kings. The methodology of athletics, combat sports, juggling and acrobatics⁷⁴ at a professional level came from the gymnasiums of Central Asia and the Greco-Roman world.

3. The ancient practice of *Shoubo*; catching animals for martial training

The original art of bare-handed combat in China was *Shoubo* (手搏),⁷⁵ which involved capturing and striking a wild animal with ones bare hands. The particular ability of strong individuals to fight bare-handed against wild animals or their enemies was developed in *pankration*, wrestling and boxing competitions in Greece. Catching a wild animal and turning it on its back was common practice when hunting, but, as discussed in section 2, competitions in the sense of the Greek boxing

sword training that they all had marks on their faces. Later Han annals, *Houhansu*, (後漢書) chap. 24. *Transmissions of Ma Yuanfu and Ma Liao* (馬援附馬廖傳). “吳王好擊劍百姓多劍瘢.”

⁷³) According to Mozi, “The kind of *Shi* (士) that is worth is the one who can excel in cavalry shooting; this one should be taken by the officers”. Mozi Xiangtu (墨子閒詁), *Shangxian* (尚賢), (*shang*) 8. *Zhonghua Shuju* (中華書局), Beijing 1986. “有賢良之士眾，則善射御之士，將可得而眾也。”

⁷⁴) When Socrates assisted to the famous banquet in around 416 BC, and related by Xenophon (*Symposion* II.11.6), he witnessed a professional woman acrobat performing difficult jumps in a hoop set around with swords or bending her body backwards touching the ground. Those two skills of entertainment will become known during the Han dynasty China as “the sparrow jump” (*chongxia yanzhao* 衝狹燕鷺; Zhang Heng, *Er Jingfu* 張衡二京賦) and the “skill of breaking own’s back” (*Aoyao ji* 拗腰伎; *Wenxian Tongkao*; [Comprehensive Examination of Literature] Ma Duanlin. Chap. 147, *le* 20). Another skill common in ancient Greece was the “pole acrobatics” (Attic amphora; acrobats at a festival, sixth century BC; Ne-cropolis of Camiros) that will also become an entertainment event during the festivities of the Han Dynasty.

⁷⁵) According to Xu Shen, during the Han dynasty, *Shoubo* had the meaning “to capture” or “to seize” (*suochi* 索持). *Shuowen jiezi* (說文解字), *Etymology of characters* (Han Dynasty), Xu Shen (許慎), *Zhonghua Shuju* (中華書局). Chap 12, Beijing 1973, 251.

or *pankration* competition did not begin in China until the Qin Dynasty, as a court fashion with the name of *jueli* or *juedi*. As with wrestling and *Chiyou*, the creation of *Shoubo* was attributed to a legendary figure named Jie, the last decadent emperor of the Xia, according to the *Shiji*, or the “Historical Records of the Great Historian”.

Jie (桀) the Emperor of the Xia Dynasty used *Shoubo* to fight the wolves; his feet were equivalent to four horses and his courage was great.⁷⁶

Shoubo was initially a way to capture wild animals bare-handed and during the Han dynasty it became known as a common fighting practice among the steppe people; it was also known at that time as a primitive way to fight bare-handed according to Yan Shigu (顏師古 581 to 645 AD).⁷⁷ At the time of the Han Emperor Chengdi (漢成帝 51 to 7 BC), Yang Xiong (揚雄 53 BC to 18 AD) witnessed the barbarians practicing *Shoubo*, catching animals as a show for the emperor during the third year of *Yuanyan*, (元延三年), in the autumn of 10 BC.

They made a circular enclosure with a net and released animals into it. Then they ordered the barbarians (*hu* 胡 people) to catch the animals bare-handed. They took what they captured for themselves, and the emperor observed (the spectacle).⁷⁸

Shoubo was institutionalized by the Han dynasty armies in an exercise divided into six methods.⁷⁹ The historical features of *Shoubo* are not very precise and there is no evidence of combat sports competitions with rules before the end of the Warring States in China. The origin of *Shoubo* is described in the “Six minister’s selection”, chapter nine, as a technique used by the steppe people to turn an animal or an enemy on its back and strike it. In this text, recorded from the six Dynasties (222 to 589 AD) and annotated by six ministers of the Tang Dynasty (618 to 907 AD), the new individualistic training methods of the steppe warriors were clearly connected to the *Shoubo*.

⁷⁶ *Shiji*, (史記), *Historical Records of the Great Historian*, *lushu*, (律書). “夏桀殷紂，手搏豺狼。足追四馬，勇非微也。”

⁷⁷ *Hanshu* (漢書), *Han Dynasty annals*, *Transmissions of Guan Fu* (灌夫傳), explanations of Yan Shigu (顏師古注). “搏以手击之”.

⁷⁸ Yang Xiong with explanations (揚雄集校注), (Han Dynasty); *Shanghai Gujichubanshechuban* (上海古籍出版社出版), Shanghai 1993. “Rhapsody on Long Willows” (長楊賦), 114-115. “以網為周隄，縱禽獸其中，令胡人手搏之，自取其獲，上親臨觀焉”.

⁷⁹ *Hanshu* (漢書), *Han Dynasty annals*, *Yi Wenzhi* (藝文志). “手搏六篇”.

Shoubo means “to capture” bare-handed. The “Virtuous Days of *Lisi*” stated that it was the way the barbarians surrounded and captured animals bare-handed, and the *Guangya* Records says that *Shoubo* is made to catch and strike. It was said that the troops placed a net around the gardens to capture the animals and then released them in order to catch them bare-handed. The *Xian* says that they captured the animals and as they carried them back, they were given orders by their chief who was watching with his deep-set eyes.⁸⁰

Training for boxing, wrestling and *pankration* competitions among Chinese troops mainly developed later during the Han-Wei dynasties, although earlier traces of “fighting” (*Bo* 搏) may be found from the Spring and Autumn period, as for example, in the “Chronicle of Zuo” (*Zuozhuan* 左傳).⁸¹ However, most of the literature concerning the *Shoubo* at this time describes fighting with the hands and not competition proper. This natural way for humans to fight may also be encountered in other parts of the world throughout the ages, but cannot be considered representative of the art of boxing, wrestling, or *pankration*, and at the period corresponding to the present study, the various schools of combat sports had not yet developed in China. The *Shoubo* did not incorporate the technical skills and rules of a professional athletic sport, and the “Han dynasty books on arts and culture”, the *Yiwenzhi* (藝文志), reaffirms that: “the *Shoubo* will become known as *Juedi* during the Qin times”.⁸²

⁸⁰) Six Ministers selection (六臣註文選). Compilation of Xiao Tong (Liang Dynasty); S. LI, etc. (Tang dynasty). Chap 9. (army. Hunt) Yang Xiong (Zi Yun) Zhang Yangfu. Beijing 1999, 155. 手搏之自取其獲上親焉 “善日李司曰陸逮 禽胡各之取其得也廣雅曰搏擊也。向日陸園陣也言以網周圍放縱禽獸於其間，銑日搏執也其執獲者任取而歸之是時主上自矚望之”。

⁸¹) For example in the 28th year of *Xigong*, in 631 BC, a noble of Qin dreamed that he had beaten to death the prince of Chu. “When he was promoted to the noble’s position, he dreamed that he was fighting with the Chu prince; the Chu prince fell to the ground clutching his head” 僖公二十八年，晉侯夢與楚子搏。楚子伏己，而鹽其腦；in the 16th year of *Chenggong*, in 583 BC “they were fighting bare-handed in the Shu Mountains, and the carriage broke” 成公十六年。“叔山冉搏人以投中折軾。”

⁸²) *Hanshu* (漢書), *Han Dynasty annals*, *Yiwen zhi* (藝文志). Shanghai 1987, 204. “戰國稅增講之禮，以為戲樂，用相夸視而秦更名角抵。”

Acknowledgements:

My obligations to Pr. Arami and Pr. Kusudo from Hiroshima University who have furnished me precious help for the sources. To Ryu Takai for his help on the Chinese sources. To Pr. Christopher Plummer from EPFL Lausanne for the care that he has taken in reading my proofs. To my mother for her financial support. Thanks to Asako Kumano for her help during my stay in Japan. My gratitude to Professor Ebner Eschenbach for the Chinese review. Thanks as well to Pr. Victor H. Mair of Pennsylvania University, for his constant support.

Efficacy of the *Ankyle* in Increasing the Distance of the Ancient Greek Javelin Throw*

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The ancient Greeks threw the javelin as part of their athletic festivals, especially the Olympic Games. They used a leather thong, called an *ankyle*, which they wrapped around the javelin, before inserting their first two fingers in a loop at one end, to aid their throws. Many scholars believe that the ankyle was used to add more thrust, as well as to provide a rifling effect, on the javelin to increase the distance of the throws. However, the effect of the use of the ankyle in the javelin throw is unknown, and the secondary literature on the subject is inconsistent. Here we show that the ankyle improves the distance of the javelin throw by 58 percent. We found that modern throwers threw a facsimile of an ancient Greek javelin a mean of 19.57 ± 2.74 m with the javelin alone, but threw for 30.99 ± 4.41 m with the ankyle. High-speed-video analysis reveals that the ankyle increases the launch velocity of the javelin 26.6 percent (i. e., 4.0 m/s to 5.4 m/s) by increasing the contact time with the javelin during the throw as well as increasing the effective length of the throwing arm. Our results are contradictory to what has been accepted by many scholars. Specifically, reports from the Napoleonic era indicate that the ankyle could increase the javelin throw by some 300 percent (E. N. GARDINER, *Throwing the Javelin*, in: *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 27, 1907, 249–273). D. C. YOUNG, *A Brief History of the Olympic Games*, Malden, MA 2004, 37, states that the improvement was more likely from 15 to 35 percent, but no direct evidence is cited. Our results show that neither view is correct, and that the ankyle improves the distance of the javelin throw dramatically, but nowhere near the exaggerated claims from the Napoleonic era, but farther than Young’s estimate.

Introduction

The javelin’s origin can be traced to Paleolithic man, where he is pictured in cave paintings using a spear for hunting. Ancient civilizations from Mesopotamia to Egypt have left us numerous images depicting men throwing spears, mostly during warring or hunting scenes, but it is likely that they threw it for entertainment and sport as well. One of the first references to javelin throwing in literature is in Homer’s *Iliad*, and, ultimately, it is the realm of the ancient Greeks, where the hunting or military spear transformed into

*) We wish to thank Dr. Nigel B. Crowther of the Department of Classical Studies at the University of Western Ontario, London, Canada, for his helpful comments in the preparation of this manuscript. We further wish to thank Professor Darrell Tousley of the Department of Art at Colorado Mesa University, Grand Junction, Colorado, USA, for casting the bronze javelin tips.

the athletic javelin, when the javelin throw became an organized sporting event.

The ancient Greeks included the javelin throw in their pentathlon. The pentathlon was, as its name implies, a five-event competition made up of the long jump (*halma*), the discus (*diskos*) throw, the javelin (*akon* or *akontion*) throw, wrestling (*pale*), and the stadion race. The javelin throw was not conducted as its own individual event as it is today, and it only made its appearance in the Olympic Games as part of the pentathlon, just like the long jump and the discus throw. According to tradition, the pentathlon was introduced to the Olympic Games in 708 B.C.E., with the other crown games soon following, and it remained a part of the games until their end, over 1,000 years later.¹

The ancient Greeks’ athletic javelin differed from their military spear, the *dory*, in that it was smaller² and used a small, bronze tip³ compared to the *dory*’s much larger, and heavier, broad-bladed head.⁴ Bacchylides⁵ tells us that the javelin was made of elder wood. If we assume the dimensions displayed in vase paintings are accurate, the javelin would be roughly 1.5 to 2.0 meters long, and it would have a diameter of 15–25 mm or about the circumference of one’s finger or thumb. With respect to the tip of the javelin, many vase-painting images show javelins with blunted tips; however, this is more likely either a case of an artist’s lack of detail or simply a rendering of a practice javelin or a measuring rod. The Nemea Archaeological Museum houses an example of a bronze point for use on the javelin, and the pyramidal point is roughly 2 centimeters in length, with a

¹) H. A. HARRIS, *Greek Javelin Throwing*, in: *Greece & Rome*, Second Series, 10(1), 1963, 26–36.

²) Ammonios, *On Similar and Different Words* 23, “*Akontion* is different from *dory*. The *akontion* is smaller than the *dory*, while the *dory* is the largest missile that is thrown by hand”; in S.G. MILLER, *Arete: Greek Sports from Ancient Sources*, Berkeley 2004, 48.

³) Pindar, *Pythian Ode* 1.43–45, “I hope that I shall not throw the bronze-tipped *akon* which I shake down with my hand outside the limits of the contest, but shall conquer my opponents with long throws”; in S.G. MILLER, *Arete: Greek Sports from Ancient Sources*, Berkeley 2004, 49. See also G. DOBLHOFER/P. MAURITSCH/M. LAVRENCIC, *Speerwurf. Texte, Übersetzungen, Kommentar*, Wien/Köln/Weimar 1993 (= *Quellendokumentation zur Gymnastik und Agonistik im Altertum* 3), 62.

⁴) S. G. MILLER, *Ancient Greek Athletics*, New Haven 2004, 69.

⁵) Bacchylides, *Odes* 8.25–36. See G. DOBLHOFER/P. MAURITSCH/M. LAVRENCIC, *Speerwurf. Texte, Übersetzungen, Kommentar*, Wien/Köln/Weimar 1993 (= *Quellendokumentation zur Gymnastik und Agonistik im Altertum* 3), 12.

broken tine that typically would have measured about 4 centimeters.⁶ The tine would have been inserted down the shaft of the javelin until the base of the point met flush with the end of the javelin. Unlike its military and hunting counterparts, the javelin would not have needed barbs, so a flush fitting would have been ideal to maximize aerodynamics.

The technique of throwing the javelin in ancient Greece was similar to the technique used today in that the athletes ran toward a line, with the javelin in one hand, holding it generally a little higher than shoulder height, parallel to the ground, with the arm bent.⁷ As the athlete approached the line, he would straighten and extend his arm behind him, readying himself for the throw. Pindar⁸ tells us that the athlete could not step over the line, which is the same rule that is enforced today.⁹

The ancient Greeks, however, have one major difference in the javelin throw; they used a leather thong called an ankyle (Greek: ἀγκύλη, Latin: *amentum*). The ankyle is pictured in vase paintings (see

⁶ S. G. MILLER, *Ancient Greek Athletics*, New Haven 2004, 69, shows both a photograph of the pyramidal point and of a red-figure amphora with a javelin that has a black tip which he states, "... denotes a bronze tip on the wooden shaft". Not all scholars agree, however, that the athletic javelin would have a bronze tip. D. C. YOUNG, *A Brief History of the Olympic Games*, Malden, MA 2004, 37, states, "... in athletic scenes no metal tip or other special point is visible at the end of the object. At Nemea, Miller has indeed found some metal points for javelins. It is not certain, however, that these come from an athletic context. In light of the artistic evidence, I suspect that these, too, were probably for military use, perhaps even from dedications." We, respectfully, disagree with this opinion. It seems that Young either is not familiar with the "artistic evidence" that Miller presents, or he simply disregards it. The small bronze tips that Miller discusses would make very minimal damage as a military weapon, and they, indeed, look similar to the tips of modern javelins and target arrows of today. One needs only to look at modern broad-head hunting arrowheads compared to target arrowheads to understand this concept. Lastly, without a weighted, metal tip, it would be extremely difficult for a javelin to fly properly and to land on its tip.

⁷ S. G. MILLER, *Ancient Greek Athletics*, New Haven 2004, 69, and H. A. HARRIS, *Greek Javelin Throwing*, in: *Greece & Rome*, Second Series, 10(1), 1963, 26–36.

⁸ Pindar, *Nem.* VII 70. See also G. DOBLHOFER/P. MAURITSCH/M. LAVRENCIC, *Speerwurf. Texte, Übersetzungen, Kommentar*, Wien/Köln/Weimar 1993 (= *Quelldokumentation zur Gymnastik und Agonistik im Altertum* 3), 59.

⁹ International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF), *Competition Rules 2010–2011*, "It shall be a failure if an athlete in the course of a trial: ... (d) in the Javelin Throw, touches with any part of his body the lines which mark the runway or the ground outside" p. 186. Retrieved 15 February 2010 from http://www.iaaf.org/mm/Document/Competitions/Technical_Area/05/47/81/20091027115916_httpostedfile_CompRules2010_web_26Oct09_17166.pdf.

Taf. 7), and it is commonly shown being wrapped around the javelin, with a loop extended toward the front of the javelin where the athlete would insert his index and middle fingers (see Taf. 8). Theoretically, the ankyle should provide additional leverage and aid in propelling the javelin, allowing the athlete to make longer throws. It is believed that the unwinding of the ankyle from the javelin would impart a spinning motion to the javelin, similar to the effect rifling grooves have on a bullet propelled from a firearm, and again, theoretically, would force the javelin to fly straighter and farther. These outcomes have been accepted as correct, evidenced by how Harris¹⁰ quotes the Loeb translator of Livy (footnote to xxxvii.41): “‘These thongs were wrapped around the shafts of javelins to impart to them a rotary motion, thereby giving longer range and more accurate aim.’” Nonetheless, Harris was not convinced, and writes: “This, however, remains to be established.”

The direct evidence for the efficacy of the ankyle in increasing the distance of the javelin throw is spotty at best, but most modern-day scholars state categorically that the use of the ankyle resulted in longer throws that also were more accurate. Young¹¹ asserts that the ankyle “... made the javelin fly farther and truer”. Kyle¹² reaffirms this belief when he states, “... athletes used a leather thong ... to impart a rifling effect to improve distance and accuracy”, and Miller¹³ writes, “[t]he loop provided leverage and acted like a sling to propel the akon ...”. Sinn¹⁴ states that the ankyle, upon its release “... resulted in a twisting motion of the javelin ... [that stabilized its flight] ... which resulted in greater distances”. Swaddling¹⁵ suggests that the spinning ensured “a steadier flight” and that “[m]odern experiments have shown that use of the thong increases the chances of pitching on the point, although it has hardly any effect on distance”,¹⁶ contradicting the assertions of Kyle, Miller, and Sinn with respect to it adding

¹⁰ H. A. HARRIS, *Greek Javelin Throwing*, in: *Greece & Rome*, Second Series, 10(1), 1963, 29.

¹¹ D. C. YOUNG, *A Brief History of the Olympic Games*, Malden, MA 2004, 37.

¹² D. G. KYLE, *Sport and Spectacle in the Ancient World*, Malden, MA 2007, 122.

¹³ S. G. MILLER, *Ancient Greek Athletics*, New Haven 2004, 69.

¹⁴ U. SINN, *Olympia: Cult, Sport, and Ancient Festival* [translated by T. Thornton], Princeton 2000, 42.

¹⁵ J. SWADDLING, *The Ancient Olympic Games*, Austin 1999, 67.

¹⁶ While Swaddling does not cite Harris (1963) directly, we are confident that that would be the “modern experiments” to which she is referring. Harris states, “... there was obviously a great advantage in the proportion of throws pitching on the point [when using the free thong].”

distance to the throw. Crowther¹⁷ also refers to “[e]xperiments with this kind of thong have shown that it provides added leverage, so that athletes can achieve a greater distance”, and he goes on to state that “[s]ome researchers have estimated that the ancients could throw the javelin about 300 feet ... but the evidence is open to question”. Unfortunately, he did not provide references in his book for those specific comments; however, through a personal communication (4 February 2010), he stated that he was referring to the experiments listed by Gardiner¹⁸ in his 1907 article entitled, *Throwing the Javelin*. In it, Gardiner writes:

Experiments have amply established the practical use of the amentum with a light javelin. In the experiments made by General Reffye for the Emperor Napoleon it was found that a javelin which could be thrown only 20 metres by hand could be thrown 80 metres with the amentum. According to Jüthner an inexperienced thrower increased his throw from 25 to 65 metres.¹⁹

These are the experiments to which most modern-day scholars are referring when they state that the use of the ankyle increases the distance of a javelin throw. However, Harris²⁰ was not convinced by these studies. He writes, “This is *oratio obliquissima*. Neither Jüthner nor Gardiner appears ever to have thrown a javelin himself, with or without a thong.” He went further to posit a two-part question, which he believed was “never asked” or “inadequately answered”, and it was as follows: “Was the thong fixed or free, and what was the improvement gained?”

To answer the first part, the thong, or ankyle, used for the athletic javelin throw was free (or that seems to be the general consensus

¹⁷ N. B. CROWTHER, *Sport in Ancient Times*, Westport, CN. 2007, 67.

¹⁸ E. N. GARDINER, *Throwing the Javelin*, in: *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 27, 1907, 249–273.

¹⁹ In J. JÜTHNER, *Über Antike Turngeräthe*, in: *Abhandlungen d. archäologisch-epigraphischen Seminars der Universität Wien*, 12, 1896, 54, Jüthner states that he personally threw the javelin more than twice as far while using the ankyle [Ich vermochte den gleichen Ger mittelst der Schlinge mehr als doppelt soweit zu schleudern als aus freier Hand ...]. Jüthner reiterates that the use of the ankyle improves the distance of the javelin throw, stating that the distance improved was from an initial throw of 25 meters throwing free hand to a throw of 65 meters using the ankyle in *Die Athletischen Leibesübungen der Griechen. II. Einzelne Sportarten. I. Lauf-, Sprung- und Wurfbewerbe*, Wien 1968, 329.

²⁰ H. A. HARRIS, *Greek Javelin Throwing*, in: *Greece & Rome*, Second Series, 10(1), 1963, 30.

based on the pictorial evidence of vase paintings)²¹ – in contrast to the ankyle used for the military *dory*, which was attached²² – meaning that it was wrapped around the javelin back onto itself to secure it, and it was not permanently attached by some other means to the javelin. Numerous vase paintings depict the ankyle as free, and the ankyle simply fell off the javelin once the javelin was thrown and was traveling through the air. After experimentation, Harris came to this conclusion as well. With respect to the “improvement gained” by the use of the ankyle, Harris’s results were, in his own words, “disappointing”. He attempted numerous trials with a “free” ankyle, and he was able to realize only a mean gain of 1 percent (with a range of ± 10 percent) in distance. That is a far cry from the 300-percent increase reported by General Reffye or Jüthner’s 160-percent increase. Young²³ expresses doubts about these improvements, and he even believes that a doubling of the distance is “unlikely”, and he goes further to state, interestingly without any verified sources or data, that the “distance was improved somewhere between 15 percent and 35 percent seems highly likely”. Thus, a major contradiction exists in the secondary literature regarding the efficacy of the ankyle in increasing the distance of the javelin throw. We undertook to study what, if any, effect the ankyle would have on the distance produced in the ancient Greek javelin throw.

Methods

We constructed javelins from 1.8-meter long, 1.9-cm diameter wooden dowels. The dowels were made of maple (*acer macrophyllum*, Janka Wood Hardness Scale rating of 850) which is very similar to elder (*sambucus cerulea*, Janka Wood Hardness Scale rating of 840), the

²¹) Miller states in *Ancient Greek Athletics*, “... erroneous modern reconstructions notwithstanding, it is clear that the ankyle was not tied to the shaft of the akon: it would fall off after unwinding completely. Indeed, the vase paintings clearly show that no knot was used on the ankyle” (p. 69).

²²) Harris states in *Greek Javelin Throwing*, “The thong of the military javelin must obviously have been permanently attached to the shaft; warfare requires instant action” (p. 29). He cites the example of Antiochos’s troops having their thongs softened by rain the day before battle as proof that the thongs were attached. If they easily were detached, then no seasoned warrior would allow them to get wet, and soften and stretch, to the point where they would be less effective. He further provides an example in Plutarch, *Phil.* 6.4–5 where Philopoemen was struck in the thigh by a javelin, in battle, that could not be removed immediately because of the thong’s fastening on the javelin.

²³) D. C. YOUNG, *A Brief History of the Olympic Games*, Malden, MA 2004, 37.

wood that the ancient Greeks seem to have used to craft their javelins. The javelin tips were cast from bronze, and they were modeled off examples housed at the Nemea Archaeological Museum,²⁴ with the exception that our tips were blunted so that they would not pierce the synthetic turf when landing (see Taf. 9). The javelin tips weighed approximately 30 grams each. The overall weight of each javelin, including the bronze tip, was approximately 450 grams. We constructed ankylai from 60-cm-long leather straps, cut approximately 1 cm wide and 2.5 mm thick. A loop was tied in one end with a bowline knot, making the looped ankyle approximately 48 cm in length (see Taf. 9). The ankyle was wrapped around the javelin, back upon itself, three times to temporarily secure it (see Taf. 10). We used three twists of the ankyle around the javelin for the following three reasons: 1. one of the vase paintings from ancient Greece clearly shows a thrower using three twists with his ankyle (see Taf. 8), 2. that was the number of twists Harris claimed was “optimal” in his study; and 3. we found that three twists worked best in our preliminary work. The ankyle was wrapped around the javelin, starting in the same spot for each trial when the ankyle was involved, so that once it was stretched and tightened, the thrower’s hand would be in roughly the center of the javelin, and in the same position as when the javelin was thrown without the ankyle (see Taf. 11).

The methodology of our study was approved by our college’s Institutional Review Board for the protection of human subjects. Sixteen men (age = 20.19 ± 2.81 years; height = 183.24 ± 5.85 cm; weight = 94.84 ± 12.47 kg) volunteered to throw our facsimile of an ancient Greek javelin, with and without an ankyle. Each subject reported for an orientation session, where informed consent was secured, and then, each subject was instructed on how to throw a javelin with and without an ankyle. The subjects warmed up through various calisthenics and practiced throwing the javelin, both with and without the ankyle, until each subject reached a modest level of mastery defined by being able to throw the javelin with a parabolic flight path and landing flat or on point. Each subject was randomly placed in one of two groups that either threw the javelin for five trials without the ankyle first (Group 1; $n = 8$) or for five trials with the ankyle first (Group 2; $n = 8$). Within the next nine days, each subject reported back for data collection, warmed up through modest calisthenics, and then threw the javelin for a minimum of 10 trials (five trials for each condition, i. e., with the ankyle or without the ankyle). The javelin had to have a parabolic flight path and land on

²⁴ S. G. MILLER, *Ancient Greek Athletics*, New Haven 2004, 69.

point or flat to be considered a valid throw. If not, the subject repeated the throw until five valid throws were recorded for each condition. The subjects were allowed to take only one step forward, while remaining behind a throwing line, and they were allowed as much time as they needed between throws to be considered fully recovered from the previous throw, generally about one minute. The throws were measured by a retractable measuring tape, recorded to the nearest inch, and converted to meters.

We used high-speed (500 frames per second; Photron Fastcam™ with Photron Fastcam Viewer version 3.1.4.0 software) video to capture the image of one subject throwing the javelin with and without the ankyle. We painted a javelin with alternating, black or white, 10-cm sections, to provide an accurate point of reference to measure the speed of the javelin during the throws (see Taf. 10 and 11). Velocity was obtained by using a known distance referenced in the plane of motion and finite differentiation of positional data.

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.0 software was used for statistical testing. Means and standard deviations were calculated for the distance thrown for the trials with and without the ankyle. Following the descriptive statistics, the reliability of the trials was determined by Cronbach's alpha, and the trend-free trials were then used for further data reduction.²⁵ A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to probe for statistical differences across trials. A paired samples t-test was calculated comparing the data of the experimental and control groups. Effect size was determined by Cohen's *d* and η^2 values, and the 95 percent confident interval was calculated.²⁶

Results

The mean distance the javelin was thrown, without the ankyle, for all subjects was 19.57 ± 2.74 meters. When the subjects used the ankyle, the mean distance thrown was 30.99 ± 4.41 meters, resulting in an improvement of 11.42 meters, or 58 percent. The mean distances thrown for each group were statistically significantly different

²⁵ F.M. HENRY, "Best" versus "Average" Individual Scores, in: *The Research Quarterly* 38(2), 1967, 317-320; F.M. HENRY, *The Loss of Precision from Discarding Discrepant Data*, in: *The Research Quarterly* 21(2), 1950, 145-152; and W. KROLL, *Reliability Theory and Research Decision in selection of a Criterion Score*, in: *The Research Quarterly* 38, 1967, 412-419.

²⁶ J. COHEN, *Statistical Power Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences*, Hillsdale, NJ 1988.

($t = 12.739$, $p < .001$; effect size $d = 1.09$, $\eta^2 = 0.13$; 95 percent confidence interval = 9.5 to 13.3). Both effect size estimates indicate a large effect while the 95 percent confidence interval presents the range within which we should be 95 percent confident that the actual mean difference will be found along with the fact that the confidence interval does not cross zero.

The one-way ANOVA calculated across the five experimental trials showed barely a statistically significant difference ($p = 0.04$). The control trials showed a statistically significant difference across trials ($p = 0.001$). However, the alpha values with successively deleted trials did not appreciably change the overall alphas of 0.941 for the experimental values (i. e., with the ankyle) and 0.914 for the control values (i. e., without the ankyle). Therefore, all trials data were collapsed across to produce a single mean value for each subject in this matched pairs crossover design.²⁷

The addition of the ankyle had several desirable effects on javelin launch characteristics. In an analysis of one example subject it was shown that:

1. Launch velocity for the javelin during the throw with no ankyle was 4.0 m/s, while the launch velocity of the javelin during the throw with the ankyle was 5.4 m/s, representing an increase in launch velocity of 26.6 percent over the throw with no ankyle.
2. The duration of contact of the hand with the javelin via the ankyle increased the effective impulse to the javelin. The propulsive time for the javelin with no ankyle was 0.465 s, and for the javelin with the ankyle, the propulsive time was approximately 0.755 s. This value is given as approximate in spite of being able to see the ankyle and the hand in contact with the javelin; the ankyle unwinds during the throw, and it is unclear how much of the time when the ankyle is in contact with the javelin is actually propulsive. The propulsive time gained by the ankyle is approximately a 38-percent improvement over the javelin thrown without the ankyle. Moreover, the amount of time following the finger release of the javelin with the ankyle was 0.17 s, which is approximately 22 percent of the total propulsive time of the throw.

²⁷) F. M. HENRY, "Best" versus "Average" Individual Scores, in: *The Research Quarterly* 38(2), 1967, 317–320; F. M. HENRY, *The Loss of Precision from Discarding Discrepant Data*, in: *The Research Quarterly* 21(2), 1950, 145–152; and W. KROLL, *Reliability Theory and Research Decision in selection of a Criterion Score*, in: *The Research Quarterly* 38, 1967, 412–419.

3. Although not measured, the length of the arm also may be increased artificially via the use of the ankyle. The javelin is quite light (~ 450 grams), and the ankyle is simply a thin piece of leather; the added mass of the ankyle would be a trivial resistance during the throw. If the arm is lengthened in a throw, the relationship between the radius of rotation and the tangential velocity would apply. This is described by the following:

$$V_t = r \omega$$

Where V_t = tangential velocity

r = effective radius of the arm plus the ankyle

ω = angular velocity

Thus, an increase in the effective length of the arm (r) would increase the tangential velocity of the javelin (V_t) at release proportional to the arm plus the ankyle length increase.

Discussion

Scholars have long thought that the ankyle increased the distance of the ancient Greek javelin throw.²⁸ Our results support this assumption. However, the improvement that was gained (58 percent in our study) was nowhere near the purported gains that are listed regularly by modern scholars based from field tests from the Napoleonic era (300 percent) and those listed by Jüthner (160 percent). Further, our findings contradict the results of Harris,²⁹ who found a very modest increase of roughly 1 percent when using a “free” ankyle. The reason for Harris’s poor results, we think, stems from his lack of generating a secure, temporary attachment of the ankyle to the javelin. Harris writes:

If a free thong is given its temporary attachment a foot or more behind the hand, it is impossible to keep it taut on the smooth shaft unless there is a small stud or projection on the shaft to prevent the last coil of the thong from slipping down towards the hand. For experimental purposes a stud was contrived of a bent strip bound to the metal shaft of the javelin (PI. II, c). The difference now became marked. Of 10 throws done in this way, 9

²⁸) E. N. GARDINER, *Throwing the Javelin*, in: *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 27, 1907, 249–273.

²⁹) H. A. HARRIS, *Greek Javelin Throwing*, in: *Greece & Rome, Second Series*, 10(1), 1963, 26–36.

landed on the point; the average distance was $S + 10$ per cent., the best being $S + 25$ per cent., the poorest S . Moreover, it seemed that here lay the greatest potential of improvement with growing skill. (p. 32)

Interestingly, we did not encounter this problem. In fact, our leather ankylai had great purchase on the javelins to the point that it would be extremely difficult for someone to pull the javelins from their grips. We are not entirely sure why Harris had such difficulties, but he did use a modern-day (N.B., for his time of 1963) steel javelin in his trials, and from the images he supplied in his article, it seems that his thong was more like a cord than a flat strip of leather. Perhaps the material used in his thong did not create the friction that leather does. Coupling that with the use of the metal javelin, it may explain why he had difficulty keeping the thong taut and securely attached to the javelin.

One area where we are in complete agreement with Harris is with respect to how the ankyle is released from the fingers. Harris writes that "the loop must be allowed to slip off the fingers on delivery. In all the best throws, the thong dropped off the javelin in mid-flight" (p. 32). Our results mimicked his statement precisely. It was the rare exception that one of our throwers retained the ankyle after the javelin was released. And, when he did, the throw was typically disastrous, with the javelin flying in an erratic flight path, traveling a much shorter distance, and rarely, if ever, pitching on point.

An interesting thing that we discovered during our testing was that learning to throw the javelin with the ankyle took very little time to master. All of our subjects were athletic (every one of them was either participating on an athletic team currently, i.e., American football, or had participated on an athletic team in the past in secondary school or for intramural sport), but none had any formal training in throwing the javelin. It generally took only a few throws to have someone reach a rudimentary level of mastery with the javelin. After throwing the javelin for a period of 10 to 20 minutes, all of our subjects had no difficulty throwing the javelin to where it would fly in a parabolic path and pitch on point.

Just as with Harris's study, one limitation was that our subjects did not use a run toward the line to increase the velocity of the javelin before the throw. Our rationale for this was that we wanted to see the true effect of the ankyle on the javelin throw, and we wanted to control for athletes using different running speeds among trials. It is unknown what the effect would be if a run-up was involved with an athlete using the ankyle while throwing the javelin, but we suspect

that the overall distance would be greater; after all, modern-day javelin throwers use a run-up to add considerable distance to their throws. Further studies should examine the effect of the ankyle on a javelin throw with an incorporated run.

Another interesting claim among modern-day scholars is that the ankyle would provide for a more stable flight by imparting rotation to the javelin, much like rifling in a firearm does to a bullet, and that the use of the ankyle also would help the javelin to pitch on point. Our testing was limited to observing the flight path, ensuring that the javelin landed either flat or on point, and measuring the distance thrown. We did not specifically observe each category of throw, i. e., ankyle vs. non-ankyle throws, to see if the flight paths were different. So, we cannot comment on those claims by modern-day scholars. Furthermore, with respect to Harris's claim (and repeated by Swaddling) that a javelin pitches on point more frequently with the use of an ankyle, we generally observed that having the javelin pitch on point was more related to the thrower's technique, specifically the angle of the javelin in relation to the ground on release, rather than the use of the ankyle. Often, if the thrower threw the javelin with the tip too high in respect to the ground and its tail, the javelin would either fly erratically or land on its tail (N. B., two subjects actually threw the javelin where it flipped back on itself, performing a backwards somersault; we attribute this to thrower error, as our subjects were novice throwers, and it occurred with and without the ankyle). However, it was the rare exception for a throw not to land flat or to pitch on point.

Now that we have demonstrated that the ankyle does, indeed, increase the distance of the javelin, future studies should be conducted to examine the following:

1. if the same effect occurs with highly trained throwers and perhaps modern javelins, but serious precautions would need to be taken. The current men's world record is nearly 100 meters. If a similar improvement were to occur when throwing a modern javelin with an ankyle, the distance would allow a thrower to throw the javelin beyond the throwing area and potentially into the spectators' stands;
2. the flight paths of javelins thrown with and without an ankyle, preferably with high-speed-video analysis, to determine the effect that the ankyle may have on the flight path and to see if this effect could potentially explain why a greater distance is achieved when using the ankyle;

3. if the ankyle affects whether the javelin pitches on point more successfully at the conclusion of its flight;
4. the effect of the ankyle on accuracy when throwing the javelin;
5. the effect of an attached, rather than a free, ankyle on the javelin throw, particularly its effect on the military *dory*.

Conclusion

The javelin throw has been used for thousands of years, tracing its origin to Paleolithic man, where it was used for hunting and warfare. The ancient Greeks transformed the military weapon into an organized athletic event, and incorporated the use of an ankyle to increase the length of the javelin throw. The actual effect of the use of the ankyle in the javelin throw is unknown, and the secondary literature on the subject is inconsistent. We have found that the ankyle improves the distance of the javelin throw dramatically (i. e., 58 percent), but nowhere near the exaggerated claims from the Napoleonic era, but farther than estimates from modern scholars.

The length of the running race in the ancient pentathlon

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The question of the length of the race in the ancient pentathlon proved puzzling and intriguing. The purpose of this work is to reopen an old debate on the kind of the race in the ancient pentathlon, a debate which has never been definitively resolved. Many scholars are of the opinion that the length of the race in the ancient pentathlon was the same as the *stadion*, i.e. one length of the stadium track, but it has also been pointed out that the race was probably five stades. The evidence shows that the race in the ancient pentathlon was a sprint, the *stadion*. However one cannot exclude the possibility that at some local competitions, it may have been one of the *diaulos* or race in armour. The above conclusion would be in agreement with Aristotle's remarks on the swiftness and power of the pentathlon contestants.

The ancient pentathlon consisted of five events: the discus, long jump, javelin, running race and wrestling. Of these five, the last two were also held separately as events in their own right, while the first three were only ever staged as part of the pentathlon. We do not know the reason why this composite sporting event was devised, as no reliable source refers to the question. The account in Philostratus (*Gym.* 3)¹ of the genesis of the event does not appear to have convinced many scholars. Some authors are of the view that the ancient Greeks did not consider the three exclusively pentathlon events (discus, long jump and javelin) as particularly important, and so in order to make them a little more interesting to participants and audience they decided to

¹) In a not very convincing explanation of the origin of the pentathlon, Philostratus (*Gym.* 3) says:

πρό μὲν δὴ Ἰάσονος καὶ Πηλέως ἄλμα ἐστεφανοῦτο ἰδίᾳ καὶ δίσκος ἰδίᾳ, καὶ τὸ ἀκόντιον ἦρκει ἐς νίκην κατὰ τοὺς χρόνους, οὓς ἡ Ἀργὴ ἔπλει Τελαμῶν μὲν κράτιστα ἐδίσκευε, Λυγκεὺς δὲ ἠκόντιζεν, ἔτρεχον δὲ καὶ ἐπήδων οἱ ἐκ Βορέου, Πηλεὺς δὲ ταῦτα μὲν ἦν δεύτερος, ἐκράτει δὲ ἀπάντων πάλη ὅπου ὄν ἠγωνίζοντο ἐν Λήμνῳ, φασὶν Ἰάσονα Πηλεὶ χαριζόμενον συνάψαι τὰ πέντε καὶ Πηλέα τὴν νίκην οὕτω συλλέξασθαι, ...

Before the time of Jason and Peleus, the wreath was given separately for the jump, and also for the discus; and the javelin, likewise, was alone sufficient for a victory at the time when the Argo was afloat. Telamon was best at throwing the discus; Lynceus at hurling the javelin; the sons of Boreas in running and jumping; Peleus was inferior in these things, but he excelled all in wrestling. So when they held contests at Lemnos, it is said that Jason united the five events to please Peleus; and in this way Peleus gained the victory. (Trans. T. Woody 1936, 6–7)

stage them together in a composite event, adding the running race and wrestling.² In doing so they created the pentathlon, the first composite sporting event in history.³ The men's pentathlon was first introduced at the 38th Olympiad in 708 BC and immediately became a regular feature of the Games, unlike its counterpart for boys, which was staged for the first and only time in 628 BC. We do not know in what order the individual pentathlon events were held, but most scholars believe that the events exclusive to the pentathlon were staged first, in no particular order, followed by the race, since we know from the ancient sources that the wrestling was the final event. We do not know, either, how the winner of the pentathlon was selected, despite the best efforts of many scholars over at least a hundred years. It does seem that picking the winner was not a particular problem for the ancient Greeks, who do not appear to have shared our doubts and uncertainties on the subject.⁴ Many scholars now take the view that the pentathlon winner will have been selected in different ways at different times, and in different places.

The running races occupied an important place in the programmes of the ancient games. Homer extols the swift feet of his heroes, particularly Achilles, whom he describes as *ῥάκιος* or *πόδας ῥάκις*, *ποδώκις* or *ποδάρκης* (*Il.* 19.295; 1.58; 2.860; 1.21).⁵ Odysseus won his bride Penelope by defeating his rivals in a race organized by her father Icarion (*Paus.* 3.12.2). Traditional sources indicate that many kings used races as a means of selecting the ideal son-in-law, or the best heir to their throne.⁶ Of the various running races,⁷ the so-called

²) See H. HARRIS, *Sport in Greece and Rome*, London 1972, 34; D. KYLE, *Winning and Watching the Greek Pentathlon*, in: *Journal of Sport History* 17(3), 295; IDEM, *Sport and Spectacle in the Ancient World*, Malten 2007, 121.

³) See I. WEILER, *Der Sport bei den Völkern der Alten Welt*, Darmstadt 1988, 189; W. DECKER, *Sport in der griechischen Antike. Von minoischen Wettkampf bis zu den Olympischen Spielen*, München 1995, 93; W. DECKER/J.P. THUILLIER, *Le Sport dans l'Antiquité. Égypte, Grèce et Rome*, Paris 2004, 97.

⁴) See KYLE (s.n.2) 292; M. GOLDEN, *Greek Sport and Social Status*, Austin 2008, 126.

⁵) For more on this subject, see V. MATTHEWS, *Swift-Footed Achilles*, in: *Écho du Monde Classique* 19, 1975, 37–43; R. DUNKLE, *Swift-Footed Achilles*, in: *The Classical World* 90(4), 1997, 227–234.

⁶) On this subject see T. NIMAS, *The Athletic Games as a Criterion for the Choice of a Husband in Greece. Myth and Reality*, in: *Nikephoros* 13, 2000, 221–40, see esp. 225–29.

⁷) For different interpretations of the word *δρόμος* see D. BELL, *The Meaning of "dromos" in Homer's Iliad 23.758*, in: *Nikephoros* 3, 1990, 7–9; N. CROWTHER, *More on "Dromos" as a Technical Term in Greek Sport*, in: *Nikephoros* 6, 1993, 33–37. For the term *dromos* as "running track" see D. KYLE, *Athletics in Ancient Athens*, Leyden 1987, 60–67.

stadion or *σταδίου δρόμος* (Pi. *Ol.* 13.30), a simple race from end to end of the stadium, was one of the most thrilling sporting events seen in ancient Greece.⁸ The length to be covered by the runners varied from one stadium to another. At Olympia it was 192.27 m, at Epidauros 180.30 m, at Delphi 177.35 m, at Pergamos 210 m, at Nemea 177.50 m, at Delos 167 m, at Miletos 192.25 m and at Athens 184.30 m. At almost all the stadiums⁹ there was a stretch of at least eight metres at the end of the track where the athletes could slow down comfortably after crossing the line. The track at Olympia was the longest in mainland Greece, that of Pergamos the longest in the Greek world. Most Greek stadiums were laid out as a parallelogram, about 200 m long and 30 m wide. The *stadion* was the speed race par excellence, with the athletes finishing at the opposite end of the stadium from where they had started and therefore not needing to negotiate any bends or turns – hence its other name *ἄκαμπτος* – [straight, unbending]. The runners were known as *σταδιοδρόμοι* and the victors *σταδιονίκαι*. The running race was seen as so important that in the women's games at Olympia (the *Heraea*) it was the only event.¹⁰ The *δίαιλος* was twice the length of the *stadion* and the competing athletes were known as *διαυλοδρόμοι*. Because they had to turn around the turning post at the halfway point of the race this and the other races involving two or more lengths of the stadium were known as *κάμπειοι*, or turning races. In Homer the *καμπτήρ* or turning post was known as the *νύσσα*. The poet describes the chariots racing at Patroclus' funeral games as turning the *νύσσα*. But the word used in classical Greece was *καμπτήρ*, although a number of ancient authors do use *νύσσα* as a synonym for *καμπτήρ*. Another *κάμπειος* race was the *δόλιχος*, which was the longest run by athletes within the stadium. Its distance varied: at some Games it was 7 lengths of the stadium, at others 10, 12, 20 or

⁸) P. VALAVANIS, *Olympic Games and Athletics in Ancient Greece. Feats, Athletes and Rewards*, Athens 1996, 76, includes the torch races in the same category, likening them to the procedure of lighting and carrying the Olympic flame that has featured in modern Olympiads since 1936. He acknowledges that the torch races in ancient Greece were more of a ceremonial than a sporting event, and were not, of course, part of the official programmes of the games. On the same subject see M. GOLDEN, *Sport and Society in Ancient Greece*, Cambridge 1998, 167–69.

⁹) On the Greek stadiums see D. ROMANO, *The Origin of the Greek Stadion*, Philadelphia 1993, *passim*.

¹⁰) For interesting views and interpretations of the women's races in general, and at Olympia in particular, see T. SCANLON, *The Footrace of the Heraea at Olympia*, in: *Ancient World* 9, 1984, 77–90; IDEM, *Race or Chase at the Arkteia of Attica?* in: *Nikephoros* 3, 1990, 73–120; IDEM, *The Heraea at Olympia Revisited*, in: *Nikephoros* 21, 2008, 159–96; D. SANSONE, *Greek Athletics and the Genesis of Sport*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1988, 33–34, 82–83.

24, i.e. anything from 1300–4600 metres. The Spartans, Arcadians and Cretans were renowned for their performance in these longer races. At the races described by Xenophon (*An.* 24.8.27) at Trapezon, no fewer than sixty Cretan runners took part in the *δόλιχος*, the Cretans appearing to have excelled in these endurance races rather than in the sprints. The former seem to have fallen out of favor in Roman times, to judge from the writings of various satirical poets, who frequently refer to the athletes in this event (*Anthologia Palatina* 11.208, 11.85). The programmes of the various Greek games do not include any races longer than the *δόλιχος*, but we know that ancient athletes did run much longer distances than those featured in the programme of the Panhellenic games.¹¹ Another race, covering four lengths of the stadium, was known as the *ἵππειος*, because it was the same distance as one of the horse races. There was no *ἵππειος* in the Olympic programme, but it was featured at Nemea, the Isthmia, the Panathenaia and several local competitions. The *ὀπλιτοδρομία* or *ὀπλίτης δρόμος* (race in armour) was one of the oldest events in the Greek world, but not introduced to the Olympic Games until 520 BC, at the 65th Olympiad. It appears that originally the athletes competed wearing all their armour, just as if going into battle. But later, in historical times, they raced only in their helmets and shields, and often only the latter.¹²

The question of the length of the race in the ancient pentathlon continues to puzzle scholars. No evidence has yet been uncovered that would settle the question once and for all. Most authors believe that the pentathlon race was the same as the *stadion*, i.e. one length of the stadium track, but it has also been claimed that the race probably covered five lengths,¹³ a view that has ‘not however won general acceptance.’¹⁴ It is a view that is based mainly on the reading of an inscription found at Anazarbos in Cilicia, which says, *inter alia*, the athlete

¹¹ See V. MATTHEWS, *The Hemerodromoi: Ultra Long-Distance Running in Antiquity*, in: *The Classical World* 68(3), 1974, 161–69, esp. 162.

¹² See J. MOURATIDIS, *The Origin of Nudity in Greek Athletics*, in: *Journal of Sports History* 12(3), 1985, 213, 230. On the races in armour see N. GARDINER, *Notes on the Greek Foot Race*, in: *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 23, 1903, 276–289. For an extensive bibliography, comments and conclusions on the running events, see T. AIGNER/B. MAURITSCH-BEIN/W. PETERMANDL, *Laufen. Text, Übersetzungen, Kommentar*, Wien/Köln 2002.

¹³ J. EBERT, *Zum Pentathlon der Antike. Untersuchungen über das System der Siegerermittlung und die Ausführung des Halterensprunges*, Berlin 1963, 11–12.

¹⁴ H. LEE, *The Program and Schedule of the Ancient Olympic Games*, Hildesheim 2001 (*Nikephoros Beihefte* 6) 41; IDEM, *Wrestling in the Repêchage of the Ancient Pentathlon*, in: *Journal of Sport History* 20, 1993, 277 note 3.

Demetrios of Salamis,¹⁵ winner of the pentathlon and the *stadion* (AD 233 and AD 237):

κοινὸν Ἀσίας νεικήσας πέμπτῳ (ὄ)πλῳ Ὀπτᾶτον ποιήσας αὐτῶ
τετράκις σύνδρομον¹⁶

Having won the Join Asian Games in the fifth hoplitodromia (ὄπλῳ) having run alongside (σύνδρομον) Optatos four times.

This inscription, as originally published by M. Gough,¹⁷ refers to the armour race (ὀπλιτοδρομία), while in the interpretation given by other authors the reading (ὄ)πλῳ is rejected, the preferred version being ἀπλῶ (simple),¹⁸ although these interpretations are not, of course, the only ones.¹⁹ If the above interpretation (ὄπλῳ)²⁰ is correct, then there is little doubt as to the type of race held in the ancient pentathlon in the games in question. The adoption of the word ἀπλῶ in lieu of (ὄπλῳ) rests mainly on the fact that Demetrios is referred to as having been a pentathlete and *stadion*-runner, not a hoplite runner (ὀπλιτοδρόμος).²¹ According to Ebert,²² this view (ὄπλῳ) can be rejected out of hand, since the race in armour was not part of Demetrios' repertoire, he had

¹⁵ The inscription does not make it clear whether the athlete was from Salamis in Cyprus or Greece. We should not take it for granted that the Greek Salamis is meant, because Salamis in Cyprus enjoyed successes in the major games. The athlete Heracleides from Salamis (Cyprus) won the *stadion* at the 144th Olympiad in 204 BC. The athlete Onisicritos of Salamis repeated the same feat 24 years later at the 150th Olympiad in 180 BC. According to V. MATTHEWS, *The Greek Pentathlon Again*, in: *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 100, 1994, 136 and DECKER (s.n. 3) 104–105 the athlete was from the Salamis of Cyprus. According to M. GOUGH, *Anazarbus*, in: *Anatolian Studies* 2, 1952, 127, Demetrios must have been from Cyprus, given that the island had many contacts with Cilicia.

¹⁶ GOUGH (s. n. 15) 127. See also EBERT (s. n. 13) 10. The athlete had won the *stadion* in 229 AD. According to L. MORETTI, *Iscrizioni Agonistiche greche*, Rome 1953, 255 Demetrios won the *stadion* in 229 AD and in the next two Olympiads (233 AD and 237 AD) both the pentathlon and the *stadion*.

¹⁷ GOUGH (s. n. 15) 128.

¹⁸ See EBERT (s. n. 13) 11; G. BEAN, *Victory in the Pentathlon*, in: *American Journal of Archaeology* 60, 1956, 367; MORETTI (s. n. 3) 255.

¹⁹ According to MATTHEWS (s. n. 15) 138 the word should be read as ἄθλω = contest (meeting).

²⁰ According to N. CROWTHER, *Resolving an Impasse: Draws, Dead-Heats and Similar Decisions in Greek Athletics*, in: *Nikephoros* 13, 2000, 309, the inscription is difficult to interpret and the meaning of the word ἀπλῶ is "obscure." The author concludes, with reservations, that this was probably the pentathlon race.

²¹ MORETTI (s. n. 16) 255.

²² EBERT (s. n. 13) 11. See also LEE (s. n. 14, 2001) 41.

won only in the pentathlon and the *stadion*. Of course there was nothing to prevent a winner of the *stadion* from participating in the armour races, since the distance, except in a very few cases, was two lengths of the stadium. In any case, we know that a number of ancient runners were victorious in the *stadion*, *diaulos* and armour race. The athlete Phanas of Pellene won at the 67th Olympiad (512 BC) in the *stadion*, *diaulos* and armour race. Astylos from Croton won the same three events at the 75th Olympiad (480 BC). Leonidas, the great athlete from Rhodes, won the same events at four consecutive Olympiads 154th (164 BC), 155th (160 BC), 156th (156 BC) and 157th (152 BC). Philostratus (*Gym.* 33) tells us that no one any longer made any distinction between the athlete in the armour race, the *stadion* and the *diaulos*, since Leonidas of Rhodes had won the three events in four consecutive Olympiads. At the 177th Olympiad (72 BC) the Elian athlete Ekatomnos also won the same three events. And the athlete Ermogenis from Xanthion won the *stadion*, *diaulos* and armour race at the 215th Olympiad (81 AD). We also know that there were pentathletes who won their own event and also the *stadion*, *diaulos* and armour race. The athlete Gorgos of Elis won the pentathlon four times at Olympia, and on each occasion also won the *diaulos* or the armour race (*Paus.* 6.15.9).²³ Likewise, Aelius Granianus of Sikyon won the *stadion* in the boy's category in AD 133, while at the next Olympiad (AD 137) he won the *diaulos*, armour race and pentathlon in the men's category (*Paus.* 2.11.8).²⁴ The reason that Demetrios was an athlete of the pentathlon and *stadion*, and therefore it could not have been the armour race that was meant in the inscription, is not in itself enough to change the word (*ὄπλω*) into *ἀπλῶ*. If the Common Games of Asia had included the armour race in their programme as a pentathlon event, which is possible, then the pentathlete Demetrios would have had no choice but to compete in the said event, one that was related to the event in which he had so far excelled – the *stadion*. Perhaps this is the reason why a great athlete like Demetrios, as the inscription describes him,²⁵ was only able with difficulty to defeat an

²³) *Paus.* 6.15.9: *μόνῳ δὲ ἀνθρώπων ἄχρι ἐμοῦ τῷ Γόργῳ τέσσαρες μὲν ἐν Ὀλυμπίᾳ γεγόνασιν ἐπὶ πεντάθλῳ διαύλου δὲ καὶ ὄπλου μία ἐφ' ἑκατέρῳ νίκη.*

²⁴) *Paus.* 2.11.8: *κεῖται δὲ χαλκοῦς ἀνὴρ ἐντὸς τοῦ περιβόλου Γρανιανὸς Σικυνῶνιος, ὃς νίκας ἀνείλετο Ὀλυμπίᾳσι δύο μὲν πεντάθλου καὶ σταδίου τὴν τρίτην, διαύλου δὲ ἀμφότερα καὶ γυμνὸς καὶ μετὰ τῆς ἀσπίδος.*

²⁵) *Δημήτριος δῖς Σαλαμεινίος πένταθλον
 τειμηθεὶς ὑπὸ τῶν κυρίων αὐτοκρατόρων
 ἔυσταρχίαις διὰ βίου νεικήσας τρίς Ὀλύμπ[ια]
 κατὰ το ἐξῆς ἀνδρῶν στάδιον, καὶ δῖς πέν[τα-]
 θλον, καὶ τοὺς ὑπογεγραμμένους ἀγῶνας*

unknown athlete like Optatos. The above view that Demetrios was an athlete of the pentathlon and *stadion*, and thus unlikely to have taken part in the armour race, could be taken more seriously if he had competed in the armour race which was held, usually, as a separate event, in which he had not excelled and possibly had not even participated in the past.²⁶ If the inscription should really be read as ἀπλω̄, then we are a long way from being able to draw the conclusion that the above word, in conjunction with the context, means five lengths of the stadium. If one wants a definition of the *stadion*, it is: a simple race of one length of the stadium (Artem. *Onirocritica* 1.58: Τρέχειν ἀπλοῦν δρόμον πᾶσιν ἀγαθὸν πλὴν νοσοῦντων). According to the scholion (Pi. O. 10.64: σταδίου μὲν ἀρίστευσεν εὐθύν τόνον), εὐθύ is that which has no turning, i. e. not the *diaulos* but the simple one-length race. The assertion that in light of the above inscription the length of the pentathlon race was probably five lengths of the stadium, is not persuasive.²⁷

It seems that the above inscription will not be of much assistance in leading us to a general conclusion on the nature of the race in the ancient pentathlon. If at the Common Games of Asia²⁸ the pentathlon race was an armour race or a race of five lengths of the stadium, can we assume that the same was the case at the major Greek games? I think such an assumption would be a little rash, and perhaps not justified by what we know of the attitudes of the ancient Greeks. What we should examine first is whether the pentathlon race was a sprint, a

ἐν Ἑλλάδι Παναθήνεα τα μεγάλα, Πύθια Ἀδριάνε[-ι]
 α, Κομόδεια δὲ ἐν Ἐφέσω Ἴσθμια δὲ ἱερὸν ἐν Νεα
 πόλει τῆς Ἰταλίας Σεβαστά, νεικήσας τοὺς ἀπο
 γραφωμένους πζ'. Ζμύρναν, Ἀντιόχειαν κατὰ
 το ἐξῆς τὸν Ἀδριάνειον καὶ τὸν Κομόδειον καὶ τὸν
 Εὐκράτους Ἀναζάρβου τῆς μητροπόλεως Ἀδριάνειον
 ἱερὸν δὲ Ταρσὸν δὲ Κοινὸν Ἀσίας νεικήσας πέμ
 πτω <ὄπλω> Ὀπτᾶτον ποιήσας αὐτῷ τετράκις
 σύνδρομον καὶ τοὺς ὑποτεταγμένους ἀγῶ
 νας πάντος κλίματος τῆς οἰκουμένης ταλαντ[ιαί-]
 οὺς καὶ ἡμίταλα[ντιαί-]οὺς μζ' ὧν καὶ τάς
 πολιτείας ἔχει.

²⁶) According to E. PAVLINIS, *Ιστορία της Γυμναστικής*, Athens, 1953, 78–79 there is no justification for the view that the pentathlon race was a race in armour, for the simple reason that this event was very physically demanding.

²⁷) Both H. BENTSON, *Die Olympischen Spiele in der Antike*, Zürich/Stuttgart 1984, 45, and DECKER (s. n. 3) 100 insist that the pentathlon race was a *stadion* and not the five-length race as claimed by Ebert.

²⁸) For more on these games and the athletes who competed in them, see E. ALBANIDIS, *Athletics in Thrace During the Hellenistic and Roman Times*, Ph.D. dissertation, Democritus University of Thrace 1995, 130 and note 138.

long-distance race or a race of five lengths of the stadium. The latter could not, either now or then, be regarded as a sprint. We know that the longest race run by athletes at organized competitions in ancient Greece was the *dolichos*, which differed in length from competition to competition, the shortest distance being, as we have said, seven lengths of the stadium. In order, then, to establish the nature of the pentathlon race perhaps we should turn to other sources, less controversial and more easily intelligible than the above inscription. Socrates (Pl. *Amat.* 135 E)²⁹ appears to say to his interlocutor that the pentathletes are inferior to the runners and the wrestlers in their own special events, but superior in them to all other athletes. The philosopher's comparison would obviously be meaningless if it did not refer to the same events. Thus the wrestling in the pentathlon cannot have been different from the wrestling held as a separate event, in terms of the rules and the method of selecting the winner. Likewise comparison among the pentathlon runners must have been made among the athletes in a specific race, i.e. the *stadion*, *diaulos*, armour race and *dolichos*. There does not appear to have been a five-length race even in the local races known to us. Even the *ἵππειος*, which did not feature in the programmes of the Olympic or Pythian Games, but was held at the Nemean and Isthmian Games and the Panathenaia, as well as several local games, was run over a distance of four stadium lengths. It is reasonable to assume that the pentathlon race was one of the races familiar from the programmes of the Greek games. There is no ancient testimony to suggest any other possibility should be considered. The likelihood of the pentathlon race having been five lengths of the stadium seems even less if we accept the interpretation given to the inscription that the athlete Demetrios tied with his rival four times before beating him on the fifth occasion.³⁰ According to Aristotle, the

²⁹) Plato, *Amat.* 135 E. *δοκεῖς γὰρ μοι λέγειν οἷον ἐν τῇ ἀγωνίᾳ εἰσὶν οἱ πένταθλοι πρὸς τοὺς δρομέας ἢ τοὺς παλαιστάς. καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖνοι τούτων μὲν λείπονται κατὰ τὰ τούτων ἄθλα καὶ δεύτεροί εἰσι πρὸς τούτους, τῶν δὲ ἄλλων ἀθλητῶν πρώτοι καὶ νικῶσιν αὐτούς.* For more on this subject, see MATTHEWS (s. n. 15) 132.

³⁰) BEAN (s. n. 18) 368 takes the view that the athletes tied four times, and the fifth time Demetrios was victorious, thus achieving his third victory and winning the pentathlon. H. HARRIS, *Greek Athletes and Athletics*, Bloomington/London 1964, 126, 160 notes that the inscription referring to the Joint Asian Games reveals that the athlete Demetrios tied with his rival four times in the *stadion* and finally defeated him at the fifth attempt. But according to MATTHEWS (s. n. 15) 138 there is no evidence that a race was repeated when the athletes tied and the likelihood of two athletes being in a dead heat four times in a sprint (200 m) seems small. Another case of a dead heat, apart from the above, in a sprint is that of King Alexander I, who, according to Herodotus (5.22): *ἐκρίθη τε εἶναι Ἕλληνα καὶ ἀγωνιζόμενος στάδιον συνεξέπιπτε τῷ πρώτῳ.* (He was judged to be a Greek; so he

competitors in the pentathlon were distinguished for their speed and strength (*Rh* 1361 β 11):

Κάλλος δε ἕτερον καθ' ἑκάστην ἡλικίαν ἐστίν. νέου μὲν οὖν κάλλος τό πρὸς τοὺς πόνους χρήσιμον ἔχειν τό σῶμα τοὺς τε πρὸς δρόμον καί πρὸς βίαν, ἡδὺν ὄντα ἰδεῖν πρὸς ἀπόλαυσιν, διό οἱ πένταθλοι κάλλιστοι, ὅτι πρὸς βίαν καί πρὸς τάχος ἅμα πεφύκασιν

Beauty varies with each age. In a young man, it consists in possessing a body capable of enduring all efforts, either of the racecourse or of bodily strength, while he himself is pleasant to look upon and a sheer delight. This is why the athletes in the pentathlum are most beautiful, because they are naturally adapted for bodily exertion and for swiftness of foot.³¹

The philosopher's observation on the speed of the pentathlon athletes is confirmed by the record: the athlete Xenophon of Corinth was

contended in the *stadion* and ran a dead-heat for the first place.) According to H. Harris, the race was run again and the king must have lost, given that his name is not mentioned in the lists of Olympic victors. CROWTHER (s.n. 8) 138 seems to agree with this view, since Herodotus says nothing more on the subject. In respect of the races he says (s.n. 8) 137, that in theory the solution to the problem of dead heats is to run the race again, but he does not regard it as certain that the organizers actually did this. At the same time he emphasizes, N. CROWTHER, "*Sed quis custodiet ipsos custodiet?*" *The Impartiality of the Olympic Judges and the Case of Leon of Ambracia*, in: Nikephoros 10, 1997, 76 that "Dead-heats, however, seem to have been rare."

³¹) Trans. The Loeb Classical Library. Aristotle again mentions the swiftness of foot and strength of the pentathlon athletes (*Rh* 1361 β 14):

Ἀγωνιστική δὲ σώματος ἀρετὴ σύγκειται ἐκ μεγέθους καὶ ἰσχύος καὶ τάχους καὶ γὰρ ὁ ταχύς ἰσχυρὸς ἐστίν ὁ γὰρ δυνάμενος τα σκέλη ῥίπτειν πῶς καὶ κινεῖν ταχύ καὶ πόρρω δρομικός, ὁ δὲ θλίβειν καὶ κατέχειν παλαιστικός, ὁ δὲ ὤσαι τῆ πληγῆ πυκτικός, ὁ δ' ἀμφοτέροις τούτοις παγκρατιαστικός, ὁ δὲ πᾶσι πένταθλος.

Bodily excellence in athletics consists in size, strength and swiftness of foot; for to be swift is to be strong. For one who is able to throw his legs about in a certain way, to move them rapidly and with long strides, makes a good runner; one who can hug and grapple, a good wrestler; one who can thrust away by a blow of the fist, a good boxer; one who excels in boxing and wrestling is fit for the pancratium, he who excels in all for the pentathlum. (Trans. Loeb Classical Library)

victorious in the *stadion* and pentathlon in 464 BC (79th Olympiad). It seems probable that in the pentathlon he won the long jump, *stadion* and wrestling.³² Gorgos of Elis, as we have seen,³³ won the pentathlon on four occasions, while also winning the *diaulos* or armour race. An inscription from the late 6th century BC states that the athlete Nikola-das of Corinth won the pentathlon and the *stadion*.³⁴ It has been said that this inscription is ‘controversial in interpretation,’³⁵ probably in respect of the prizes he won in previous competitions, not, however, as appears, his specific achievement at Phleious (ἐν δὲ Φλειοῦντι σταδίοισι τὰ πέντε κρατήσας ἠΰφρανεν μεγάλην Κόρινθον). Of course there are only very few cases of pentathletes winning outside the pentathlon in one of the ‘heavier’ events. Eutelidas of Sparta won two victories among the boys, one for wrestling and one for the pentathlon in the 38th Olympiad (628 BC).³⁶ But the fact is that more sprinters won the pentathlon than athletes from the heavier events (wrestling, boxing, *pancratium*).³⁷ An interesting absence from the ancient sources is a victory of a distance runner in the pentathlon, or the victory of a pentathlete in both pentathlon and *dolichos*.³⁸ To the sources cited above we might add another, the reference in Simonidis (*Epiqr.* 10.52) to the victory of the pentathlete Diophon, son of Philon:

Ἴσθμια καὶ Πυθοὶ Διοφῶν ὁ Φίλωνος ἐνίκα ἄλμα ποδωκείην
δίσκον ἄκοντα πάλην.

In the Isthmian and Pythian games Diophon son of Philon won the jump, the race, the discus, the javelin and wrestling.

³²) MATTHEWS (s. n. 15) 135.

³³) *Supra* 23.

³⁴) *Anthologia Graeca* 13,19.

³⁵) See MATTHEWS (s. n. 5) 134–35 note 26. For an extended discussion with interesting views, see E. MARÓTI, *Zum Siegerepigramm des Nikoladas*, in: *Nikephoros* 3, 1990, 133–40.

³⁶) Paus. 6.15.8: *πρῶτον γὰρ δὴ τότε οἱ παῖδες καὶ ὑστατον πενταθλήσοντες ἐσεκλήθησαν* (this being the first and last occasion when boys were allowed to enter for the pentathlum).

³⁷) See GOLDEN (s. n. 8) 72. For more cases of pentathletes winning other competitions see N. GARDINER, *The Method of Deciding the Pentathlon*, in: *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 23, 1903, 61 note 34; MATTHEWS (s. n. 15) 135–36.

³⁸) In a not perfectly intelligible account Philostratus (*Gym.* 32) finds shared characteristics between pentathletes and long-distance runners, saying that a top distance runner is regarded as an athlete whose shoulders and neck are as strong as those of a pentathlon athlete, but whose legs must be slender and light, like a sprinter’s.

Ποδωκείην (or πόδας ὠκύς, or ὠκύπους), relating to the pentathlon race, is used from the time of Homer onwards almost exclusively to mean swiftness of foot.³⁹ Pausanias (6.13.3), referring to the runner Politis from Ceramus, who managed to win not only the *dolichos* but also the *diaulos* and *stadion*, describes the latter as *βραχύτατον ὁμοῦ καὶ ὠκιστόν* (the shortest and quickest.)

In light of all the above, it seems clear that the ancient pentathlon race was a sprint, the *stadion*. However, we cannot rule out the possibility that at some games, mainly local ones, it may have been one of the *diaulos* or armour race.⁴⁰ This conclusion would be consistent with Aristotle's observations on the speed and strength of the pentathlon competitors.

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³⁹ See Hom. *Il.* 2.792: *ποδωκείησι πεποιθώς* (trusting in his fleetness of foot); 2.764: *ποδώκεας ὄρνιθας ὥς* (swift as birds); 2.860: *ἀλλ’ ἐδάμη ὑπὸ χειρὶ ποδώκεος Αἰακίδαο ἐν ποταμῷ* (but was slain beneath the hands of the son of Aeacus, swift of foot in the river); 10.316: *ὅς δὴ τοι εἶδος μὲν ἔην κακός, ἀλλὰ ποδώκης* (that was ill-favoured to look upon, but withal swift of foot); 10.320: *νηῶν ὠκυπόρων* (swift-faring ships); 23.776: *πόδας ὠκύς Ἀχιλλεύς* (swift-footed Achilles); 23.793: *Ὡς φάτο, κύδηεν δὲ ποδώκεα Πηλεΐωνα* (So spoke he, and gave glory to the son of Peleus, swift of foot); 23.828: *ποδάρκης δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς* (swift-footed goodly Achilles); see also X. *Mem.* 3.11.8 for *ποδώκεις κύνας* (speedy hounds). According to DUNKLE (s.n.5) 227 one of the things that strikes even the non-specialist reader of the *Iliad* is the frequent reference to the basic strength of Achilles as a warrior: his swiftness of foot. Moreover, the author regards the word *ποδώκεια* as “a nominal form of *πόδας ὠκύς*”.

⁴⁰ The armour race required both speed and strength, perhaps more strength than the *diaulos* and, obviously, less speed. Thus we cannot exclude the possibility that it was included in the programme of some games as the pentathlon race.

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Agariste's Suitors: Sport, Feasting and Elite Politics in Sixth-Century Greece

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Herodotus' description (6.126–130) of Agariste's wooing and betrothal articulates late archaic elite discourses of social distinction through commensality and sport. The use of sympotic and athletic trials is encountered in other Greek, mainly mythological, betrothal stories. Cleisthenes' and the suitors' attitudes towards drinking and intoxication correspond to elite perceptions on moderate and excessive drinking and their effects. Regarding sport, the year-long athletic trials of the suitors at Sicyon and the subsequent literary elaboration of the episode run contrary to the trend, attested since the sixth century BC, towards the establishment of periodic panhellenic and local contests. Moreover, the Sicyon suitor contests ostensibly occurred in disregard, and perhaps in defiance, to late archaic views which mandated the subordination of athletic victors and victories to community interests.

In the sixth book of his *Histories* (6.126–130) Herodotus narrates the story of the wooing of Agariste, daughter of Cleisthenes, tyrant of Sicyon. The story is well known yet certain aspects of it remain largely unexplored. The main objective of this paper is to dissect the evidence for elite feasting and sport provided by the episode in question in the wider context of elite interaction and inter-state politics in archaic Greece. As is amply documented by archaic literary and material evidence, practices of sympotic commensality and sport functioned as crucial strategies of social recognition and distinction for archaic Greek elites. It is argued that the betrothal of Agariste episode illustrates how these strategies operated in practice, especially how they were appropriated and perceptually re-negotiated by sixth and early fifth-century elites in the process of consolidating an elite panhellenic cultural *koine* and in view of the ongoing conflict, within the ranks of the upper class itself or vis-à-vis other social groups, for political power. Little is known about the early life of Cleisthenes of Sicyon. Hailing from a family that held power in Sicyon since roughly the mid-seventh century, Cleisthenes ruled as a tyrant c. 600–570 BC.¹ Even though Sicyon could not match the power and wealth of some of its neighbors, Cleisthenes by all accounts became a pre-eminent figure in the inter-state politics of his era. Under his leadership Sicyon par-

¹ For various, often conflicting, theories regarding the chronology of Cleisthenes' reign and the Orthagorid dynasty in general see MCGREGOR 1941; HAMMOND 1956; BERVE 1967, 27–33; LEAHY 1968; GRIFFIN 1982, 40–59; PARKER 1992 and 1994. Even though the rough outline of Cleisthenes' life is accepted by most scholars, several points of detail remain in doubt.

icipated in the First Sacred War (c. 595–586 BC) which resulted in the victory of Cleisthenes and his allies (Athens, Thessaly). Given the outcome of the war, it comes as no surprise that Delphi received magnificent dedications from the Sicyonian tyrant, including a *monopteros* and a *tholos*.²

In a similar way to other archaic tyrants Cleisthenes displayed an active interest in sport. In this regard he was following in Myron's, in all probability Cleisthenes' grandfather's, footsteps. According to Pausanias (6.19.1) Myron was Olympic victor in the *tethrippon* in 648 BC. It has been suggested that following the end of the First Sacred War Cleisthenes was involved in the re-organization of the Pythian festival in Delphi which included an extensive program of athletic contests.³ Be that as it may, he won the first *tethrippon* competition of the new Pythian games in 582 BC (Paus. 10.7.6) and according to the Pindaric scholia at some point he established a Pythian festival in Sicyon from the spoils he received from the Sacred War.⁴ Cleisthenes reached the pinnacle of his athletic career with his victory in the *tethrippon* in the Olympic games of, in all probability, 576 BC (Hdt. 6.126; Moretti 1957, no. 96). At that point, Cleisthenes was undoubtedly considered as one of the most powerful men in Greece.

It was on the occasion of his Olympic victory that Cleisthenes initiated the process of betrothal of his daughter Agariste. According to Herodotus (6.126.2), following his *tethrippon* victory and presumably while still in Olympia the Sicyonian tyrant made a grand proclamation that whichever Greek thought of himself as worthy to be his son-in-law should present himself in Sicyon within sixty days. A total of thirteen suitors (Hdt. 6.127.1–4) from different parts of the Greek world “who were proud of themselves and their community” (Hdt. 6.126.3) volunteered and made the trip to the northern Peloponnesian town. Cleisthenes welcomed them all and kept them in Sicyon for a year. During this period the suitors competed in running and

²) For the Sicyonian *monopteros* and *tholos* at Delphi see DE LA COSTE-MESSALIÈRE 1936, 19–233; GRIFFIN 1982, 106–111; NEER 2007, 243–46; SCOTT 2010, 53–55 and *passim*. It should be noted that some scholars openly challenge the association of the *monopteros* and *tholos* with Cleisthenes (e. g. DE LIBERO 1996, 200–201).

³) See MCGREGOR 1941, 279–80.

⁴) Σ *N. 9. inscr.* and 20 DRACHMANN. For the Sicyonian Pythia see HUBBARD 1992, 82–86. MCGREGOR 1941, 283 has argued that Cleisthenes did not establish but re-organized the Sicyonian Pythia which were originally dedicated to Adrastus. Although such a tradition regarding the Sicyonian Pythia certainly existed in antiquity (see *Pi. N. 9*), the association with Adrastus could be explained on the grounds of political expediency. See HUBBARD 1992, 83–4.

wrestling (Hdt. 6.126.3: *τοῖσι Κλεισθένης καὶ δρόμον καὶ παλαίστην ποιησάμενος ἐπ' αὐτῷ τούτῳ εἶχε*) and presumably other athletic contests. In Hdt. 6.128.1 it is further specified that Cleisthenes subjected the younger suitors to gymnastic trials (*καὶ ἐς γυμνάσιά τε ἐξαγινέων ὄσοι ἦσαν αὐτῶν νεώτεροι*).⁵ Furthermore, Herodotus maintains that during the wooing period the suitors dined communally (6.128.1 *συνεστίη*), but Cleisthenes also consorted with them in private in order to evaluate their character, temper and upbringing. The suitors' trial period lasted an entire year, at the end of which Cleisthenes settled on Hippocleides of Athens as his son-in-law (Hdt. 6.128.2). However, he kept his choice to himself and determined to make a public announcement at the betrothal feast.

The feast is described by Herodotus (6.129–130) as a magnificent and lavish affair in which the suitors and the entire community of Sicyon participated. Following dinner, as merriment and drinking progressed Hippocleides started dancing indecorously. Cleisthenes found his behavior embarrassing and as a result he changed his mind and betrothed Agariste to the Alcmaeonid Megacles, the second Athenian suitor.

Agariste's Bridal Contests and Sixth-century Elite Culture

This is in outline the story of Agariste's wooing as reported by Herodotus.⁶ Even though it has been suspected in the past, in general more recent commentators do not doubt the historicity of the central aspects of the episode.⁷ Based on the story of Agariste's betrothal

⁵ As it has been pointed out by GLASS 1988, 161, technically speaking the Greek in Hdt. 6.126.3 and 6.128.1 can be taken to mean either that Cleisthenes established athletic facilities (*dromos, palaistra, gymnasia*) or that the young suitors engaged in athletic activities or both. My feeling is that the emphasis in both passages is on athletic performance, although some facilities, even rudimentary (see KYLE 2007, 83), very probably existed.

⁶ Agariste's wooing is mentioned in passing by some late sources (Ath. 6.273 b–c; 12.541 b–c = Timaios of Tauromenion *FGrHist* 566 F9; 14.628 cd; Ael. *VH* 12.24; D.S. 8.19; *Suda*, *Συβαρίται*) but always in a manner that, for the purposes of this paper, does not contribute anything of importance to the story as recorded by Herodotus.

⁷ See e. g. GRIFFIN 1982, 52–6; MURRAY 1993, 213; DE LIBERO 1996, 193–4 and *passim*; DUPLOUY 2006, 80–5; KYLE 2007, 83; PARKER 2007, 22; STEIN-HÖLKESKAMP 2009, 106; OSBORNE 2009, 266; LOLOS 2011, 61–65. Other scholars are more cautious, e. g. HALL 2007, 150 who correctly points out some chronological incongruities surrounding the Agariste betrothal episode, especially regarding the suitors Males of Aetolia and Leocedes of Argos (for this issue, see studies in n. 10).

historians have advanced arguments regarding Cleisthenes' commercial interests in the west or his designs for expedient political alliances.⁸ There is certainly some value in these observations: for instance, politically motivated marriages were a prime means of elite networking in archaic Greece.⁹ More recently, scholars have pointed out that the Agariste betrothal story as reported by Herodotus is indicative of a process of amalgamation and enrichment typical of oral traditions.¹⁰ Moreover, it is quite likely that Herodotus himself further re-cast and enriched many of the stories included in the *Histories*.¹¹ An interpretation of Herodotus 6.126–130 along these lines would account for the chronological incongruities concerning the participation of certain suitors as well as the thematic resonances of the episode with prominent mythological wooing and bridal contests stories (Helen, Pelops and Hippodameia).

However, such considerations do not exhaust the implications of the episode. For instance, even if we admit that some of the details of the story (e. g. identity of some participants, duration of betrothal contests) can be attributed to its re-elaboration through oral tradition and the composition patterns of the *Histories*, it is worth asking why did the story acquire its particular shape and content in the time that intervened from the original events of Agariste's wooing to the time it was recorded by Herodotus? More specifically, how can one account for the prominence of commensality and sport in the Herodotean narrative? Seen from this perspective, the story of Agariste's wooing has far-reaching, largely unexplored connotations.

Herodotus' sources for this episode can not be ascertained, although the tone of the passage strongly suggests that they were familiar with Alcmaeonid traditions and genealogies. Regardless of their stance towards the famous Athenian clan,¹² overall their disposition towards Cleisthenes of Sicyon appears neutral, sometimes even positive. In this sense, it is quite likely that Herodotus' narrative approximates the way Cleisthenes himself wanted the whole episode of Agariste's betrothal perceived. This is a point that merits further in-

⁸) Commercial interests in the west, see MCGREGOR 1941, 271 and 276. Political alliances, see PARKER 1994, 417; LOLOS 2011, 62–3. See also the comments of DUPLOUY 2006, 82.

⁹) Politically motivated marriages, e. g. Periander with the daughter of the tyrant of Epidaurus Procles (Hdt. 3.50.1–2); Agariste's and Megagkles' daughter was married to Peisistratus (Hdt. 1.61.1); Hippias of Athens betrothed his daughter Archedice to Aeantides of Lampsacus (Thuc. 6.59.3).

¹⁰) THOMAS 1989, 264–281; SCOTT 2005, 414–431; FORSDYKE 2011, 149.

¹¹) GRIFFITHS 2006.

¹²) See GRIFFIN 1982, 55; DUPLOUY 2006, 83. But cf. THOMAS 1989, 264–281.

vestigation. In 6.128.1 Herodotus reports that throughout their year of residence in Sicyon the tyrant provided everything for the suitors and “hosted them with magnificence” (*ἐξείνιζε μεγαλοπρεπέως*). The choice of words can hardly be accidental: Herodotus’ source squarely and deliberately placed Agariste’s bridal contests in a long tradition of elite *xenia*. Herodotus himself provides other examples of sixth-century tyrants involved in elite guest-friendship. For instance, Periander of Corinth was a very close friend (*ξείνον ἐς τὰ μάλιστα*, Hdt. 1.20) of Thrasybulus, tyrant of Miletus who in turn became a guest-friend (*ξείνους*, Hdt. 1.22.4) of the Lydian king Allyates. Moreover, Polycrates of Samos was a guest-friend (*ἔχων δὲ ξεινίην*, Hdt. 3.39.2) of the Egyptian king Amasis. All these were more than mere relationships of personal friendship or ephemeral political alliances concluded on the basis of expediency. *Xenia* interactions were meant to inscribe the participants into a wide network of elite peers who sported similar lifestyles, ideology and interests.¹³

Besides the emphasis on *xenia*, Herodotus underlines the lavishness (*μεγαλοπρεπέως*) of the Agariste betrothal affair. Along with *kalogagathia*, *habrosyne*, *xenia* and other catchwords, *megaloprepeîē* seems to have been part of the discourse through which archaic and classical aristocrats and magnates partly defined themselves and publicly articulated their status.¹⁴ *Megaloprepeîē* and its derivatives are used by Herodotus primarily in a technical manner to indicate material opulence and qualify the expenditures of tyrants, royals, dignitaries and well-off aristocrats.¹⁵ Archaic tyrants were famous for their profound wealth as well as for the flamboyant manner in which that wealth was displayed and expended. Tyrant expenditure was not confined to private material luxuries¹⁶ but also involved significant outlay for lavish monuments and community projects (infrastructure, tem-

¹³) For elite ritualized friendship in archaic Greece see in general HERMAN 1987.

¹⁴) I do not mean to imply that a monolithic perception of the various notions associated with an elite lifestyle was in place across all communities of archaic Greece. As it is always the case, concepts were frequently contested and re-negotiated. See MORRIS 2000.

¹⁵) Hdt. 3.125.2; 5.18.1; 6.122.2 (dubious as interpolation); 6.128.1; 7.57.1; 9.82.2. In two other instances (1.139.1; 4.76.3) *megaloprepeîē* denotes magnificence of a person as indicated by their name and the magnificence of a religious festival respectively.

¹⁶) For aspects of the use and significance of luxurious material culture among archaic Greek elites, including tyrants, see KURKE 1992; MORRIS 1997; MORRIS 2000, 178–85.

ples, panhellenic sanctuary treasuries) which advertised the power of cities and their elites.¹⁷

Viewed in the light of this network of elite material consumption and peer interaction, the mythological/heroic echoes that commentators have detected¹⁸ in Cleisthenes' *xenia* to Agariste's suitors can be reasonably understood: in comparison to boisterous Homeric wedding celebrations (e.g. *Il.* 18.491–496; *Od.* 4.1–20), Agariste's betrothal was intended to be perceived as an event of epic proportions¹⁹ whose magnificence would have been augmented even further if, as it has been suggested, the betrothal feast coincided with the celebration of the Sicyonian Pythia festival.²⁰ The combination of several aspects of Agariste's wooing as recorded by Herodotus, including the year-long *xenia* offered to suitors (6.126.2), the consumption of one hundred oxen at the community betrothal feast (6.129.1), the granting of a talent of silver as farewell gift to all suitors (6.130.2) surpass all standards of ostentatious guest-friendship expenditure encountered in extant archaic traditions.²¹ The status and desirability (if not for physical reasons, at least for reasons of political expediency) of the bride certainly contributed to the magnitude of the event: as it has been suggested, certain brides could be perceived in archaic elite quarters as premier luxury objects and thus inscribed in the elite economy of *xenia* and gift-exchange.²² These observations suggest that, to the extent that events in Sicyon approximate Herodotus' account, Cleisthenes intended not simply to replicate but to exceed existing (including Homeric) blueprints of elite behavior. In other words, for the betrothal of

¹⁷ See the discussion in KALLET 2003, especially 117–126. For the archaic elite agenda of *megaloprepeiē* and other strategies of elite distinction see, in addition to the studies in n.16, KURKE 1991; MORRIS 1996 and 2000, 276–80; ANDERSON 2005. For wealth and other factors determining elite status in archaic Greece see STAHL 1987, 79–105; STEIN-HÖLKESKAMP 1989, 57–138; DUPLOUY 2006, 28–35, 164–183 and *passim*.

¹⁸ See GRIFFIN 1982, 56; GRIFFITHS 2006, 136.

¹⁹ Cf. the remarks by MURRAY 2003, 213: “the episode reveals a class self-consciously aware of Homeric precedent but combining this with the changed attitudes of an upper class of leisure”.

²⁰ See Robertson 1991, 26.

²¹ Elite material consumption and spending practices as recorded in the Homeric epics and other archaic poetry individually approximate or equal the extravagance of Cleisthenes' spending. For instance, hecatombs are slaughtered and consumed at a feast (e.g. *Il.* 1.430–71; *Od.* 3.55–66; 20.276–83). Moreover, during the funeral games of Patroclus (*Il.* 23.257–897) most participants receive a prize of symbolic or intrinsic value from the host Achilles. See PAKONSTANTINO 2002. The uniqueness of Cleisthenes' conspicuous waste consisted in combining several elements of material extravagance in a single act of *xenia*.

²² KURKE 1992, 100.

his daughter the Sicyonian tyrant adopted an amplified version of a traditional model of guest-friendship and engaged in a material extravaganza which amounted to what is designated in anthropological literature as “conspicuous waste” of resources.²³ In the decades that followed the actual events, bards and oral traditions familiar with the reign of the Sicyonian tyrant and the family history of the Alcmaeonids aggrandized further the effect of Cleisthenes’ *xenia* by enriching the story and by transmitting it far and wide.

Feasting and Drinking

The questions that inevitably arise from the preceding discussion are why Cleisthenes and the suitors engaged in this process of elite opulence and its concomitant ideological dissemination, and what did it all mean in the context of sixth-century Greece. It is my contention that aspects of feasting and athletic competition as described in Hdt. 6.126–130 can assist in providing new answers to these old questions. Hence a closer examination is in order. Herodotus’ narrative makes clear the paramount role of commensality and sport in the wooing of Agariste. Cleisthenes tested the suitors’ “manly qualities and temper, upbringing and manners” (*ἀνδραγαθίης καὶ τῆς ὀργῆς καὶ παιδεύσιός τε καὶ τρόπου*) in athletics and commensality,²⁴ i.e. in activities that were crucial in defining the archaic Greek aristocracy.²⁵

According to Herodotus, Cleisthenes paid special attention to the suitors’ demeanor at the common meal (6.128.1). Commentators usually overlook the significance of this point. However, besides Herodotus’ explicit assertion, the fact that sympotic behavior was for Cleisthenes an important criterion in choosing his son-in-law is also strongly suggested by the events, as described by Herodotus, surrounding Hippocleides’ demeanor during the betrothal feast. Herodotus implies that Hippocleides had become more intoxicated than the other suitors (6.129.2) and presents his embarrassing dances as a result of his drunkenness. Cleisthenes viewed Hippocleides’ demeanor with disfavor (*ὕπώπτευε*, 6.129.2) and considered it as indicative of his shamelessness (*ἀναιδείην*, 6.129.4).²⁶

²³ See e. g. HARRIS 1989, 111–132; WINZELER 2008, 72.

²⁴ For archaic Greek commensality, especially the elite *symposion*, see the studies in MURRAY 1990. Cf. also LOMBARDO 1989; SLATER 1991; STEIN-HÖLKESKAMP 1992; MURRAY/TECUŞAN 1995; SCHMITT PANTEL 2011.

²⁵ See STEIN-HÖLKESKAMP 2009, 106.

²⁶ Cf. Ath. 14.628c–d which, paraphrasing Herodotus, refers to Hippocleides dancing in “vulgar posture” (*φορτικῶς ὀρχησάμενον*).

Cleisthenes' decision to dissolve the prospect of an appealing and expedient political alliance through the marriage of Agariste and Hippocleides, solely on the basis of the latter's indecorous sympotic conduct, has perplexed some commentators who have attempted to find hidden motives behind the rejection of Hippocleides²⁷ or have explained it as part of a popular tradition.²⁸ However, Cleisthenes' decision becomes more comprehensible and feasible if it is considered in the context of sixth-century elite attitudes on sympotic drinking. Exclusive feasting and drinking were in archaic Greece fundamental for the articulation of elite identity. In the world depicted in the Homeric epics, drinking occasions articulated relations of dependence and/or reciprocity among elite peers, especially in the context of *xenia*. Moreover, the right to feast and drink in the company of kings and princes reflected the heroes' martial excellence, reinforced their position of social ascendancy vis-à-vis the lower social orders and legitimized their claim to rule.²⁹ In this context, alcoholic drinking was depicted as a socially integrated activity. Wine was positively valued for its nutritional qualities, its role in enhancing camaraderie and often for its material and symbolic worth. At the same time, extreme intoxication was frowned upon, not due to any fear that it may lead to chronic alcoholic addiction but because of its potential association with disruptive antisocial behavior and the loss of an individual's decorum, especially during a feast. For instance, in *Od.* 14.463–66 Odysseus points out that wine can lead to foolish behavior and make even a wise man turn to singing, laughing, dancing and speaking out of turn. Moreover, at times uncontrollable drinking and inebriation was directly associated with aggression and violence (*Od.* 21.288–98).

Starting in the late seventh and during the sixth century, i. e. the period pertinent to the Agariste betrothal feast episode, a more complex template of drinking practices and attitudes emerges.³⁰ Once again, evidence suggests that in general wine-drinking was extensively practiced and perceived largely in positive terms. However, even within the context of upper-class sympotic drinking there were sharp divisions regarding the value and meaning of wine-drinking as well as the

²⁷) See e. g. GRIFFIN 1982, 55–6. It is worth noting that according to *Plut. Sol.* 11 Cleisthenes had a personal connection with Megacles' father Alkmaion who had commanded the Athenian contingent in the First Sacred War and was thus a close ally of the Sicyonian tyrant.

²⁸) THOMAS 1989, 269.

²⁹) For elite feasting in the Homeric world see H. VAN WEES 1995; RUNDIN 1996. For drinking see ANDÒ 2004; PAPA-KONSTANTINOY 2009.

³⁰) For practices and ideologies of wine-drinking in archaic Greece see PAPA-KONSTANTINOY 2012, *Wine and Wine-Drinking*.

manner in which it should be practiced. Hence some elitist poets advocate excessive, uncontrollable drinking. For instance, in Alcaeus fr. 332 Lobel-Page the poet prompts his drinking companions to "get drunk and drink beyond any measure" in celebration of the death of their political adversary Myrsilos. In fr. 335 Lobel-Page the same poet exhorts a drinking fellow to "bring wine and get drunk". Exhortations or positive allusions to liberal drinking are encountered in other sympotic poets as well. In Anacr. fr. 356a Page the poet orders a bowl that he intends to drink without stopping for breath and in Anacr. fr. 373 Page he boasts of emptying a jar of wine. It is admittedly difficult to substantiate the extent and frequency with which such poetic exhortations to drunkenness were adopted by archaic symposiasts. However, iconography in sixth-century black and red-figure Athenian, often sympotic, pottery suggests that heavy drinking was a reality in some elite symposia.³¹

This discourse of inebriation, which appeared to have been popular among some elite quarters, can be perceived, in the context of archaic elite lifestyle outlined above, as a particularly emphatic strategy of social distinction. Archaic elites who engaged in heavy drinking and intoxication appear to be flaunting their ability, in terms of resources and leisure time, to engage in profligacy. Moreover, at times heavy drinking practices might have served more particular purposes, e. g. to solidify the boundaries of political groups and agendas. Hence Alcaeus' fr. 332 Lobel-Page mentioned above might be connected with the poet's attempt to rally the members of his upper-class drinking group in opposition to competing elite factions in Mytilene.

Contemporary to the often polemical and partisan calls for excessive drinking and inebriation, an alternative paradigm of alcoholic drinking based on restraint and moderation can be detected in some archaic poets.³² Champions of the drinking-in-moderation model often establish an explicit and causal link between unrestrained drinking, the loss of personal decorum/self-control and the social opprobrium incurred by the heavy drinker, especially in the context of an elite symposium. Such perceptions of wine-drinking are articulated most explicitly in the *Theognidea*, a poetic corpus that largely articulates elite values and concerns of the late archaic/early classical period.³³ In this framework uncontrollable intoxication acquires class connotations

31) For sympotic iconography and some problems surrounding its interpretation see LISSARRAGUE 1990.

32) Thgn. 211–2; 509–10; 837–40; Panyas. fr. 17,4–5 and fr. 19 BERNABÉ.

33) Thgn. 413–4; 479–83; 491–2; 497–8; 500–502; 503–508. See also Hippon. fr. 67 WEST; Panyas. fr. 17,7 ff. BERNABÉ.

and is intimately linked to the debased and insatiable appetites of the low social orders, parvenus and foreigners.³⁴

Overall, Herodotus' narrative of Hippocleides' and Cleisthenes' responses to situations of alcoholic drinking and intoxication articulates basic tenets of wider, often conflicting, archaic perceptions on the meaning and value of sympotic drinking. Hippocleides' drinking and rowdy dancing is in keeping with otherwise documented instances of archaic elitist pomposity and disregard for social conventions in sympotic contexts. Moreover, Cleisthenes' partial evaluation of the suitors on the basis of their demeanor during commensality as well as the rejection of Hippocleides on account of his frivolous drinking and dancing is in accordance with archaic principles of drinking moderation. In the view espoused by Cleisthenes, wine-drinking practices are a mirror of character and values, which in turn largely determine an individual's attained (not necessarily identical with inherited) social status. Individual intoxication and its behavioral consequences are perceived as tokens of an uncouth and socially debased personality that should be excluded from the narrow circle of the ruling elite.

Sport

Similarly to feasting and drinking, sport plays a paramount role in the bridal contests in Sicyon. The Homeric epics provide the earliest glimpses of archaic sport, with particular emphasis on the athletic activities of the warrior elite. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* do not explicitly mention any periodically recurring athletic contests. Funeral games for elite individuals (Patroclus, *Il.* 23.257–897) or one-off contests conducted in honor of a guest (Odysseus, *Od.* 8.97–255) constitute the main avenue of athletic competition for Homeric elites.³⁵ Yet during the seventh and early sixth centuries Panhellenic and local athletic contests periodically conducted in the context of religious festivals do emerge.³⁶ As we have already pointed out, it is likely that Cleisthenes of Sicyon himself might have been actively involved in the process of

³⁴ See e.g. Archil. fr. 124 a and b WEST which ridicules a heavy-drinking parvenu whose behavior is conditioned by his gastric appetites; Thgn. 485–7 which compares a heavy drinker to a *κακὸν λάτριν ἐφημέριον*, a wretched hired servant for the day; Anacr. fr. 356 b Page where Scythian drinking is contrasted to restraint and orderly conduct. For Greek perceptions of foreign drinking practices see MAURITSCH-BEIN 2002.

³⁵ Cf. also the games for Amphidamas in Hes. *Op.* 654–59.

³⁶ For various facets of the emergence of Panhellenic and local athletic contests see MORGAN 1990; GOLDEN 1998; DAVIES 2007; KYLE 2007, 72–149.

establishing the Delphic Pythia as well as its local Sicyonian counterpart. Once established, athletic contests, especially in the four panhellenic *periodos* games, grew swiftly in popularity. Moreover, by the end of the archaic period athletic training, competition and victory gradually articulated a complex array of meanings and ideologies. It has been suggested that gymnasia that were established in some archaic communities during the sixth century BC partially functioned as an arena where aspects of intra-elite conflict were played out.³⁷ In addition, elites largely dominated competitive sport in the seventh and sixth centuries BC.³⁸ For the athletically-minded elites, especially of the sixth-century BC, periodic athletic contests in panhellenic and local festivals fulfilled the need and desire to demonstrate, to their peers and to their social 'inferiors', their physical, and by extension social, preponderance. Finally, quite often athletic success, especially at the highest level, was perceived as directly linked to claims of political power.³⁹

Nonetheless, researchers have pointed out a major qualitative transformation in the public perception of athletic activity in the Greek world during the sixth century BC, i. e. the necessity to partially represent the symbolic capital generated by athletic victories as operating to the benefit of the victor's community.⁴⁰ Although this new perception of the civic value of sport and athletic victory becomes more widespread in the second half of the sixth-century, its ideological precursors are visible in the period pertinent to our discussion, i. e. roughly 600–550 BC.⁴¹ Perhaps not accidentally, during the sixth century there are critical voices regarding the value of sport, athletic victory and the magnitude of athletic rewards⁴² as well as possible attempts, at least in Athens, to regulate such rewards.⁴³ In short, the ath-

³⁷) MANN 1998.

³⁸) PLEKET 1975 and 2001. Pleket's thesis was partially challenged by YOUNG 1984. But see the remarks by KYLE 2007, 208–10.

³⁹) For the link between athletic success and political distinction as well as other aspects of athletic activity in sixth-century Greece see CHRISTESEN 2007. For an overview of the development of sport in the Panhellenic sanctuaries during the archaic period see ULF 1997.

⁴⁰) See in general KURKE 1991; GOLDEN 1998, 74–88; MANN 2001; HARRELL 2002; CHRISTESEN 2007.

⁴¹) See GOLDEN 1998, 77; CHRISTESEN 2007, 59–60.

⁴²) Xenoph. fr. 2 WEST; see BERNARDINI 1980, 84–92; MÜLLER 1995, 88–99; PAPA-KONSTANTINOPOULOS 2012, *Critics*. It is worth noting that Xenoph. fr. 2 WEST, 16–21 appears to assume the existence of the sixth-century trend to integrate civic values in the representation of athletic victory. Xenophanes' attitudes towards sport was not a groundbreaking novelty, see Tyrtaeus fr. 12 WEST.

⁴³) In Solon's legislation. See discussion below.

letic trials of the suitors in Sicyon and the literary re-elaboration of the story of Agariste's wooing occurred in the context of a) the rapid expansion of institutionalized, periodically held athletic contests; b) the emergence of the early stages of an elite gymnasium culture and c) the articulation of diverging and often conflicting attitudes towards sport, e.g. the overvaluation of elite exclusive athletic activities or alternatively the trend to emphasize in athletic victories community interests over individual achievement.

Viewed in this light, the betrothal contests at Sicyon present some features that contrast them sharply to sporting trends of the sixth-century. At Sicyon a wealthy tyrant (as opposed to a sanctuary or community) serves as the organizer, host and financial sponsor of the sporting contests that are conducted as part of the betrothal of the organizer's daughter. The organizer personally proclaims the general terms of the wooing process and issues an invitation to potentially interested suitors. An unspoken but clearly hinted social exclusion mechanism (Hdt. 6.126.2) ensures that only suitors that thought of themselves as social peers of the organizer come forward and enter the contests. To the extent that they are not directly connected to a periodic religious festival, athletic contests during Agariste's wooing are rather one-off, secular occasions. Finally, the athletic trials that the suitors at Sicyon were subjected to lasted much longer than any other known contemporary example of competitive or initiatory athletics. In short, in a number of ways the games at Sicyon are more reminiscent of a Homeric model of elite sport than of contemporary sixth-century athletic practices.⁴⁴

In addition to betrothal contests, it should be noted that another type of privately-funded, limited-participation athletic contests, i.e. funeral games for distinguished individuals, continued to be held until the early fifth century,⁴⁵ hence coinciding with the upsurge, consolidation and increasing popularity of panhellenic and city-state sponsored games. Prizes won in archaic funeral games bear inscriptions that often highlight the singularity of the victory occasion.⁴⁶ Moreover, such objects were frequently recycled in the economy of prestige material culture as dedications in sanctuaries or as valuable personal heirlooms. In this manner, prizes in sixth-century funeral games defy the late archaic trend, articulated primarily in epinician poetry, to project communal values on elite athletic victories.

44) For sport in the Homeric epics see KYLE 2007, 54–71.

45) ROLLER 1981.

46) ROLLER 1981, 2–6.

It can therefore be argued that during the sixth century BC, and in contrast to the growing demand for integration of communal values in representations of elite sport, exclusive elite betrothal contests and funeral games articulated and promoted an image of athletics as a mode of social recognition,⁴⁷ i.e. a reified elite prerogative and token of distinction. The conflict between an archaic elite exclusive model of sport and the sixth-century attempts to regulate and standardize an increasingly popular set of athletic practices can be further illuminated by examining the specific circumstances of the participation of the two Athenian suitors, Megacles and Hippocleides, in the betrothal contests at Sicyon. Both suitors had impeccable aristocratic credentials, including a family history (especially Megacles) of successful involvement in competitive sport. Megacles, the successful suitor, was an Alcmaeonid. By the dramatic date of Agariste's wooing this powerful and wealthy Athenian family sported one Olympic victory in the *tethrippon* of 592 BC won by Alcmeon I, the father of Megacles.⁴⁸ By the mid-540's Megacles' brother Alcmeonides I had won two victories in equestrian events at the Great Panathenaea.⁴⁹ Hippocleides on the other hand was related to the rich and hippotrophic family of Cimon who achieved Olympic *tethrippon* victories in the 530s and early 520s.⁵⁰ Late antique sources associate Hippocleides with the archonship of 566 BC and the re-organization, including the introduction of athletic events, at the Panathenaic festival.⁵¹ Hence the evidence strongly suggests that the families of both suitors were actively involved in various aspects of the steadily expanding, sixth-century circuit of Panhellenic and community-sponsored competitive sport.

In Athens, diverse developments pre-empted and precipitated the growing importance of periodically-held athletic contests during the sixth century. The attempt in 632 BC by Cylon to seize power partly on the basis of his prestige as Olympic victor in c. 640 BC as well as the dispatch of Phryon, Olympic victor in the 630s or 620s, as *oikistes* at Sigeum highlight the centrality of sport as a mechanism of social and political advancement.⁵² Moreover, it has been suggested that be-

⁴⁷) For the notion of "social recognition" among archaic Greek elites see DUPLOUY 2006.

⁴⁸) See KYLE 1987, 196, A 5 for testimonia.

⁴⁹) KYLE 1987, 196, A 6.

⁵⁰) Hippocleides, DAVIES 1971, no. 7617, see no. 8429 II; KYLE 1987, 221, P 97. Cimon I, DAVIES 1971, no. 8426, see no. 8429 VII; KYLE 1987, 204, A 34.

⁵¹) Marc. Vit. Thuc. 2–4 citing Pherecydes *FGrH* 3 F 2.

⁵²) For Cylon's attempt to seize power in Athens see Hdt. 5.71; Thuc. 1.126.3–5; Paus. 1.28.1; Plut. *Sol.* 12.1–3; for Phrynon see Diog. Laert. I.74; Strab. 599–600

ginning roughly in 700 BC and until the end of the seventh century Athens was essentially, if not formally, ruled by an oligarchy whose members largely proclaimed their social and political ascendancy on the basis of elitist ideology and material practices reminiscent of a 'heroic' past.⁵³ All the above must be taken into account when considering the conditions of political and economic crisis that led to Solon's reforms, including his legislation on athletic rewards.

The motives and objectives behind Solon's legislation are often obscure and have been the subject of a long, and still largely unresolved, scholarly debate.⁵⁴ Regarding sport, late sources report that Solon standardized state rewards for victorious athletes (500 drachmas for an Olympic victory, 100 for an Isthmian) and possibly introduced regulations related to the management of athletic facilities.⁵⁵ If genuine, Solon's laws on athletic rewards appear to be in keeping with the trend, also attested in other parts of archaic Greece, to introduce legislation that was aimed at regulating forms of elite material extravagance.⁵⁶ Furthermore, these laws acknowledge and partly attempt to react to the early archaic perception of sport as an elite cultural trademark as well as to the special conditions (accumulation of wealth and power, employment of specific strategies of social distinction) that, on the present state of the evidence, emerge as characteristic of the Athenian elites on the eve of Solon's reforms.

Invested with a community mandate for social reforms, Solon attempted in the case of his athletic legislation to appropriate and thus re-define, without however completely abolishing, elite values on the meaning of sport as a power discourse. Extant evidence suggests that over the course of the sixth century some elite Athenian athletes gradually adapted to the new athletic landscape of Panhellenic and civic athletics and largely conformed to the calls to integrate their athletic victories into the framework of the dominant community ideology and standards of behavior.

(founder of Sigeum); MORETTI 1957, no. 58 and GOLDEN 2004, 135 (date of his Olympic victory).

⁵³ See MORRIS 1987, 205–207; 1993; 1995; 1997; 2000, especially chapter 7. Cf. WHITLEY 1994.

⁵⁴ For Solon's legislation in general see the various essays in BLOK/LARDINOIS 2006 with earlier bibliography.

⁵⁵ Awards for Olympic and Isthmian victors, see Plut. *Sol.* 23.3; Diog. Laert. 1.55–56. For Solon's athletic legislation see WEILER 1983; KYLE 1984; MANN 2001, 68–81.

⁵⁶ For evidence and problems surrounding sumptuary legislation in archaic Greece see HÖLKEKAMP 1999, 157–8 and *passim*; PAKONSTANTINO 2008, *passim*.

However, as the *Agariste* betrothal contests suggest, the fusion of elite and civic athletic ideologies was neither comprehensive nor straightforward. Moreover, the same evidence suggests that, to a certain degree at least, some members of the Greek elite actively resisted the attempts to integrate their sport practices into mainstream communal ideology. And because the archaic Greek elite largely defined itself as an inter-state group on the basis of common ideas and lifestyle, the ideological conflict regarding the meaning of sport and other practices was conducted on the panhellenic as well as on a local level. With particular reference to Athens, Solon's laws as well as the sport practices conducted during *Agariste's* wooing can also be interpreted as a stage in an ongoing panhellenic debate on the meaning and expediency of sport, which in turn was part of a wider ideological struggle over the value of elite privilege, wealth and entitlement to political power. Viewed in this light, *Magakles* and *Hippocleides* 'responded' to Solon's attempt to re-negotiate sport as a traditional signifier of elite status by participating in a year-long series of athletic drills that is marked by a deliberate disregard for any kind of 'civic' athletic values.

Overall, sport practices in the *Agariste* wooing episode must be interpreted on a par with other attempts to preserve the rarified elite character of archaic competitive sport. Despite other sixth-century developments to the contrary, through words and acts some Greek elites continued to re-claim sport as a realm of elite privilege.

Conclusion

The betrothal of *Agariste* (Hdt. 6.126–130) vividly depicts aspects of the behavior and leisure practices characteristic of the Greek elite during the sixth and early fifth centuries BC. By focusing on feasting, drinking and sport this paper argues that the episode also illuminates the process whereby these practices were integrated in elite power discourses and operated through ongoing contestation and re-negotiation of their meaning. The development of elite practices and perceptions of commensality and sport occurred in a context of cultural consolidation which resulted in the emergence of an upper-class that was partly distinguished from other social groups on the basis of lifestyle and material consumption. It has been argued that to become visible to itself and to others, an elite group must develop 3 C's: consciousness, cohesion and conspiracy.⁵⁷ All three are conspicuous in the *Agariste*

⁵⁷ MEISEL 1962, 4. Quoted in SHORE 2002, 3.

wooning story: a consciousness of common belonging through the participation of elite suitors in the betrothal process and the subsequent elaboration and dissemination of the story through oral tradition; a cohesion of lifestyle and general political objectives, evident in practices of sport and commensality, extravagant material culture and the pursuit of a politically expedient marriage; and finally conspiracy, in that the elites in question dexterously exclude all other social groups from the process of participating in and appropriating remembrance of, through oral tradition, the wooing process.

To be sure, this relative cultural homogeneity could not mask the continuous political conflict among elite families and groups, both on the panhellenic and the local level. Correlatively, elite interpretations of sport, commensality and material culture were challenged by advocates of an ideology that favored wider popular participation, egalitarianism and communal values. In addition to commensality and sport, egalitarian principles gradually gained in popularity and were articulated in politics and legislative reforms in parts of Greece during the sixth century BC.⁵⁸

Thus the Herodotean narrative of the events at Sicyon articulates divergent perceptions, attested in other archaic sources as well, on the value of elite commensality and more particularly on the desired states of wine-drinking (inebriation, moderation) and their effects. Regarding athletics, the attitudes alluded in the Herodotean passages run contrary to sixth-century trends towards standardization of competitive sport as well as towards the increasingly expanding civic-minded sport ideology. In this instance, elite participants in the year-long athletic drills at Sicyon perhaps wished to stake an old-fashioned claim to sport as an exclusive elite domain. In that sense, the Agariste episode also reveals something of the process through which commensality and sport practices were ideologically manipulated and transformed into social and political capital by late archaic elites.

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⁵⁸) For the emergence of egalitarian trends in politics, law and other aspects of public life in sixth-century Greek communities see in general ROBINSON 1997; PAKONSTANTINO 2008; SCHMITT PANTEL 2011. For the espousal of communal values by some elite sixth-century athletes see n. 40.

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Deaths in the Pan-Hellenic Games: The Case of Arrachion Reconsidered

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Houston

Arrachion the pankratiast reputedly succumbed to a fatal choke hold immediately after forcing his opponent to surrender by dislocating his ankle. R. H. Brophy III made a case that Arrachion's death couldn't have been the result of a choke hold, arguing instead that it was the result of a broken neck sustained during the maneuver used to dislocate his opponent's ankle. Because the new reading of the text presented in this paper supports neither a neck fracture nor strangulation as causes of death, an alternative cause of death – backed by recent medical findings – is proposed.

The account of the death of Arrachion the pankratiast as he was competing for his third crown in the Olympics of 564 B. C. E. is related by both Pausanias (8.40.1–2) and Philostratus (*Imag.* 2.6).¹ Both accounts essentially agree: an unnamed opponent had taken Arrachion's back, wrapping his legs around Arrachion for purchase while applying a choke hold. Arrachion attacked his opponent's foot with a painful dislocating move, forcing the opponent to surrender as Arrachion himself expired from the effects of the deadly choke hold. The only apparent discrepancy is that Pausanias has the opponent's toe being dislocated, while for Philostratus it was the ankle that was dislocated. Unlike the spare recital of the combat given by Pausanias, the description of the opponent's attack and Arrachion's counter given by Philostratus goes into considerable technical detail. Unfortunately, however, there has been no consensus among scholars in understanding what Philostratus recorded, giving rise to a welter of conflicting interpretations.²

One scholar attempting to sort out Philostratus' account noticed a long-overlooked anomaly. Robert H. Brophy III was a martial arts enthusiast with some knowledge of judo, a sport in which the forearm choke from behind as described by Philostratus is a legal submission technique. Brophy was aware that someone who is choked will first

¹ Philostratus uses the spelling *Arrichion*; the different spellings are discussed in BROPHY 1978, 366–67, note 6.

² See, e. g., FAIRBANKS 1931, 153–54; GARDINER 1965, 220–21; HARRIS 1964, 108; MILLER 2004, 38–39; POLIAKOFF 1987, 62–63; ROBINSON 1981, 81; SWEET 1987, 85; and TYRRELL 2004, 138–39; subsequent references to these citations may be shortened to name alone. The translation of the text in this paper is the present writer's own.

lose consciousness from lack of oxygen to the brain and will subsequently expire only if the choke is maintained after the victim has lost consciousness.³ Since Arrachion obviously had to be conscious in order to counter his opponent by attacking his ankle, and since the opponent's surrender would have immediately ended the fight, there is no accounting for Arrachion's suddenly dropping dead from the effects of the choke without first going through an intermediary stage of unconsciousness.

Accordingly, Brophy sought to explain Arrachion's death by some other form of trauma, and he did so by experimenting with a martial arts training partner to figure out how Arrachion might have fatally injured himself while dislocating his opponent's ankle. Brophy concluded that according to Philostratus' account Arrachion was standing with his opponent on his back, the opponent's legs grapevined around his own, tips of the opponent's feet inserted into the hollows behind his knees. Arrachion closed his legs together to trap his opponent's legs, kicked his right leg back, and toppled over to his left.⁴ Although the backward kick dislocated the opponent's right ankle, Arrachion's jerky leftward movement – with the opponent's choke hold still tightly locked in place – resulted in the breaking of his neck.⁵

This paper takes the position that although Brophy was correct in his assessment of Arrachion's death being attributable to something other than a choke, a new reading of the text does not support his attribution of the death to a broken neck sustained when Arrachion toppled sideways from a standing position. The new reading of the text will be presented here along with an alternate explanation of the cause of Arrachion's death.

The context of the *Imagines* account is an art appreciation lecture whose subject is a painting depicting the aftermath of the contest: an Olympic judge posthumously crowns Arrachion the winner while the opponent maintains his hand gesture of surrender. As he describes the circumstances surrounding the scene, the narrator makes this most relevant – but overlooked – disclosure:

*μη δὲ συντυχία νοεῖσθω τοῦτο· σοφώτατα γὰρ προνήθη τῆς
νίκης.*

³) BROPHY 1978, 380–81.

⁴) BROPHY 1978, 378–79.

⁵) BROPHY 1978, 381; Brophy's views are reiterated in TYRRELL 2004, 139–140.

*Let not this matter be thought of as a chance event; for he ingeniously planned for the victory beforehand.*⁶

This is alluded to again in a reference to the strategy or *logismon* employed by Arrachion as he countered his opponent's choke hold. The implication is that Arrachion's counter was probably a practiced signature move, in which case tucking his chin to his chest to block his opponent's forearm would have been a part of the drill. There is also a possibility that baiting his opponent into taking his back in order to set him up for the submission may have been a part of the *logismon* as well.

In a general description of the techniques employed by pankratiasts, the narrator states that among other things they *sphurō prospalaiousi*, *wrestle or struggle with an ankle*. This appears to be a description of seizing an ankle in order to apply an ankle lock, perhaps hinting at the technique by which Arrachion was to dislocate his opponent's ankle.

Although most interpretations assume Arrachion to have been standing, the new reading presented here assumes that the action began with Arrachion on hands and knees.⁷ Defending against a forearm choke from that position is not only documented in representations from antiquity⁸ but can also be inferred from the text. Those who would have Arrachion standing have him falling over from the standing position when the word employed – *enizēsas* – in fact actually means *to have sat on* something. The terminology makes perfectly good sense, however, with Arrachion on hands and knees, a position from which he could sit off to one side with his leg folded under him.

⁶ PLASS (1995, 16) apparently understands the passage to mean that Arrachion staged his own death as a part of his victory: "Interest in finding a rationale prompts Philostratus to discount any idea that the situation really was just queer or a mere accident: 'Don't imagine that this was chance, for he planned his victory with great care.' (*Imag.* 2.6.2)."

⁷ Because Gardiner has Arrachion *rolling over* to seize his opponent's ankle, it would appear that he alone of the other interpreters cited herein also believed that Arrachion was on hands and knees.

⁸ A first century Roman clay lamp from the Museo Nazionale delle Terme, Rome, depicts one combatant on knees and elbows, head down, his opponent on top of him, legs grapevined, working at setting up a forearm choke. The man on top is either attempting to work his left hand under the other's neck or is applying pressure to the back of the neck with the left forearm to make the other raise his head so he can slip his right arm under for the choke. (Ill. 47 in POLIAKOFF 1987, 49. Poliakoff, however, understands the man on top to be getting in position to twist the other's shoulders around to score a fall in wrestling.)

Starting position established, the new reading picks up as follows:

Ὅθεν τὸν Ἀρριχίωνα μέσον ἤδη ἥρηκῶς ὁ ἀντίπαλος ἀποκτεῖναι ἔγνω καὶ τὸν μὲν πῆχυν τῆ δειρῆ ἤδη ἐνέβαλεν ἀποφράττων αὐτῷ τὸ ἄσθμα, τὰ σκέλη δὲ τοῖς κουβῶσιν ἐναρμόσας καὶ περιδιείρας ἐς ἑκατέραν ἀγκύλην ἄκρω τῷ πόδε

For which reason Arrachion's opponent, having already clinched him around his midsection, decided to move in for the kill, and he immediately put his forearm to his throat to cut off his air, having already hooked his legs into his groins and passed the end of each foot through the crook [of each knee].
(2.6.4)

The relating of the opponent's securing the choke hold on Arrachion is introduced by *for which reason* ('*othen*) because the narrator had just reiterated that choke holds were permitted in certain of the games. The forearm choke from behind – more commonly known as a *rear naked choke*⁹ – is often set up by first wrapping the arms around the opponent's torso from behind to provide a base from which the attacker can then grapevine his legs around his opponent's for purchase as described.

Although the other translations have the opponent setting out *to kill* Arrachion, taking *apokteina* literally makes no sense in the context of a sporting event in which the rear naked choke was a legal submission hold to which one could safely surrender or be spared from unconscious death by watchful officials.¹⁰ This study takes *apokteina* in the exact same figurative sense that modern day fight enthusiasts use words like *kill*, *murder*, and *slaughter* to indicate a convincing victory.¹¹

That the opponent put his forearm across Arrachion's throat to cut off his air doesn't necessarily mean that the attempt was successful. Given that Arrachion's counter to the choke was apparently a practiced signature move, and given that the opponent had telegraphed his intentions by cinching him up from behind to get in position for the choke, Arrachion most certainly would have tucked his chin to his chest to block the choke. Observers of modern day mixed martial arts

⁹) It is called a *naked* choke because it doesn't involve gripping the collar or lapel of a garment.

¹⁰) Were there no safeguards against unconscious combatants being choked to death, there most certainly would have been mention of such mishaps in the millennium that pankration was practiced as an Olympic sport.

¹¹) Figurative usages of *apokteina* also appear in E. *Hipp.* 1064 and E. *Or.* 1027.

competition will attest that on occasion a competitor they expected to submit to a choke instead escaped because contrary to appearance the competitor managed to keep his opponent from effectively applying the choke.

τῷ μὲν πνίγματι ἔφθη αὐτὸν ὑπνηλοῦ τὸ ἐντεῦθεν θανάτου τοῖς αἰσθητηρίοις ἐντρέχοντος, τῇ δὲ ἐπιτάσι τῶν σκελῶν ἀνειμένη χρησάμενος οὐκ ἔφθη τὸν λογισμὸν τοῦ Ἀρριχίωνος·

And while on the one hand he got the better of him with the choke from which sleeplike death was overcoming his senses, on the other hand, the one pressing the attack – because of a slackening in the tension of his legs – was not able to get the better of Arrachion's strategy. (2.6.4)

That sleeplike death was overcoming Arrachion's senses is not any kind of accurate, objective clinical assessment, but rather an after the fact rationalization: sleeplike death *must* have been overcoming his senses or he wouldn't have died. The reference to the slackening of the tension in the opponent's legs is a technically accurate description of the way a competitor in an activity as strenuous as grappling attempts to conserve energy by temporarily relaxing control over his opponent, tightening it back up only in response to movement by the opponent. The *strategy* or *logismon* refers back to the narrator's mention that Arrachion *ingeniously planned for the victory beforehand*, the implication being that his ankle-dislocating counter to the choke was a practiced signature move.

ἐκλακτίσας γὰρ τὸν ταρσὸν τοῦ ποδὸς Ἀρριχίων, ὑφ' οὗ ἐκινδύνευεν αὐτῷ τὰ δεξιὰ κρεμαννυμένης ἤδη τῆς ἀγκύλης, ἐκείνον μὲν συνέχει τῷ βουβῶνι ὡς οὐκέτ' ἀντίπαλον, τοῖς δὲ γε ἀριστεροῖς ἐνιζήσας καὶ τὸ περιττὸν ἄκρον τοῦ ποδὸς ἐναποκλείσας τῇ ἀγκύλῃ οὐκ ἔῃ μένειν τῷ σφυρῷ τὸν ἀστράγαλον ὑπὸ τῆς εἰς τὸ ἔξω βιαίου ἀποστροφῆς·

For having kicked out the instep of his [opponent's right] foot, from under which he was posing a threat to it because the crook of his [opponent's right] knee was hanging there to the right, Arrachion clutches that [instep] to his groin, thus no longer anything to be struggled with. And having sat to his left and having enclosed the useless tip of his [opponent's left] foot in the crook [of his left knee], he was not suffering the ball joint of the [opponent's right] ankle to remain in its socket by means of a forcible twisting out. (2.6.4)

This is the part of the text that has posed the greatest challenge to interpreters. The interpretation presented here not only best fits the text, but was also practically confirmed by moves worked out in live grappling practice.¹² From his position on hands and knees, Arrachion kicked back with his right leg, dislodging the instep of his opponent's right foot (*eklaktisas ... ton tarson tou podos*).¹³ In the following clause – *from under which he was posing a threat to it* ('*uph*' '*ou ekinduneuen autō*) – the pronouns both refer back to the dislodged instep or foot, now made vulnerable to an attack from Arrachion's position on the bottom.

The opponent's foot was particularly vulnerable to attack *because the crook of his knee was hanging there to the right* (*ta dexia kremannumenē ēdē tēs agkulēs*).¹⁴ The typical response to having the instep of a grapevined leg dislodged as described would be to try to hook it back under one's opponent to regain purchase for the choke hold. But before Arrachion's opponent could do that – in the split second his bent leg was just hanging in space – Arrachion struck, the perfect timing undoubtedly a part of his practiced *logismon*.

He *clutches that to his groin* (*ekeinon ... sunechei tō boubōni*), the instep (or foot) being the antecedent of *that* (*ekeinon*). This would have been accomplished by his reaching back with his right hand, snagging the opponent's loose foot, pulling it to his groin, and cupping his palm around the instep. Since the opponent's dislodged foot was now under Arrachion's control, it was *thus no longer anything to*

¹²The present writer has trained for several years in Brazilian jiu-jitsu, a grappling art in which the rear naked choke and ankle locks are both legal submission techniques. Since ankle locks are not legal submission techniques in judo – the grappling art with which Brophy was familiar – Brophy may not have given adequate consideration to the possibility that Arrachion's opponent may have been submitted with an ankle lock.

¹³Some understand *ton tarson tou podos* as referring to Arrachion's foot instead of his opponent's foot: "kicked back with the sole of his right foot" (Fairbanks); "Arrachion kicked away his own right foot" (Miller); "Arrachion kicked his foot free" (Sweet); and "Arrachion kicked back the sole of his [right] foot" (Tyrrell).

¹⁴Some understand the dangling bent leg to be Arrachion's instead of his opponent's: "for the latter kicked back with the sole of his right foot (as the result of which his right side was imperiled since now his knee was hanging unsupported)" (Fairbanks); "his own right side was imperiled, leaving the leg bent at the knee, dangling there" (Robinson); and "Arrachion kicked back the sole of his [right] foot. His right side was threatened as his bent leg was left dangling." (Tyrrell) The rationale seems to be that Arrachion's kicked-back dangling leg leaves him standing less balanced on only one leg.

be struggled with (*'ōs ouket' antipalon*).¹⁵ This recalls the narrator's earlier statement that pankratiasts have to wrestle or struggle with an ankle in order to apply an ankle lock. Thanks to Arrachion's perfectly timed move, however, he was able to snag the foot and get it into position to apply an ankle lock without such a struggle.

Arrachion then *sat* to his left, trapping the tip of his opponent's left foot in the crook of his left knee (*tois ... aristerois enizēsas kai to peritton akron tou podos enapokleisas tē agkulē*). The tip of the opponent's left foot is described as *useless* (*peritton*) because it no longer provides an effective anchor for the choke attempt but rather anchors the opponent in place for the impending dislocation of his right ankle. That Arrachion would have ended up sitting with his left leg folded under him with the tip of his opponent's left foot trapped in the crook of his left knee underscores the nuance of *enizēsas* as having the meaning of having sat *on* something.¹⁶ In this sitting position, Arrachion would have had his opponent's right foot in his lap, right palm cupped around the instep, forearm resting against the opponent's lower leg. By cupping his left palm over his right hand and pulling the opponent's instep up and in – while keeping his right forearm braced against the opponent's lower leg for leverage – Arrachion would have been able to dislocate the opponent's right ankle as described.¹⁷

ἡ γὰρ ψυχὴ ἀπιούσα τοῦ σώματος ἀδρανὲς μὲν αὐτὸ ἐργάζεται,
δίδωσι δὲ αὐτῷ ἰσχύειν εἰς ὃ ἀπερείδεται.

¹⁵ Failure to recognize that it was the opponent's foot or instep that Arrachion clutched to his groin makes for some awkward interpretations of *ekeinon ... sunechei tō boubōni 'ōs ouket' antipalon*: “then with his groin he holds his adversary tight” (Fairbanks); “holding his opponent at the groin” (Miller); “Arrachion held his opponent – who was not really an opponent any more – to his groin” (Poliakoff); “Arrhichion seized his opponent at the groin so he could no longer resist” (Robinson); “he held him tightly to his groin – no longer an opponent –” (Sweet); and “Arrichion gripped his opponent with his groin so that he no longer resisted” (Tyrrell).

¹⁶ Other meanings attached to *tois ... aristerois enizēsas* include “throwing his weight down toward the left” (Fairbanks); “toppled over to his left side” (Harris); “fell heavily to the left” (Miller); “leaning to his left” (Poliakoff); “sank down on him to the left” (Robinson); “bending to his left side” (Sweet); and “throwing his weight to his left” (Tyrrell).

¹⁷ Gardiner is the only interpreter of those cited who understands Arrachion to have manually seized his opponent's right ankle in order to dislocate it. Fairbanks, Harris, Poliakoff, and Tyrrell understand the opponent's right ankle to have been dislocated as a result of being caught in the crook of Arrachion's right knee. Miller has the opponent's left ankle dislocated as a result of being caught in the crook of Arrachion's left knee. And Sweet has the opponent's left ankle dislocated as a result of being caught in the crook of Arrachion's right knee.

For on the one hand, when his soul left his body, it produced the effect of draining it of its strength; yet on the other hand, it gave it the strength to be fixed steadily upon that which it was trying to accomplish. (2.6.4)

Again, this is not an accurate, objective clinical assessment of the situation, but rather an after the fact rationalization of how someone whose senses are supposedly succumbing to “sleep-like death” could nonetheless manage to execute a spectacular submission move: his soul’s slipping free of its mortal coils fleetingly energized him. Such a rationalization is needed to explain the anomaly of Arrachion’s suddenly dropping dead from the effects of a choke without first going unconscious – in which case he wouldn’t have been able to submit his opponent.

In the three decades following the publication of Brophy’s article, a substantial body of medical literature has developed around a sudden death in athletes phenomenon in which even elite athletes may suddenly and unexpectedly experience a fatal heart stoppage during or just after competition or training.¹⁸ Since the new reading of Philostratus does not support a neck-breaking mishap from a standing position – or any other kind of fatal trauma¹⁹ – an incidence of the

¹⁸) For a recent treatment of the subject including an extensive bibliography, see PIGOZZI/RIZZO 2008.

¹⁹) BROPHY (1978, 380) correctly points out that the accounts do not call attention to any kind of blow to the throat that might have had fatal consequences. Although the present writer’s research did turn up a forensic report on a delayed death following injury suffered during strangulation (SIMPSON et al., 1987), the victim first went unconscious and suffered injury only because the choke hold was maintained for several minutes thereafter.

A couple of studies by KOIWAI (1981, 1987) prove most informative. One (1987) discusses a number of fatalities resulting from the use of the rear naked choke by law enforcement personnel in the course of subduing resisting subjects. The other (1981) discusses documented instances of fatalities from any cause occurring during judo training or competition. Of the nineteen documented judo fatalities, not a single one was attributable to a rear naked choke or any other kind of choke. It would appear that although a fatal outcome may result when a rear naked choke is applied to an agitated subject struggling to resist arrest, the potential for a fatal outcome is virtually nil when the rear naked choke is applied under controlled conditions to an experienced grappler used to dealing with being attacked with a rear naked choke.

Had the rear naked choke applied by Arrachion’s opponent been effectively set, the consequence of Arrachion’s refusal to submit should have been unconsciousness at most – in which case he wouldn’t have been able to submit his opponent by dislocating his ankle.

sudden death in athletes phenomenon may prove to be the best explanation for what befell Arrachion.

Clarence A. Forbes, discussing fatalities in Greek athletics, cites a couple of instances of what would now be recognized as classic examples of the sudden death in athletes phenomenon:

“Finally we must mention the dramatic deaths that sometimes overtook athletes at the moment of victory. The combined physical strain and nervous excitement of competition, particularly at the great games, would inevitably have disastrous effects once in a while, although the athletes were carefully trained and their physical condition was thoroughly checked over. The strain on a pentathlete in Olympic competition would be just about the supreme test of endurance, and we are not surprised to hear that the Spartan pentathlete Aenetus died just as the crown of wild olive was being placed on his head. Aelian tells of a somewhat similar case: an unnamed athlete of Croton won an Olympic victory, started to walk towards the Hellanodicae for his crown, and dropped dead with what was apparently heart failure.”²⁰

What Forbes – writing over six decades ago – attributed to a combination of physical strain and nervous excitement would now be attributed by medical experts to identified cardiovascular defects that may unexpectedly trigger fatal episodes during or just after athletic exertion. The conditions under which Arrachion met his end – having just convincingly submitted his opponent with a practiced signature move – have more in common with the sudden and unexpected post-victory deaths of Aenetas and the unnamed athlete from Croton than with a death from a rear naked choke or any other trauma that may have been inflicted during the fight.

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²⁰FORBES 1943, 58–59; Paus. 3.18.7; Ael. *V.H.* 9.31.

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Aging, Athletics and Epinician

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This paper examines the relationship between aging and athletics in epinician and contemporary athletic discourse more generally. Central to epinician, as well as to dedications, vases and oral legends, is the image of the ageless athlete. Although this image is informed by a highly negative idea of aging in some lyric poetry, epinician also articulates a positive vision of old age, first, through descriptions of the old age that athletes can expect, and, second, through descriptions of equestrian victors, all of whom were beyond the age of athletic competition. Epinician's vision of old age remains, however, constrained by the central figure of the ageless athlete, with its typical repertoire of models and themes, and fails to offer a realistic sense of aging and physical decline.

οὗτος ἐγὼ ταχὺτάτι ·
χεῖρες δὲ καὶ ἦτορ ἴσον. φύονται δὲ καὶ νέοις
ἐν ἀνδράσιν πολιαί
θαμάκι παρὰ τὸν ἀλικίας εἰκότα χρόνον.

This is how fast I am. / My hands and heart are a match. Often
on young men also / grow grey hairs / before the proper moment
in life. (Pind., *Ol.* 4.24–7)¹

In Pindar's *Olympian* 4, these words are delivered by 'the son of Clymenus' as he steps forward to claim the prize for the race in armor held as part of the Argonauts' games on Lemnos. The Lemnian women have mocked him for his grey hair, presumably scorning him as too old and weak to couple with them, but his victory in the contest serves as proof that he belongs among the "young men". Grey hair turns out to be misleading, but victory is unambiguous. Grey hair or no, the Argonaut cannot be old because he has won the race.

*) Sincere thanks to the Reed College Lankford Grant for Research in the Humanities, which funded this work, and also to the anonymous reader for *Nikephoros*, whose expertise, particularly in vases, enriched the final version of this paper.

¹) Text is from B. SNELL/H. MAEHLER (Eds.), *Pindarus: Pars I: Epinicia*, Leipzig 1987. All translations are our own. On the function of this myth, see N. NICHOLSON, *Pindar's Olympian 4: Psaimis and Camarina after the Deinomenids*, in: *CPhil.* 106, 2011, 93–114. Abbreviations are those of *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd ed., S. HORNBLLOWER/A. SPAWFORTH (Eds.), Oxford 1996.

The binary structure of this logic is striking. The son of Clymenus is either young and in his prime, or old and past his prime. There is no middle ground, no sense that an athlete might be both older but still a very fine runner, perhaps in his mid-thirties; athletics is simply the business of men termed “young”. An athlete’s prime appears as a single, shapeless condition, without gradations and radically distinct from the years of a man’s physical decline. All fine athletes are young; everyone else is old. What happens in between is a mystery.²

The shape of old age – who counts as old, what behaviors are considered definitive of it, the logic that governs its deployment – varies from culture to culture, and even within cultures, contingent on larger social, economic and political factors,³ and it is the goal of this paper to trace how the relation between athletics and aging was conceptualized in the athletic discourses of Pindar’s time, particularly in epinician itself. Epinician is the key element in this study, partly because it offers the most abundant evidence for this period, and partly because it offers a more complex picture of old age than other contemporary media.

The first part of this paper will examine the difficult relationship between aging and athletics in the discourses most associated with athletics, including epinician. Central to these discourses was the figure of the ageless athlete, free from injury and decline, and unencumbered by fatherhood, and this figure deprived these discourses of a realistic sense of aging and physical decline. Parts Two and Three will examine epinician’s innovative attempts to integrate old age into the world of athletics, first, through explicit descriptions of the old age that athletic victors could expect, and, second, through its treatment of equestrian victory. Through these strategies, epinician certainly offered its patrons a more positive vision of old age than other contemporary media, but a final part will argue, through a reading stressing the strangeness of Pindar’s *Pythians* 1 and 3, that, for all its efforts to incorporate old age, the privilege that epinician accorded the figure of the ageless athlete meant that it failed to adequately address aging and physical decline.

Aging has received increasing attention in recent years, and several studies trace how old age is treated in archaic Greek culture, but little

²) ‘Athletics’ is used here to mean only gymnastic, not equestrian contests. Equestrian competition will be considered in Part III. On depictions of the hoplite race on vases, see n. 13 below.

³) T. FALKNER/J. DE LUCE, *A View from Antiquity: Greece, Rome, and Elders*, in: T. COLE/D. VAN TASSEL/R. KASTENBAUM (Eds.), *Handbook of the Humanities and Aging*, New York 1992, 5. Cf. T. FALKNER, *The Poetics of Old Age in Greek Epic, Lyric, and Tragedy*, Norman 1995, xv–xix.

attention has been paid to epinician or the aging athlete. Epinician is omitted from the studies of old age in archaic literature of Falkner and Brandt,⁴ and, while Preisshofen recognizes some of the innovations in epinician's representation of old age, his study is limited in two respects.⁵ First, it considers epinician only within the context of poetry, and so does not relate epinician's treatment of aging to the figure of the ageless athlete that was central to epinician and contemporary athletic discourse generally. Second, it does not differentiate the athletes from the equestrian victors, who, as Golden has argued, were beyond the age of athletics, and yet, as will be argued below, were treated in remarkably similar terms to the athletes.⁶ What Preisshofen misses, therefore, is the complexity of epinician's treatment of aging, the contradiction between its privileging of the figure of the ageless athlete and its promotion of a positive vision of old age, and the way that the figure of the ageless athlete informs, and limits, its vision of old age. Epinician certainly did offer a more positive vision of life beyond athletics to its patrons, as Preisshofen argues, but, constrained by a key figure of its ideology, it never found a place for bodily decline.

1. Aging and Athletics

In the figure of Odysseus the epic tradition offers a nuanced idea of an athlete's biography and, indeed, of aging in general. Odysseus competes on three occasions in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, in a discus competition on Phaeacia, in the boxing match against Irus and in the running race at the funeral games of Patroclus. Odysseus' superiority is never questioned; his discus throw far outdistances those of the Phaeacians (*Od.* 8.186–99), he quickly fells Irus, even though he holds back (*Od.* 18.66–109), and Antilochus observes that he is second only to Achilles in speed (*Il.* 23.790–2). But on each occasion, he is matched against younger opponents, a circumstance that gives

⁴ FALKNER, *Poetics* (vd. n. 3), H. BRANDT, *Wird auch silbern mein Haar: eine Geschichte des Alters in der Antike*, Munich 2002. H. BRANDT, *Am Ende des Lebens: Alter, Tod und Suizid in der Antike*, Munich 2010, 75–6, notes the stories of athlete suicides. The brief summary of E. BALTRUSCH, *An den Rand gedrängt. Altersbilde im Klassischen Athen*, in: A. GUTSFELD/W. SCHMITZ (Eds.), *Am schlimmsten Rand des Lebens? Altersbilder in der Antike*, Cologne 2003, 58–62, also omits epinician.

⁵ F. PREISSHOFEN, *Untersuchungen zur Darstellung des Greisenalters in der frühgriechischen Dichtung*, Wiesbaden 1977, 93–109.

⁶ M. GOLDEN, *Sport and Society in Ancient Greece*, Cambridge 1998, 117–23.

confidence to his opponents. Irus taunts him that he might not want to fight a “younger man” (*νεωτέρῳ ἀνδρὶ*, 18.31.), while the Phaeacian competitors address him as “father” (*πάτερ*, 8.145) and Antilochus describes him as a generation older (23.787–91). Although Odysseus proves that he is not yet seriously hampered by his age, the vagaries of his superior body are emphasized in one episode. After boasting to the Phaeacians that he would win any event against them, he twice notes how his toils have broken down his body (8.154–5, 182–4) and expresses concern that his poor rations at sea have so loosened his knees that he might lose at running (8.230–3). With Odysseus intrudes the idea of the older athlete, what Antilochus terms, with some exaggeration, the time when old age is still raw (*ᾠμογέροντα*, *Il.* 23.791).⁷

In the person of Odysseus, therefore, are communicated two notions about athletes: first, that an athlete’s prime extends over a long period, so that there can be considerable age differences between competitors; and, second, that an athlete’s abilities are not constant, but can be compromised by circumstances. Such notions are, however, entirely absent from the discourses most associated with the practice of athletics in the late archaic and early classical periods. In place of the complex, aging Odyssean body is found instead a simple, static body not subject to aging or variations in its abilities.

In memorials, the adult athlete appears as ageless. Epinician odes certainly distinguish youth competitors explicitly and through an emphasis on their beauty,⁸ but adult athletes belong to a single uniform age. No adult athletes are represented as older than their competitors (though many surely were). No victory is given particular praise because of the advanced age at which a competitor achieved it (despite the fact that very young victors may be praised for winning in the open categories).⁹ And there is no sense that older competitors compete with different skills, say, more strength and cunning, but less agility. The athlete’s failure to age is encoded in epinician’s most foundational symbol, Heracles. Instead of aging, Heracles wins immortal life among the gods, with *Hebe*, the personification of the prime of life, as his bride.¹⁰ Where in the *Odyssey* the aging Odysseus

⁷ FALKNER, *Poetics* (vd. n. 3) 3–51 argues that Odysseus represents a peculiar temporality in epic.

⁸ See I. PFEIFFER, *Athletic Age Categories in Victory Odes*, in: Nikephoros 11, 1998, 21–38.

⁹ E. g. Pind. *Ol.* 9.89–94. Cf. Nicasyllus of Rhodes (Paus. 6.14.1–2), dated tentatively by L. MORETTI, *Olympionikai. I vincitori negli antichi agoni Olimpici*, Rome 1957 (MAL 8.2), 177 to c. 464.

¹⁰ Pind. *Nem.* 1.69–72, 10.17–18, *Isthm.* 4.58–60. On the age connoted by *hebe*, see below. Heracles’ opposition to aging is visually depicted in five vases from the

is married to the aging Penelope, in epinician the ageless Heracles is forever wedded to his prime.

The statues dedicated at sanctuaries promoted an equally ageless idea of the athlete. The *kouros*-type statues that were dedicated in the latter part of the sixth century were remarkable for their sameness,¹¹ but even the more fluid statues of the fifth century followed a standard physique. Competitors in different events were distinguished only by poses or pieces of equipment, not by different body types, and no attempt was made to convey the age of the athlete beyond whether he was victorious in the boys' or the open category.¹² Panathenaic vases and the many vases that depicted athletic scenes show some interest in distinguishing the physiques of the heavy athletes from the runners, but, with one interesting exception (provided by a depiction of the hoplite race, itself something of an exceptional event), they show no interest in articulating distinctions within the age groups.¹³ Along with

first half of the fifth century that depict Heracles in conflict with Geras, an emaciated personification of Old Age. On two vases Heracles is chasing Geras; on two more, he is beating him; and on a third, they are conversing, but Heracles is threatening him (ΚΑΑΥΣΕΙ, "You will be sorry.") See H. SHAPIRO, *Geras*, in: LIMC IV, 1988, 180–2, BRANDT, *Geschichte* (vd. n. 4) 25–6, and R. GARLAND, *The Eye of the Beholder. Deformity and Disability in the Graeco-Roman World*, 2nd ed., London 2010, 118, 197.

¹¹ R. NEER, *Delphi, Olympia, and the Art of Politics*, in: H. SHAPIRO (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Archaic Greece*, Cambridge 2007, 230. On regional differences, see J. HURWIT, *The Art and Culture of Early Greece, 1100–480 B.C.*, Ithaca 1985, 199.

¹² R. SMITH, *Pindar, Athletes and the Early Greek Statue Habit*, in: S. HORNBLOWER/C. MORGAN (Eds.), *Pindar's Poetry, Patrons, and Festivals: From Archaic Greece to the Roman Empire*, Oxford 2007, 116–22. Painted facial hair may have distinguished men from youths; see HURWIT (vd. n. 11) 275–6.

¹³ For Panathenaic vases, see, e. g., New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 16.71; Karlsruhe, Badisches Landesmuseum, 65.45; Malibu, J. Paul Getty Museum, 86.AE.71; and S. MATHESON, *Panathenaic Amphorae by the Kleophrades Painter*, in: *Greek Vases in the J. Paul Getty Museum* 4, 1989, 107–9. For non-Panathenaic vases, e. g., London, British Museum, 295; Würzburg, Martin von Wagner Museum, L328. For the exception, see London E818, a red-figure drinking cup, and J. SWADDLING, *The Ancient Olympic Games*, 2nd ed., Austin, TX., 1999, 59. A bearded victor looks back at a beardless competitor who has dropped his shield after passing the finishing post, perhaps a sign of a collision or a gesture of disgust. Requiring greater strength than the simple running races, the hoplite race may have been kinder to older competitors, but the victors were nevertheless predominantly younger. On vases, competitors are typically beardless, and one known victor, Telesicrates of Cyrene, who won the Pythian hoplite race in 474, won the Pythian stadion race eight years later (schol. *ad Pyth.* 9, inscr. a, b, A. DRACHMANN [Ed.], *Scholia Vetera in Pindari Carmina*, 3 vols., Leipzig 1903, 2.220–1). What does seem to be clear, however, given Pindar's *Olympian* 4 and the London cup, is that the hoplite race provided an unusual point of entry into questions of aging.

increased size, a beard, a standard symbol of the open contests, was used to mark out adult competitors, but no further distinctions were made.¹⁴ This lack of distinction is particularly striking in the combat events, given the great popularity of the figure of the aging boxer in Hellenistic and Imperial sources. So popular did this figure become that Vergil made one of the boxers in his funeral games in the *Aeneid* an aging champion – strong, but heavy on his feet and no longer keen to compete. Neither of the competitors in the *Iliad*'s boxing match is older.¹⁵

Just as victory memorials offered no sense that some adult competitors were older than others, so they also gave no indication that an athlete's physical condition might be better or worse at different times. No victory memorial makes any reference to injury, for example. Of course, victorious athletes generally win their victories without being injured, but they often have a history of injury or have been forced to retire after their victories because of injury, both of which circumstances we might expect to be noted in the occasional victory memorial. An Imperial inscription from Aphrodisias, for example, records one great athlete's career-ending injury along with his victories.¹⁶ Victory odes certainly privilege narratives that describe how an athlete has overcome some past adversity or failure, whether exile, family loss, family athletic failure, or some sort of bad draw, but injuries do not appear as one such obstacle overcome by the victor.¹⁷ This silence should be correlated with the agelessness of the adult athlete traced above. The athlete's condition is static and singular; just as his body does not age, so it does not wax or wane with injury or illness.

Victors also appear freed from the biological rhythms of life. Although epinician speaks of children in a variety of contexts, even (as we shall see) of the victor's future descendants, actual children are never introduced with athletic victors. This is not just true in odes for youth victors, such as Pindar's *Olympian* 10, where the boy victor is compared to Ganymede, a figure who was removed from the usual

¹⁴) At some festivals the youth category below the open contests was referred to as the "beardless" category. See GOLDEN (vd. n.6) 104–12.

¹⁵) Verg. *Aen.* 5.394–400. Cf. Amycus in Theoc. 22.44–52 and the Terme boxer of c. 100 B. C. E. now in the Palazzo Massimo in Rome. See further J. KÖNIG, *Athletics and Literature in the Roman Empire*, Cambridge 2005, 102–32.

¹⁶) L. ROBERT, *Aphrodisias II*, in: *Hellenica* 13, 1965, 135–44. For athletic injuries in the 5th century, see Hippoc. *Art.* 2–4, 11, and a unique vase from c. 450, Athens inv. no. 12237 (G. NICOLE, *Catalogue des vases peints du Musée National d'Athènes. Supplement*, Paris 1911, 248–9).

¹⁷) Obstacles overcome: Pind. *Ol.* 12.12–16, *Nem.* 6.7–11, 61–3, *Isthm.* 7.37–9, *Bacchyl.* 11.24–36.

course of human life (99–105), but also in the odes for adult victors. The absence of children in Pindar's ode for Diagoras of Rhodes is particularly striking. At least two of his sons, Damagetos and Akousilaos, had already been born and the mythical narrative about Helios lays considerable emphasis on his large family, but Diagoras himself is not said to have children.¹⁸ Similarly marriage seems not to be a feature of the epinician athlete's life. Marriage is a common enough theme in the imagery or myths of epinician; indeed, victory itself is often figured as a marriage. But this figure serves rather to remove the victor from marriage, as the victor is represented as marrying not a human, but glory or fame. Victory, in fact, substitutes for marriage, as its glory will do the work of children in perpetuating the victor's name.¹⁹ Marriage or children would not necessarily age a victor, but they would tie him to life, since they represent the mortal's response to his inevitable aging and death; without marriage and children the victor seems to live outside of human time.

The absence of Diagoras' children in his epinician ode contrasts with the situation at Olympia, where the victor statues of Diagoras, Damagetos, Akousilaos, a third son and a grandson were set up next to each other.²⁰ Other family groups were also on view in Olympia in the same period: Theopompus of Heraea, victor in the pentathlon, dedicated statues of himself and his father, Damaretus, victor in the first two hoplite races in 520 and 516, on the same pedestal, while the son of Glaucus of Carystus, Philon, a two-time Olympic boxing champion, dedicated both his own and his father's statues and had them placed together.²¹ Yet, as these two examples show, these groups were not a radical departure from the regular practice of epinician or Olympia,

¹⁸) Pind. *Ol.* 7.71–6. Diagoras' Olympic victory dates to 464, Damagetos' first to 452 and Akousilaos' to 448, so that both children must be born by the time of their father's victory. Sons are named in some equestrian odes: Pind. *Pyth.* 1.58, 6.15, *Isthm.* 2.1, 31.

¹⁹) E. g. Pind. *Ol.* 7.1–10, *Pyth.* 9.67–75, 103–25, *Isthm.* 4.19–24. For glory as a bride, see A. CARSON, *Wedding at Noon in Pindar's Ninth Pythian*, in: GRBS 23, 1982, 121–8, C. BROWN, *The Bridegroom and the Athlete*, in: D. GERBER (Ed.), *Greek Poetry and Philosophy: Studies in Honor of Leonard Woodbury*, Chico 1984, 37–50.

²⁰) Paus. 6.7.1–3.

²¹) Theopompus: Paus. 6.10.4–5, with MORETTI, *Olympionikai* (vd. n. 9) 85. Glaucus: Paus. 6.9.4–6.10.3; F. RAUSA, *L'immagine del vincitore: L'athleta nella statuaria greca dall'età arcaica all'ellenismo*, Rome 1994, 46–7; SMITH (vd. n. 12) 99; also J. FONTENROSE, *The Hero as Athlete*, in: *California Studies in Classical Antiquity* 1, 1968, 100. The visual link between the two statues was broken by the dedication of Agametos of Mantinea's statue; *contra* MORETTI, *Olympionikai* (vd. n. 9) 80, this must date after 488.

since the groups should be understood not as grouping victors with their sons, but as grouping victors with their fathers. The fathers did nothing to promote the vision of themselves as fathers; Diagoras' victor statue was a regular victor statue (apparently depicted in prayer), and Glaucus and Damaretus made no dedications at all.²² That they had children is only revealed because their sons also won and then chose to create memorials that grouped the family together, and this insistence on linking victors to their forebears, particularly those with success in the games, is typical of epinician also. The agelessness of the victor comes not from not having parents, but from the liberation from time that his victory represents.²³

The clearest examples of ageless athletes come in a different medium, however, that of the oral legends circulated about great athletes, typically combat athletes, but also athletes in other disciplines. These legends are mostly attested in much later sources but, as Bruno Currie has argued, the existence of athlete cults in this period offers solid evidence that the genre as a whole dated to this time; in some if not most cases, the athletes themselves, or their families, probably actively encouraged their transformation into legends through dramatic performances, much as other athletes nurtured their fame by commissioning odes and setting up dedications.²⁴ These oral legends were a narrative medium, telling stories about the athletes constituted out of various recurrent motifs, and they typically conclude with the athlete's sudden death.²⁵ These deaths might occur at the time of a victory, whether during the crowning, on the way home, or at the climax of the contest itself, or during a heroic (though not necessarily positive) task, such as fighting in war, tearing down a school or propping up a large tree, undertaken by the athlete after his victory.²⁶ But, at

²² According to schol. *ad Ol.* 7, inscr. c, (DRACHMANN [vd. n. 13] 1.197), the statue reached out its right hand.

²³ Diagoras' family grouping did, however, profoundly affect the oral legends circulated about him. See below, n. 28.

²⁴ B. CURRIE, *Euthymos of Locri: A Case Study in Heroization in the Classical Period*, in: JHS 122, 2002, 24–44, B. CURRIE, *Pindar and the Cult of Heroes*, Oxford 2005, 130–33.

²⁵ FONTENROSE (vd. n. 21), K. CROTTY, *Song and Action: The Victory Odes of Pindar*, Baltimore 1982, 122–38 and L. KURKE, *The Economy of Kudos*, in: C. DOUGHERTY/L. KURKE (Eds.), *Cultural Poetics in Archaic Greece: Cult, Performance, Politics*, Cambridge 1993, 149–53 analyze recurrent patterns in some of these legends.

²⁶ Crowning: unnamed Crotoniate, likely sixth or early fifth century (Ael. *VH* 9.31. MORETTI, *Olympionikai* [vd. n. 9] 178); perhaps Aenetus of Amyclae (Paus. 3.18.7, C. FORBES, *Accidents and Fatalities in Greek Athletics*, in: *Classical Studies in Honor of William Abbott Oldfather*, Urbana, Ill., 1943, 58–9; MORETTI,

whatever specific moment it occurs, the typical death strikes the athlete at the peak of his powers.²⁷ This death is thus also a constitutive element of the figure of the ageless athlete, preventing his decline and foreclosing the possibility of marriage, fatherhood and a life beyond athletics.²⁸

There were certainly other stories told about these athletes, but it seems that athlete legends that featured an early death were repeated more often and more widely. The Glaucus that the Attic orators appeal to looks like the simplistic figure of legend who destroyed his opponents with his plow shot on his first trip to Olympia, not the flesh and blood Glaucus who was frequently defeated and died in Sicily after being put in charge of Camarina by Gelon.²⁹ Similarly, the Milo of

Olympionikai [vd. n. 9] 175 tentatively dates to a later period). Way Home: Ladas, victor in the long-distance run in 460 (MORETTI, *Olympionikai* [vd. n. 9] 96); perhaps Nicasyllus of Rhodes (above, n. 9). Contest: Arrichion of Phigalia (Paus. 8.40.1–2, R. BROPHY, *Deaths in the Pan-Hellenic Games: Arrichion and Creugas*, in *AJPhil.* 99, 1978, 363–82); cf. also schol. *ad* Pind. *Ol.* 5.34b, DRACHMANN (vd. n. 13) 1.148 (“very many competitors died in the stadium”), perhaps reflecting many lost stories, if not the truth (FORBES [vd. n. 26] 50 n. 1). Heroic labors: Philippus of Croton (Hdt. 5.47, MORETTI, *Olympionikai* [vd. n. 9] 76); Cleomedes of Astypalaea (Paus. 6.9.6–8, MORETTI, *Olympionikai* [vd. n. 9] 82); Milo of Croton (Paus. 6.14.5–8); and the later Polydamas of Scotussa (Paus. 6.5.4–9). Cleomedes and Diognetus of Crete kill their opponents (Paus. 6.10.6; FONTENROSE [vd. n. 21] 73–4, 89).

²⁷ Euthyklus of Western Locri dies after he serves on an embassy (Callim. fr. 84–85 Pf., with the *diegesis*), but the typical shape of the genre makes it likely that this embassy occurred soon after his victory, serving to continue the narrative of that victory. The legends of Euthymus of Western Locri (Paus. 6.6.7–11) and Glaucus (Paus. 6.10.1–3) also end with their deaths; how and when Glaucus died is left obscure, but Euthymus is said to have died in extreme old age. No account is given of his life beyond his prime, however. A second exception is Teisamenos, whose legend follows him into a second career as a seer (Hdt. 9.33–35, FONTENROSE [vd. n. 21] 94–5, KURKE [vd. n. 25] 135–6), but, as the legend makes clear, he is really a seer, and not a true athlete.

²⁸ Neither marriage nor fatherhood feature in the typical narrative. Euthymus does marry (Paus. 6.6.7–11), but his marriage is primarily a symbol of the community’s liberation and does not issue in children. A true exception to this pattern are the legends telling how Diagoras lived to see his sons victorious at Olympia (Cic. *Tusc.* 1.46.111, Plut. *Pel.* 34, Gell. 3.15.3, Paus. 6.7.1–3). In these accounts, Diagoras is not born of a god and does not complete any heroic deeds (beyond his victory), face any disrespect, or die in his prime. Typical legends did circulate about Diagoras, however; see schol. *ad* Pind. *Ol.* 7, inscr. a and c, and CURRIE, *Cult* (vd. n. 24) 122.

²⁹ Aeschin. *In Ctes.* 189 and Dem. *De Cor.* 319. Glaucus’ single victory at Olympia (Paus. 6.10.2–3) is a comparatively weak record for a great fighter, inflated by later authorities into something more suitable (*Suda*, s. v. *Γλαῦκος*; *Λέξεις Ρητορικαί* s. v. *Γλαῦκος Καρύστιος*, *Lexica Segueriana*, I. BEKKER [Ed.], *Anecdota*

Aristotle, with his vast diet, is the circus strongman of his athlete legend, not Herodotus' Crotoniate powerbroker who lives to be the father-in-law of Democedes.³⁰

Across a wide variety of media, therefore, the athlete was consistently portrayed as somehow standing outside of time. Athletes formed a simple homogeneous group – the same age, free from decline or injury, and outside the normal biological rhythms of life, with no need for marriage or children. More realistic versions were also circulated, but the discourse of athletics was dominated by the ageless athlete.

This figure was underwritten by the larger cultural discourse of aging, as evidenced by archaic lyric poetry. Ian Morris has divided lyric poetry into two types, elitist and middling.³¹ His analysis has been criticized as unduly schematic and an “unwarranted politicization of life style” that focuses too much on relating behaviors to support of or opposition to the polis,³² but, while individual poems (as we would expect) often mix elitist and middling motifs, Morris' politicization of material culture is welcome,³³ and his broad sketch of the differences between his two types of lyric holds up well. Morris argues that elitist lyric, such as the poetry of Mimnermus, Sappho, Alcaeus and Anacreon, privileged luxury, love, beauty, ‘the east’, close connections to the gods and athletics, while middling poets, such as Solon, Tyrtaeus, Hipponax and Xenophanes, scorned these things, and focused instead on moderation, the community of male citizens, and direct civic utility. One further point of difference that Morris does not consider concerns aging. Elitist lyric promotes an intensely binary vision of life; it divides life into two pieces, *hebe*, or the prime of life, and old age, with nothing in between but a sharp drop. Most of Mimnermus' surviving poetry starkly opposes *hebe* to old age. *Hebe* is a time of pleasure and love, encapsulated in the repeated image of the “flowers of *hebe*” (ἤβητος ἄνθεα); the flower soon withers, however,

Graeca, Vol. 1, Graz 1965, 227). For his death in Sicily, see schol. 429 A (DILTS *ad* Aesch., *Ctes.* 189, with N. LURAGHI, *Tirannidi arcaiche in Sicilia e Magna Grecia da Panezio di Leontini alla caduta dei Dinomenidi*, Florence 1994, 276 n. 14.

³⁰) Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1106 b (with GOLDEN [vd. n. 6] 157–8), Hdt. 3.137. While Milo dies young according to Paus. 6.14.5–8, Cic. *Sen.* 9.27 has him haunting gymnasias and complaining of his “dead” shoulders in his old age.

³¹) I. MORRIS, *Archaeology as Cultural History: Words and Things in Iron Age Greece*, Malden, Mass., 2000, 155–91.

³²) D. HAMMER, *Ideology, the Symposium, and Archaic Politics*, in: *AJPhil.* 125, 2004, 491–503. Cf. also C. ANTONACCIO, *Hybridity and the Cultures within Greek Culture*, in: C. DOUGHERTY/L. KURKE (Eds.), *The Cultures within Ancient Greek Culture: Contact, Conflict and Collaboration*, Cambridge 2003, 63–4.

³³) See, e. g., ANTONACCIO (vd. n. 32) 61–5.

and what follows is old age, a time not of gradual decline, but of immediate pain, ugliness, disease and social exclusion. Even death is preferable.³⁴ Other elite poems, such as those of Ibycus, Anacreon and Sappho, treat the boundary with somewhat less horror and more detachment, but the fundamental division of life into two separate parts remains intact.³⁵ Life is still conceived of as consisting of two plateaux, with a huge and incomprehensible drop between them; no idea of middle age, and no sense of how one transitions from *hebe* to old age, is articulated.³⁶

The ageless athlete fits easily into this context. Although this lyric tradition is in many ways obsessed with old age, it offers no sense of aging. Its notion of *hebe* has the same static and ageless quality of the adult athlete in the discourses examined above. Although the individual is expected to become old, *hebe* itself is constant, and there is no sense of a gradual decline or movement towards old age. Old age just arrives, with all its pains and burdens, and one moment you are in your prime, the next shapeless and diseased.

This sense of disconnection between *hebe* and old age is intensified by a tendency to shorten the time covered by *hebe* so that it seems to cover only the very brief moment when a youth becomes a man. Although, for example, in the *Odyssey* Odysseus can claim to be in his *hebe* when he is around forty, in one poem Mimnermus speaks of *hebe* as “short-lived, like a dream” (*ὀλιγοχρόνιον ... ὡσπερ ὄναρ*) and wishes that it lasted longer, and in another poem makes clear that the

³⁴ Mimnermus 1–6 W. PREISSHOFEN (vd. n. 5) 86–90, FALKNER, *Poetics* (vd. n. 3) 128–139, BRANDT, *Geschichte* (vd. n. 4) 35–6. For social exclusion, see Mimnermus 1.9 W, and FALKNER, *Poetics* (vd. n. 3) 130–9. The particularly negative view of old age fits with elitist lyric’s claim to closeness to the gods, since in epic old age horrifies gods more than humans. See PREISSHOFEN (vd. n. 5) 6–19, FALKNER, *Poetics* (vd. n. 3) 121–8. Cf. also *Thgn.* 272, 527–8, 768, 985–8, 1007–12, 1069–70, 1131–2, with PREISSHOFEN (vd. n. 5) 90–3, and BRANDT, *Geschichte* (vd. n. 4) 31–2.

³⁵ Many of the lyrics of Anacreon and Ibycus explored the unsuitability of the old to the activities of the young; see e. g. Anac. *PMG* 358, 378, 395, 417–8, Ibyc. *PMG* 286–7, with PREISSHOFEN (vd. n. 5) 67–4. FALKNER, *Poetics* (vd. n. 3) 139–47 and BRANDT, *Geschichte* (vd. n. 4) 35–6 see more of a challenge to this boundary in Anacreon. The recently reconstructed “Tithonus poem” of Sappho can be added to this group. While a shorter, bleaker version became a classic poem for symposia, the longer version lamented old age, but found comfort in luxury. See FALKNER, *Poetics* (vd. n. 3) 102–7, D. BOEDEKER, *No way out? Aging in the New (and Old) Sappho*, in: E. GREENE/M. SKINNER (Eds.), *The New Sappho on Old Age: Textual and Philosophical Issues*, Washington, DC., 2009, 71–83.

³⁶ PREISSHOFEN (vd. n. 5) 87, FALKNER, *Poetics* (vd. n. 3) 131, C. GILLEARD, *Old Age in Ancient Greece: Narratives of desire, narratives of disgust*, in: *Journal of Aging Studies* 21, 2007, 87–8.

floral imagery for *hebe* signifies, among other things, its brevity.³⁷ In Pindar's epinicians, *hebe* is the time when a man is ready to be tested, but this time is again likened to a flower and telescoped down to the moment when manhood begins: Pelops turns his mind to Oenomaus' challenge when "toward the time of blooming growth" (*πρὸς εὐάνθεμον ... φύαν*, *Ol.* 1.67) his beard began to grow; Jason is described as in the flower of *hebe* (*Pyth.* 4.158) when he is twenty years old and ready to reclaim his honor (104); and Iamus too seeks a kingdom at the moment that he "plucked the fruit of joyful gold-crowned Hebe" (*τερπνᾶς δ' ἐπεὶ χρυσοστεφάνοιο λάβεν / καρπὸν Ἥβας*, *Ol.* 6.57–8). Such a vision of *hebe* leaves little room for adult victors, and leads to an unexpected greening of some of them, as odes occasionally reach back into the victor's past to the moment when he was on the cusp of manhood.³⁸

So brief a *hebe* makes the transition to old age even more problematic. Life is divided into two pieces, *hebe* and old age, but *hebe* often seems to cover no more than a year or two of manhood, while old age covers only the distant and decrepit end of life. Between them lies a vast silence. The elitist vision of life is not so much of two radically opposed plateaux, as of two radically opposed moments.

The middling poets certainly promoted other ideas of human life that offered a more connected and less Manichean vision of life. In his own persona Xenophanes offers a much more positive picture of the abilities of the old, lauding wisdom rather than beauty and youth. In his ideal symposium, old and young mix together.³⁹ But his vision is still fundamentally binary, opposing the young and the old, the wise and the athletic. For a more radical revision, we must turn to Solon, who not only lauds the virtues of the old, but also breaks life down into a series of ten hebdomads, through which different human abilities wax and waned. According to Solon, a man's prime is an extended state; *hebe* begins around fourteen years of age, the beard grows between twenty-one and twenty-eight, and the peak of strength is reached in the next seven years. The rest of life is also a complex map of shifting abilities. No term for "old age" is used.⁴⁰

³⁷) Hom. *Od.* 8.137–8, 181; Mimnermus 5.3–5 W, 2.1–5 W.

³⁸) Pind. *Ol.* 9 gives most attention to the victor's win at the games at Marathon, in which he was bumped up from the "beardless class" (89–94); *Isthm.* 4 concludes by looking back to the victor's win as a boy (67–72); *Nem.* 8, which is not for a youth (PFEIFFER [vd. n. 8] 27–38), nevertheless opens with an invocation to the erotic attraction of unwed maidens and boys (1–5).

³⁹) Xenophanes 1.22, 2.17–19, 8 W.

⁴⁰) Solon 20, 27 W, PREISSHOFEN (vd. n. 5) 81–5. BRANDT, *Geschichte* (vd. n. 4) 36–8 sees Solon as returning to a more Homeric idea of old age, but FALKNER,

As we might expect, however, such middling ideas had little purchase on the elitist field of athletics, which, as we have seen, was dominated by the figure of the ageless athlete. The athlete's agelessness was nurtured by significant institutional pressures, since agelessness was central to the figure's utility within aristocratic ideology; linking itself to the bodies of cult heroes, the figure offered a resonant symbol of aristocratic excellence.⁴¹ Aristocratic ideology was organized around a strict notion of class, that some people were better than others, and that this difference was significant, permanent and always in evidence.⁴² This permanent difference was encoded in narrative at the level of the body, in the figure of the simple, constant body of the epic hero. As Mikhail Bakhtin notes, as a character, the epic hero is finished and completed; "he has already become everything that he could become, and he could become only that which he has already become."⁴³ Epic heroes do not wax and wane, and, like the ageless athlete, they have no time for injury; such would compromise their ability to fulfill their full potential at every moment.⁴⁴

The figure of the ageless athlete is thus rooted in the bodily imagery of aristocratic ideology, its agelessness sustaining the notion of a constant, identifiable superiority. At the same time, however, the

Poetics (vd. n. 3) 153–68 and BALTRUSCH (vd. n. 4) 59–61 stress Solon's radical break with tradition. Brandt does not distinguish elitist from middling treatments of old age.

⁴¹ For the body as a key signifier of social relations, see P. STALLYBRASS/A. WHITE, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*, Ithaca, N.Y., 1986, 1–26 and J. PORTER, *Introduction*, in: J. PORTER (Ed.), *Constructions of the Classical Body*, Ann Arbor 1999, 12–13.

⁴² P. ROSE, *Sons of the Earth, Children of the Gods: Ideology and Literary Form in Ancient Greece*, Ithaca 1992, 159–63 argues that Pindar particularly associated this excellence with birth, but there is a more general move towards conceiving of excellence as inherited in both the family groupings of dedications (SMITH [vd. n. 12] 99) and the theme of divine birth in athlete legends (CURRIE, *Cult* [vd. n. 24] 130–1).

⁴³ M. BAKHTIN, *The Dialogic Imagination*, ed. and trans. M. HOLQUIST/C. EMERSON, Austin 1981, 34. The relation between hero cult and epic is complex. See G. NAGY, *The Best of the Achaeans: Concepts of the Hero in Archaic Greek Poetry*, Baltimore 1981, 67–210 and CURRIE, *Cult* (vd. n. 24) 27–200.

⁴⁴ That heroes either die or quickly recover in epic has been often noted. See, e. g., C. SALAZAR, *The Treatment of War Wounds in Graeco-Roman Antiquity*, Leiden 2000 (*Studies in Ancient Medicine*, 21), 128, J. GRIFFIN, *Homer on Life and Death*, Oxford 1980, 90, M. GRMEK, *Diseases in the Ancient Greek World*, trans. M. Muellner/L. Muellner, Baltimore 1989, 24. There are certainly older heroes in the *Iliad*, such as Nestor, but they are atypical (FALKNER, *Poetics* [vd. n. 3] 14), and not seen aging, being already old when the epic begins. For differences in the *Odyssey's* representation of old age, see FALKNER, *Poetics* (vd. n. 3) 34–46, and Part II.

figure must have caused significant conceptual and psychological problems for the athletes themselves as they found themselves aging. The legend of Timanthes of Cleonae offers some sense of how serious these problems were. Timanthes was a real Olympic victor, winning the pancration in 456, and, while his story reflects some motifs typical of the athlete legends, it may well be true; Timanthes' obvious emulation of Heracles looks like an effort to create around himself a typical story athlete legend and claim a hero cult.⁴⁵ Once Timanthes had retired from competition, Pausanias tells us with some disdain, he tested his strength daily by stringing a great bow. After an interruption in his schedule, he finds that he can no longer string the bow, and so "lit a fire and threw himself alive onto the pyre."⁴⁶

Timanthes does not see a future for himself beyond his physical prime. Once that begins to decline, he seeks instead the eternal *hebe* of Heracles. Given the failure (or refusal) of the various discourses of athletics to imagine an aging athlete or articulate a positive vision of middle age, his choice should seem less surprising than it did to Pausanias. Standing at the edge of the plateau of *hebe*, Timanthes preferred to kill himself than fall off the edge.

2. Epinician's "Rich Old Age"

On many occasions, epinician seems to adopt the highly negative view of old age found in elitist lyric poetry. Old age is "accursed" (*οὐλόμενον*, Pind. *Pyth.* 10.41) and "hateful" (*ἀπεχθόμενον*, Pind. *Nem.* 10.83), and mythical heroes, whether Castor, the Hyperboreans, Ganymede or Heracles, escape its horrors.⁴⁷ But on other occasions, epinician articulates a more positive vision. Drawing on the more measured vision of the *Iliad*, epinician revises the highly negative vision of old age promoted by elitist lyric, but does not challenge its

⁴⁵ CURRIE, *Cult* (vd. n. 24) 370–1. BRANDT, *Ende* (vd. n. 4) 75 is more doubtful. Even if untrue, the story likely dates c. 450 (CURRIE, *Cult* [vd. n. 24] 124–33), and so still clearly articulates the lack of options facing the aging athlete at this time.

⁴⁶ Paus. 6.8.4.

⁴⁷ Castor: Pind. *Nem.* 10.73–90. Hyperboreans: *Pyth.* 10.41; Ganymede: *Ol.* 10.104–5. Heracles: *Nem.* 1.69–72, 10.17–18, *Isthm.* 4.59–60. Ganymede is a particularly resonant symbol of non-aging from elitist lyric. For the Tithonus-Ganymede opposition, see PREISSHOFEN (vd. n. 5) 17–19, 89–90, H. KING, *Tithonos and the Tettix*, in: T. FALKNER/J. DE LUCE (Eds.), *Old Age in Greek and Latin Literature*, Albany 1989, 68–89, FALKNER, *Poetics* (vd. n. 3) 102–7, 120–9, and BRANDT, *Geschichte* (vd. n. 4) 11–13. The eastern associations of both figures link them to elitist lyric.

fundamentally binary idea of life as composed of two stages, *hebe* and old age, or offer any sense of how one becomes the other.

In *Nemean* 7 Pindar instead imagines for his victor a “rich old age”:

εἰ γὰρ σύ ἰν ἐμπεδοσθενέα βίον ἀρμόσαις
 ἤβᾳ λιπαρῶ τε γήραϊ διαπλέκοις
 εὐδαίμον' ἔοντα, παίδων δὲ παῖδες ἔχοιεν αἰεὶ
 γέρας τό περ νῦν καὶ ἄρειον ὄπιθεν.

May you [Heracles] fit him [Sogenes] with a life of sure strength and weave it together with youth (*hebe*) and rich old age, a blessed life, and may his children's children ever have the honor they have now, and more in the future. (*Nem.* 7.98–101)⁴⁸

The “rich old age” that Pindar prays Sogenes will receive differs in significant ways from the old age of the Mimnerman tradition, as Preisshofen notes.⁴⁹ Four particular elements can be isolated. First, *hebe* and old age are no longer disconnected, but explicitly “woven together” (*διαπλέκοις*, 99) into a single life. Second, the victor is represented in the context of his family, presumably honored by them, rather than dishonored as the Mimnerman old man. Third, the old man is “happy” or “blessed” (*εὐδαίμον'*, 100), because of his own victory and perhaps further victories by family members. And, fourth, the old man displays some excellences or virtues; in this case, he is not frail or wretched, but strong (*ἐμπεδοσθενέα*, 98). Indeed, there is no trace of the ugliness, illnesses and failing capacities of the Mimnerman old man.

The same positive vision is repeated on a number of occasions not as a prediction about the victor himself, but as a description of the victor's father, who in several odes (especially those for Aeginetan victors) is depicted as integral to the winning of the victory.⁵⁰ In

⁴⁸ W. RACE, (Ed.), *Pindar*, 2 vols., Cambridge, Mass., 1977, following Maas, emends *σύ ἰν* (98) to *σφισιν* (Sogenes and his father), as at *Pind. Pyth.* 10.18. In *Nemean* 7, the lines make less sense if the father is included, given that his youth is long passed; in *Pythian* 10, Pindar prays more simply that the wealth of father and son will continue to grow. The larger argument is not, however, affected by the emendation.

⁴⁹ PREISSHOFEN (vd. n. 5) 106.

⁵⁰ On the depiction of one fathers as a trainer, see N. NICHOLSON, *Aristocracy and Athletics in Archaic and Classical Greece*, Cambridge 2005, 169–72. D. FEARN, *Aeginetan Epinician Culture: Naming, Ritual, Politics*, in: D. FEARN (Ed.), *Aegina: Contexts for Choral Lyric Poetry. Myth, History, and Identity in the Fifth Century BC*, Oxford 2011, 175–226, points out that odes for Aeginetans are particularly framed in terms of families, rather than individuals.

Nemean 7, Sogenes' father is one such exemplum. As an athlete's father he comes in the company of a child, but he is also "happy" (*ὄλβον*, 58) and intelligent (60) and "daring in the pursuit of fine things" (*τόλμαν ... καλῶν*, 59); this last phrase frames the father's willingness to risk a possible defeat by his son in the language used in epic of younger men's battles.⁵¹ A second example is Lampon, the victor's father in *Isthmian* 6, who is able to "welcome Hades and grey old age" (*Ἄϊδαν γῆράς τε δέξασθαι πολίον*, 15) because of his "happiness" (*ὄλβον*, 12), "god-built excellences" (*θεοδμάτων ἀρετάς*, 11), and "hard work and expenditure" (*δαπάνα τε ... / καὶ πόνω*, 10–11), presumably in aid of his sons' successes. More briefly, in *Olympian* 8 Alcimedon's grandfather finds in his grandson's victory new "strength to wrestle against old age" (*μένος / γήραος ἀντίπαλον*, 70–1),⁵² while the victor's father in *Pythian* 10 is "blessed" (*εὐδαίμων*, 22) because he won at the great games and lived to see his son victorious there also. This last example makes it clear that explicit descriptions of the victor's father fulfill the same function as the prayer in *Nemean* 7; both depict in positive terms a life the victor can have as an old man.

This positive vision of old age is not restricted to Pindar's epinicians, although outside of Pindar's odes it only survives in odes for equestrian victors. *Olympian* 5, an ode by an unknown epinician poet for a mule-cart victor,⁵³ envisages an "old age that rejoices in horses" (*ἵπποις / ἐπιτερπόμενον ... γήρας*, 22) with a "happy conclusion" (*εὐθυμον ἐς τελευτάν*, 22), surrounded by children (23). The reference to horse breeding implies the victor's excellence in toil and expenditure. For his part, Bacchylides assures Hieron that, although he cannot "throw aside grey old age and recover once again blooming *hebe*" (*πολίον π[α]ρέντα / γήρας, θάλ[εια]ν αὐτίς ἀγκομίσσαι / ἥβαν*, 3.88–90), he enjoys "happiness" (3.92–4) and his "excellence" remains intact (3.90–1).⁵⁴

The particular vocabulary used in these depictions of old age makes it clear that they constitute a refutation of Mimnermus' vision. Mimnermus' short-lived flowers of *hebe* become in epinician the life-

⁵¹ That *τόλμαν ... καλῶν* refers to allowing his son to enter major competitions is made clear by Pind. *Nem.* 11.32. For *τόλμα* as a virtue of epic heroes in battle, see, e. g., Hom. *Il.* 10.205, 10.232, 13.395, and 17.68.

⁵² PREISSHOFEN (vd. n. 5) 100–1 stresses the paradox in the old man's strength.

⁵³ See W. BARRETT, *Greek Lyric, Tragedy, and Textual Criticism: Collected Papers*, Oxford 2007, 46–53, contra W. MADER, *Die Psaumis-Oden Pindars (O. 4 und O. 5): Ein Kommentar*, Innsbruck 1990 (Commentationes Aenipontanae 29), 109–13.

⁵⁴ The text of Bacchylides is from D. CAMPBELL (Ed.), *Greek Lyric Vol. IV Bacchylides, Corinna, and Others*, Cambridge, Mass., 1992.

long bloom of a victor or his family. In Pindar's *Isthmian* 4, the hearth of the victor's family is made to bloom again after the death of four members on a single day by the victor's success, "like the mottled earth with roses after a wintry darkness of months" (*μετὰ χειμέριον ποικίλα μηνῶν ζόφον / χθὼν ὥτε φοινικέοισιν ἄνθησεν ῥόδοις*, *Isthm.* 4.18a–b).⁵⁵ The "seed" (*σπέρμ'*, 93) of Diagoras' family flourishes with his victory in *Olympian* 7.⁵⁶ Sogenes' father may be beyond "the joyful flowers of Aphrodite" (*τὰ τέρπν' ἄνθε' Ἀφροδίσια*, *Nem.* 7.53), but he himself takes the place of the blooming flower as he is nurtured with the water and sunlight of Pindar's praise: *ξεῖνός εἰμι · σκοτεινὸν ἀπέχων φόγον, / ὕδατος ὥτε ῥοὰς φίλον ἐς ἄνδρ' ἄγων / κλέος ἐπήτυμον αἰνέσω*. "I am a guest-friend. Keeping off dark blame, bringing true fame to a friend like streams of water, I will praise him" (*Nem.* 7.61–3). Bacchylides more simply offers "the fairest flowers of happiness" (*ὄλβου / κάλλιστ' ... / ἄνθεα*, 3.92–4) in place of Hieron's lost "blooming *hebe*" (*θάλλ[εια]ν ... / ἥβαν*, 3.89–90), while for the same victor, Pindar "embarks on a well-flowered voyage proclaiming your / excellence" (*εὐάνθεα δ' ἀναβάσομαι στόλον ἀμφ' ἀρετᾶ / κελადέων*, *Pyth.* 2.62–3).⁵⁷

Similarly, the "joy" (*τερπνόν*, 1.1 W) that Mimnermus denied old age is claimed for victory, as its province is expanded from the works of Aphrodite to the works of the Charites, under whose aegis, in the vision of epinician, comes the whole network of relationships involved in victory and its celebration.⁵⁸ Celebrations, songs and victory are all "joyful."⁵⁹ *Pythian* 10 links the vocabulary of joy and flowers as it merges athletic success and material prosperity. After describing the victories of the victor and his father, Pindar prays that their "lordly wealth" continue to "bloom" (*ἀγάνορα πλοῦτον ἀνθεῖ*, *Pyth.* 10.18) and that they not meet with any reversal, "having been allotted no small gift of the joyful things in Hellas" (*τῶν δ' ἐν Ἑλλάδι τερπνῶν /*

⁵⁵ *Isthm.* 3 and 4 should be considered separate odes; see BARRETT (vd. n. 53) 162–7 and below. Line numbers for the two odes follow RACE (vd. n. 48).

⁵⁶ D. YOUNG, *Three Odes of Pindar: A Literary Study of Pythian 11, Pythian 3, and Olympian 7*, Leiden 1968, 95–7.

⁵⁷ The scanty remains of Simonides' epinicians do not permit conclusions about their treatment of old age. Frs. 19–22 W suggest that his sympotic elegies followed elitist lyric, as, in the context of love, they contrast a young *hebe* to an advanced old age, treating old age as deficient. For the fragments, see M. WEST, *Simonides Redivivus*, in: ZPE 98, 1993, 9–14. Simonides is only briefly mentioned by FALKNER, *Poetics* (vd. n. 3) 169 and omitted by PREISSHOFEN (vd. n. 5).

⁵⁸ Charites: Pind. *Ol.* 9.28, 14.5. For joy, see also Mimnermus 1.8, 2.4, 5.3 W.

⁵⁹ Pind. *Ol.* 5.22, 6.105, 10.76, *Isthm.* 4.72 b.

λαχόντες οὐκ ὀλίγαν δόσιν, *Pyth.* 10.19–20).⁶⁰ The close of *Pythian* 8 also reworks a variety of Mimnerman ideas. Mortal joy is described as brief and, in a clear plant image, quickly falling to the ground: “for a short time does human joy wax, and equally suddenly does it fall to the ground, shaken by an adverse will.” (ἐν δ’ ὀλίγῳ βροτῶν / τὸ τερπνὸν αὔξεταῖ οὕτω δὲ καὶ πίτνει χαμαί, / ἀποτρόπῳ γνώμα σεσεισμένον, 92–4.) Yet Pindar is not talking about youth here, but mortal life in general; it is man’s life that is like a dream, “a dream of a shadow” (σκιᾶς ὄναρ, 95), not his youth, as Mimnermus (ὥσπερ ὄναρ, 5.4 W). And victory again provides the antidote. Where it was the loves of youth that were “gentle” (μείλιχα, 1.3 W) in Mimnermus, it is victory that makes life “gentle” (μείλιχος, 97) in *Pythian* 8.

Preisshofen recognizes that Pindar’s vision of old age begins from Mimnermus’ terms, and suggests that his revision of Mimnermus’ conception of old age draws on the more positive picture of the *Odyssey*.⁶¹ Pindar’s vocabulary of “rich old age” (λιπαρῶ ... γῆραι, *Nem.* 7.99) is certainly drawn from that epic; this is the term applied to the old age achieved by Nestor (λιπαρῶς γηρασκέμεν, *Od.* 4.210) and sought by Odysseus (γῆράς τε λιπαρὸν, 19.369).⁶² Yet Pindar’s conception offers none of the subtleties of the *Odyssey*’s vision. As Falkner has argued, Odysseus represents a “hero embedded in the world of time” in contrast to the Achillean hero who “seems at times to transcend the temporality of existence.”⁶³ Around the figure of Odysseus (in both the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*) cluster ideas of aging that are entirely absent from the epinician athlete. While both look forward to old age, in contrast to the epinician athlete, Odysseus also represents the age at the end of *hebe* and the beginning of old age, blurring the boundary between the two. Odysseus is not a ready-made old man, as Nestor or Thearion, but someone in the process of aging, someone still in his prime, but older than many others in their prime, whether the athletes he competes against or the suitors in his house. He is, as Antilochus calls him, at the raw edge of old age (ὠμογέροντα, *Il.* 23.791), a unique coinage for a unique hero. By contrast, the epinician athlete seems to exist outside of time, avoiding fatherhood, injury and aging, even if he is imagined as an old man and father at some point in the future; his life is less a progression than the

⁶⁰ On this elevation of athletic success to a larger felicity, see ROSE (vd. n. 42) 169.

⁶¹ PREISSHOFEN (vd. n. 5) 106.

⁶² See PREISSHOFEN (vd. n. 5) 33–42, FALKNER (vd. n. 3) 34–46, and also *Od.* 11.136, 23.283.

⁶³ FALKNER (vd. n. 3) 47.

combination of two neatly separated parts, *hebe* and old age, and while Pindar suggests they will be “woven together” (*διαπλέκοις*, *Nem.* 7.99), he offers no sense of how this is to happen. The figure of Odysseus explores precisely this connection, however, the transition between the peak of *hebe* and “rich old age”.

Epinician’s vision of old age is thus not rooted in the *Odyssey* or the figure of Odysseus more generally. It draws rather on the vision promoted by the *Iliad*, and on the figure of Nestor. Epinician was not concerned to articulate transitions between different stages of life but to represent a positive vision of old age as a happy and honored time of life; indeed, any focus on transition would undermine the agelessness that was central to the ideological work performed by the symbol of the athlete. In contrast to the *Odyssey*, the *Iliad* was not concerned with transitions either, but portrayed characters, as Falkner comments, “in the aorist, suggesting a heroic essence in a series of dramatic confrontations”.⁶⁴ Those characters in the *Iliad* that are in their prime are simply in their prime, while the old heroes, like Nestor, belong to a different generation, often being also the fathers of the younger heroes. Indeed, the character of Nestor itself seems to be composed of two separate life moments, much like that of Sogenes in *Nemean* 7, the old age seen in the main narrative and the prime that Nestor recalls in his speeches. When the transition was made between the two is left in silence.⁶⁵

What Nestor represents is not aging, but the possibility of honor for the aged. While the trials of old age are not wholly denied, Nestor enjoys a position within the first rank of Achaean leaders and the respect of the other leaders. He is also capable. Along with his wisdom and speaking ability, his strength and vigor are emphasized (at the same time as his declining strength): Diomedes complains that he never rests, and he easily lifts a cup that another man would struggle to raise.⁶⁶ Nestor is undoubtedly something of an anomaly here, particularly in regards to his physical strength; the portrayal of other old men emphasizes their weakness as well as their failing leadership abilities.⁶⁷ But this anomaly is key to epinician’s representation of old age. Not only are the old happy in epinician, they also, like Nestor, display surprising physical abilities: Sogenes is imagined having a “life of sure strength” in his old age (*ἐμπεδοσθενέα βίοντον*,

⁶⁴ FALKNER (vd. n. 3) 4.

⁶⁵ The difference in generation is emphasized with Nestor: *Hom. Il.* 1.247–52. For his prime, see 1.254–72, 4.318–20, 7.124–60, 11.668–762, 23.629–43.

⁶⁶ *Il.* 10.164, 11.636–7, FALKNER (vd. n. 3) 14–15.

⁶⁷ FALKNER (vd. n. 3) 14–27, BRANDT, *Geschichte* (vd. n. 4) 17–20.

Nem. 7.98); his father displays “daring” (*τόλμαν*, *Nem.* 7.59), a virtue often applied to athletes and warriors, and here used to describe his willingness to risk a family failure;⁶⁸ Lampon “toils” (*πόνω*, *Isthm.* 6.11); and Alcimedon’s grandfather regains his “strength” (*μένος*, *Ol.* 10.70).

What epinician offers, therefore, is a revision of the bleak picture of elitist lyric based on the more measured picture of the *Iliad*, particularly its figure of Nestor: the old are depicted as capable and fortunate, and no longer segregated from younger men, as if radically different from them. Unlike the vision of the *Odyssey*, the vision of the *Iliad* does not undermine the fundamental agelessness of the epinician athlete. The *Iliad* is equally uninterested in progression, its view of life equally binary in its structure; its heroes exist as much outside of time, as much (in Falkner’s terms) in the “aorist”, as the athletes. By drawing on the *Iliad*, therefore, epinician is able to offer its athletes a positive vision of old age that fits with the temporality of the ageless athlete. At the same time, however, this vision offers no sense of how the athletes will become old.

3. Epinician and Equestrian Contests

This paper has so far examined the relationship between aging and athletic victors in epinician, but a significant component in epinician’s treatment of aging concerns equestrian victors. The wider world of equestrian competition was not restricted to older men,⁶⁹ but Golden

⁶⁸ See n. 51 above, and, for athletes, cf. Pind. *Pyth.* 10.24, *Isthm.* 4.45.

⁶⁹ Younger entrants competed at lesser festivals in two ways. First, the more diverse array of events offered at these contests, including mares races, colt races and two-horse chariots, meant that heads of families did not monopolize all the equestrian events; Damonon of Sparta, for example, left the horse race to his son while monopolizing the chariot races at local Peloponnesian festivals. For the Damonon stele, see *IG* 5.1.213, L. MORETTI, *Iscrizioni agonistiche greche*, Rome 1953, 36–40 and S. HODKINSON, *Property and Wealth in Classical Sparta*, London 2000, 303–7. Second, some events at these festivals, like the *apobates* race at the Panathenaea, required the competitor to do strenuous physical work, and so effectively restricted themselves to young men. See GOLDEN (vd. n. 6) 119–20, and, on the Panathenaic events, J. SHEAR, *Prizes from Athens: The List of Panathenaic Prizes and the Sacred Oil*, in: *ZPE* 142, 2003, 92–103, and S. TRACY/C. HABICHT, *New and Old Panathenaic Victor Lists*, in: *Hesperia* 60, 1991, 198–200. Although it seems likely that owners drove their own chariots more frequently at these lesser festivals (NICHOLSON [vd. n. 50] 4), it is unlikely that this meant that more of the entrants were young; rather more of the older owners exercised their right to drive their own chariots at these less competitive venues. Charioteers could enjoy success well into their fifties; cf. A. CAMERON, *Porphyrius the Charioteer*, Oxford 1973,

has shown that the most important events at the panhellenic festivals were the preserve of those beyond the age of athletic competition, who used proxies to do the physical labor of riding or driving.⁷⁰ Even at lesser festivals the chariot competitions were likely contested only by older competitors.⁷¹ And these are the equestrian victories that epinician celebrates, panhellenic victories in the chariot, horse or mule cart, or chariot races at lesser festivals.⁷² Epinician's world is thus sharply divided by age: the young do the athletics, the old the equestrian contests.

With this distinction in age came a distinction in virtue: while athletic competitors shone by their bodily exertions, equestrian victors at the Panhellenic festivals stressed their lavish expenditure. During the games themselves, they entertained the other attendees. Such generosity is explicitly attested for three Olympic equestrian victors from the early fifth century (and doubtless was offered by more), while in the sixth century Cleisthenes of Sicyon used his Olympic chariot victory as an opportunity to invite the most eligible athletes to stay with him in Sicyon and woo his daughter.⁷³ Such an invitation trumpeted

178–9. Although the short-lived *kalpe* race at Olympia in some ways resembled the *apobates* race, it would have been entirely anomalous for Olympia if the owner had been required to do the riding and running.

⁷⁰ GOLDEN (vd. n. 6) 118–23. Golden's argument is based on the ages of known competitors, and on two reasonable premises. First, that the expense required to breed horses mostly restricted competition to heads of families. Second, that peer pressure steered younger men away from the (major) equestrian contests. Owners could drive their own chariots, but very few seem to have done so, and any who did so, like Herodotus of Thebes (Pi. *Is.* 1), would likely have been beyond the age of athletic competition (vd. n. 68).

⁷¹ The Damonon stele suggests this, as does Golden's first premise (vd. n. 70). Racing chariots was expensive wherever it was done. On the few competitors who drove their own chariots, see nn. 69–70 above.

⁷² All the odes not for Panhellenic victories celebrate chariot victories: Pind. *Nem.* 9 (Sicyon), Bacchyl. 14 (the Petraea), and probably Simon. *PMG* 514 (Pallene; see NICHOLSON [vd. n. 50] 223 n. 13). Pind. *Pyth.* 2 celebrated Hieron's Olympic chariot victory; see D. YOUNG, *Pindar Pythians 2 and 3: Inscriptional ποτέ and the 'Poetic Epistle'*, in: *Harv. Stud.* 87, 1983, 42–8. Hieron's patronage of Locri continued beyond 477; *Pyth.* 2.18 likely signifies a temple and alludes to Hieron's involvement in the construction of the Marasà temple in Locri, which was completed c. 470. See CURRIE, *Cult* (vd. n. 24) 272.

⁷³ Anaxilas of Rhegion and Empedocles of Acragas: Ath. I.3e; Psaumis of Camarina: [Pind.] *Ol.* 5.5–6; Cleisthenes: Hdt. 6.126–31. Cf. also Plut. *Them.* 25.1 (Hieron of Syracuse) and Plut. *Alc.* 12.1 and Diod. Sic. 14.109 (Alcibiades). In Herodotus' account of Cleisthenes' invitation, the distinction made between older and younger competitors clearly corresponds to that between equestrian and gymnastic competitors: all share meals together, but the younger men (*νεώτεροι*, Hdt. 6.128) are also made to compete at athletic events.

the difference in age as well as wealth between athletes and equestrian competitors. Dedications made at the major sanctuaries by equestrian victors also stressed their wealth. From the last quarter of the sixth century, those victors who could afford it dedicated votive statues of themselves, but the first equestrian victor to dedicate such a statue, Cleosthenes of Epidamnus, victor in the Olympic chariot race in 516, included it in a much larger statue group, with sculptures of the four horses, the car and the charioteer.⁷⁴ In the next sixty years, four more elaborate groups were dedicated.⁷⁵ Even single portrait statues probably stressed their subject's wealth by depicting them in elaborate clothing. It seems unlikely, at least in the period before the Persian wars, that the portrait statues of equestrian victors were nude, since on vases commemorating horserace victories victors are sharply distinguished by their full and patterned garments from the naked, or lightly clothed jockeys.⁷⁶

Epinician's treatment of equestrian victory was quite different, however. Epinician seems to have done all it could to erase differences between athletic and equestrian victories. The fundamental form – the shape, the language, the formulae – is identical for each, and, with the exception of Pindar's anomalous *Pythian* 4, odes for equestrian victors are no longer or shorter than those for athletes. The mythical narratives of equestrian odes do not, on the whole, introduce different heroes. While Pelops in Pindar's *Pythian* 1 and Nestor in *Pythian* 6 are charioteers, the mythical heroes are more usually athletes, such as Heracles in *Olympian* 3, *Nemean* 1 and Bacchylides'

⁷⁴ Paus. 6.10.6–8, SMITH (vd. n. 12) 95. The dedication of a sculpted chariot imitated an earlier custom of dedicating the chariot itself, attested for the triple Olympic victor Euagoras of Sparta c. 540 (Paus. 6.10.8), and c. 462 for Arkesilas of Cyrene (Pind. *Pyth.* 5.36–42). Statues of the horses found a precedent in the memorial set up in Athens by the elder Cimon for his triple Olympic champion horses (Ael. *VH* 9.32).

⁷⁵ Gelon, Hieron, Polypeithes of Sparta, and Cratisthenes of Cyrene. See the list of SMITH (vd. n. 12) 123–4.

⁷⁶ For these vases, see NICHOLSON (vd. n. 50) 104–7. It is possible that, as rich clothing increasingly became a signifier of a discredited Easternness in the period after the Persian wars, these portrait statues began to model themselves after the athlete statues, disavowing size and clothing. As SMITH (vd. n. 12) 123 n. 111 notes, the four Spartan chariot victors from the latter half of the fifth century that Pausanias records – Polyycles, Lichas, Arkesilas and Anaxander – all avoided chariot groups. To Smith's list can be added: Xenarches – or whoever's name belongs in Paus. 6.2.1 – and Lycinus. On the latter, see MORETTI, *Olympionikai* (vd. n. 9) 102. It is clear from Paus. 6.2.2 that Lycinus dedicated two individual statues, the first probably for a hoplite race victory, so that the strange idea that he won in the foal chariot race, which had not yet been introduced, cannot be explained by an under-sized chariot group.

Ode 5, or Jason and the Argonauts in *Pythian* 4. Particularly illustrative is *Olympian* 4, a short ode for an equestrian victor. It concludes with the story of a race in armor.

The vocabulary used of the two types of contests tends to obscure any differences in how they were won. On the one hand, terms implying physical exertion are mostly reserved for athletic victors. *ἀεθλητάς*, “athlete”, cognate with *ἀεθλέω*, “suffer”, is used only of competitors in the gymnastic competitions, and the strength needed in combat events and the importance of hard work and toil are frequent themes in the odes for them.⁷⁷ On the other hand, the theme of toil is not absent from equestrian odes, where generous expenditure is seen as a form of toil or at least associated with it.⁷⁸ Further, while *ἀεθλητάς* is not used of equestrian victors, another cognate, *ἄεθλον*, which is comparatively rare in inscriptions, is used extensively, and expansively, to include prizes and contests in both equestrian and athletic contests.⁷⁹ Epinician’s rhetoric of assimilation is highlighted by Euripides’ entirely opposite strategy in his anomalous ode for Alcibiades, which trumpeted the fact that he won his chariot victory “without toil” (*ἄπονητί*, Plut. *Alc.* 11.2).

The most significant way in which epinician erases the difference between equestrian and athletic contests is, however, that epinician largely transforms athletic victory from a sign of strength and speed into a sign of the moral virtues of generosity, good sense and of a generalized excellence, so that both types of victory become indicative of the same broader virtues of character. Praise of generosity, wise expenditure and wisdom – virtues which one might expect to be the hallmarks of equestrian victors – is typical in odes for athletes also, while praise of “excellence” (*ἀρετά*), and the conception of any given achievement as an expression of this “excellence”, is ubiquitous.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ *ἀεθλητάς*: Pind. *Nem.* 5.49, 10.51, *Isthm.* 6.72. Strength: Pind. *Nem.* 6.66, *Isthm.* 4.68, Bacchyl. 13.75. Toil: Pind. *Pyth.* 8.73, *Nem.* 4.1, 6.24, 7.74, *Isthm.* 5.25, Bacchyl. 13.56.

⁷⁸ Pind. *Ol.* 6.11, *Pyth.* 1.90, *Nem.* 9.44 (where the notion links in earlier achievements of battle), *Isthm.* 3.17.

⁷⁹ E. g. Pind. *Ol.* 1.3, 7.80, *Nem.* 9.9, 10.32, *Isthm.* 1.18, 5.55, Bacchyl. 8.32, 9.8, 10.19, 12.35, 13.197. *ἄεθλον* appears infrequently in inscriptions: MORETTI, *Iscrizioni* (vd. n. 69) no. 10, and J. EBERT, *Griechische Epigramme auf Sieger an Gymnischen und Hippischen Agonen*, Berlin 1972 (Abhandlungen der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, Philologisch-Historische Klasse, 63.2), no. 5 and perhaps no. 12 (if genuine) and no. 14 (if the restoration is correct).

⁸⁰ Praise of wealth and expenditure in odes for athletes: Pind. *Ol.* 13.7, *Pyth.* 10.18, *Isthm.* 5.57, 6.10. Praise of wisdom: e. g. Pind. *Ol.* 7.53, 9.28, 9.38, 9.107, *Pyth.* 8.74, *Nem.* 5.18, 7.17.

Finally, epinician treats equestrian and athletic victories as part of a larger, unitary agonistic activity. Family victories in chariot races are mentioned alongside those in athletics, even though proxies were certainly used in the chariot races.⁸¹ The case of Melissus of Thebes, a Panhellenic victor in both the pancration and the chariot, is telling here. The manuscript tradition of Pindar records two odes for Melissus, *Isthmian* 4, celebrating his Isthmian pancration victory, and *Isthmian* 3, celebrating his Nemean chariot win. Anomalously these two odes are in the same meter, something not true of any other pair of odes in the collection, whether for the same victor or not. *Isthmian* 3 was clearly written after *Isthmian* 4. Moreover, as Barrett argues, the particular instantiations of the metrical scheme in the two odes strongly suggest that the second ode was not meant to be added to the first to form a single, unified ode, but to be performed as its own ode. On the other hand, the repetition of the original metrical scheme provides a uniquely strong link between the two odes, suggesting that they were intended as complementary elements in a single celebration.⁸² Such a unified celebration surely served to represent Melissus' equestrian competition as a continuation of his athletic competition, even though he did not drive his own car: both his Panhellenic victories merited odes, in the same metrical scheme, from the same poet.⁸³ Moreover, the language of the later ode blurs the differences between the two victories. The victories are referred to as "twinning prizes" (*διδύμων ἀέθλων*, *Isthm.* 3.9), while the prominent use of "excellence" (*ἀρετά*, *Isthm.* 3.4, 13) to describe Melissus' achievements recycles the vocabulary of the earlier ode (*Isthm.* 4.13, 38). Finally, terms more applicable to pancration are now applied to hippotrophy. Melissus is described as "fortunate in strength of wealth" (*εὐτυχήσαις ... σθένει πλούτου*, *Isthm.* 3.1–2) and his family as "walking through wealth in the toils of four-horse chariots" (*πλούτου διέστειχον τετραοριᾶν πόνοις*, *Isthm.* 3.17).

Thus, in contrast to the larger athletic culture of Panhellenic competition to which it belonged, epinician blurred the differences between athletic and equestrian competition, representing them not as different sorts of achievements, but as parts of a larger, lifelong ago-

⁸¹ Pind. *Pyth.* 11.46–50, *Isthm.* 4.19–29.

⁸² BARRETT (vd. n. 53) 162–7.

⁸³ The dedications of Lycinus of Sparta at Olympia offer some parallel. Lycinus probably won both a hoplite and a chariot crown (MORETTI, *Olympionikai* [vd. n. 9] 102), dedicating a statue by Myron of Athens each time (Paus. 6.2.2). The shared artist linked the dedications, but they may not have been placed together, since Paus. 6.2.2 makes it clear that the chariot statue was dedicated in a block of Spartan equestrian victors.

nistic activity that required the same qualities of its victors. This representation of equestrian competition should be correlated with epinician's broader effort to present a positive vision of old age. Life beyond athletic competition is not presented as different or deficient compared to *hebe*; it is not a time when expenditure must substitute for a failing body. Rather, a single, constant excellence reaches across a whole life, displaying largely the same virtues, and uniting *hebe* and old age. Consequently, the passing of *hebe* does not appear as a major break, and aging does not undermine one's ability to compete and display one's excellence. Indeed, the representation of the excellence of equestrian competition avoids the question of aging altogether: rather than being challenged, the agelessness of the athlete is instead broadened. Like the athlete, the equestrian victor seems to stand outside of time, his excellence unchanging and unchallenged by an aging body.

4. Conclusion: Hieron, Pindar and Old Age

Epinician should thus be understood as striving to articulate a positive vision of old age, drawing on the Iliadic precedent of Nestor to revise the gloomy outlook of elitist lyric. In epinician's hands, old age is no longer worse than death, but a time of happiness, excellence and even strength (at least for victors, and those with victors in their family), and, while epinician maintains the binary idea of life as composed of a prime and an old age, it frames them as two parts of a single life throughout which the same abiding excellence can make itself known.

In effect, however, epinician's vision simply denies the material effects of aging. In contrast to the *Odyssey* or the elegies of Solon, it obscures the physical frailty and decline of old age and plays down the differences between the various stages of life; its old men are strong and capable of the same excellence as its athletes. Such a strategy seems unlikely to be an adequate response to the material experience of an aged victor, and there is good reason to think that it did, in fact, prove unsatisfactory for older victors. While the majority of the odes for Hieron follow the standard tropes outlined above and betray no sense that Hieron's physical condition provided a special challenge, in two of Pindar's compositions, *Pythians* 1 and 3, these tropes struggle to accommodate his old age.⁸⁴ That Hieron's old age proved

⁸⁴ PREISSHOFEN (vd.n. 5) 94 suggests that the sufferings of old age are more prominent in the odes for Hieron, but most of the odes treat old age in standard ways. Bacchyl. 3 has been considered above. Pind. *Pyth.* 2.62–7 distinguishes the "boldness" of his youth from the "counsels" of his old age, but both are introduced under the unified banner of Hieron's excellence. Bacchyl. 5 focuses on the excel-

resistant to such tropes is not surprising. Not only was he advanced in age at the time of his victories, but for much of this final decade he was physically incapacitated, suffering so severely from bladder stones that, rather than riding a horse, he had to be carried in a litter on campaign.⁸⁵

Uniquely in epinician, the victor's ill-health constitutes a major theme of *Pythian* 3.⁸⁶ Much of the first half of the ode is organized as an apology for not being able to bring Hieron a healer for his illness (1–76), and includes a lengthy description of the medical talents of a previous healer, Asclepius (47–53).⁸⁷ Hieron's ill-health not only shapes the ode, but also puts pressure on, and even deforms, the usual epinician tropes for dealing with old age. First, old age usually merges with death as threatening an anonymity that victory can overcome;⁸⁸ ill-health is rarely mentioned, but this too seems elsewhere to be overcome by victory.⁸⁹ In *Pythian* 3, however, Hieron's ill-health remains stubbornly separate, resistant to the curative power of victory: Pindar separates out "twin blessings" (*διδύμας χάριτας*, 72), dividing "golden health" (*ύγίειαν χρυσέαν*, 73) from the victory celebration, and declaring that he can bring the latter, but can do nothing for Hieron's ill-health.

Second, while epinician typically sets limits to human happiness, these limits are not elsewhere given the emphatic treatment they receive in *Pythian* 3.⁹⁰ The gnome, that the gods give men two evils for every good (80–2), an obvious allusion to Achilles' words of consolation to Priam in the *Iliad*, offers a calculation of human happiness that

lence and happiness of the victor (1, 31–6, 50–5, 176–200) and treats death, not old age as the evil to overcome (160–75), while Pind. *Ol.* 1.97–9 repeats the principle that a young man will make his whole life happy through victory, a principle that the decision of Pelops (82–5) illustrates.

⁸⁵ Pind. *Pyth.* 1.50–5, 3.73, schol. *ad Pyth.* 1.89 a (following Arist. *Constitution of the Syracusans*), b, (DRACHMANN [vd.n.13] 2.17–18). Hieron died in 466 (BARRETT [vd.n.53] 91–4), and his victories belong to the last fifteen years of his life (482–68); on the dates of Pind. *Pyth.* 2 and 3, see YOUNG, *Poetic Epistle* (vd.n.70) 31–48. GOLDEN (vd.n.6) 121 suggests a birth date of 530. This is likely conservative; LURAGHI (vd.n.29) 327 offers good reasons to think Hieron was the oldest of the Deinomenid brothers.

⁸⁶ Ill-health is rarely even alluded to elsewhere. See Pind. *Ol.* 8.81–8, *Pyth.* 10.41–2, Bacchyl. 1.163–74, [Pind.] *Ol.* 5.17–24.

⁸⁷ For this apology, see YOUNG, *Three Odes* (vd.n.56) 27–68.

⁸⁸ Pind. *Ol.* 1.81–5, 8.65–73, *Nem.* 9.44–6, *Isthm.* 6.10–18, Bacchyl. 3.87–91, [Pind.] *Ol.* 5.17–24. Cf. also Pind. *Nem.* 7.98–101, *Isthm.* 7.40–51.

⁸⁹ In *Ol.* 8.84–5, Pindar's prayer closely links Alcimedon's future success with the continued health of his older relatives, Iphion and Kallimachos.

⁹⁰ E.g. Pind. *Ol.* 3.44–5, *Pyth.* 10.27–30, *Nem.* 9.44–7, 11.13–16, *Isthm.* 6.10–13, 7.43–4, Bacchyl. 5.54–5, [Pind.] *Ol.* 5.23–4.

is uniquely bleak for epinician.⁹¹ This grim ratio is then not allowed to fade into the background, but illustrated by a lengthy examination of the fortunes of Peleus and Cadmus (86–103). Moreover, while old age is not offered as one of the evils that attend Peleus and Cadmus, the allusion to Achilles' words suggests that the evils of aging are central to life's heavy proportion of grief. In the *Iliad* Achilles proceeds to illustrate the truth of his observation by the examples not of Peleus and Cadmus, but of Peleus and Priam. Both men enjoyed extraordinary wealth, power and happiness, but Peleus, Achilles notes, lacks a son to look after him in his old age, and war has deprived Priam of the only son who protected him.⁹² The allusion thus briefly points to more negative images of old age in the *Iliad* than epinician usually draws on, the weak and childless Peleus and Priam, not the strong Nestor surrounded by his children.⁹³

Pythian 3 does, however, conclude with two more positive paradigms of old age, Nestor and "Lycian" Sarpedon (112). Sarpedon has a surprisingly complex history. The *Iliad*'s well-known representation of him as dying in his prime in battle (later beautifully captured by the Euphronios crater with its even younger, beardless Sarpedon) seems to have been a departure from a larger oral tradition in which Sarpedon was, like Nestor, a hero who lived through three generations without being beset by ill-health. Sarpedon's extended life is only recorded in a late source, but the antiquity of the Sarpedon of this source is vouched for by his appearance in Herodotus.⁹⁴ Both Nestor and Sarpedon, therefore, represent a vigorous old age, and so both figures simply pass over the ill-health that was central both to Mimnermus' depiction of old age and to Hieron's experience, leaving the close of the ode to return to a generic epinician conclusion, that great deeds, when sung of, will endure.⁹⁵

⁹¹ Hom. *Il.* 24.527–30. On the allusion, see YOUNG, *Three Odes* (vd. n. 54) 50–1.

⁹² Hom. *Il.* 24.534–51. Priam states the importance of Hector at 24.499–501. In *Pyth.* 3.10–2, Achilles' death is described from the Achaeans' point of view, not Peleus'.

⁹³ On the contrast between Nestor and Priam, see PREISSHOFEN (vd. n. 5) 25–31, FALKNER (vd. n. 3) 5–27.

⁹⁴ Nestor: Hom. *Il.* 1.250–2. Sarpedon: Apollod. 3.1.1–2, Hdt. 1.173.1–3, and A. MILLER, *Nestor and Sarpedon in Pindar, Pythian 3 (Again)*, in: *Rh. Mus.* 137, 1994, 383–386. On the way the *Iliad* reworks the traditional Sarpedon, see CURRIE, *Cult* (vd. n. 24) 50–2. On Euphronios' crater, see H. SHAPIRO, *Myth into Art: Poet and Painter in Classical Greece*, London 1994, 22–4.

⁹⁵ Cf. Pind. *Pyth.* 1.99–100, *Nem.* 3.83–4, 8.48–51, *Isthm.* 1.64–8, *Bacchyl.* 3.92–98, 5.195–200.

Pythian 1, by contrast, makes a much more daring effort to accommodate the sick old man within epinician imagery, comparing Hieron campaigning while sick to Philoctetes (50–7).⁹⁶ The appearance of Philoctetes represents an intrusion; with his enduring wound and leaking body, Philoctetes belongs no more in epinician than he does in the *Iliad*, both of which are structured around the image of the intact and injury-less body.⁹⁷ This is his only appearance in the surviving corpus of epinician, and with him enters a new vocabulary of the body. Philoctetes' "weak flesh" (*ἀσθενεῖ μὲν χρωτί*, 55) has no parallel; *ἀσθενής* occurs only here in epinician, while its application to *χρώς*, usually used of the surface of the body, is unprecedented.⁹⁸ That Philoctetes is "worn down by an ulcer" (*ἔλκει τεϊρόμενον*, 52) is also unusual for epinician. The phrase echoes Homer's brief description of Philoctetes (*ἔλκει μοχθίζοντα κακῶ ὀλοόφρονος ὕδρου*, "toiling from an evil ulcer of a baleful sea-snake" *Il.* 2.723), and proves equally anomalous. The passive form *τεῖρομαι* occurs only here in epinician, while *ἔλκος* is also rare, particularly when used for an ulcer rather than a wound received in battle.⁹⁹

It is likely that Hieron himself sponsored the comparison with Philoctetes. Pliny the Elder tells of a famous sculpture of Philoctetes made by Pythagoras of Rhegion and set up in Syracuse. It depicted Philoctetes limping, and according to Pliny was so convincing that "even the spectators seemed to feel the pain of his ulcer".¹⁰⁰ It cannot be known for sure whether the sculpture was set up under Hieron, or later (although it is known that Pythagoras did make a statue after 480 for the runner Astylus who joined Gelon's synoecism-cum-refoundation of Syracuse in 484), but Hieron seems to have exploited an identification with Philoctetes as part of his larger conflict with Croton, the one major Greek city in the West that did not accede to Syracuse's hegemony. Philoctetes served as a significant vehicle in Croton's attempts, during the time of Hieron's regime, not only to solidify its control over the territory inland from Croton and the terri-

⁹⁶ The reference is likely to Cumae, *contra* BARRETT (vd.n.53) 87. Cumae sought Hieron's help before the battle (Diod.Sic.11.51.1), and so fits Philoctetes' story better than the Agrigentines who sued for peace after Thrasydaeus fled into exile (Diod.Sic.11.53.5).

⁹⁷ On Philoctetes and the *Iliad*, see GRIFFIN (vd.n.44) 90; on wounds, n.44, above. Philoctetes was a major character in the *Ilias Parva* (see fr.1). Unlike Hieron, he was cured before returning to battle.

⁹⁸ On the usual meaning, see *LSJ* s.v. *χρώς* I.1.

⁹⁹ Of ulcers: Pind.*Pyth.* 3.48. Of battle wounds: Pind.*Pyth.* 4.271, *Nem.* 8.29.

¹⁰⁰ Pliny, *HN* 34.19. Pliny does not name the statue as Philoctetes, but the identification has been widely accepted.

tory of the old empire of Sybaris, but also to create an alliance with Segesta to oppose the ever extending reach of Syracuse. Hieron, however, seems to have sought to appropriate this symbol for himself and his city, making a virtue out of his own physical incapacities.¹⁰¹

Whatever the reasons for its introduction into *Pythian* 1, the figure of Philoctetes graphically illustrates how far the usual epinician tropes failed to adequately address Hieron's own experience of his aging. By trumpeting the happiness, excellence and even strength of old age, epinician did offer a positive vision to counter that of elitist lyric, but this vision did not come to terms with the basic complaints articulated by Mimnermus – the weakness, sickness, ugliness and incapacity of old age – and to do so epinician had to reach beyond its usual repertoire of themes and images. What limited epinician in this regard was the importance of the ageless athlete as an epinician symbol; its efforts to provide a place for the aged within the world of epinician were trumped by the temporality embedded in the structure of epinician by the figure of the ageless athlete: epinician offers images of the old, but no sense of aging and no sense of bodily decline. Such a sense could have been gleaned from the *Odyssey* or Solon's elegies, with their nuanced sense of the gradations and differences in life, but only at the cost of its central symbol of aristocratic excellence, and that was a price epinician was not ready to pay.

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¹⁰¹) On Astylus' move to Syracuse, see LURAGHI (vd. n. 29) 293–4. R. JEBB, *Pindar*, in: *JHS* 3, 1882, 179 views the statue as contemporary and suggests that Pindar drew his theme from it. On the role of Philoctetes in Crotoniate propaganda, see D. MUSTI, *Lo sviluppo del mito di Filottete, da Crotona a Sibari. Tradizioni achee e troiane in Magna Grecia*, in: J. DE LA GENIÈRE (Ed.), *Épéios et Philoctète en Italia. Données archéologiques et traditions légendaires. Actes du colloque international du Centre de Recherches Archéologiques de l'Université de Lille III*, Lille, 23–24 Novembre 1987, Naples 1991, 24–9, M. GINGIULIA, *Filottete tra Sibari e Crotona. Osservazioni sulla tradizione letteraria*, in: DE LA GENIÈRE (vd. n. 101) 49–53, and L. MOSCATI CASTELNUOVO, *Filottete, Crotona e le origini di Segesta*, in: *Kokalos* 41, 1995, 51–61. On Hieron's efforts to appropriate the symbol for himself, see G. NENCI, *Filottete in Sicilia*, in: DE LA GENIÈRE (vd. n. 101) 133–5, and D. BONANNO, *Ierone il Dinomenide: Storia e rappresentazione*, Pisa 2010, 203–7.

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Euripides' Critique of Athletics in *Autolykus*, fr. 282 N^{2*}

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In the art and literature of Antiquity the important role that sports played is frequently in evidence. Although most instances offer a positive view of the athlete, there was also criticism by poets, philosophers and doctors, who all expressed their disapproval of an occupation that endangered the athletes' lives and was much too highly valued by society. Fragment 282 N², from the Satyr play *Autolykus* by Euripides is especially representative in this respect since it expresses both views.

From an early date because they seemed to embody human ideals athletes were viewed as worthy subjects for artistic treatment. This association was so close that at times it is difficult to decide whether an artist has portrayed a god or the victor in a sports competition. This is because in either case we are given an example of physical perfection. Literature too helped contribute to this positive depiction of sports, principally – and for obvious reasons – in epinikian odes, although this image was also present in other genres and the other arts. From the dawn of Greek literature the figure of the heroic warrior was presented as outstanding both in war and in sports; there was even the association, at times especially clear, of athletics and mythology. Indeed, well-known legends attribute the founding of the Olympic Games to Pelops or to Heracles, the hero who was often used as a model of the perfect athlete.¹ At the same time we should mention the funeral games that Homer describes, in which those who fought before the Trojan walls competed for glory and prizes. The best illustration of this kind of competition, and the best known, appears in Book XXIII of the *Iliad*, where the poet gives a detailed account of the games that Achilles organized in honour of Patroclus, including pre-

^{*} English translation by Philip W. Silver. For the citations of the Classical authors and journals I use the system of abbreviation of the *Greek-English Lexicon* (H. G. LIDDELL/R. SCOTT/H. S. JONES) Oxford 1968 and of *L'Année Philologique*, respectively.

¹ Pi. O. 1.112–143, 3.13–15, 6.67–69, 10.51–72. A.R. 1.752–758. D.S. 4.14.1–2. Paus. 5.7.9–10. Cf. F. M. CORNFORD, *The Origin of the Olympic Games*, in: J. E. HARRISON (ed.), *Themis: A Study of the Social Origin of Greek Religion*, Cambridge 1927, 212–259; G. NAGY, *Pindar's Olympian 1 and the Aetiology of the Olympic Games*, in: *TAPhA* 116, 1986, 71–88; E. SUÁREZ DE LA TORRE, *La experiencia religiosa del atleta olímpico*, in: *Revista de Occidente* 134–135, 1992, 24–27; V. VANOYEKE, *La naissance des Jeux Olympiques et le sport dans l'Antiquité*, Paris ²2004, 73–77.

cise descriptions of the participants, the contests themselves, the prizes offered, and the results of each event. The participants in the games described in the Epic are the heroes who reapply the concept of *arete* to the athletic ideal and seek glory as a reflection of the nobility that justifies their rank in society.

This comparison between the warrior hero and the athlete who competes for a prize was especially attractive to the authors of epinikian odes, who thereby increased their praise of the victor, adding to his nobility by comparing him to exceptional figures from the past. This is particularly apparent in Pindar who gives the same importance to a winner crowned in the games as to a hero on the battlefield.² He offers the victor in sports as a model to be emulated; for Pindar such a man possesses values that are only found together in a select few, who then become the most perfect examples of the aristocratic ideal of *καλοκαγαθία*.³ Particular excellence in the Games was considered in the light of the extraordinary feats of the great heroes of mythology, who were the models that the athletes attempted to emulate.⁴

However, this positive view of the world of sports had a negative side, equally well illustrated in art and literature. Especially beginning in the Hellenistic period – although there are earlier examples –, in both sculpture and vase painting there are realistic depictions of fighting between boxers who are clearly injured, and between overweight wrestlers, especially far removed from any ideal of aesthetic perfection.⁵ In literature, even before the visual arts, we see this negative side of sports reflected in criticism of its physical aspect – overtraining and an unhealthy life destroyed the athletes –, and of its social and moral aspects: sports made no positive contribution to the State although they might bring honor, prizes and public acclaim. This negative view is repeated, from different perspectives, and for a considerable time, in genres as different as lyric poetry, medical literature, and the theatre.

² Cf. *O.* 2.43–44; *I.* 1.50–52.

³ For this concept cf. I. MARTÍNKOVÁ, *Kalokagathia – How to Understand Harmony of a Human Being*, in: *Nikephoros* 14, 2001, 21–28.

⁴ F. GARCÍA ROMERO, *Poesía y deporte en la antigua Grecia*, in: *Revista de Occidente* 134–135, 1992, 49–52.

⁵ On the depiction of athletes, especially in the Roman period, see J. KÖNIG, *Athletics and Literature in the Roman Empire*, Cambridge 2005, 102–124.

There is a good example of this view in fr. 282 N² by Euripides, from his Satyr play *Autolykus*.⁶

Κακῶν γὰρ ὄντων μυρίων καθ' Ἑλλάδα
οὐδὲν κάκιόν ἐστιν ἀθλητῶν γένους
οἱ πρῶτα μὲν ζῆν οὔτε μανθάνουσιν εὖ
οὔτ' ἂν δύναιτο· πῶς γὰρ ὅστις ἔστ' ἀνήρ
γνάθου τε δοῦλος νηδύος θ' ἠσημένους 5
κτῆσαιτ' ἂν ὄλβον εἰς ὑπερβολὴν πατρός;
οὐδ' αὖ πένεσθαι κάξυπηρετεῖν τύχαις
οἰοί τ'· ἔθη γὰρ οὐκ ἐθισθέντες καλὰ
σκληρῶς μεταλλάσσουν εἰς τὰμήχανον.
λαμπροὶ δ' ἐν ἤβῃ καὶ πόλεως ἀγάλματα 10
φοιτῶσ'· ὅταν δὲ προσπέσῃ γῆρας πικρόν,
τρίβωνες ἐκβαλόντες οἴχονται κρόκας.
ἐμεμψάμην δὲ καὶ τὸν Ἑλλήνων νόμον,
οἱ τῶνδ' ἕκατι σύλλογον ποιούμενοι
τιμῶσ' ἀχρεῖους ἠδονὰς δαιτὸς χάριν. 15
τίς γὰρ παλαίστας εὖ, τίς ὠκύπους ἀνήρ
ἢ δίσκον ἄρας ἢ γνάθον παίστας καλῶς
πόλει πατρώα στεφάνον ἤρκεσεν λαβῶν;
πότερα μαχοῦνται πολεμίοισιν ἐν χεροῖν
δίσκους ἔχοντες ἢ δι' ἀσπίδων χερί 20
θείνοντες ἐκβαλοῦσι πολεμίους πάτρας;
οὐδεὶς σιδήρου ταῦτα μωραίνει πέλας
στάς. ἄνδρας χρὴ σοφούς τε κάκαθούς
φύλλοις στέφεσθαι, χῶστις ἡγεῖται πόλει
κάλλιστα σώφρων καὶ δίκαιος ὢν ἀνήρ, 25
ὅστις τε μύθοις ἔργ' ἀπαλλάσσει κακὰ
μάχας τ' ἀφαιρῶν καὶ στάσεις· τοιαῦτα γὰρ
πόλει τε πάσι θ' Ἑλλησιν καλά.

⁶ M. MARCOVICH, *Euripides' Attack on the Athletes*, in: *Živa Antika* 27, 1977, 51–54. P. ANGELI BERNARDINI, *Esaltazione e critica dell'atletismo nella poesia greca dal VII al V sec. A. C.: storia di un'ideologia*, in: *Stadion* 6, 1980, 91–92. F. ANGIÒ, *Euripide, Autolico, fr. 282 N.²*, in: *Dioniso* 62.2, 1992, 83–94. V. VISA-ONDARÇUHU, *L'image de l'athlète d'Homère à la fin du V^e siècle avant J.-C.*, Paris 1999, 239–243. F. GARCÍA ROMERO, *El cuerpo del atleta en la antigua Grecia*, in: *biTARTE* 37, 2005, 50. J.P. HARRIS, *Revenge of the Nerds: Xenophanes, Euripides, and Socrates vs. Olympic Victors*, in: *AJPh* 130.2, 2009, 163–166. D.M. Pritchard, *Athletics in Satyric Drama*, in: *G&R* 59.2, 2012 (forthcoming).

This fragment is especially interesting since it is implicitly a summary of the main points of this criticism, incorporating ideas already found in lyric poets such as Tyrtaeus and Xenophanes. To these ideas Euripides added others such as physical ruin – mentioned by doctors such as Hippocrates and, above all, by Galen⁷ in the Roman era –, their inability to fill their family coffers, and their gluttony, recurring notes in descriptions of the lifestyle of athletes.

As regards this passage from Euripides the following observation suggests itself. Euripides has one character voice certain opinions, although there is no way of knowing who the speaker is or to what extent he speaks for the author. However, D.F. Sutton⁸ believes that in addition to a negative view evident in this fragment there may also be an opinion in defense of athletes. In fact, Euripides did write an epinikian ode – the only one he wrote and the last example of this genre – to celebrate the deeds of Alcibiades at Olympia. The latter, in the Games of 416 BC won the chariot races with one team of horses and second and fourth place with two other chariots.⁹ Another point to mention is that the work to which the fragment belongs is a Satyr Play, a genre in which there are numerous allusions to athletic contests and especially to boxing and wrestling. It is common to find mythological figures such as Antaeus, Busiris and especially Heracles characterized as athletes, whether in combat or in humorous portraits of them as gluttons.¹⁰

⁷) Galen, among other occupations, was first a doctor for the school of gladiators in his native Pergamum, and so had occasion to know their world at first hand. V. NUTTON, *The Chronology of Galen's Early Career*, in: CQ 23.1, 1973, 162–164. KÖNIG, *Athletics and Literature* (vd. n. 5) c. 6: *Athletes and doctors: Galen's agnostic medicine*, 254–300.

⁸) D. F. SUTTON, *The Greek Satyr Play*, Meisenheim am Glan 1980, 148.

⁹) Th. 6.16.2. Plu. Alc. 11. Ath. 1.3 c. Cf. C. M. BOWRA, *Euripides' Epinikian for Alcibiades*, in: *Historia* 9, 1960, 68–79; VISA-ONDARÇUHU, *L'image de l'athlète* (vd. n. 6) 324–331; J. M. GARCÍA GONZÁLEZ, *En Grecia antigua: la crítica de los intelectuales y la decadencia de los juegos olímpicos*, in: M. PASTOR MUÑOZ/M. VILLENA PONSODA/J. L. AGUILERA GONZÁLEZ (eds.), *Deporte y olimpismo en el mundo antiguo y moderno*, Granada 2008, 148.

¹⁰) SUTTON, *The Greek Satyr Play* (vd. n. 8) 148–149 and *Athletics in Greek Satyr Play*, in: RSC 23, 1975, 203–209. R. SEAFORD, *Euripides. Cyclops*, Oxford 1984, 39–40. L. PAGANELLI, *Il dramma satiresco. Spazio, tematiche e messa in scena*, in: *Dioniso* 59.2, 1989, 263–267. J. L. LÓPEZ CRUCES, *P. Oxy. 2454 (TrGF adesp. 653). Cuestiones de datación, género y autoría*, in: *Myrtia* 19, 2004, 13. I. C. STOREY, *But Comedy has Satyrs Too*, in G. W. M. HARRISON (ed.), *Satyr Drama. Tragedy at Play*, Swansea 2005, 203. GARCÍA GONZÁLEZ, *En Grecia antigua* (vd. n. 9) 143–145.

Regarding the point of view expressed in the Euripidean fragment, the first two verses are a declaration of principle that leaves no doubt: *κακῶν γὰρ ὄντων μυρίων καθ' Ἑλλάδα / οὐδὲν κάκιόν ἐστιν ἀθλητῶν γένους*, "Although the misfortunes in the Hellenic land are legion, none is more damaging than the race of athletes." The speaker then calls into question all the positive commonplaces associated with athletes in Antiquity, everything from their physical beauty, to the association of athletic prowess with bravery in war, as well as their glorification by a public that praised them as heroic only to abandon them when they reached old age, *τρίβωνες ἐκβαλόντες ... κρόκας*, "just like a worn-out cloak" (v. 12). He then criticizes athletics as injurious to health, a point made by Hippocrates and especially by Galen. Here Euripides follows the lead of Tyrtaeus and Xenophanes, and contributes to a theme that would continue long after, with examples as late as Roman times.

Near the beginning of this fragment, a character ridicules the lives of athletes because they are "not friends of good behavior", but rather "slaves of their jaws and victims of their stomachs" (vv. 8 and 5).¹¹ This sentiment is not arbitrary, because excessive eating will be a constant in the criticism of athletes. In fact their excessive appetite seems to have been a favorite target of the playwrights, particularly in the fourth century BC when they were mocked for having large stomachs and small brains.¹² All examples from the surviving plays in which athletes appear are fragments, so that their presentation is not as pointed as with other *topoi* such as the parasite or the cook. Nevertheless, they gain a certain importance since some playwrights made them the subject of their comedies, of which only the titles have survived, or, at best, a few fragments. Thus we know of a *Ἐπινίκιος* (*The Victorious Athlete*) by Epicharmus and an *Ἰσθμιονίκης* (*The Victor in the Isthmian Games*) by Mnesimachus, and we have titles of plays that touch on different sporting events: *Πένταθλος* (*The Pentathlete*) by Eubulus and Xenarchus; *Παγκρατιάστης* (*The Pankratiast*) by Alexis, by Philemon and by Theophilus (and later Ennius); *Πυκτής* (*The Pu-*

¹¹ This expression recalls another Satyr play by Euripides, *The Cyclops*, where the allusion to the jaws relates to the animal (and cannibal) diet of the monster of the title (vv. 92, 289, 310). In v. 303, Ulysses reminds him that the norms of hospitality do not permit "filling stomach and jaws", *νηδὺν καὶ γνάθον πλήσαι*, with the flesh of new guests.

¹² Cf. G. W. ARNOTT, *Alexis: The Fragments. A Commentary*, Cambridge 1996, 508.

gelist)¹³ by Timocles and Timotheus; and *Ἀποβάτης* (a species of acrobat who at full gallop leapt from one horse to another) by Alexis.¹⁴

L. Bruzzese¹⁵ believes that probably this characterization of the athlete also appears in fragmentary works whose titles do not refer explicitly to athletes. This may be the case of the comedy *Κεραυνός* or *Κεραυνόμενος* by Anaxippus, where fun is made of one Damippus, whose surname is *Κεραυνός* (“Thunderbolt”), since he renders tables sacrosanct, and above all out of reach, once he has “struck” them with tooth and jaw.¹⁶ In the fragments 274 and 275 K.-A. of a play by Alexis, whose title is lost, there is a character who may be either a pankratiast or a boxer. In the first fragment he describes a dream of victory in which he is given a wreath of plums, an especially unusual crown, and he adds that the plums are ripe, that is, purple in color, exactly like his bruised face after the fight. This is confirmed in the second fragment where the meaning of the dream is revealed.¹⁷

The athlete in Comedy is based on the figure of Heracles, who was always associated with sports, and especially with contests of strength in myth, religion, literature and the visual arts. Beginning in 520 BC in depictions of Heracles’ encounter with the Nemean lion he appears in a way that clearly recalls fighters grappling in the arena. The best example in literature is in an epinikian ode by Pindar, where the myths of Heracles are applied to boxers, wrestlers and pankratiasts, at times even confounding the real fighter with the mythical archetype.¹⁸ Then too, in Theocritus’ fourth *Idyll* (vv. 111–118), we see wrestling,

¹³) From Roman literature we could also cite a *Pugil* among the comedies of Caecilius.

¹⁴) Cf. ARNOTT, *Alexis: The Fragments* (vd. n. 12) 104–106.

¹⁵) L. BRUZZESE, *Lo Schwerathlet, Eracle e il parassita nella commedia greca*, in: Nikephoros 17, 2004, 141–144.

¹⁶) This and similar surnames, such as *Σκηπτός*, or *Χεῖμων*, are not inappropriate for the heavy eaters, especially the uninvited ones, because they also consume the feasts at which they gorge themselves. Cf. Theophil. fr. 3 K.-A.; Alex. fr. 183 K.-A.; Anaxil. fr. 3 K.-A.; Antiph. fr. 193.4 K.-A. These comparisons were certainly a commonplace, because they were used by both Alexis (fr. 47 K.-A.) and Timocles (fr. 4.8–10 K.-A.) to refer to the effect caused when certain lovers of fish visited the markets.

¹⁷) Cf. ARNOTT, *Alexis: The Fragments* (vd. n. 12) 766–768.

¹⁸) BRUZZESE, *Lo Schwerathlet, Eracle e il parassita* (vd. n. 15) 148–151. P. ANGELI BERNARDINI, *Eracle atleta: Eur. HF. 957–62; Alc. 1025–36*, in: RCCM 40 (1–2), 1998, 9. EAD., *L’eroe, l’atleta, il soldato nell’ideologia agonale greca*, in: C. MASSERIA/D. LOSCALZO (eds.), *Miti di guerra, riti di pace. La guerra e la pace: un confronto interdisciplinare*, Bari 2011, 92.

boxing and pankration as part of the young Heracles' education. In this connection it is interesting to recall that Apollodorus (2.4.9) says he learned the art of wrestling from Autolykus and, while not supported by other sources, it is probable, as Sutton¹⁹ suggests, that the theme of Euripides' Satyr play is in fact the young Heracles learning to wrestle.

One of the characteristics of Heracles is his enormous appetite, his *πολυφαγία*. This appears already in the *Wedding of Ceyx* (fr. 264–268 Merkelbach-Snell), a poem attributed to Hesiod, and in a fragment from Pindar (fr. 168 Snell-Maehler), where the poet expresses astonishment at the speed with which the hero devours two roast oxen. This exaggerated eating and drinking seems to be associated with Heracles, as is suggested by Sophocles (*Tr.* 268) and Euripides (*Alc.* 747–760) in Tragedy, Stesichorus (fr. 181 Page) in Lyric Poetry and Panyasis (fr. 16–19 Bernabé) in the Epic. Also in the visual arts, especially vase painting, the hero is often portrayed eating and drinking at a banquet.²⁰ Because of its exaggerated nature Heracles as glutton soon became a *topos* in the Satyr plays²¹ and in Comedy. Aristophanes (V. 59–60) criticized the utilization of this motif of *Ἡρακλῆς τὸ δεῖπνον ἐξαπατώμενος* ("Heracles deprived of his dinner") as a worn-out cliché used to provoke easy laughter, and often repeated in comic scenes, although the playwright himself also shows Heracles as a glutton in several of his comedies.²² The first example that we have of this *topos* is in fr. 18 K.-A. of *Busiris*²³ by the Sicilian playwright

¹⁹ SUTTON, *The Greek Satyr Play* (vd.n.8) 148. Cf. ANGIÒ, *Euripide, Autolykus, fr. 282 N.*² (vd.n.6) 85–86.

²⁰ P. ANGELI BERNARDINI, *Eracle mangione: Pindaro, fr. 168 Snell-Maehler*, in: QUCC 21, 1976, 51. A. VERBANCK-PIÉRARD, *Herakles at Feast in Attic Art: a Mythical or Cultic Iconography?* in: P. HÄGG (ed.), *The Iconography of Greek Cult in the Archaic and Classical Periods. Proceedings of the First International Seminar on Ancient Greek Cult (Delphi, 16–18 November 1990)*, Athens/Liège 1992, 85–106.

²¹ Cf. N. CHOURMOUZIADES, *Σατυρικά*, Athens 1974, 115–164.

²² V. 567, *Pax* 739–743, *Lys.* 928, *Ra.* 62–65, 549–576, *Av.* 567, 1583–1590, 1601–1603, fr. 284 K.-A. Cf. Th. PAPPAS, *Le personnage d'Héraclès chez Aristophane: comportent scénique d'un héros secondaire bouffon et satyrique*, in: *Dioniso* 61.2, 1991, 257–268; G. MASTROMARCO, *Introduzione a Aristofane*, Roma/Bari 1994, 163–164.

²³ The theme of Heracles and the Egyptian king Busiris was extremely popular, as we see from the many comedies with the same title as the one by Epicharmus (and probably with a similar characterization of the hero) in Attic authors such as Cratinus (fr. 23 K.-A.), Ehippus (fr. 2 K.-A.), Mnesimachus (fr. 2 K.-A.) and Antiphanes (fr. 66–68 K.-A.). In Satyr plays as well there are several like *Busiris* by Euripides (fr. 313–315 N²) and another by Diogenes the Cynic where, accord-

Epicharmus, where a character describes in detail the intimidating way the hero has of eating:

*πρᾶτον μὲν αἰκ' ἔσθοντ' ἴδοις νιν, ἀποθάνοις·
βρέμει μὲν ὁ φάρυγξ ἔνδοθ', ἀραβεῖ δ' ἄ γνάθος,
ψοφεῖ δ' ὁ γομφίος, τέτριγε δ' ὁ κυνόδων,
σίξει δὲ ταῖς ρίνεσσι, κινεῖ δ' οὔατα.²⁴*

Possibly the hero's enormous appetite also figures in other comedies by Epicharmus, such as *Heracles at Pholus' House* and *The Wedding of Hebe*, although the evidence is inconclusive. With the authors of Old Comedy, in addition to Aristophanes, a similar picture of the hero appears in Cratinus and Phrynichus. The same image of Heracles also appears in authors of the Middle and the New Comedy such as Alexis, Antiphanes, Eubulus, Strattis or Archippus.²⁵

As to the image that these playwrights offer of the athlete as a species of bottomless pit, there is a good example in fr. 8 K.-A. from Theophilus' *The Pankratiast*, where one character, possibly the protagonist, describes to an amazed listener all he has eaten:

*A. ἐφθῶν μὲν σχεδὸν
τρεις μνάς. B. λέγ' ἄλλο. A. ῥυγχίον, κωλήν, πόδας
τέτταρας ὑείους. B. Ἡράκλεις. A. βοός δὲ τρεῖς,
ὄρνιθ'. B. Ἄπολλον. λέγ' ἕτερον. A. σύκων δύο
μνάς. B. ἐπέπιες δὲ πόσον; A. ἀκράτου δώδεκα
κοτύλας. B. Ἄπολλον, ὦρε καὶ Σαβάζιε.²⁶*

ing to Dio Chrysostom (6.32), Busiris is depicted as an athlete, "training with great diligence, eating all day, and boasting overly much about his skills as a fighter".

²⁴ "If you saw him eating, first of all, you'd die. His throat emits a roar, his jaws rattle, his molars resound, his canine teeth squeak, he snorts loudly, and he wiggles his ears."

²⁵ Cratin. fr. 346 K.-A. Phryn. Com. fr. 24 K.-A. Alex. fr. 140 K.-A. Antiph. fr. 174–176 K.-A. Eub. fr. 6 K.-A. Stratt. fr. 12 K.-A. Archipp. fr. 10 K.-A. Cf. Ath. 10.411a–412b, 12.512e–f. For Heracles the glutton in comedy see: G.K. GALINSKY, *The Comic Hero*, in: *The Herakles Theme. The Adaptations of the Hero in Literature from Homer to the Twentieth Century*, Oxford 1972, 81–100; J. WILKINS, *The Boastful Chef: The Discourse of Food in Ancient Greek Comedy*, Oxford 2000, 94; M. J. GARCÍA SOLER, *Grands mangeurs et grands buveurs dans la Grèce ancienne*, in: *Food & History* 4.2, 2006, 46–47; S.D. OLSON, *Broken Laughter. Select Fragments of Greek Comedy*, Oxford 2007, 40–41, 265–266.

²⁶ "A. – Almost three pounds of boiled meat ... B. – Tell me more! A. – ... a little snout, a ham, four pig's feet ... B. – Heracles! A. – ... three cow's feet, poultry ... B. –

This fragment provides clear evidence of the nature of the athletes' diet: especially high in protein so as to build greater strength and endurance. This diet is the endpoint of a development that took place in about the sixth century BC, consisting of food that was considered energy-producing, such as milk and dried figs, which were never entirely dispensed with, as we see in the passage from Theophilus. Dried figs guaranteed an "explosive" energy, while for resisting stress bread with olive oil were ingested. Later the diet was high in protein, according to this fragment from Theophilus and many other literary examples.²⁷

Although there is no direct evidence in this respect, it has usually been thought that this kind of diet was characteristic of athletes dedicated to combat sports. Because there were no divisions according to weight, and the fighting had no limits except surrender, collapse, or the death of one of the contestants, physical strength and endurance were important, and so it was essential to increase muscle-size. This was the origin of the practice called *ἀναγκοφαγία*, a species of forced eating,²⁸ an essential part of the athletes' training, to which there are numerous references. For example, Athenaeus of Naucratis, an author of the second century AD, in Book 10 of *Deipnosophists* (412d–413c), in an extensive section on gluttons – with many references to athletes – states that: *πάντες γὰρ οἱ ἀθλοῦντες μετὰ τῶν γυμνασμάτων καὶ ἐσθίειν πολλὰ διδάσκονται*, "all those who take part in athletic contests, besides gymnastic practice, also learn to eat a great deal".²⁹ At this point he dedicates considerable space to examples of gluttony and the feats of athletes like Theagenes of Thasos, who single-handedly ate an entire bull; Titormus of Aetolia, who on a bet ate a whole

Apollo! Tell me the rest! A. – ... two pounds of figs. B. – And how much did you drink on top of this? A. – Twelve cups of unmixed wine. B. – Apollo, Horus, and Sabazius!"

²⁷⁾ Paus. 6.7.10. Porph. *Abst.* 1.26.2. D.L. 8.12. Plin. 23.121–122. Ruf. *ap.* Orib. 1.40. Cf. M. ZERBINI, *Alle fonti del doping. Fortuna e prospettive di un tema storico-religioso*, Roma 2001, 25.

²⁸⁾ This word, and its corresponding verb, *ἀναγκοφαγεῖν*, and other similar expressions (*τὴν βίαιον τροφήν* "forced feeding", Arist. *Pol.* 1338b40–41; *ἀναγκοτροφεῖν* "having to follow a dietary regimen", Epict. *Ench.* 3.15.2–3) are specific to sports as the lexicographers point out. Pollux (3.153) lists this verb among those dealing with physical training and Hesychius (*α* 4236) defines *ἀναγκοφαγεῖν* as *πρὸς ἀνάγκην ἐσθίειν, ὅπερ ἀθληταὶ πάσχουσιν*, "be forced to eat as happens with athletes". Cf. REISCH, *ἀναγκοφαγία*, in: RE I/2, Stuttgart 1894, 2058–2059; VISA-ONDARÇUHU, *L'image de l'athlète* (vd.n.6) 278–280, and *L'image de l'athlète dans la Collection hippocratique*, in: Actes du VII^e colloque international hippocratique (Madrid, 24–29 sept. 1990), Madrid 1992, 277.

²⁹⁾ Cf. Achae. fr. 4.2 Snell.

cow for breakfast; Astyanax of Miletus, who by himself ate an entire banquet that had been prepared for nine people; or Milo of Croton, one of the most famous athletes of Antiquity, for his strength and for his capacity for food: he was reputed to often have eaten 20 pounds of meat, a like amount of bread, and to have washed it all down with three pitchers of wine.³⁰

This *πολυφαγία* is one of the constants in comparing athletes with Heracles. An especially representative example in this respect is the extraordinary Milo who, as a member of one of the most important families of Croton, acted as a priest of Hera Lakinia, a protective deity of his city. Indeed, according to myth both the shrine and Croton itself were founded by the hero.³¹ This explains Milo's costume when he led the Crotonians against neighboring Sybaris, dressed in a lion's skin and wielding a club, the traditional attributes of Heracles.³²

The most obvious result of an athlete's excesses was obesity, so often depicted on the stage and in literature. Attic pottery from the sixth to the fourth centuries BC shows fat boxers, pankratiasts, and even runners, as does a smaller variety of sculpture, and all continue to appear down to Roman times. In literature Lucian in his *Dialogues of the Dead* (20.5) describes the athlete Damasias with the expression *τοσαύτας σάρκας περιβεβλημένον*, "swathed in such masses of (his own) flesh", and Galen, in his treatise *On Exercise With a Small Ball* (3 = 5.905 Kühn), complains that the kind of exercise practiced in the gymnasium does more to enlarge the body than to cultivate virtue. In the *Thrasyboulos or Whether Healthiness Belongs to Medicine or Gymnastics* (37 = 5.879 Kühn), Galen criticizes athletes who reach an exaggerated size and weight because of the quantities of food and drink associated with their gluttony.³³ According to Aristotle one consequence of obesity is that it causes physical deformity, since it keeps nature from fostering a balanced growth (*GA* 768 b, *Rh.* 1361 b). Socrates too, in the *Banquet* by Xenophon (2.17), alludes to the in-harmonious growth caused by excessive specialization. And Philostratus (*Gym.* 44) attributes the decadence of athletes to their excessive eating, because it causes them to lose energy and become soft and

³⁰ Arist. *EN* 1106 b3 and fr. 520 Rose. Str. 6.1.12. Paus. 6.14.5–7. Cf. VANOYEKE, *La naissance des Jeux Olympiques* (vd. n. 1) 81–82.

³¹ PHILIPP, *Kroton*, in: RE XI/2, Stuttgart 1965, 2020.

³² Hdt. 3.137.5. Iamb. *VP* 104. Str. 6.1.12. D.S. 12.9.5–6. Cf. M. DETIENNE, *La cuisine de Pythagore*, in: Archives de Sociologie des Religions 15, 1970, 145–146.

³³ J. M. NIETO IBÁÑEZ, *Galen's Treatise 'Thrasybulus' and the Dispute between 'Paidotribes' and 'Gymnastes'*, in: Nikephoros 16, 2003, 150.

lazy. They were encouraged by the doctors to eat before training “until they were as heavy as blocks of Libyan or Egyptian stone”, so that athletes came to be viewed as gluttons with stomachs always hungering for more.³⁴

Nevertheless, despite what Philostratus held, doctors (or at least those not associated with gymnasia) considered the way of life of the athletes dangerous and were the first to severely criticize it for causing a constitutional imbalance and physical malformation. Indeed, Galen, in his *Thrasybulos*, blamed the trainers for the decadence of the healthy norms of the gymnasium because they made athletes follow a regimen dedicated solely to the defeat of an opponent.³⁵ The author of the Hippocratic treatise *Aphorisms* had already pointed out the dangers of excessive training: a certain precariousness, since once an optimum development was reached, it could only be followed by a decrease in strength. Galen was of the same opinion as Hippocrates, who he quotes repeatedly in his *Exhortation to Study the Arts* (11–13 = 1.26–37 Kühn), basing his argument on the fragment from Euripides. He extends this criticism to the whole system of training, pointing out that in the end their lives are little better than those of pigs, except that pigs neither over-exert nor force-feed themselves the way athletes do. Many of their physical problems were due to the great amounts of food consumed, and also to the fact that their diets were neither varied nor balanced, which led to sudden losses of physical strength, and even to more serious problems if they were followed for too long. It is true that modern sports stars also follow special, restricted diets, but only while in training for their events, and afterwards they return to normal eating.

The natural consequences of this unhealthy life are described by Euripides, who introduces a new factor – physical degeneration – that is not found in earlier critiques of sports:

*λαμπροὶ δ' ἐν ἡβῇ καὶ πόλεως ἀγάλματα
φοιτῶσ'· ὅταν δὲ προσπέσῃ γῆρας πικρὸν,
τρίβωνες ἐκβαλόντες οἴχονται κρόκας.*³⁶

³⁴ KÖNIG, *Athletics and Literature* (vd. n. 5) 323, 335–336.

³⁵ NIETO IBÁÑEZ, *Galen's Treatise 'Thrasybulus'* (vd. n. 33) 147–156. KÖNIG, *Athletics and Literature* (vd. n. 5) 267–274. GARCÍA GONZÁLEZ, *En Grecia antigua* (vd. n. 9) 151–153.

³⁶ “In the youthful prime of their lives they strut about, the glories and delights of their cities; but when bitter old age overtakes them they vanish like a worn-out unraveled cloak” (vv. 10–13).

Galen takes up this notion, adding details that contradict the ideal of the athletes' beauty, when he compares their bodies to battlements that have been attacked by war machines, and in their weakened condition can no longer survive the least earth tremor. "This happens to the bodies of athletes and when they finish competing it is even worse. Some die at once and some live longer but never reach old age. Or, if they do, their fate is as described in the Homeric prayers: they end up 'limping, all shriveled up, deprived of sight' (Hom. *Il.* 9.503)" (11 = 1.30 Kühn).³⁷ Galen also describes their damaged eyes, teeth that fall out, their twisted joints, and earlier wounds that reopen. The practice of sports like boxing or pankration disfigures their faces and leaves them blind in one or both eyes, and he adds: "this – I believe – is when the kind of beauty derived from sports becomes obvious" (12 = 1.31–32 Kühn).

The satirical poet Lucillius, author of epigrams about athletes, holds a similar view to Galen's, but here the negative image of their prowess is a source of humor.³⁸ In his epigram number 81 the boxer Androleos lists his "prizes": *ἔσχον δ' ἐν Πίσῃ μὲν ἐν ὤτιον, ἐν δὲ Πλαταιαῖς / ἐν βλέφαρον Πυθοῖ δ' ἄπνοος ἐκφέρομαι*, "In Pisa I had (i. e., lost) an ear, in Plataea an eye, at Delphi I nearly died ..." (AP 11.81.3–4). The epigrams 75 and 77 are even better examples. Epigram 75 tells of a boxer who when he returns home is kept from assuming his former life. His brother, unable to recognize him, takes him to court and shows that he is so unlike an old portrait that he is declared a foreigner. In epigram 77 someone tells the boxer Straton that, when Ulysses returned to Ithaca after 20 years, his dog recognized him, but that, after only four hours of fighting, he could not even have recognized himself, and that if he saw himself in a mirror he would swear it was someone else.

After referring to the physical collapse of these combatants Euripides criticizes a public that praises them and awards prizes for such "useless pastimes", *ἀχρείους ἡδονᾶς* (v. 15). He agrees with the many authors before and after him who complain of the exaggerated social importance accorded athletes, despite the relatively minor value of their profession. In this same passage the author asks what benefit a city obtains, when under attack, from a man who fights well and runs swiftly (vv. 17–24). When Euripides speaks in this way, he adopts a

³⁷ Cf. *On Exercise With a Small Ball* 5 = 5.910.

³⁸ Cf. L. ROBERT, *Les épigrammes satiriques de Lucillius sur les athlètes. Parodie et réalités*, in: *L'épigramme grecque*, Vandœuvres-Genève 1968 (Fondation Hardt, Entretiens sur l'Antiquité Classique XIV), 181–291.

tradition that derives from the Ancient poets, beginning with Tyrtaeus (fr. 9 Gentili-Prato),³⁹ who perhaps about 640 BC listed the virtues that would make a man worthy of praise: speed, strength, wealth, nobility and eloquence. Beside these virtues, Tyrtaeus will only acclaim a warrior's courage if he defends and glorifies his city, not if he seeks individual reward. A strong or a swift man is of no use to the city unless he is brave and attacks the enemy; but a hero who fights in the vanguard, and whose shouts urge on those around him, does indeed help to defend his city.

Xenophanes' approach (fr. 9 Gentili-Prato⁴⁰) is more direct and polemical, using as he does the idea with which Euripides will conclude his fragment: athletes receive too much compensation, too much praise, whereas only men of wisdom capable of leading a city really deserve it. Unlike Tyrtaeus, Xenophanes lists specific contests celebrated on a particular occasion, that is, the Olympic Games: foot races, pentathlon, wrestling, pankration and horse races. His complaint is also specific: these victors receive prizes such as a front row seat at the events, financial support by the city, and "a prize that to them must seem an enormous fortune" (vv. 6–9).⁴¹ The poet sees no sense in the distribution of distinctions in this way, since it is unfair to value strength, which adds nothing to the proper governance of the city and does not increase its material wealth. Socrates expresses the same idea before the court that condemns him. He proposes instead of punishment the prize of eating in the Prytaneum, because in his opinion he deserves it more than any Olympic victor: *ὁ μὲν γὰρ ὑμᾶς ποιεῖ εὐδαίμονα, δοκεῖν εἶναι, ἐγὼ δὲ εἶναι*, "For he makes you seem happy, whereas I make you truly happy".⁴²

³⁹ ANGELI BERNARDINI, *Esaltazione e critica dell'atletismo* (vd. n. 6) 84–87. VISA-ONDARÇUHU, *L'immagine de l'athlète* (vd. n. 6) 215–229. G. A. PRIVITERA, *Cibo e gloria: il bivio in Pindaro*, in: RAL Ser. 9 a, 14.1, 2003, 123–124.

⁴⁰ C. M. BOWRA, *Xenophanes and the Olympic Games*, in: *AJPh* 59.3, 1938, 257–279. M. I. FINLEY/H. W. PLEKET, *I giochi olimpici. I primi mille anni*, Roma 1980, 113–114. P. GIANNINI, *Senofane fr. 2 Gentili-Prato e la funzione dell'intellettuale nella Grecia antica*, in: *QUCC* 39, 1982, 57–69. ANGELI BERNARDINI, *Esaltazione e critica dell'atletismo* (vd. n. 6) 88–90, and *Introduzione*, in: P. ANGELI BERNARDINI (ed.), *Lo sport in Grecia*, Roma/Bari 1988, xxvi–xxvii. J. M. LUCAS DE DIOS, *Jenófanes: la inteligencia contra el deporte*, in: J. A. LÓPEZ FÉREZ (ed.), *Estudios actuales sobre textos griegos*, Madrid 1991, 57–73. VISA-ONDARÇUHU, *L'immagine de l'athlète* (vd. n. 6) 229–239. GARCÍA ROMERO, *El cuerpo del atleta* (vd. n. 6) 49. HARRIS, *Revenge of the Nerds* (vd. n. 6) 158–163.

⁴¹ D. C. YOUNG, *Mens sana in corpore sano: Body and Mind in Ancient Greece*, in: *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 22.1, 2005, 38 n. 32.

⁴² Cf. *Pl. Ap.* 36 d–e.

As regards the great honors heaped on athletes, cities considered participation in the Olympic Games patriotic: in proclaiming a victor his birthplace was named and this tied it to the victory. Indeed, in the late sixth and early fifth centuries BC the custom of awarding honors to the winning athletes was widespread, especially in southern Italy and Sicily, and this continued into Roman times. Regarding this phenomenon, J. Fontenrose⁴³ has collected many remarks about victorious contestants in which they are likened to mythological heroes. Then too, this same period saw the greater popularity of epinikian odes and a considerable amount of statuary of athletes, probably due to their greater importance at this time.

This criticism of the excessive social role of athletes owes much to the profound changes occurring in the Greek world, with its emphasis on new ethical and political principles. Indeed, from the fifth century BC on, the affirmation of these principles was common due to new ideas of the philosophers, and changes in education that promoted the superiority of the intellectual over the physical. Plato in the *Republic* considers basic for the guardians of the *polis* the same disciplines that figured in the traditional Greek *paideia*, that is, gymnastics and music, this last in the widest sense (376e, 410a–412a). Both are given equal importance and are presented as complementary, so that they contribute to the balanced nature of the individual. But Plato makes clear that the gymnasium he proposes has nothing to do with the preparation of athletes who are only interested in physical strength and muscular vigor.

At the beginning of the fourth century BC we find the complaints of Isocrates who, taking up certain contemporary ideas from his cultural milieu, expresses surprise and dismay at the different treatment of those successful only in physical endeavors as opposed to those who work for the common good. At the same time he stresses the superiority of hard work and intellect over strength and speed. There are three works in which he addresses this theme in similar terms. In his *Letter to the Rulers of Mytilene* (*Epist.* 8.5.1), he is surprised at the number of cities that award their largest prizes to the winners of athletic contests instead of to those who provide something of value to the State. In this case they fail to realize “that the faculties of strength and speed perish with the body, but the arts and sciences are eternal, and benefit those who cultivate them”. Nevertheless, in his opinion,

⁴³ J. FONTENROSE, *The Hero as Athlete*, in: *California Studies in Classical Antiquity* 1, 1968, 73–104. Cf. Z. NEWBY, *Athletics in the Ancient World*, Bristol 2006, 59; ANGELI BERNARDINI, *L'eroe, l'atleta, il soldato nell'ideologia agonale greca* (vd. n. 18) 92–93.

“the worst part is that despite acknowledging that the soul is more precious than the body, they look with greater favor on training in gymnastics than on the study of philosophy” (*Antidosis* 250). He makes the same point at the beginning of the *Panegyric* (1–2), where he laments the preeminence given those who pursue physical success and not of those who strive for the common good. This point of view was popular for a long time, as we see in Galen in the second century AD, especially in his *Exhortation to Study the Arts*, in which he seeks to separate the young from the pointless profession of athletes and their unearned glorification.

In fr. 282 N² of Euripides' *Autolykus* there is an excellent summary of these *topoi* regarding the athlete. The aspects he is most concerned with touch different areas: the social, medical and even the moral. In this he shares the preoccupation of other intellectuals for what they viewed as a lack of balance between the athletes' liberal compensation and their actual usefulness. That is to say, their scant contribution to the common good at a time when the citizens' participation in the governance of the city-state was at a premium. He also conveys the concern of doctors for the athletes' health because their training damaged their bodies. However, since we do not have the context of this fragment, it is not possible to know its real sense. Due to the type of work it belongs to, it is likely to have been composed with a humorous intention (this could be the reason for the somewhat exaggerated pathos of the ragged robes image to describe the end of the athletes' career), although later authors, like Galen, took it seriously.

In fact, that this kind of critics continued for so long suggests they had very little effect. Rather, these opinions seem to have been the discourse of a limited circle of intellectuals, moralists and philosophers, who never managed to convince the masses. Indeed the latter continued to enjoy sporting contests. Even if public ridicule by the writers of comedy was recognized as such, it was only because of the prestige that the athletes already enjoyed. Despite the criticism of the intellectuals, the satire of the poets, and their depiction in sculpture and vase painting, the great sports competitions saw an increased popularity in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, first under Macedonian rule and later under the Roman Emperors. Their loss of popularity came only with the decadence of life in the city-state and the decrease in urban wealth that became evident in the third and fourth centuries AD. This in turn led to a reduction of the material base necessary for the organization and financing of athletic events. The spread of Christianity, with its rejection of the physical and everything related to it, did the rest.

Thucydides 5.49–50, the Olympic Games of 420 BC: Narrative Structure and Technique

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This article re-examines the two splendid chapters (5.49–50) in which Thucydides describes the Olympic games and festival of 420 BC. It is argued, against criticism levelled against the author in 2008 by A. Köhnken, that the description employ narrative strategies, including and especially artful delays. In particular (1) Lichas' introduction at 5.50.4 is delayed (he could have been introduced at the beginning of ch.49); Lichas' patronymic is also delayed (it could have been given earlier in book 5); the claim (Köhnken) that Thucydides' sole and exclusive motive in these chapters was to illustrate general 'fear' felt towards the Spartans is argued to be reductively monocausal, though the motive is valid as far as it goes. Other and simultaneous motives are suggested.

Introduction

Thucydides devotes two highly unusual chapters to an account of the exciting Olympic festival and games of 420 BC, a year after the Peace of Nikias, and to their immediate prehistory. The Spartans were excluded by the Eleians, with whom they were in legal dispute, from the Olympia festival and sanctuary, and there was a general fear that they would make an armed attack. This anxiety was compounded when Lichas, the eminent but probably disagreeable Spartan, was beaten by umpires for entering a chariot under Boiotian colours, and then ostentatiously drawing attention to his victory. A. Köhnken has recently devoted a chapter in a *Festschrift*¹ to a critique of my 2004 treatment of this episode.²

I regret that Köhnken's study appeared in the same year (2008) as the third and final volume of my Thucydides commentary (which covered the chapters in question),³ so that I was not able to notice his criticisms there. Equally, he was not able to notice the revised and deliberately less 'Pindaric' treatment of this episode in my commen-

¹ *Enkomiastische Dichtung und Geschichtsschreibung: S. Hornblowers pindarische Interpretation von Thukydides 5,49f.*, in: E. WINTER (ed.), *Vom Euphrat bis zum Bosporus*, *Festschrift für E. Schwertheim zum 65. Geburtstag*, Bonn 2008 (*Asia Minor Studien* 65), 385–90.

² S. HORNBLOWER, *Thucydides and Pindar: Historical narrative and the World of Epinikian Poetry*, Oxford 2004, 273–86. Lichas disagreeable: this can safely be inferred from Th. 8.84.5.

³ S. HORNBLOWER, *Commentary on Thucydides vol. III: Books 5.25–8.109*, Oxford 2008, 122–37. Henceforth abbreviated *CT III*.

tary, where the main focus was naturally on Thucydides, though with some back-references to the earlier book.

Köhnken is wholly unconvinced that there is anything Pindaric about those two chapters of Thucydides, and I do not propose now to return to that aspect. Instead, I wish to reply to his specific objections, insofar as they directly concern Thucydides. They affect three matters: (1) Thucydides' positioning of the mention of Lichas the Spartan within chs. 49–50; (2) Thucydides' positioning of Lichas' patronymic within book 5; and most important (3) Thucydides' reason or reasons for covering this festival at such length. On (3), I offered a plurality of reasons. Köhnken offers one.

Köhnken's position on (1)–(3) can be summarised as follows: (1) Lichas' introduction at 5.50.4 is not an example of narrative delay; (2) Lichas' patronymic (again, 5.50.4) is not an example of narrative delay, although it is not in dispute that he was named with no patronymic at 5.22.2;⁴ (3) the reason why Thucydides treats this festival at length is simple: he wished to emphasise the fear, *Furcht*, which prevailed after, and despite, the unstable Peace of Nikias of 421 BC.

These are all matters of narrative technique. I here state two principles which I suggest should be followed when examining the narrative of any ancient author. First (A), one must ask 'could the author have arranged things differently?' If the answer is No, it is useless to spend time on examining the narrative as it stands, because there was no choice facing the author. Second (B), monocausal explanations are best avoided, especially where the author is as subtle as Thucydides.

1

Köhnken denies that the appearance of Lichas – who is not mentioned until 50.4, although the festival narrative began at 49.1 – is delayed. He says that Lichas has no place in the purely diplomatic material in ch. 49.1–50.2. See Köhnken 358: 'Die Partie 5,49,1–50,2 gilt ausschließlich Auseinandersetzungen zwischen Elis und Sparta.' Really? 'Ausschliesslich'? This is surely not correct, because it ignores the very first sentence of all, namely 49.1, in which Thucydides tells us that the Olympic festival happened in that summer, and that the victor in the *pankration* was Androstenes the Arkadian, for the first time.⁵

⁴) This assumes that the two mentions of Lichas refer to the same man. The Argive context at 5.22 surely makes that probable.

⁵) KÖHNKEN 390 again insists that 49–50.2 are concerned 'ausschliesslich' with the prehistory ('Vorgeschichte') of the exclusion of the Spartans from the Olympic

But there was another and much more celebrated Olympic victor in that summer, namely Lichas! The entire mini-narrative constituted by the two long chapters 49 and 50 opens and closes with an Olympic victor. If it be objected, 'but Androsthene's merely functions as a date!' we should ask ourselves what we mean by 'functioning as a date', at a period before the introduction of numbered and sub-numbered Timaian or Polybian Olympics of the type '3rd year of the 54th Olympiad'. A 'date' by name of athletic or equestrian victor is a way of fixing the year in the mind. Surely, the 420 festival, as we call it, was memorable for two things: the Spartan military threat and, compounding that threat, the spectacular behaviour and then punishment of Lichas. For every one person who could mentally fix those Olympics by Androsthene's the first-time pankratiast (or by Hyperbios of Syracuse the runner, Diod. 12.77.1), there must have been a thousand people who could fix it by what Lichas then 'did and suffered', in a famous Aristotelian formulation. It is no good invoking the supposedly formulaic character of the dating by pankratiast, because it is not a formula: there is only one other example of an Olympic 'date' in all Thucydides, namely 3.8, where the victor was another high-profile figure, Dorieus the Rhodian, and where, too, the festival was mentioned for a particular reason, namely the conference at which the Mytileneans and others aired grievances against the Athenians. Two instances do not make a formula.

But let us now apply principle (A) and ask, how else might Thucydides have handled this episode? Only thus can we hope to refute Köhnken, who appears to operate with Thucydides' text as a non-negotiable 'given'. If we regard Thucydides' order of presentation as the only possible order, then it is not surprising if we reach the conclusion that it contains nothing in need of explanation. So let us exercise the imagination and ask, how else might Thucydides have handled it? Here it may be helpful to look at Herodotus' only description of a particular Olympic games and festival (5.22). He begins with a statement that Alexander of Macedon was judged by the Olympic organisers to be a Greek, then we have the narrative of his disputed participation, then (repeated) the statement that he was judged to be a Greek and that he came equal first in the foot-race (the translation of the last

festival, and here he includes Androsthene's victory – but only as part of the 'specification of the Olympics'. How can a victory at a festival be part of the prehistory of that festival?

words is disputed, but that is not important for our purposes).⁶ Thucydides, operating in this way, could have said:

‘In this summer the Olympic festival was celebrated, in which [Androstenes the Arkadian won the *pankration* for the first time, and] the Spartans caused fear by surrounding the sanctuary under arms, and Lichas the Spartan won the chariot-race when under a ban. This is how it happened. The Spartans had been excluded’ etc., as in our texts. The part in square brackets (Androstenes) is optional, and of course the rest could have been expressed differently and more briefly.

But – to anticipate an obvious objection – Thucydides was not Herodotus. For a Thucydidean excursus presented on something like these lines, namely the story of Kylon (another Olympic victor, as it happens), see 1.126 (statement of demand for expulsion because of curse, explanatory narrative, recapitulation of demand and curse); or the death of Nikias at 7.86: they slaughtered him, then explanation of how that came about, then repetition of the fact of the killing. ABA in each case.

Thucydides at 5.49–50 has chosen a different technique. If we knew nothing in advance about that unusual festival, we might wonder initially why it is being mentioned at all. The whole of the rest of ch. 49 and the long para. 50.1 is devoted to the back-history of the dispute between the Eleans and Spartans, presented as a quarrel between anonymous collectives, and in a way which (to put it politely) demands our full concentration, so as to elicit from Andrewes the complaint that ‘the matter has not been set out very clearly’.⁷ Then (50.2) the narrative takes on greater simplicity and urgency, and the fears first of the Eleians (para. 3) and then of all at those attending the *panegyris* (para. 4, opening), are described; and finally (para. 4, continuation) the spotlight falls on an individual, Lichas, because he aggravated the fear. This is dramatic writing, and it surely owes something to the authorial decision to start at a leisurely and retrospective pace and then to uncoil the narrative without revealing at the outset where it is tending. In short, its effectiveness is owed in part to the *delay of the mention of Lichas*.

⁶ I do not mean to imply that Herodotus never makes us of narrative delay. See Ed. FRAENKEL, *Aeschylus Agamemnon*, Oxford 1950, vol. III, 805.

⁷ A. ANDREWES in: A. W. GOMME/A. ANDREWES/K. J. DOVER, *Historical Commentary on Thucydides vol. iv: Books v 25–vii*, Oxford 1970, 66.

2

Lichas is given his patronymic here, in the Olympic mini-narrative (5.50.4), but not at 5.22.2, his first mention: he was there briefly said to have gone, at an earlier date than the immediate context, with an otherwise unknown and ‘fatherless’ Spartan called Ampelidas to renew a treaty with the Argives. Here the distance between Köhnken and me is not great, so that it is not easy to see why he resists the idea that Lichas’ patronymic Arkesilas, a man famous in his own right for his equestrian victories,⁸ is delayed. Köhnken (389) thinks that at 5.22, Lichas is not mentioned for himself, (‘nicht für sich’, whatever that means exactly) but in a dependent participial clause. Only at 50.4 is he presented formally, with patronymic and ethnic – so Köhnken asserts – because only there does he make an individual appearance (i. e. at ‘sein erster individueller Auftritt’). But here too we may invoke principle (A). The decision to name Lichas parenthetically and briefly at 5.22 was not inevitable. Lichas was the *proxenos* of the Argives, as we will learn at 76.3, where he is given the patronymic again; and this is surely why he was chosen for the mission at ch. 22. This could have been developed more fully in the early part of book 5 if Thucydides had wished to. Is his appearance at 76 ‘für sich’ or ‘nicht für sich’? If the former, the distinction between the two Argive diplomatic missions seems arbitrary. If the latter, why does he have his patronymic (again) at 76? When Thucydides mentioned Lichas at 22.2, he knew very well that this was a man who would play a prominent role very soon, in fact at the next Olympic festival, but the historian chose not to provide a patronymic for Lichas now. Why? I willingly concede that it cannot be proved that the name Arkesilas would suggest equestrian success at the panhellenic games in the previous generation. But nor can it be disproved, and I submit that it remains attractive. As for Thucydides’ behaviour over patronymics, it does not conform to precise rules, although of course a patronymic provides extra weight, so that a full designation can be applied even to a man we have met many times, especially if he is about to be characterised (a well-known example of this is ‘Hermokrates son of Hermon’ at 6.72.1). But some impenetrability remains. For instance, it cannot be said that Thucydides wished to maintain parity between Ampelidas and Lichas by giving neither man a patronymic, because at 8.75.2 we have the curiously clumsy and asymmetrical pairing ‘Thrasyboulos son of

⁸) The name evokes both Lichas’ father Arkesilas, a notable member of the ‘international aristocracy’ in his own right (for his many victories see Plut. *Kim.* 10.5), and also the horse-breeding kings of Kyrene.

Lykos, and Thrasyillos', in a context where there was no risk of confusion with another Thrasyboulos.

3

Finally, let us address the purpose of the whole mini-narrative of chapters 49–50. For Köhnken, this is straightforward: anxiety about a possible Spartan intervention ('Angst vor einem möglichen Eingreifen der Spartaner') is an important factor ('ein wesentlicher ... Faktor') for the 'architecture' of Thucydides account of the Olympic games of 420 (Köhnken 387). But then the tolerant pluralism implied by 'ein ... Faktor' soon gives way to 'ausschliesslich' (that word again!): we are now told that Thucydides in his account of the Olympic games of 420 is concerned *exclusively* with illustrating the threat ('ausschliesslich um die Veranschaulichung der Bedrohung') which hung like a sword of Damokles, as Köhnken graphically puts it, over these first Olympic games of the Peace of Nikias period. Köhnken elaborates this at the end of his article (389–90): the Olympic games take place under the shadow of the 'Furcht', 'fear', of a fresh outbreak of violence. The tense atmosphere of the Olympic games is said to be representative of the peace of Nikias period.⁹

All this about fear is beyond dispute, and I accept it entirely – as far as it goes. How could one not accept it? Thucydides insists on it more than once in chapter 50, and the powerful implied negative with which Thucydides concludes 50.4 (the Spartans nevertheless 'kept quiet' i.e. they made *no* move, contrary to what was feared or expected) clinches the point elegantly: things might have been horribly different. But is it enough? One can admit the importance of the fear motif but still allow for strong biographical interest in Lichas on the part of Thucydides (would he have awarded so much detail to the crowning and punishment if the winning Spartan had been another and otherwise unmentioned commoner?). In any case, fear is not actually mentioned until 50.2, so it will not work as an explanation of the architecture of the 'prehistory' material which takes up nearly all of 49.1–50.1. So let us think about that long preliminary section.

Here I invoke principle (B) above. It is correct, but too easy, to explain everything in book 5 in terms of the peace of Nikias and general

⁹ KÖHNKEN ends (n.26) with an approving citation of T. ROOD, *Thucydides: Narrative and Explanation*, Oxford 1998, 97–8, on the 'fear' motif.

nervousness.¹⁰ I now invite a different approach to book 5.25–109 as a whole: the uneasy lull provided by the peace of Nikias period generated a recrudescence of small-scale imperialisms throughout Greece, some of which had a very long history indeed. The Spartans attempt to coerce Elis, but the Eleians had in their turn attempted to coerce Lepreon. But this was nothing new: Herodotus had said that the Eleians ‘in my time’¹¹ ravaged a number of neighbouring cities, Lepreon among them (Hdt.4.148.4). Book 5 of Thucydides (after chapter 25) has plenty of this sort of thing – the stronger coercing or attempting to coerce the weaker.¹² Seen under this light, the Melian Dialogue and aftermath (5.84–116), a section which is often and understandably treated in isolation by modern scholars because of its philosophical importance and unusual manner of presentation, will look less different from everything that has preceded it since 5.25. So the Elis-Sparta quarrel of 5.49 (which would flare up again two decades after 420 because the Spartans bitterly remembered their old grievances)¹³ not only illustrates Greek fears and anxieties, though it does that too. It exemplifies a pattern of coercion of smaller states by greater states which characterises the entire 5.25–109 narrative.

Conclusion

Köhnken is wrong to deny the narrative strategies, especially the artful delays, which Thucydides employs in his presentation of Lichas the Spartan at 5.49–50. Köhnken’s own explanation of the amplitude of Thucydides’ description of the 420 BC festival is plausible as far as it goes, but it is monocausal and thus does imperfect justice to the complexities of Thucydides book 5.

¹⁰ In this connexion a remark of H.D. WESTLAKE is often quoted: Th.’s aim was to ‘focus attention upon the utter bankruptcy of Greek statesmanship at the time, especially in the Peloponnese’ (*Studies in Thucydides and Greek History*, Bristol 1989, 93 [but originally 1971]).

¹¹ See *CT* III,71–2, discussing Th. 5.31.2.

¹² For an argument along these lines, and a list of such small-scale imperialisms, see *CT* III,216, introduction to the Melian Dialogue.

¹³ For this war see Xen. *Hell.* 3.2.21–31. The Spartans’ exclusion from Olympia, and the humiliating treatment of Lichas, both long in the past by 400, are given as reasons for their aggression against Elis. Did Thucydides know about this war?

Some Considerations on the Historical Background of the Olympic Games in 300 B. C.

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In his book on *Ancient Greek Athletics* S. G. Miller has reconstructed the Olympic Games held in 300 B. C. This has prompted my own interest in the origin and political background of the known victors in the Olympic Games of that year. The names and nationalities of eleven victors are known; and the most intriguing aspect for me is the successful participation of those from Magnesia on the Maeander, Mytilene, and Cyrene. In this paper I shall discuss the participation of the victors from those regions and try to shed some light on the development of those regions' relations with the Olympic movement and the general political conditions in that year. This is a worthwhile objective. The years around 300 B. C. were dominated by the political conflicts among the successors of Alexander the Great.

In his fascinating book on *Ancient Greek Athletics* (New Haven/London 2004) S. G. Miller, the distinguished leader of the excavations at Nemea, includes a reconstruction of the Olympic Games held in 300 B. C., “*not because anything special happened at these games but because we can set the ancient Olympics in a recognizable framework of time and place ... We can start with the date. The Olympic Games always took place at the second full moon after the summer solstice. In 300 B. C. that fell on August 9*” (113).

At that time the contests lasted five days, and the full moon had to fall on the middle day of the Games, that is, on the night between the second and the third day.¹ On the basis of these considerations Miller was able to state the course of the events before and during the Games.² Miller's findings prompted my interest in the origin and

¹ S. G. MILLER, *Ancient Greek Athletics*, New Haven/London 2004, chapter 6. 124. Conf. H. M. LEE, *The Program and Schedule of the Ancient Olympic Games*, Hildesheim 2001 (Nikephoros Beihefte 6), 7 ff., 102.

² On the whole Miller is in agreement with H. M. Lee's view of the program and schedule of the Games, but differs on two points. (1) According to Miller, after the common preparations in the Gymnasium at Elis, the procession of the participants from Elis to Olympia started on 6th of August and finished on the morning of 7th: “the day and night of August 6 would have been spent on the road ... on the morning of August 7 they would have nearly arrived at Olympia.” (118). Contrast Lee: “Letrini [was] the place where the procession stopped for the night? The pause would then have served the dual purposes of affording an opportunity for the rites and rest for the night ... Since the journey from Elis to Olympia probably lasted two days, and the Games began not on the full moon but two or three days before ...” (29). Thus, with Lee, the procession of the participants of the Games from Elis to Olympia would have taken place on the 5th and 6th of August. (2) Miller also

political background of the known victors at the Olympic Games of that year.

The known winners of the Olympics of 300 B. C. were as follows:

Pythagoras of Magnesia on the Maeander – *stadion*

Nicander of Elis – *diaulos*

Ceras of Argos – wrestling

Archippus of Mytilene – boxing

Nicon of Anthedon (Boeotia) – *pankration*

Timosthenes of Elis – boys' *stadion*

Hippomachus of Elis – boys' boxing

[...]s of Magnesia on the Maeander – race in armour

Theochrestus of Cyrene – *tethrippon*

Herodorus of Megara – trumpeter contest

Eubalces of Sparta – event unknown³

The most interesting aspect of this list for me is the successful participation in these Games of athletes from as far away as Magnesia on the Maeander and Mytilene, both in Asia Minor, and Cyrene, in Africa, during a period fraught with political problems. Accordingly in this paper I discuss the participation of those particular athletes, and attempt to shed some light on the development of those regions' relations with the Olympic movements and on the general political conditions obtaining during the year on which that particular festival was held.

The years leading up to the Olympic Games of 300 B. C. saw the culmination of a struggle for power among the successors of Alexander the Great.⁴ At stake was whether a single one of the Diadochi

parts company with Lee in his description of the last day of the Games. Miller writes: "On the last day of the festival ... in front of the Temple of Zeus, the final prize of victory is awarded to each winner, a crown of wild olive leaves ..." (127). Lee, on the other hand, thinks that "no ancient source explicitly mentions a separate closing ceremony with the award of the olive wreaths on the day after the competition is concluded ... Nor is there any source which unambiguously places the alleged ceremony in the Altis at the temple of Zeus" (74).

³ See L. Moretti, *Olympionikai, I vincitori negli antichi olimpici*, Rome 1957, no. 500–510; *The Olympic Games in Ancient Greece* (eds. I. MEITANI/E. EXISOU/A. CHRISTODOULOU), Athens 1982, 292; S. G. MILLER, *Ancient Greek Athletics* (see note 1) 120–127.

⁴ See M. CARY, *A History of the Greek World 323 to 146 B. C.*, London 1977; I. KERTÉSZ, *Hellénisztikus történelem (Hellenistic History)*, Budapest 2000, 97–119; G. R. BUGH (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Hellenistic World*, Cambridge 2006; *CAH (Cambridge Ancient History) VIII/1*, Cambridge ²1984, 1–117; J. SEIBERT, *Das Zeitalter der Diadochen*, Darmstadt 1983; R. A. BILLOWS, *Antigonos*

would be able to unite the former empire of Alexander the Great under his own authority. The contender with the best prospect of success was Antigonus Monophthalmus, together with his son, Demetrius Poliorcetes, whose domain was in Asia. As for the others, Cassander held Macedonia and part of Greece, Ptolemy Egypt, Cyrene and Cyprus, Seleucus the region of Babylon, and Lysimachus Thrace. Cassander, Ptolemy, Lysimachus and Seleucus formed a coalition, sometimes closer, sometimes looser, against Antigonus and his son. The initial objective of the father and son was to defeat Ptolemy, who was the strongest of their rivals; and in 306, off Salamis in Cyprus, one of the greatest sea battles of ancient times was fought, in which Demetrius' fleet destroyed that of Ptolemy. After the victory the assembled army declared Antigonus and his son kings. Similar titles were assumed shortly afterwards by Ptolemy, Lysimachus, and Seleucus, and a little later by Cassander. Separate monarchies thus began to emerge within the empire of Alexander the Great. After their victory at Salamis, Antigonus and Demetrius launched an attack on Egypt, Antigonus by land and Demetrius by sea. This attack failed, however, mainly owing to weather conditions. Demetrius then attacked Rhodes, the mercantile centre of the Near East. However, the other newly proclaimed kings sent the defenders supplies by sea, and Demetrius was forced to abandon the siege. Demetrius then turned his attention to the Greek motherland. He protected Athens against an attack by Cassander, and succeeded in ejecting him from Central Greece. He then, in 303 B.C., reorganized under his own auspices the Corinthian League, which had been founded by Alexander's father, Philip II. It looked as if Antigonus in Asia Minor and his son in Greece were going to overcome all their difficulties. Then word came to Demetrius from Antigonus that Seleucus and Lysimachus, supported by Ptolemy and Cassander, were about to attack him, and Demetrius left Europe to support his father.

After 303 the balance of power began to shift in favour of the anti-Antigonid coalition. Lysimachus succeeded in suppressing the rebellions of the Thracians and the Greeks living under his rule, and was able to concentrate his efforts on Antigonus. He led his army to Asia Minor, and conquered numerous strongholds of Antigonus, including Pergamum. These conflicts provided Seleucus with an opportunity to occupy vast territories east, not only Mesopotamia but also Media, Susiana, Persis and Bactria. He was able to advance as far as India, where he concluded an agreement with Chandragupta, the Indian

rajah. Seleucus ceded the earlier conquests of Alexander the Great in India, and is said to have received 500 battle elephants in exchange. Seleucus then joined in the attack on Antigonus, and at the same time Ptolemy occupied some territories in Syria held by Antigonus. Finally in 301 at Ipsus, in the province of Central Phrygia, Seleucus and Lysimachus defeated the Antigonid army. In that so-called Battle of the Kings Antigonus was killed, and Demetrius and the remnants of his army were forced to flee to Europe. Therewith ended any prospect of a revival of the vast empire of Alexander the Great.

No sooner had victory been won, however, than the victors began to quarrel among themselves. Lysimachus and Seleucus were in contention over North-western Asia Minor and Thrace, and Seleucus and Ptolemy over Syria. The southern coast of Asia Minor was granted to Cassander's brother Pleistarchus, but later Seleucus married the daughter of Demetrius, and abandoned his former ally Pleistarchus. This enabled Demetrius to conquer the southern coast of Asia Minor. During many years of various wars the Greek cities of North and Western Asia Minor remained practically independent, until in 295 B.C. Lysimachus subjugated them for a short time.⁵ During the 3rd century B.C. the cities of Ionia and Aeolis in Asia Minor were able to manoeuvre among the Ptolemies, the Seleucids, and the Attalids of Pergamum, and thus largely preserved their freedom.⁶ On the other hand, Ptolemy and his successors strengthened their position in North Africa. The rebellion in Cyrene in 304 was suppressed by Magas, the stepson of Ptolemy, who consolidated Ptolemy's power.⁷

The complicated events I have attempted to sketch above form the historical background of the Olympic Games in 300 B.C. I now turn to the origins of the known victors at that festival with a view to discovering the relationship between the historical situation and those athletes' successful participation.

The *stadion* footrace race was won by Pythagoras of *Magnesia on the Maeander*.⁸ The victor of the race in armour, of whose name only the final s is known, was also from that city.⁹ Magnesia (the present

⁵ R. B. MCSHANE, *The Foreign Policy of the Attalids of Pergamum*, Urbana 1964 (Illinois Studies in the Social Sciences 53), 25.

⁶ MCSHANE (see note 5) *passim*.

⁷ G. HÖLBL, *Geschichte des Ptolemäerreiches. Politik, Ideologie und religiöse Kultur von Alexander dem Großen bis zur römischen Eroberung*, Darmstadt 1994, 21.

⁸ L. MORETTI, *Olympionikai, i vincitori negli antichi agoni olimpici*, Rome 1957, no. 500.

⁹ MORETTI (see note 8) nos. 507, 521.

Maghnisa or Inekbazar in Turkey) was the only Ionian city in Asia Minor with no direct outlet to the sea, and was not a member of the coalition of the Ionian cities known as the Panionium. According to tradition it was founded by Aeolians from Thessaly. One of the western provinces of Thessaly was also called Magnesia. The settlement only later acquired an Ionian character. Magnesia was situated on the lower course of the Maeander, 17 miles north-east of the coastal city of Priene. During this period it pursued an aggressive policy of expansion at Priene's expense. Priene was protected by Lysimachus who had garrisoned it.¹⁰ It is likely that Magnesia's short-lived prime was due to the fact that it did not take part in the wars of the Diadochi and, being situated inland, had little strategic importance and no king seems to have considered it worth occupying. Magnesia's first documented Olympic victory was in 424 B.C., when Cleiomachus of Magnesia gained the victory in boxing.¹¹ According to our data the next success occurred almost a century later, in 344, when the race in armour was won by a certain Callicrates, who repeated that success four years later.¹² There is then no further evidence of Magnesian participation at Olympia till 300 B.C., when Magnesians won victories in footraces at those and the following Olympics. These events reflect the undoubtedly consolidated position of Magnesia during that period. On the other hand, it is also no accident that no Magnesians won an Olympic victory again till 92 B.C., when the wrestling and the pancratium were both won by Protophanes.¹³ During the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C. the whole region was the scene of a power struggle between the Attalids of Pergamum, the Ptolemies, and the Seleucids; and it was only the development of Roman rule that brought peace to this region. The absence of any recorded Magnesians participation in the Olympic Games during the two intervening centuries may safely be attributed to the prevailing political uncertainty and the very active pirate activity.¹⁴

The victory in boxing at the Olympic Games of 300 B.C. was won by Archippus of *Mytilene*,¹⁵ the capital of Lesbos, the third-largest Greek island. This island was situated off the north-western coast of Asia

¹⁰) See D. MAGIE, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor to the End of the Third Century after Christ*, Princeton/New Jersey 1950, 78–79, 894–896.

¹¹) MORETTI (see note 8) no. 329.

¹²) MORETTI (see note 8) nos. 449, 454.

¹³) MORETTI (see note 8) nos. 666, 667.

¹⁴) Conf. E. MARÓTI, *Kalózkodás a római polgárháborúk korában (Piracy in the Period of the Roman Civil Wars)*, Budapest 1972.

¹⁵) MORETTI (see note 8) no. 503.

Minor and the inhabitants spoke the Aeolian dialect. The early tyrants in Lesbos were anxious to protect the island's independence against the rulers of Samos. After the Persian conquest the inhabitants of Lesbos took part in the Ionian revolt; and later, after the Persian defeat in the Greco-Persian Wars, the island became a member of the Delian League. Thanks to liberation from Persian rule and the closer political and economic ties with the Greek motherland, Lesbos became involved in the Olympic movement. The first known Olympic victor from Lesbos was Scamander of Mytilene who won the *stadion* race in 476 B.C.¹⁶ However, after that, the 5th century brought no further good fortune to the inhabitants of Lesbos, who became the victims of Athenian power politics. In 428, during the Peloponnesian War, the greater part of the island revolted against Athens. The revolt was led by Mytilene. In the following year the revolt was suppressed and bloody reprisals followed. Lesbos was under Persian rule for most of the 4th century up till the eastern campaign of Alexander the Great. During the wars of the Diadochi up till the final years of the 4th century Lesbos was one of the territories ruled by Antigonos. As the most powerful of all the Diadochi, Antigonos was able to stabilize the position of Lesbos for a short time. And it may be thanks to that stability that in 312 B.C. Parmenion (or Parmenides) of Mytilene could win a victory in the *stadion*.¹⁷ The same may also be true of the victory of Archippus from the same city in boxing twelve years later at the Olympic Games of 300 B.C. In the latter case, however, another factor may have been the power vacuum left by the battle of Ipsus the previous year. During the 3rd century B.C. Lesbos came under the hegemony of the Ptolemies, and its connections with the Greek motherland faded. There is no further evidence of participation by competitors from Lesbos in the Olympic Games till the time of the Roman hegemony, when in 168 B.C. the *stadion* was won by Aristander of Antissa¹⁸ and in 156 B.C. the boys' pancratium was won by Amyntas of Ereus.¹⁹

In 300 B.C. Theochrestus of *Cyrene* won the four-horse chariot race, the *tethrippon*.²⁰ Cyrene, situated in a region of North Africa now part of Libya, was settled by Greeks from the island of Thera in the 7th

¹⁶⁾ On Lesbos see E. MEYER, *Lesbos*, in: *Der Kleine Pauly. Lexikon der Antike in fünf Bänden*, Bd. 3. 585–587. On Scamander see MORETTI (see note 8) no. 209.

¹⁷⁾ MORETTI (see note 8) no. 482.

¹⁸⁾ MORETTI (see note 8) no. 617.

¹⁹⁾ MORETTI (see note 8) no. 632.

²⁰⁾ MORETTI (see note 8) no. 508.

century B.C.²¹ According to tradition its first king was Battus. The Olympic successes of Cyrene began in 484 B.C. when the race in armour was won by Mnaseas.²² Twenty years later, in 464 B.C., Mnaseas' son Cratisthenes won the four-horse chariot race at Olympia.²³ Four years after that Battus' descendant, King Arcesilaus IV, who had won the four-horse chariot race at the Pythian Games of 462,²⁴ won in the same event at the Olympic Games of 460 B.C.²⁵ In 456 B.C. Cyrene became a republic with a democratic constitution. In that year a contestant from Cyrene, Polymnastus, won the *stadion* footrace at Olympia.²⁶ Most of Cyrene's earlier sporting successes had been in the four-horse chariot race, which required great wealth, but the first Olympic victor from the newly-established republic was a runner. This victory nicely reflects the democratic changes in the society of Cyrene. In the 4th century B.C., which saw a general decline of the democracy, the differences in social and financial status became crucial in Cyrenean society; and this development was reflected in the city's sporting life. A contestant from Cyrene, Eubatas, won the four-horse chariot race in 364,²⁷ and an earlier bearer of the name Theochrestus won the same event in 360.²⁸ However, in the latter year the victor in the *stadion* footrace, a certain Porus, was also from Cyrene.²⁹ Thus at the same Olympic Games, the victors in the events open to the richest contestants and to the poorest contestants as well were citizens of Cyrene. Again, in 348, the *stadion* was won by an athlete from Cyrene, Polycles.³⁰ It is worth noting that, unlike Magnesia on the Maeander and Mytilene, Cyrene was more active in participation in

²¹ See H. VOLKMANN, *Kyrene*, in: *Der Kleine Pauly* 3, 410–411.

²² MORETTI (see note 8) no. 194.

²³ MORETTI (see note 8) no. 257.

²⁴ E. MARÓTI, *A delphoi Pythia sportversenyek győztesei (The Victors of the Pythia in Delphi)*, Budapest 2000, no. 39. Mr. G. Howie called my attention to the victory of Telesicrates from Cyrene in the Pythian Games in 472 B.C., in the race in armour. Telesicrates was wealthy enough to commission Pindar to write *Pythian* 9 in his honour. Conf. MORETTI (see note 8) no. 30.

²⁵ MORETTI (see note 8) no. 268.

²⁶ MORETTI (see note 8) no. 269.

²⁷ MORETTI (see note 8) no. 421.

²⁸ MORETTI (see note 8) no. 428.

²⁹ MORETTI (see note 8) no. 423.

³⁰ MORETTI (see note 8) no. 442. Conf. S. G. MILLER, *Naked Democracy*, in: *Polis and Politics. Studies in Ancient Greek History Presented to Mogens Herman Hansen on his Sixtieth Birthday, August 20, 2000*, edited by P. FLENSTED-JENSEN/Th. NIELSEN/L. RUBINSTEIN, Copenhagen 2000, 277–296: “The gymnic competitions can therefore be understood as a levelling agent that could easily have contributed to the development of democracy” (283).

the Olympic Games. This could be partly thanks to the maritime conditions, which were safer in the Mediterranean than in the Aegean, as the Mediterranean was less subject to piracy.³¹ Theochrestus' victory in the four-horse chariot race in 300 was won in the same year as Magas established Ptolemaic rule over the region. Thereafter, with the loss of independence, sport in Cyrene went into decline. Only two Cyrenean Olympic victors are known from later times, both in the *stadion*, Idaeus in 276 B.C.³² and Acusilaus, more than a century and a half later, in 120 B.C.³³

According to such superficial knowledge as we now have, most of the Olympic victors in the year 300 B.C. were citizens from *poleis* in the Greek motherland. Elis had three victors,³⁴ and Sparta³⁵ and Argos³⁶ one each. These states were situated in the Peloponnese. Megara also had one victor;³⁷ and that *polis* was situated on the northern borders of the Peloponnese. The northernmost competitors in those Games came from Boeotia in central Greece.³⁸ Thus the known Olympic victors of 300 B.C. from the Greek motherland lived a relatively short distance from Olympia. This clearly reveals the political anarchy prevailing in Greece after the battle of Ipsus.³⁹

The aim of this paper was to offer a brief supplement to Miller's reconstruction of the Olympic Games of 300 B.C. I hope to have brought out the close relations between the Olympic movement and the actual international situation existing at the time those Games were held.

³¹) See note 14.

³²) MORETTI (see note 8) no. 537.

³³) MORETTI (see note 8) no. 648. It is worth noting that, while the Olympic participation of the citizens of Cyrene had declined, the valley of the Nile produced 43 Olympic victors between 296 B.C. and 277 A.D. – see W. DECKER, *Olympiasieger aus Ägypten*, in: U. VERHOEVEN-ERHART GRAEFE (Hg.), *Religion und Philosophie im alten Ägypten*. Festgabe für Philippe Derchain zu seinem 65. Geburtstag am 24. Juli 1991, Leuven 1991, 93–105.

³⁴) MORETTI (see note 8) nos. 501 (Nicander), 505 (Timosthenes), 506 (Hippomachus).

³⁵) MORETTI (see note 8) no. 510 (Eubalces).

³⁶) MORETTI (see note 8) no. 502 (Ceras).

³⁷) MORETTI (see note 8) no. 509 (Herodorus).

³⁸) MORETTI (see note 8) no. 504 (Nicon).

³⁹) See the literature cited in note 4 and G. SHIPLEY, *The Greek World after Alexander 323–30 B.C.*, London/New York 2000, 108–152.

A Victory List from Cos

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In a victory list from Cos of Augustan date, the festival *Ἐλευ[σίν]ια τὰ καὶ Καισάρηα* is local, and not the Eleusinia of Athens. But no cult of the Eleusinian pair is known at Cos. Restore instead *Ἐλευ[θέρ]ια*, commemorating the end of the tyranny of Nicias of Cos and the victory of Octavian at Actium.

A statue base on Cos, of Augustan date, honors an athlete, listing his several victories:¹

----- τοῦ Π[υθ]οδώρου
νικάσαντα
[Ἴσθ]μια ἄνδρας πένταθλον,
[Ἐλ]ευσίνια τὰ μεγάλα ἄνδρας πένταθλον,
5 [Ῥω]μαῖα τὰ τιθέμενα ὑπὸ τοῦ δάμου παῖδας
Ὀλυμπικούς στάδιον, Καισάρηα ἐν Μητροπόλει
[π]αῖδας στάδιον, Ῥωμαῖα τὰ τιθέμενα ὑπὸ τοῦ
δάμου παῖδας Ἴσθμικούς στάδιον, δίαινον,
πένταθλον τᾶ αὐτᾶ ἡμέρα, Ἐκατήσια ἐν
10 Στρατονικήα παῖδας Ἴσθμικούς πέν-
ταθλον, Θεογά[μ]ια ἐν Νύση παῖδας Ἴσθμι-
κούς πένταθλον, Κλάρια ἐν Κολοφῶνι
[παῖδ]ας [Ἴ]σθμικούς πένταθλον, Ἀρχηγέ-
[σια] ἐν Ἀλικαρνασσοῦ παῖδας Ἴσθμικούς
15 [πέ]νταθλον, Ἐκατήσια ἐν Στρατονικήα
[ἀ]γενεῖους πένταθλον, Ἀρχηγέσια ἐν Ἀλι-
[κα]ρνασσοῦ ἀγενεῖους πένταθλον, Ἐλευ-
[σίν]ια τὰ καὶ Καισάρηα ἄνδρας πέντα-
[θλον], Καισάρηα τὰ τιθέμενα ὑπὸ τοῦ δάμου
20 ἄνδρας πένταθλον,
[Ἀπο]λλωνία ἐν Μύνδω πένταθλον,
[Ἀρχηγέ]σια ἐν Ἀλικαρνασσοῦ πένταθλον, ἐπιστατεῦντος
-----ου τοῦ Πυθοδώρου.

The list exhibits a discernible order. Two panhellenic contests are placed out of chronological sequence at the beginning: the Isthmia, the lone victory in one of the four festivals of the classical *periodos*, inscribed first and in isolation, and the Great Eleusinia at Eleusis in

¹) First published in 1874, and many times since: e. g. *Syll.*³ 1066; MORETTI, *I. agon. gr.* 61 with commentary; SEGRE, *Iscr. Cos* EV 203 with photograph.

Athens. The remaining games are then registered chronologically, at least in terms of the victor's age levels; these were local in terms of both geography (Cos and the western coast of Anatolia but not the Greek mainland or elsewhere) and status (not panhellenic).² The last three lines are a later addition.

Moretti dated the monument late in Augustus' reign because he took the Kaisareia of line 19 to honor young Gaius Caesar, citing the Coan victory list *I. agon. gr. 60*. That is unnecessary; and in the latter inscription the unusual honorand is in fact clearly specified, *Καισάρηα τὰ τιθέμενα Γαίῳ Καισάρι*. The Rhomaia (line 7) are attested also in an undated inscription from Chios, *Ρωμαία τὰ ἐγ Κῶ*.³

The puzzle is the two Eleusinias. The Great Eleusinia were the panhellenic and more extensive celebration that was held at Eleusis at four-year intervals, distinct from the Lesser Eleusinia or *trieteris* in the off year.⁴ But what is the "Eleusinia also called Kaisareia" (17)? The two panhellenic festivals were thought to need no geographical marker; the lesser festivals that follow in the list all have one – with this one exception: the Coans evidently felt that its locale was obvious.

The Coans are unlikely to mean in line 17 the Great Eleusinia again, thus naming the festival in two different ways in the same text. But it is also unlikely that the added name Kaisareia designated the Lesser Eleusinia as distinct from the Greater: for the Athenians to add Augustus' name to the minor celebration might well seem more an insult than an honor. In any case, the imperial epithet for the Eleusinia is not attested at Eleusis or elsewhere. These Augustan titles faded as subsequent emperors and benefactions intervened, but our evidence on the Eleusinia is such that, if the lesser games used the name Kaisareia even briefly, we would probably hear of it more than this once.

Moretti alone has seen that Eleusinia labeled in two different ways must have been distinct games, and concluded that the "Eleusinia also called Kaisareia" were a Coan festival of Demeter. But no cult, let alone games, of the Eleusinian pair is on record at Cos. Demeter had a temple, but the evidence for Kore/Persephone is thin indeed.⁵ There is

²) By "Panhellenic" I mean games formally proclaimed to other cities and attended by their delegates. For the Eleusinia see *I. Gonnoi* 109.35 *τοὺς δὲ σπονδοφόρους τοὺς ἐπαγγέλοντας τὰ τε Ἐλευσίνια* (ca. 200 B. C.); cf. M. THOMPSON, *Coins for the Eleusinia*, in: *Hesperia* 11, 1942, 213–229, at 217.

³) L. ROBERT, *Etudes épigraphiques et philologiques*, Paris 1938, 126–128.

⁴) K. CLINTON, *IG I² 5, the Eleusinia, and the Eleusinians*, in: *AJP* 100, 1979, 1–12, at 10–12; K. RIGSBY, *The Schedule of the Eleusinia*, in: *Mnemosyne* 63, 2010, 289–297.

⁵) S. SHERWIN-WHITE, *Ancient Cos*, Göttingen 1978, 305–312.

no mention of a joint cult in surviving texts, or of the epithet “Eleusinian”. The inscriptions of Cos are unusually rich in their allusions to religious usages. If there were an established cult and games named for the Eleusinian goddesses, it surely would have left some further trace in the documents.

We might then seek some other city that celebrated Eleusinian games that would attract foreign competitors. Classical Sparta had Eleusinian games, on slim testimony.⁶ In the Hellenistic period, Eleusinia were held once a year at the Alexandrian suburb Eleusis, attested once in the third century B.C.⁷ Both festivals seem too remote to be in our Coan’s circuit; both may well have lapsed by the Augustan age. And we would expect the city to be specified in the Coan list.

I would urge therefore that Moretti was right to place the festival on Cos. The expression *ὑπὸ τοῦ δάμου* has been omitted here merely because the compound name of the festival already makes the entry long, and above all because the Coans considered the name unambiguous – they knew no other festival with this double name. I propose instead a different restoration. The recent history of Cos is suggestive.

In the 30’s B.C. Cos was ruled by the tyrant Nicias, a partisan of Antony.⁸ Two dozen small private monuments imply an edict of his that every household maintain an altar in his behalf. An epigram of Augustan date recounts the Coans’ riotous desecration of his grave.⁹ No firm date is evident in this material. The likely guess has long been that his end came around the time of the defeat of Antony at Actium.¹⁰ He was properly buried, and on Cos rather than abroad with the campaign. Perhaps his death preceded the battle, while the destruction of his tomb followed it.

Augustus was attentive to the Coans’ recent sufferings. In 31 B.C., gathering resources for the war, a legate of Antony had cut down trees in the precinct of Asclepius; Augustus had him executed in the grove itself.¹¹

⁶ MORETTI, *I. agon. gr.* no. 16.11, *Ἐλευθύνια τετρά[κιν]*.

⁷ P. M. FRASER, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, Oxford 1972, I 200–201. Only Satyrus mentions the festival, *κατ’ ἐνιαυτὸν . . . [ἀ]γομέ[ν]η πανήγυρις ἔχουσα [...]κὸν καὶ μουσικὸν ἀγῶνα* (*P. Oxy.* XXVII,2465).

⁸ R. HERZOG in: *HZ* 125, 1922, 189–216; SHERWIN-WHITE (see n. 5) 141–145; K. BURASELIS, *Kos between Hellenism and Rome*, Philadelphia 2000, 25–65.

⁹ *Anth. Gr.* 9.81 (GOW-PAGE, *Garland of Philip*, Crinagoras XXII).

¹⁰ HERZOG (see n. 8) 213–215; R. SYME in: *JRS* 51, 1961, 25–28 (*Roman Papers* II 213–215); G. W. BOWERSOCK, *Augustus and the Greek World*, Oxford 1965, 46 n. 1; SHERWIN-WHITE (see n. 5) 144–145.

¹¹ Cass. Dio 51.8.3 (the execution described under 30 B.C.), Val. Max. 1.1.19; cf. SHERWIN-WHITE (see n. 5) 141.

We have then a Coan festival with two names, attested briefly in the aftermath of the tyranny of Nicias. Attested only once, the games may have had a short life. I suggest that the festival was a part of the popular reaction against the tyrant. Restore:

Ἐλευ-

[θήρ]ια τὰ καὶ καλούμενα Καισάρεια ἄνδρας πέντα-
[θλον]

Larisa in Thessaly affords a parallel: two inscriptions of the second century B. C. reveal a festival there called the Eleutheria.¹² Historians have deduced that this commemorated the liberation of Larisa (and Thessaly) from Macedonian rule in 196 B. C.

For Coan readers of this list, no confusion with the Eleutheria at Plataea was possible, given the imperial alias; and that festival would have been placed at the top with the other two panhellenic games. The games at Larisa, if they survived to the Augustan period, were well out of the Coan athlete's orbit, and again would have required an indication of their city.

If this is so, then ca. 30 B. C. the Coans founded a new festival, the Eleutheria-Kaisareia, which commemorated their liberation from tyranny and honored the winner of Actium.

Addendum:

I saw too late L. ROBERT, *OMS* VII 762–763, who also argued for Eleutheria, but referred this to Plataea, with which I disagree.

¹²⁾ Ἐλευθέρια τὰ ἐν Λαρίσῃ: *IG* VII 48, IX.2 614; MORETTI, *I. agon. gr.* p. 118.

Roman Emperors and Greek Athletes*

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This article consists of three sections. In the first it is argued that prior to (and also during) Roman domination in the Greek cities sport was a dominant feature of urban society and culture. The gymnasium and the contests organized both in the gymnasia and in the cities at large were ubiquitous phenomena in the Greek world. In the second section the role of the emperor as protector of the athletes' interests and privileges is discussed, with special reference to the recently published Hadrianic letters from Alexandria Troas. The final section focuses on why Roman emperors wanted to get involved in Greek athletics at all. Athletics were a crucial element in the self-identity of urban elites and it was in the emperor's interest to support these elites. At the same time athletic contests often served to express worship of and loyalty to the emperor. On the other hand emperors may have wanted to control at least the athletic part of the urban budgets.

Quite recently the editor of a popular Dutch historical magazine (*Historisch Nieuwsblad*) wrote that in his opinion the history of sport was a "soft discipline".¹ What exactly he meant by "soft" remains unclear but the connotation of the adjective was not meant to be positive.² Now it *is* indeed quite conceivable that, if an historian of Holland's famous 'golden century' (17th century) gets involved in the study of sport in that period, there will be little that catches his interest and even less that deserves the epithets 'exciting' or 'intellectually challenging'. His report will boil down to innocent little stories about what at best can be termed 'popular entertainment', adorned with details about rustic little games in even more rustic disciplines. Th. Stevens, a Dutch historian of (early) modern sport, recently referred to the "transition of *traditional* categories of *play* and *entertainment* to modern, standardized *competitive* sport" (emphasis added), a phenomenon called "sportification", which began to emerge

*) I thank my friend and colleague Ron Stroud (Berkeley) for correcting my English. Any remaining errors are, of course, my own.

1) I draw upon an article in the Dutch weekly *HP/De Tijd* (March 7, 2008, 57), where the editor of *Historisch Nieuwsblad* is quoted.

2) An anecdote, told by M. GOLDEN, betrays a similar mentality. When the author of *Sport and Society in ancient Greece*, Cambridge 2008, consulted a list of ancient Olympic victors in the Classics Library in Cambridge, a specialist in Latin literary criticism reacted: "Greek sport: that's not very fashionable" (Preface, XIII). When in the 70s of the 20th century R. Stokvis, a Dutch sociologist interested in the history of sport, asked in a prestigious bookstore in Amsterdam about a book on sport, the answer was: "sir, we are an academic bookstore."

in the 19th century.³ If, however, one happens to be interested in the society and mentality of Greek cities in Graeco-Roman times and wishes to make a thorough analysis of those phenomena, one is well advised not to discard the history of Greek sport as Klio's "soft" step-daughter. Sport was undoubtedly an essential phenomenon in the education of a Greek citizen and in public life of the cities; and for a naturally much smaller group of talented and devoted athletes it was even a way of life, which reflected many values generally adhered to in the cities. "Sportification" began in antiquity and re-surfaced in the 19/20th century.

The history of Greek sport abounds with "facts and information from which readers can profit much", to quote the above-mentioned editor of the Dutch periodical once more. Needless to say in the latter's view this was definitely not the case in the history of sport as he saw it. Below I start with a section on Greek sport in the Greek cities prior to Roman domination; subsequently we focus on the cities in the Greek-speaking eastern part of the Roman Empire. Two questions are asked: what, if anything, have Greek athletes and cities to do with Roman emperors and, more important, what did they expect from them? Conversely, why should Roman emperors show any interest in or engagement with the world and culture of Greek sport?

The attentive reader may by now have surmised that I have no qualms about using the term 'sport' as an appropriate concept for the ancient historian.⁴ Irrespective of what one wants to believe about the origin of sport (from the phylogenetic factor to the prehistoric hunt),⁵ one thing seems to me incontrovertible: the term 'sport' is not to be

³) Th. STEEVENS, *Inleiding: de onstuitbare opmars van de sportgeschiedenis in Nederland*, in: W. VAN BUREN/P. J. MOL (edd.), *In het spoor van de sport. Hoofdlijnen uit de Nederlandse sportgeschiedenis*, Haarlem 2000, 7–15, esp. 11.

⁴) For a similar view see I. WEILER, *Der antike Sport. Angebote zur Vermittlung*, in: E. ERDMANN/H. KLOFT (edd.), *Mensch – Natur – Technik. Perspektiven aus der Antike für das dritte Jahrtausend*, Münster 2002, 275–323, esp. 275–278; cf. also my brief remarks in *Nikephoros* 13, 2000, 281–282 and *Gnomon* 78, 2006, 431.

⁵) For an interesting and very informative survey of recent attempts to tackle the problem of the origin of sport see I. WEILER, *Der agonale Sport – eine spezifische indogermanische Großleistung?* in: N. MÜLLER/M. MESSING (edd.), *Olympismus – Erbe und Verantwortung. Olympism – Heritage and Responsibility*, Kassel 2008, 139–155, and ID., *Historische und ethologische Anmerkungen zum Fußballspiel*, in: J. COURT/A. MÜLLER/C. WACKER (edd.), *Jahrbuch 2006 der deutschen Gesellschaft für Geschichte der Sportwissenschaft*, Berlin 2007, 26–45. For the alleged relation between sport and prehistoric hunt see D. SANSONE, *Greek athletics and the genesis of sport*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1998, with I. Weiler's review in *Gnomon* 62, 1999, 218–222 and my brief comment in *Nikephoros* 13, 2000, 283.

reserved for the industrial world; it is wholly applicable to the ancient world in the sense of “a series of activities in which persons physically and voluntarily compete against each other in public contests with established regulations and procedures, with the immediate object of succeeding in those contests under criteria for determining victory”.⁶

From the very first testimonies about Greek sport in historical times (Homer) there is a close connection between sport and war. Elsewhere I have collected various indications for this connection after Homer.⁷ The origin of sport, whether in prehistorical or historical times, is one question; another is why the Greeks have chosen to practice and develop the various athletic disciplines (running, heavy events) which together form what we now call sport. Here Stephen Instone⁸ advanced the attractive and well-argued hypothesis that for the running events, javelin- and discuss-throwing military origins can perhaps be discerned. As to the heavy events, not discussed by Instone, one might argue that ‘man-to-man’-fighting is an activity common to both soldiers and athletes. The author concludes that warfare shaped athletics and that conversely “athletics could be a training-ground for war” (80).

Why the Greeks largely ignored team- and ball-sports in their institutionalized sport and why they, as opposed to the ancient Near Eastern world, organized a thoroughly institutionalized network of

6) For this definition see my article *Mass-Sport and local infrastructure in the Greek cities of Roman Asia Minor*, in: *Stadion* 24, 1, 1998, 151–172, esp. 151/152.

7) *The infrastructure of sport in the cities of the Greek World*, in: *Scienze dell’Antichità. Storia, Archeologia, Antropologia* 10, 2000, 630–632; cf. also the section on “sport and war” in M. GOLDEN, *Sport and Society in ancient Greece*, Cambridge 1998, 23–28; J. C. DAYTON, *The athletes of war. An evaluation of the agonistic elements in Greek warfare*, Toronto 2006; M. LAVRENCIC, *Krieger und Athlet? Der militärische Aspekt in der Beurteilung des Wettkampfes in der Antike*, in: *Nikephoros* 4, 1991, 167–175; W. AMELING, *Der Sieg im Krieg ist wie der Sieg im Agon: Beide gereichen der Polis der Sieger zur Ehre*, in: *ZPE* 176, 2011, 16. Even in Roman Imperial times, when Greek ephebes were no longer trained in military disciplines, “the long-standing connection between athletics and military training continued to pack an ideological punch”, in: Z. NEWBY, *Greek athletics in the Roman world*, Oxford 2005, 278. For the relation between boxing and war cf. P. MAURITSCH, *Den Tod verachten – Anmerkungen zum antiken Faustkampf*, in: E. CHRISTOF/G. KOINER (edd.), *ΠΙΟΤΝΙΑ ΘΗΡΩΝ*. Festschrift für Gerda Schwarz zum 65. Geburtstag, Vienna 2007, 261–269 and ID., *Materialien zur Darstellung von Gewalt in literarischen Schilderungen von Kampfsportszenen*, in: *Nikephoros* 19, 2006, 57–66, esp. 63–65.

8) S. INSTONE, *Origins of the Olympics*, in: S. HORNBLOWER/C. MORGAN (edd.), *Pindar’s poetry, patrons and festivals. From archaic Greece to the Roman empire*, Oxford 2007, 71–82.

hundreds of tournaments in an ever-growing number of cities, are questions which seem to be more central than the endless speculations about the origin of sport in prehistoric times; and certainly more relevant for a proper understanding of ancient society and its values. In this paper we take the thoroughly institutionalized form of Greek sport, with its highly individual disciplines of 'Leicht- and Schwerathletik' for granted.

1. Sport and City prior to the Roman domination

As soon as we really begin to know something about Greek society, i. e., as soon as archaeological sources are supplemented by written ones, the Greeks or, at least, those Greeks who could afford practicing competitive sport manifest themselves as 'mad on sport'.⁹ This is not to say that *all* Greeks suffered from this idiosyncrasy. Critics of sport were – and are – never absent.¹⁰ For financial reasons quite a few Greeks were simply unable to devote themselves to training for and

⁹) Whether or not sport originated in a sort of cultic/ritual play, as soon as we begin to really know something about sport, the athlete was not a *homo ludens* but rather a *homo competitivus* (or even *pugnans*). In the archaic period, in which noble gentlemen dominated political and social life, there is no question of 'zweckfreie' sport, allegedly reflecting an orientation towards playing and sporting gentlemen. As a result the idea that in the Greek world there was a development from noble, 'play like' sport to degenerated, money- and mass-oriented sport, regulated by strict rules and bureaucracy, in which the 'play'-element disappeared, has little to recommend it. Greek sport was a matter of *agōnes*, not of *παίδιαί* (cf. L. ROBERT, *Opera Minora Selecta* VI, Amsterdam 1989, 710), which is not to say that the Greeks invented 'das agonale Prinzip': see I. WEILER, *Wider und für das agonale Prinzip – eine griechische Eigenart? Wissenschaftliche Aspekte und Grundsatzüberlegungen*, in: Nikephoros 19, 2006, 81–110.

¹⁰) Cf. I. WEILER, *Philostrats Gedanken über den Verfall des Sports*, in: R. BACHLEITNER/S. REDL (edd.), *Sportwirklichkeit. Beiträge zur Didaktik, Geschichte und Soziologie des Sports*. Festschrift E. Niedermann, Vienna 1989, 97–105; ID., *Überlegungen zur konventionellen Kritik am Sport und seinen "Auswüchsen"*, in: *Kultur. Zeitschrift für Kultur und Gesellschaft* 9.3, 1994, 30–32; ID., *Kynische Sportkritik*, in: P. SCHERRER, *et alii* (edd.), *Steine und Wege*. Festschrift für Dieter Knibbe zum 65. Geburtstag, Wien 1999, 253–260; ID., *Sport und Sportkritik in der Spätantike: Kaiser Iulian als kynischer Aussenseiter?* in: C. ULF (ed.), *Ideologie – Sport – Aussenseiter. Aktuelle Aspekte einer Beschäftigung mit der antiken Gesellschaft*, Innsbruck 2000, 167–183. For authors from the Second Sophistic (Lucian; Galen; Philostratos) and their critical views on sport see J. KÖNIG, *Athletics and Literature in the Roman empire*, Cambridge 2005 (with my remarks in: Nikephoros 20, 2007, 301–307) and ID., *Competitiveness and anti-competitiveness in Philostratus' Lives of the Sophists*, in: N. FISCHER/H. VAN WEES (edd.), *Competition in the ancient world*, Swansea 2011, 279–300.

participating in contests; some of them may even have been unwilling to pay any attention to sport. All this does not alter the fact that athletics were a dominant factor in Greek urban society. Each city or town was supposed to have, at least, one gymnasium,¹¹ in which prior to the pax Augusta sport went hand in hand with military training, supplemented in the late Hellenistic period by a small portion of intellectual *paideia* materializing in visits to philosophical schools (if available) and attending lectures by wandering philosophers, rhetors and historians. The main ideology of Greek athletes was characterized by military values like *eutaxia*, *philoponia*, *andreia*, *euexia* and *karteria*. The bigger cities were, the greater the likelihood that there was more than one gymnasium: one for boys (*paides*), another for ephebes and/or *neoi*, and a third for the ‘old men’ (*presbyteroi*); the latter, needless to say, used their gymnasium for ‘wellness’, in the sense of bathing, anointing themselves, massage and occasional ball-games, rather than for training in strenuous, competitive athletic disciplines.

Whereas traditionally the market (*agora*) was the political center of a city, the gymnasium has aptly been called by L. Robert “une seconde agora”.¹² An oft-quoted passage of Pausanias tells us that for the author’s perception – and doubtless also for that of his readers – a town that really deserved the name *polis*, i. e., was of a minimum size with a decent urban center and concomitant wealth, had a gymnasium, in addition to an *agora* and a theatre. An inscription from Phrygian Tyriaion shows that this idea was not confined to a couple of literary authors and their ‘fans’, but was widely shared, even by Hellenistic kings and settlers in a small inland village in Asia Minor. The Attalid king Eumenes II (197–159 B.C.) complied with a request of the villagers to grant *polis*-status. The king officially granted *politeia* (city constitution) and a *gymnasion* and added that he was prepared to send specialists capable of “building a gymnasium”. The story ends with Aelius Aristides, writing in the 2nd cent. A.D. that “all localities were full of gymnasia”. The epigraphical evidence shows that he was right.

Sport was an utterly competitive and individual affair for the Greeks. In the gymnasium training focused on ‘Leichtathletik’ and ‘Schwerathletik’. The former consisted of various running events: *stadion* (ca. 200 m), *diaulos* (ca. 400 m) and *dolichos* (long-distance run: between 4 and 5 km); the latter comprised wrestling, boxing

¹¹) For the gymnasium I draw upon the article mentioned in note 7, esp. 629–640 (with all references); see now also D. KAH/P. SCHOLZ (edd.), *Das Hellenistische Gymnasion*, Berlin 2004, and the detailed summary of its contents in *SEG LIV* 1849.

¹²) L. ROBERT, *Opera Minora Selecta* II, Amsterdam 1969, 814 note 3.

(rough) and *pankration* (still rougher). The *pentathlon* was for the generalists; philosophers held it in high esteem but, judging from the prizes awarded to winners, it was less popular in the stadiums. A recently published inscription from Thessalian Pelinna¹³ revealed an as yet unknown running event: the *tristadios* (sc. *dromos*; ca. 600 m), probably a local speciality, since it is not attested in other places. Less obscure but certainly not a regular discipline in the average Greek *agōn* is the *hippios* (double *diaulos*: ca. 800 m).¹⁴ The length of the stadion-race is determined by the length of the rectilinear running-track in the stadion (ca. 190 m; comparable to our 200 m-dash). This means that for the *diaulos*, *tristadios* and *hippios* the athletes had to round a post at the end of the stadion-track once, twice or thrice; the implication is that the Greek concept of sprint (or protracted sprint) substantially differs from ours; but it surely guaranteed more sensation: rounding posts at full speed enhanced the possibility of runners bumping against each other. Registration for and success in both the *stadion* and *diaulos* were quite normal; pride in a double victory was one of the equivalents of the modern concept of 'records'.¹⁵

In the gymnasium contests were regularly organized, in which boys, ephebes and *neoi* (12–30 years of age) participated. Physical exercises (German: 'Leibesübungen') served as preparation for highly competitive contests, in which always a first and only rarely also a second and third prize was to be won.¹⁶ Gymnastics (German: 'Turnen') was never an official discipline, in which prizes could be won. Team-sports were rare. Torch-races between teams of boys or ephebes are known to have been held and outside the gymnasium ball-games were

¹³) SEG LIV 566.

¹⁴) L. ROBERT, *Études Anatoliennes*, Amsterdam 1970, 60; ID., *Opera Minora Selecta VII*, Amsterdam 1990, 753.

¹⁵) Cf. my remarks in Nikephoros 12, 1999, 279–281. For the concept of 'ancient records' and how it was expressed see S. BRUNET, *Winning the Olympics without taking a fall, getting caught in a waistlock or sitting out a round*, in: ZPE 172, 2010, 115–124, and P. GOUW, *Griekse atleten in de Romeinse keizertijd (31 v. Chr.–400 n. Chr.)*, Amsterdam 2009, 97–154 ('"De enige van alle Grieken." Atleten op recordjacht').

¹⁶) N. B. CROWTHER, *Second-place and lower finishes in Greek athletics (including the pentathlon)*, in: ZPE 90, 1992, 97–102 (= ID., *Athletika. Studies in the Olympic Games and Greek athletics*, Hildesheim 2004, 323–329). KÖNIG (cf. note 10 in fine) 281, suggests that instances of second-place finishes or lower (and also of boasts of drawn contests, for that matter) are 'reliable signs of the downplaying of competitiveness'. I prefer to interpret these phenomena as manifestations of pride in the results of what a maximum of competitiveness could achieve; a maximum that, alas, was not enough to become a victor but allowed a second-best.

practiced in the Baths or by the elderly.¹⁷ They never made it, however, to the level of the official *agōnes* held either in the gymnasium or in the cities at large and, in N. Crowther's words, "had more of a recreational than an agonistic basis".¹⁸

The gymnasium and its age-groups constituted the bridge which the youngsters or, at least, the more talented and ambitious among them, crossed in order to get access to the contests organized by cities in their stadiums. In the course of the centuries and in the context of increasing urbanization in Greece itself and in the slowly but steadily Hellenized areas of present-day Turkey, the Near East, Egypt and Libya, a vast 'agonistic market' evolved consisting of hundreds of annual, triennial or quadrennial contests. A recent study of W. Leschhorn shows that we should reckon with a 'market' of between 300 and 500 contests in Roman Imperial times.¹⁹ Since for new emperors and for deceased members of the urban elites new *agōnes* were founded, the numbers per annum could vary considerably. The number of contests organized in any given city depended on the size and wealth of the city. Needless to say, the intensity and frequency of modern sport events (often on a weekly basis) were not be matched by the ancients. Even if a city was big and rich enough to organize between five and ten contests *per annum* (Ephesos), the rhythm of sports-events clearly is much slower than in modern times.

In the perception of ancient athletes, however, the opportunities for participation in a contest were very numerous. Athletes 'wandered around' the world from one contest to another. One of the epithets in the name of the great association of athletes means 'wandering' (*peripolistikē*).²⁰ In an inscription a victorious athlete is said to have won games "all over the oikoumene, from the Kapitolia [in Rome] to Antiochia in Syria". Other inscriptions proclaim that the honorand won

¹⁷) N. B. CROWTHER, *Team Sports in ancient Greece: some observations*, in: *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 12.1, 1995, 127–136 (= ID., *Athletika* [cf. note 16] 351–372, esp. 355).

¹⁸) N. B. CROWTHER, *Old age, exercise, and athletics in the ancient world*, in: *Stadion* 16.2, 1990, 171–183 (= ID., *Athletika* [cf. note 16] 255–267).

¹⁹) W. LESCHHORN, *Die Verbreitung von Agonen in den östlichen Provinzen des römischen Reiches*, in: *Stadion* 24.1, 1998, 31–57; ID., *Sport und Spiele im Münzbild der römischen Kaiserzeit*, in: M. GUTGESELL *et alii* (edd.), *Olympia. Geld und Sport in der Antike*, Hannover 2004, 55–68.

²⁰) For the vicissitudes and titles of the associations of athletes see H. W. PLEKET, *Some aspects of the history of the athletic guilds*, in: *ZPE* 10, 1973, 197–227; for the location of the headquarters of the merged associations of 'ecumenical athletes' and 'ecumenical sacred winners', see R. VOLPE, *Le terme di Traiano e la ξυστική σύνοδος*, in: A. LEONE (ed.), *Res bene gestae. Ricerche di storia urbana su Roma antica in onore di Eva Margareta Steinby*, Rome 2007, 428–437.

contests “in all regions of the world” or “in Asia, Italy, Hellas, and Alexandria” [i.e., in Egypt], i.e., in virtually the entire civilized world.²¹ It does not, therefore, come as a surprise that in such a dense market the need for a well-organized calendar arose. In the Carian city of Aphrodisias the local agonistic calendar was established in such a way as to enable the athletes to turn up in time in two neighbouring cities and to participate in the Kapitolia in Rome.²² In 134 A.D. the international association of actors asked Hadrian to organize the calendar for a number of major contests, thereby enabling the performers to attend all the contests they wanted to participate in and, in addition, to plan participation in contests in specific areas and periods during intervals left unoccupied by the major festivals.²³ Hadrian’s ‘calendar’ also applied to the association of athletes and their contests.

A hierarchy of contests²⁴ had long existed: at the top we have the ‘Big Four’: the so-called *periodos* consisting of the Olympic, Nemean, Isthmian and Pythian games. They were ‘sacred crown-games’: dedicated to a deity, with as first prize a crown made from perishable material; in due course cities increasingly started to found new sacred crown-games. Some of them were called Olympia or Pythia, others, more modestly, were ‘isolympic’ or ‘isopythian’. In the Roman Imperial period ca. 20 ‘Olympic Games’ are attested, organized by various cities throughout the Greek-speaking eastern Mediterranean. Several cities, other than Delphi, organized Pythia;²⁵ and the same applies to the Aktia, established by Augustus in Epirote Nikopolis and added to

21) L. ROBERT, *Opera Minora Selecta* VI, Amsterdam 1989, 320/321 and 399.

22) C. ROUECHÉ, *Performers and partisans in the Roman and Late Roman periods*, London 1993, no. 51.

23) G. PETZL/E. SCHWERTHEIM, *Hadrian und die dionysischen Künstler. Drei in Alexandria Troas neugefundene Briefe des Kaisers an die Künstler-Vereinigung*, Bonn 2006, ll. 57–84; cf. *SEG* LVI 1359 (with additional bibliography; cf. now also J.-Y. STRASSER, “*Qu’on fouette les concurrents ...*”. À propos des lettres d’Hadrien retrouvées à Alexandrie de Troade, in: *Revue des Études Grecques* 123, 2010–2012, 585–622). For regional agonistic circuits cf. J.-Y. STRASSER, *Les Olympia d’Alexandre et le pancratiaste M. Aur. Asklepiadès*, in: *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 128/129, 2004/2005, 421–468, esp. 438, S. REMIJSSEN, *Pammachon, a new sport*, in: *The Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 47, 2010, 185–204, esp. 196 and P. GOUW (cf. above note 15) 33–56 (‘Atleten en het bestaan van regionale festivalcircuits’).

24) H. W. PLEKET, *Games, prizes, athletes and ideology: some aspects of the history of sport in the greco-roman world*, *Stadion* 1, 1975, 49–89 (also available in J. KÖNIG, *Greek athletics*, Edinburgh 2010, 145–174).

25) For the proliferation of Olympic and Pythian games see A. FARRINGTON, *Olympic victors and the popularity of the Olympic Games in the imperial period*, in: *Tyche* 12, 1997, 15–43, esp. 41–43, and H. W. PLEKET, *Varia Agonistica*, in: *Epigraphica Anatolica* 30, 1998, 129–132, esp. 130.

the original *periodos* of the Big Four.²⁶ The cities sent out special envoys (*theoroi*) in order to ask for acceptance of the status of such games and to invite representatives to be present at their celebration and to participate in the sacrifices to the deity in whose honour the festival was organized. Such representatives were also called *theoroi*, while in the imperial period the term *sunthutai* ('joint sacrificers!') appears.²⁷

Other contests, with lower status and less prestige, were less 'internationally' – and more locally/regionally-oriented and awarded money prizes to the winners: the so-called *agōnes chrematitai* or *themateitai* (after *chremata* = money and *thema* = prize) (or perhaps the amount of money given by the founder of a contest?); alternatively, they were known as *themides*.²⁸ Their status was lower but the money-prizes

²⁶) In the first century B.C. – first century A.D. the original *periodos* ('Big Four') was extended with three other games: the Kapitolia in Rome, the Aktia in Nikopolis and either the Argive Heraia or the Sebasta in Naples; this extended *periodos* was called the *teleios periodos* ('the complete, perfect periodos'): see P. FRISCH, *Der erste vollkommene Peridonike*, in: *Epigraphica Anatolica* 128, 1991, 71–77. See also A. UZUNASLAN/C. WALLNER, *Die Periodoniken. Vorüberlegungen zu einer Sammlung der besten Agonisten der Antike*, in: K. STROBEL (ed.), *Die Geschichte der Antike aktuell: Methoden, Ergebnisse und Rezeption*, Klagenfurt 2005, 121–130, esp. 123, for the problem of the Heraia and Sebasta.

²⁷) For the phenomenon of *theoroi* and *sunthutai* see *IG XII 4 220/221*, 223 (announcement of the Koan Asklepieia in 242/241 B.C.), *SEG LVI 1231* (announcement of the Magnesian Leukophryena in 208 B.C.); cf. now also J.D. SOSIN, *Magnesian inviolability*, in: *TAPA* 139, 2009, 369–410), *IG XII 4 153* (announcement of the Milesian Didymeia); L. ROBERT, *Documents d'Asie Mineure*, Paris 1987, 156–162; J. and L. ROBERT, *Claros I. Décrets hellénistiques*, Paris 1989, 20 (cf. now also *Bulletin Épigraphique*, in: *Revue des Études Grecques* 123, 2010–2012, no. 524, for pentaeteric *theōroi* sent to Claros by the Ionian League); R. PARKER, *New "Panhellenic" festivals in Hellenistic Greece*, in: R. SCHLESIER/U. ZELLMANN (edd.), *Mobility and travel in the Mediterranean from antiquity to the Middle Ages*, Paderborn 2004, 9–22; for *theoroi* and *sunthutai* in the Roman period see L. ROBERT, *Opera Minora Selecta VI*, Amsterdam 1989, 111 and VII, Amsterdam 1990, 754, 761, 779; ID., *Documents* (see above) 165/166; P. WEISS, *Festgesandtschaften, städtisches Prestige und Homonoiaprägungen*, in: *Stadion* 24.1, 1998, 59–70; C.P. JONES, "Joint sacrifice" at Iasus and Side, in: *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 118, 1990, 183–186. For *theoroi* in imperial times see also note 64.

²⁸) For *themides* cf. J.-Y. STRASSER, *Études sur les concours d'Occident*, in: *Nikephoros* 14, 2001, 109–155, esp. 118–124; A. FARRINGTON, *Θέμιδες and the local elites of Lycia, Pamphylia and Pisidia*, in: A.D. RIZAKIS/F. CAMIA (edd.), *Pathways to power. Civic elites in the eastern part of the Roman empire*, Athens 2008, 241–249. For the meaning of *themis* and *thema* cf. STRASSER, *Études* (see above) 119 and S. REMIJSEN, *The so-called "crown games": terminology and historical context of the ancient categories for Agones*, in: *ZPE* 177, 2011, 97–109, especially 101/102.

(6000 or 3000 drachmai in the case of the so-called *agōnes* [*hemi*]talantiai) for the winners offered enough compensation. On the one hand the local circuits were a breeding-ground for talented athletes on their way to the international level; on the other hand they offered the stars the opportunity to cash directly interesting amounts of money. In victory-catalogues from the Roman period, the successes in the great sacred-stephanitic contests are enumerated one by one; they frequently and dryly conclude with a clause like “and he won also in so-and-so many money-games”. This formula goes back to the time of Pindar, who wrote his epinikia for renowned winners in the *periodos* games and occasionally referred to other victories “as numerous as grains of sand on the beach”. J. Ebert even invented a special term to characterize this habit: ‘Abbruchformel’.²⁹

It is especially for various cities in Asia Minor that small dossiers of relevant agonistic inscriptions have been analyzed. For Pisidian Termessos we are fortunate in having evidence for athletic victors both in gymnasium games and in local Termessian *themides*. All these texts were inscribed on the walls of public buildings or on *stelai* set up at prestigious locations in the city. We have evidence for at least fifteen local *agōnes*, most in honour of deceased wealthy citizens, some dedicated to a local deity.³⁰ Similar, though quantitatively much less impressive dossiers have been presented for the Lycian cities of Balbura³¹ and Oinoanda³²; the latter city organized at least five contests founded and financed by wealthy citizens; they were all ‘open to the Lycians’, and all winners attested in inscriptions were in fact Lycians.³³ There is one example of a scion of an elite-family who started his career as a boy at home, subsequently excelled on the international scene and ultimately returned to his home city to win as an adult man in two local contests.³⁴

²⁹) J. EBERT, *Griechische Epigramme auf Sieger an gymnischen und hippischen Agonen*, Berlin 1972, 18, 68 and 243.

³⁰) O. VAN NIJF, *Athletics, festivals and Greek identity in the Roman East*, in: Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society 45, 1999, 176–200; ID., *Inscriptions and civic memory in the Roman East*, in: Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies, Supplement 75, London 2000, 21–36; ID., *Public space and political culture in Roman Termessos*, in: O. VAN NIJF/R. ALSTON (edd.), *Political culture in the Greek city after the classical age*, Leuven 2010, 215–242.

³¹) SEG XXXVIII 1446–1448, 1459; XLI 1343–1354.

³²) SEG XLIV 1165–1201.

³³) PLEKET, *Varia* (cf. note 25) 129/130.

³⁴) PLEKET, *Varia* (cf. note 25) 130/131; VAN NIJF, *Athletics* (cf. note 30) 189/190; H. W. PLEKET, *Zur Soziologie des antiken Sports*, in: Nikephoros 14, 2001, 157–212, esp. 205 (English translation available in T. F. SCANLON (ed.), *Oxford readings in Greek and Roman sport*, Oxford forthcoming).

The cities – in contemporary parlance we would say ‘the authorities’, whether national or local – were involved in various ways in sport and concerned about the athletes. It is the city that built gymnasia, elected annual gymnasiarchs (from ca. 300 B.C.), earmarked money in its budget and appointed one or more trainers. Incidentally, private *gymnasia* and private trainers were indispensable for those who wanted to compete on the international level.³⁵ In addition to public money, it is the urban gymnasiarchs who invested money in the *gymnasia*.³⁶ The regular visitors – age-groups like *paidēs*, *ephebes* and *neoi* – were also supposed to pay small contributions.³⁷ It is in the *gymnasia* that contests were organized for the urban youngsters. The city organized the contests outside the *gymnasion* and financed them, together with the *agōnothetēs*; revenues from earmarked foundations were also welcome. Ca. 300 B.C. the city of Ephesos, after a request by his trainer, decided to financially support a young, promising athlete “for a stay abroad and for his training”.³⁸ As said above, if one really wanted to compete on the highest level, a private trainer – often an ex-athlete – was indispensable. Cities reserved in their budgets monetary rewards for winners in sacred-crown games and awarded special privileges (*timai*) to them. Special laws determined the amounts of money to be paid to the victors and probably differentiated

³⁵) Cf. S. BRUNET, *Olympic hopefuls from Ephesos*, in: *Journal of Sport History* 30, 2003, 219–235; see SEG LIV 1182 for a summary and some comment on the theory that official trainers of the *gymnasion* also acted as private coaches of successful athletes. There is evidence for private trainers accepting a job in urban *gymnasia* but explicitly demanding the privilege of accompanying their private pupils to *agōnes* abroad. Cf. also J. KÖNIG, *Training athletes and interpreting the past in Philostratus' Gymnasticus*, in: E. BOWIE/J. ELSNER (edd.), *Philostratus*, Cambridge 2009, 251–283.

³⁶) Cf. P. FRÖHLICH, *Les activités évergétiques des gymnasiarques à l'époque hellénistique tardive: la fourniture de l'huile*, in: O. CURTY (ed.), *L'huile et l'argent. Gymnasiarchie et évergétisme dans la Grèce hellénistique*, Paris 2009, 57–94.

³⁷) Cf. my article (note 7) 636, with the addition of Ph. GAUTHIER, *Bulletin Épigraphe*, in: *Revue des Études grecques* 116, 2003, 594 no. 185. This means that the clientele of the average *gymnasion* probably did not include the sons of poor families. The *gymnasion* was the realm of the bouletic and – at most – a broad middle-class of relatively well-to-do farmers and craftsmen. Talented poor boys depended on subsidies from their city, private sponsors or lenders. Among the adult professional athletes the elite presumably predominated but poorer talents were not absent. For a nice example of a poor athlete who borrowed money for his training and maintenance and was supposed to refund the money only if he managed to gain victories, see A. WACKE, *Athleten als Darlehensnehmer nach römischem Recht*, in: *Gymnasium* 86, 1979, 149–164.

³⁸) Discussed by BRUNET (cf. note 35), who argues that the trainer was employed by the city in a public *gymnasion*: see SEG LIV 1182.

between victories in *periodos*-games (and the like; *isopythios* and *isolympios* etc.) and other sacred-crown games and between victories in equestrian and athletic disciplines.³⁹

Cities were proud of athletes who had not only their own names proclaimed when they achieved a victory, but also that of their mother-cities. There are even instances of cities, which by offering citizenship to a successful athlete, tried to seduce him into abandoning his native town: the ancient equivalent of what we now call a 'transfer'! We have here a sort of exchange of identities: the athlete identified himself with his city, the city with the athlete.⁴⁰

Though cities had no say in whether or not athletes decided to participate in a given contest and never determined who was going to represent them in Olympia in a given discipline, they did stand up for them if they got into trouble. When in 332 B.C. the Athenian Kallippos was caught in bribing his adversary and subsequently fined, Athens sent its renowned orator Hypereides to Olympia to argue for remission of the fine. The orator did not succeed but the case shows the concern of the city for the well-being of its top athletes. It has recently been suggested that it was ultimately incumbent on the state, of which the offender was a citizen, to pay the fine. Pausanias (5.21.8 a) indeed writes that a city paid the fine imposed on one of its wrestlers, who was charged with bribing his opponent. In another, earlier case the Athenian 'representative' (*theoros*) at the Games lent money to a fraudulent and punished athlete.⁴¹

³⁹) L. ROBERT, *Opera Minora Selecta* I, Amsterdam 1969, 119/120; ID., *Opera Minora Selecta* V, Amsterdam 1989, 354–357; W. SLATER, *Paying the pipers*, in: B. LE GUEN (ed.), *L'argent dans les concours du monde grec*, Paris 2010, 249–281, especially 268–272. In the Roman Imperial period special amounts of money were paid by the mother-cities of athletes who had gained victories in so-called 'hieroi *eiselastikoi agōnes*', a special privileged category within the broad category of *hieroi (stephanitai) agōnes*. These amounts were due to the athletes after they had 'entered' (*eiselaunein*) their cities. The methods used to calculate the amounts of money to be paid for the victors were a matter of discussion: see *SEG* LVI 1359 ll. 10, 19, 25/26, 46 and 49–51 (also bibliography and some hesitating suggestions in the app. cr.).

⁴⁰) For this phenomenon see the evidence collected by L. ROBERT, *Opera Minora Selecta* V, Amsterdam 1989, 358–367.

⁴¹) For Kallippos, Pausanias and the *theoros* cf. I. WEILER, *Korruption in der Olympischen Agonistik und die diplomatische Mission des Hypereides in Elis*, in: A. D. RIZAKIS (ed.), *Achaia und Elis in der Antike*, Athens 1991 (*Meletēmata* 13), 87–92; V. MATTHEWS, *Olympic losers: why athletes who did not win at Olympia are remembered*, in: G. P. SCHAUS/S. R. WENN (edd.), *Onwards to the Olympics: historical perspectives on the Olympic Games*, Waterloo 2007, 81–93, esp. 88–90; J. EBERT, *Agonismata. Kleine philologische Schriften zur Literatur, Geschichte und Kultur in der Antike*, Stuttgart/Leipzig 1997, 200–236, esp. 229–232.

Summing up: the modern cliché “no top-sport without ‘Breiten-sport’” is eminently applicable to the ancient world of the Greek cities. The *gymnasion* represents this infrastructure, together with the ubiquitous stadiums, and it is that infrastructure which generated ambitious and talented youngsters who tried to win in local and subsequently in ‘international’ contests.

After the demise of the Roman Empire and the concomitant decline of ancient polis-life,⁴² it is not until the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries that the above-mentioned cliché gradually became relevant again. ‘Sportification’ (cf. above p. 1) stopped in between; why that is the case, is a question rarely posed. Possibly the rise and dominance of Christianity, with its vigorous stance against the cult of the body, and the close relation between sport and pagan religion were cardinal factors.

2. Emperor and sport in the Greek cities of the Empire

When the destructive civil wars of the first century B.C. came to an end and Augustus managed to bring law and order and, above all, peace, in most regions of the Empire a period of modest demographic growth, increasing urbanization, and economic growth began, which was extensive, and in some provinces probably also intensive, though always modest in comparison with the *sustained* growth of the industrial era. One of the results of these developments, relevant for our purpose, was a proliferation of new contests. L. Robert wrote of an “explosion agonistique”.⁴³ It is especially inscriptions and the legenda on coins which provide information about this explosion. As was pointed out above, there emerged a vast ‘agonistic market’.

2.1. The Emperor as patron of athletes: the point of view of the athletes

What could athletes expect from emperors and in what respect did Greek cities, which organized one or more contests *per annum*, have

⁴²) On the end of ancient athletics see C. ROUECHÉ, *Spectacles in late antiquity*, in: *Antiquité Tardive* 15, 2007, 59–64, esp. 59–62, and I. WEILER, *Theodosius I und die Olympischen Spiele*, in: *Nikephoros* 17, 2004, 53–75. See now, above all, S. REMIJSSEN, *The end of Greek athletics*, Diss. Leuven 2012.

⁴³) L. ROBERT, *Opera Minora Selecta* VI, Amsterdam 1989, 709–719, esp. 712 (also available in English in J. KÖNIG, *Greek athletics*, Edinburgh 2010, 109–119, esp. 111).

to do with emperors in distant Rome? First, it is important to realize that from the very beginning of the Imperial period the athletes were organized in two official, empire-wide associations: one for ‘the athletes from the *oikoumene*’ (from the inhabited world, i.e., the Roman Empire), the other for an elite among the athletes, viz. the ‘victors in the sacred crown-games’ (*hieronikai[kai]stephanitai*). Probably in the mid 2nd century A.D. these two associations merged into one association of ‘wandering athletes and victors in sacred crown-games’, with Herakles as its divine patron and its headquarters in Rome, near the Imperial Baths. A top-official of that association – invariably a prominent ex-athlete – was at the same time director of those Baths, characterized recently by J.-Y. Strasser as the “établissements qui renferment en un seul lieu thermes, palestres, xyste et gymnase”.⁴⁴ It is the emperors Hadrian and Antoninus Pius who personally saw to it that a plot was reserved for the association’s headquarters. This in itself seems to imply that between athletes and emperors there were close contacts; close enough, at least, to make it attractive to be in each other’s proximity. There was a third association of ‘retired athletes’ who had its headquarters also in Rome.⁴⁵ Emperors were in the habit of appointing renowned athletes, after their retirement,⁴⁶ as imperial commissioners (the so-called *xystarchs*) to supervise the contests in a given city or region: perhaps out of concern about law and order around a contest and discipline among the athletes (although local *mastigophoroi* [‘whip-bearers’] were qualified enough to take care of such problems) but probably also for financial reasons: the cities and/or their magistrates invested large sums of money in such games and the emperors did not want this policy to destabilize the financial system of the cities.

⁴⁴) J.-Y. STRASSER, *La carrière du pancratiaste Markos Aurélius Dèmostratos Damas*, in: *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 127, 2003, 251–299, esp. 297.

⁴⁵) For the three associations see the article mentioned in note 20.

⁴⁶) STRASSER (cf. note 44) 298; the board of the above-mentioned association of professional athletes comprised, in addition to a chief-secretary, a chief-physician (cf. STRASSER [cf. note 28] 140–146), a high priest and the Director of the Imperial Baths, also a *xystarch-for-life*. The latter fulfilled several *xystarchiai* after his retirement; a well-known example is the star pankratiast M. Aurelius Demonstratos Damas, who was a life-long *xystarch* and actually held thirteen *xystarchiai* in cities in Asia Minor, Egypt and Italy (STRASSER [cf. note 44] 264). Long before the association settled down in Rome and long before an association of retired athletes existed, individual star-athletes after their retirement, were appointed by emperors to hold *xystarchiai* (see e.g. L. MORETTI, *Iscrizioni agonistiche greche*, Rome 1953, nos. 65 and 71). For the financing of the function of *xystarch* see now PETZL/SCHWERTHEIM (cf. note 23) 34–39. For the *xystarchia* see also my remarks in *An agonistic inscription from Sardis*, in: ZPE 2012 (forthcoming).

Athletes expected privileges from emperors and direct protection of their interests. Just before Augustus in 31 B.C. became the sole ruler of the world, his opponent Antonius, at the request of his friend and trainer and of a high functionary of the association of 'ecumenical victors in sacred crown-games', had already awarded a series of privileges to the athletes: exemption from military service, from holding high (and expensive!) functions in cities and from the obligation of billeting 'foreigners', a euphemism for important Roman dignitaries or soldiers.⁴⁷ The athletes, who travelled all over the *oikoumene*, had a great stake in not getting involved in their own cities in expensive and time-consuming functions. Holding functions implied high costs for the functionaries concerned; public budgets did exist but did not cover all the costs; moreover, functionaries were expected either not to use them at all or to use them only partly. Salaries were not paid. Incidentally, this specific exemption confirms what is otherwise already known from other evidence, that successful athletes often were well-to-do people, either *ab origine* or due to the money prizes accumulated during their career and the money given by their mother-cities for 'crowns' won in *agōnes hieroi kai stephanitai* and in eis-elastic games.

These privileges remained in force throughout the Imperial period and were occasionally even extended by some emperors. In the late 3rd century A.D. emperors took action against abuse: exemption from civic obligations was to be awarded only to those athletes who were known to have competed throughout their whole lives and to have been crowned with at least three wreaths in a sacred contest without having bribed their fellow-competitors; moreover, among those three victories one should have been gained either in Rome or in ancient Greece.⁴⁸ A similar restriction of a privilege is on record in Ulpian, who writes that "athletes are exempted from taking on guardianship, provided they have been crowned in sacred contests".⁴⁹ Why this restriction only to sacred contests or to specific sacred contests (in Rome or in ancient Greece)? The answer is to be found in the aforementioned hierarchy of athletic tournaments in the Greek world. Privileges were no longer to be given to any victorious athlete but only to those who belonged to the highest echelons of professional

⁴⁷) R. K. SHERK, *Roman documents from the Greek East. Senatus Consulta and Epistulae to the age of Augustus*, Baltimore 1969, 290–293 no. 57.

⁴⁸) *Cod. Just.* 10.54, with C. WALLNER, *Diokletian, die griechische Agonistik und die römischen spectacula*, in: *Rivista Storica dell'Antichità* 37, 2007, 133–152, esp. 140–142.

⁴⁹) *Digesta* 27.1.6.13.

athletes and were real stars. 'Rome' stands for a victory in the Kapi-
tolia, founded in 86 A.D. and another addition to the original *periodos*;
and under 'ancient Greece' lurks undoubtedly a reference to that
very same *periodos* and a few other games of the same level. Three
victories in those games are indicative of the high level to be achieved
by those to whom privileges were to be granted. The abuse, prohibited
by the emperors ca. 300 A.D., consisted in privileges granted to ath-
letes who were successful in many local money-games and in an occa-
sional victory in one of the many other sacred crown-games. Such a
career was meritorious but in the emperor's view did not generate
enough prestige for such athletes to be worthy of privileges. Once
more it is essential to realize that Roman administration and taxation
strongly depended on the proper functioning of cities and their elites.
The urban elites were responsible for law and order and for the sup-
pression of riots; they were also responsible for the collection of taxes
imposed by Rome on the empire's population. Too many exemptions
from holding magistracies or paying taxes could harm the proper bal-
ance in city-government and the continuity of the flow of taxmoney to
Rome.

But there is more to be said about what athletes wanted and appar-
ently could expect from emperors. The spectacular discovery of three
letters of Hadrian (117–138 A.D.), found recently in Alexandria
Troas and addressed to the association of 'wandering musicians and
actors around Dionysos', is an absolute eye-opener in this respect.⁵⁰
Though the 'Dionysians' are the addressee, it is quite clear from sev-
eral passages in this dossier (ll. 21, 24, 34–38, 40 and 48), that the
imperial decisions also concerned the athletes who, as pointed out
above, had organized their association around Herakles. At the request
of the association Hadrian issued orders about various subjects which
directly concerned the interests of athletes (and actors). In his first
letter the emperor begins by emphasizing the necessity for all contests
certainly to be held. Apparently cities used to divert funds, both pub-
lic and private and earmarked for the organization of an *agōn*, to other
purposes, and as a result simply did not hold a contest at all; alterna-
tively, they officially did announce and hold the tournament but after
the arrival of the contestants, they dissolved it either immediately or
at the beginning or half-way through. In case festivals were cancelled
at whatever stage "the contestants shall divide up the prizes without
contesting". How exactly this was to be implemented, the emperor
does not say. Apparently the message, viz. that prize-money belonged

⁵⁰ Cf. PETZL/SCHWERTHEIM (note 23) and *SEG* LVI 1359, with references to
publications which responded to Petzl/Schwertheim.

to the best athletes and not to fraudulent city-officials, was more important than its implementation. More specifically, Hadrian does not give permission to use money, from which prizes are offered to victorious contestants or special 'contributions' (*suntaxeis*) to victors in eiselastic sacred crown-games (cf. note 39), used for the construction of a building. Hadrian evidently held musical and athletic contests in high esteem and severely criticized those members of the elite who, for whatever reason, preferred not to invest money in contests and prizes. This is the more remarkable since ca. ten years earlier, in a letter to the city of Carian Aphrodisias, the emperor approved the decision to divert money, commonly paid by high priests of the imperial cult for gladiatorial shows, to the building of an aqueduct: "I not only give you permission but I also praise your proposal".⁵¹ Musical and athletic contests were rated higher by Hadrian than gladiatorial shows, even though the latter were closely connected with the worship of the emperor and as a result underlined the close links between provincials and the emperor. Ca. 300 A.D. another Roman emperor allowed provincial governors to use money, earmarked for *agōnes*, for the renovation of city walls but significantly he adds that, after the renovation project, the money should be invested again in contests.⁵²

Hadrian's letter offers us a glimpse of the fierce discussion among urban elites about the best way to invest money and reveals that the elites were not always unanimously in favour of supporting athletes. This is a welcome corrective to the invariably positive image of athletics provided by honorary inscriptions. Recent research by A. Zuiderhoek⁵³ has shown that the general picture of euergetic efforts in Greek cities of the Roman empire is one of investments being made predominantly in agonistic festivals. Behind the statistics we now see behaviour of the elite which does not belie those statistics but nuances them in the sense that in the strategy of predominant investments in athletics intra-elite rivalries are not to be excluded. However, these rivalries did not lead to a decrease of investments in agonistic matters in favour of non-agonistic buildings or enterprises.

Subsequently Hadrian discusses the problem of prizes (*athla*) and contributions (*suntaxeis*). In what might seem to us to be ludicrous details, he prescribes the following procedure: "In general some offi-

51) J. REYNOLDS, *New letters from Hadrian to Aphrodisias: trials, taxes, gladiators and an aqueduct*, in: *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 13, 2000, 5–20 (II. 36/37); cf. *SEG* L 1096.

52) *Cod. Just.* 11.42.1; cf. WALLNER (cf. note 48) 142/143.

53) A. ZUIDERHOEK, *The politics of munificence in the Roman empire. Citizens, elites and benefactors in Asia Minor*, Cambridge 2009, 71–112, esp. 76–88.

cial of ours is present at the contests; and the *agonothetes* of each contest shall count over the money for the prize to the governor of the province, or the proconsul, or quaestor, or legate, or whoever is the person attending, one day before each entry [i. e., category of competition within a contest], and he shall place it in a bag, seal it, and place it beside the crown, whether the category is artistic or athletic, and the victor immediately after the victory shall receive it together with the crown, with everybody watching". Since there were numerous cities in a province, the governor (of an imperial [legate] or senatorial province [*proconsul*]) cannot be expected to have had the time or interest to be present at all contests; that explains the section about his substitutes (*quaestor*, *legatus* or any representative sent by the governor). That there were serious problems with fraudulent urban magistrates in this matter, appears clearly at the end of Hadrian's second letter. The main topic of this letter is the re-organization of the agonistic calendar. At the end of this very technical letter (cf. for details *infra*), the emperor suddenly returns to the problem of the prize-money. In a mutilated section we find a clause about "(contestants) not being worn down demanding the prize-money after the contests". The next clause runs as follows: "Hence what I laid down elsewhere [i. e., in his first letter] is necessary, that the money be set out beside the crowns in the theatre and the stadium and that the victor should receive it immediately in the sight of the spectators". The emperor adds a new clause in which the fraudulent *agonothetes* will be held liable for a fine equal to twice the prize-money, in such a way that half is taken by the contestant and half by the city, in which the contest is held. Clearly artists and athletes felt threatened by unreliable, fraudulent magistrates, who evidently embezzled money earmarked for victorious athletes and artists. In this respect the clauses about "everybody watching" and "in the sight of the spectators" are both amusing and revealing. Imperial assistance was indispensable for actors and athletes alike.

Hadrian goes on to clarify the situation around the so-called *sun-taxeis* (ll. 10, 25–28, 46/47 and 49–51): 'contributions' to be paid to the *hieronikai* by their home-cities; in fact it is not *all* victors in sacred crown-games, whose interests are at stake here, but a special category among them, viz. those who had won in so-called *eiselastic* sacred crown-games: games, whose victors were to enter their home-city in a solemn entry-procession (*eiselasis*), a privilege of old closely connected with the Olympic Games (cf. note 39). Did these special *sun-taxeis* replace the monthly allowances (*sitēresia*) paid in Hellenis-

tic times to victors in sacred-crown games⁵⁴ or were they an addition to the latter? Whatever the truth, it is the emperor who decided on the grant of eiselastic status to an existing sacred-crown game and on the method used to calculate the amount due to the entering victors. As for the grant of such a status, we have the amusing story of the city of Thyateira in Lydia, which ca. 220 A.D. sent its renowned pankratiast and Olympic victor G. Perelius Aurelius Alexander as a special ambassador to Rome with the request to raise the status of the pre-existing *Augusteia* to the rank of a sacred eiselastic contest;⁵⁵ forty years earlier the Milesians asked Marcus Aurelius – ‘the philosopher on the throne’ – and Commodus to do the same with their *Didymeia*.⁵⁶ Egyptian papyri show that the amounts cashed by the eiselastic victors were substantial. The situation is somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand the emperor was prepared to further the financial interests of great athletes; on the other hand he clearly wanted to control the urban financial system and thus to reduce the risk of over-spending and being unable to guarantee the levying of taxes for the emperor.

Often-quoted letters of Pliny and Trajan (Hadrian’s predecessor) show that a problem had arisen concerning these special rewards (Greek: *suntaxeis*; Latin: *obsonia*), especially concerning the method to be used for calculating the precise amounts of money. Trajan decided that these contributions must be calculated from the day of the actual entry (*eiselasis*) into the victor’s city. What precisely the method of calculating was we do not know but from later Egyptian papyri we learn that *obsonia* were given for a limited number of months and years and paid out in a block sum.⁵⁷ Hadrian begins by proclaiming that the “contributions shall be given to the sacred victors according to the fixed dates in simple cash and not in wheat or wine, which would turn our athletes into retailers”. Furthermore, he modifies his predecessor’s decision and decides that “the contributions are due not from the day on which someone drove in [i. e., in his city] but from the day when the letter about the victory is delivered to their home cities. Those hurrying on to other contests are also allowed to send the letter”. Hadrian’s decision was advantageous to the athletes concerned. Since they were constantly on the move, wandering from

⁵⁴) L. ROBERT, *Opera Minora Selecta* I, Amsterdam 1969, 119–120; SLATER (cf. note 39) 268–272.

⁵⁵) L. ROBERT, *Études Anatoliennes*, Paris 1937, 119–123.

⁵⁶) *SEG XXXVIII* 1212.

⁵⁷) The practice of calling these *suntaxeis/obsonia* ‘life-long pensions’ (cf. the article quoted in the next note, p. 168) seems questionable. The amounts cashed by the victorious athletes could, of course, be used as a sort of private pension-fund, but they were not going to be paid out regularly as long as the athlete lived.

one contest to the other, often over long distances both in Asia and Europe, it could take a long time before they actually returned to their home-city. Magistrates, who failed to pay these *obsonia* to the *hieronikai* “shall pay out in addition one and a half times to the sacred victor”. This merely confirms that the emperor stood in the breach for the athletes’ interests. Hadrian’s decisions were made before the association of athletes established its headquarters in Rome. In the second letter it appears that the actors (and athletes) had met the emperor in Naples, probably during the celebration of the Sebasta in that city in 134 A.D. Establishing the headquarters near the imperial palace in Rome under Antoninus Pius surely must have facilitated the connections between athletes and emperors.

In two other sections Hadrian points out that the pre-existing privileges of “freedom from liturgies and from tax” also remain in force during his reign; he specifically adds that “since athletes spend their whole life absent abroad”, they should be “released from the taxes on burials”, sc. when they at the end of their career return home and die.⁵⁸ He does not *prescribe* this to the cities but finds it *philanthropon* (“it is humane”) to award this specific privilege to the home-coming athletes. The implication is that normally a burial tax was to be paid to the mother-city of the athletes.

In a long second letter Hadrian, after having had talks with representatives of the association, Greek cities and provincial leagues and read their petitions, offers a detailed re-arrangement of ca. twenty major festivals in a quadrennial schedule. He establishes a precise chronological order and fixes the duration of quite a few contests and of the intervals in between. It is interesting to note that the emperor starts the quadrennial schedule with the Olympic Games, justifying it with a self-evident observation: “this contest is ancient and certainly the most prestigious of the Greek ones”. The Games still enjoyed a pre-eminent position, in spite of the proliferation of Olympic Games and countless other sacred-crown games in the Greek world. The aim is to enable the competitors either to participate in all these games in a more or less relaxed way or to make a selection among them. The games mentioned by Hadrian are celebrated in Asia Minor, Greece and Italy. Those who wanted to make up a special program, tailored to their wishes and needs, could do so and subsequently decide in which other games, ‘thematic’ or ‘stephanitic’, they would like to participate during the intervals between the selected games. Hadrian’s schedule

⁵⁸) For this tax cf. K. SÄNGER-BÖHM, *Die συντάξεις und τέλη τὰ ἐπὶ ταῖς ταφαῖς in der Hadriansinschrift aus Alexandria Troas: eine papyrologische Bestandsaufnahme*, in: ZPE 175, 2010, 167–170.

covers four years, and there are still 'empty' periods in his calendar. Moreover, since the duration of some festivals was set at forty days, actors and athletes were in a position to skip some of the three games along Asia Minor's west coast (Smyrna, Pergamon and Ephesos) and to make a detour of forty or eighty days in order to perform in one or more of the numerous tournaments organized by other cities in other parts of the empire.⁵⁹

In a final and very brief letter the emperor defends another privilege of the artists and athletes: "In accordance with my own custom I give you (the right to) a banquet. I confirm the customary banquets, so that it may not be in the power of the *agonothetes* to evade this kind of benefaction." Hadrian adds that it is not his aim to introduce expenses into cities that they did not formerly pay. In some cities it was apparently a tradition that athletes and artists – perhaps only the victors – were offered a public banquet financed from the official budget for the tournament concerned. The emperor urges those cities and their *agonothetai* to continue to offer such banquets. The athletes wanted to defend the relatively minor privilege they enjoyed; and they needed the emperor for confirmation.

2.2. Emperors and Athletes: the point of view of the emperors

What motivated Roman emperors to get involved in Greek athletics in the cities that organized contests and in the affairs of the athletes themselves? Here it is first of all essential to realize how important sport was for the identity of both the citizens of a Greek city in general and the elites in particular. The latter played a cardinal role. Unlike the professional sportsmen in most mass-sports of our time, Greek athletes often were scions of the urban elites. This phenomenon can be observed in the early archaic period of Greek history and it continued to be the case in the classical, Hellenistic and Roman periods, with the important proviso that after 400 B. C. (and possibly even somewhat earlier) talented and ambitious young men from middle class families were offered, and seized, the opportunity to join the upperclass athletes; after an initial period of training in the urban *gymnasia* they were subsidized by the city and/or wealthy benefactors to hire a private coach and to travel abroad for participation in big international games like those of the *periodos* and the like. From the very beginning it is the aristocratic elite which determined the ideology of sport: discipline, courage, endurance, perseverance and, as a

⁵⁹) Cf. note 23 for regional agonistic circuits.

reward, immortal glory were the essential values; values which were also typical of the Greek military ethos. The participation of non-elite athletes did not bring about a change in this athletic ideology. As so often, newcomers adapted themselves to the dominant value-system instead of developing an alternative, competing ideology: they wanted to be just like the members of the elite.⁶⁰

In recent articles it is especially O.M. van Nijf who has emphasized the relation between sport, participation in contests (local and [inter]regional) and the urban elites in the Roman Imperial period. Three quotations neatly sum up the main thrust of his studies: “sport and literature are more or less equivalent and combinable signs of true *paideia*, Greek culture”, “Greek identity (...) could be acquired not just through language and learning but also (and perhaps more easily) through athletic training in the *gymnasion*” and “the agonistic festival was a defining characteristic of Greek civic life under Roman rule”.⁶¹

Roman emperors and their subordinates were aware of the importance of sport for the identity of the urban leaders; and they probably also knew of the immense popularity of athletes among the urban crowds. As said before, the imperial government depended heavily on the local provincial elites for the collection of taxes for the Roman *fiscus* and for the maintenance of law and order in the cities. The number of officials deployed by the Roman government in the provinces was small. It was simply not in the interest of Roman emperors to antagonize the urban elites by curbing their enthusiasm for and investments in identity-construing athletic contests. A passage in the *Digesta* may serve to show the emperor’s concern about Greek athletics. *Dig.* 50.10.3 tells us that new projects may be undertaken in the cities without permission of the emperor, except if it concerns a circus, theatre or amphitheatre.⁶² The text is important for what it does

⁶⁰) Cf. my articles *The participants in the ancient Olympic Games*, in: W. COULSON/H. KYRIELEIS (edd.), *Proceedings of an international symposium on the Olympic Games*, Athens 1992, 147–152, and *Zur Soziologie des antiken Sports*, in: *Nikephoros* 14, 2001, 157–212.

⁶¹) VAN NIJF, *Athletics* (cf. note 30) 176–200, esp. 177, 181 and 184; see also ID., *Athletics and paideia: festivals and physical education in the world of the Second Sophistic*, in: B. E. BORG (ed.), *Paideia: the world of the Second Sophistic*, Berlin/New York 2004, 203–227.

⁶²) Quoted by A. ZUIDERHOEK, *The ambiguity of munificence*, in: *Historia* 56, 2007, 196–213, esp. 198, who argues that there was a “persistent note of unease about [euergetism] emanating from the urban elites” (200). I tend to think in terms of misbehaving magistrates rather than of a structural unease and ambiguity caused by the fact that the lower classes could use the euergetic festivals as ‘vehicles for the expression of discontent’. The evidence seems to point to magistrates being occasionally prepared to use athletic funds for other, in their eyes more useful,

not say. *Gymnasia* and stadiums are not mentioned. They may have been less costly than (amphi)theatres, but it is perhaps also the case that the emperors did not want to interfere in plans concerning the athletic infrastructure of the cities because the latter, more than gladiatorial shows in amphitheatres, was intimately linked with the identity of the Greek city, its elites and the common citizens. An additional reason for curbing the construction of amphitheatres may have been that gladiators were an expensive investment. Gladiators severely injured or even killed meant heavy losses for the members of the elite who organized and financed the shows. From inscriptions it can be inferred that imperial permission had to be asked for the organization of fights 'with sharp weapons'. Such fights could predictably result in severe injuries and even the death of the precious investment that is called 'gladiator'.⁶³ As pointed out above (p. 17), the emperor Hadrian gladly approved and praised the decision of Aphrodisias to invest money, commonly invested in gladiatorial shows, in an aqueduct. Attempts to economize on the costs of an athletic contest, however, were severely criticized and even forbidden by the emperor. At the same time, however, money endowed for non-athletic purposes, was not to be used for athletic pursuits, as shown by an inscription from Macedonian Beroia (*I. Beroia* 7), where money earmarked for a *phallus*-procession was inadvertently diverted towards the upkeep of the local *gymnasium*.

The same combination of the emperor as on the one hand the patron and supporter of Greek sport and on the other as the financial controller and 'brake-man', comes to the fore when it comes to the

purposes (e.g. buildings) or simply to embezzle them rather than to a feeling of unease about potentially disruptive forces at work during athletic festivals. Diverting magistrates may also have been motivated by intra-elite rivalries. Dio Cassius (52.31.3–6) makes Maecenas say that the cities "should not waste their resources on expenditure for a large number and variety of public games – and ought, indeed, to have their festivals and spectacles – but not to such an extent that the public treasury or the estates of private citizens shall be ruined thereby". This passage presumably reflects the ideology of Cassius Dio *cum suis* ca. 200 A. D. rather than Maecenas and/or Augustus' views, and shows that in certain circles there was great concern about the costs of athletic culture in the cities; the same concern which may have prompted magistrates in Alexandria Troas to invest in buildings rather than in contests. This feeling, however, does not seem to have had much impact on the mainstream in urban or imperial politics. Emperors seem to have favoured a policy of 'controlled' expansion of the athletic circuit; see *I. Ephesos* 18 (D) LL. 2–4, where already under Claudius the governor of Asia Minor prescribes that not more than 4.500 denarii are to be spent on penteteric games.

⁶³ M. CARTER, *Gladiatorial combat with 'sharp' weapons*, in: ZPE 155, 2006, 161–175.

foundation of new games by the cities. Emperors entered the playing-field when cities created a new sacred-crown contest. The received opinion is that the emperor's permission was indispensable for such a creation. Relevant for my purpose is that the permission was wrapped up in the ideological garment of 'a gift' (*dōrea/donatio*) So we have the representation of the emperor as a benefactor, though his 'gift' remained limited to an affirmative statement; that the *dōrea* also implied financial support is held to be improbable by most historians of ancient sport.⁶⁴ The emperor realized that the creation of a new contest was an important expression of the self-identity of a city; moreover, since many such contests were named after the emperor and were embedded in the emperor cult, they strengthened the city's loyalty towards the emperor. The other side of the medal may have been far more pragmatic. The more sacred contests, the more costs for the budgets of the cities, both the organizing and the mother-cities of the athletes. The emperor may have wanted to control at least the athletic part of the urban budgets.

The same concern about the financial burdens of contests manifests itself in documents concerning imperial involvement in local games.

⁶⁴ L. ROBERT, *Opera Minora Selecta* VI, Amsterdam 1989, 111; S. MITCHELL, *Festivals, games and civic life in Roman Asia Minor*, in: *Journal of Roman Studies* 80, 1990, 183–193, esp. 191. There is evidence showing that in imperial times cities continued to send out *theoroi* proclaiming the new contest: L. ROBERT, *Documents d'Asie Mineure*, Paris 1987, 165/166; ID., *Opera Minora Selecta* VII, Amsterdam 1990, 754, 761 and 779; WEISS (cf. note 27) 59–70. Cf. also *OGIS* 456, where *kataggeleis* ('those, who proclaim', 'heralds') is used instead of *theoroi* (Augustan period; with a partially preserved list of cities to which they were to be sent). I am under the impression that in the late 2nd and 3rd cent. A.D. cities may have increasingly restricted the dispatch of such *theoroi* to cities in the neighbourhood. When Carian Aphrodisias received the 'gift' of a sacred-crown contest ca. 250 A.D., it is a number of cities in the immediate vicinity that responded to the request of the Aphrodisian *theoroi* by sending representatives (*theoroi* = *synthytai*; cf. above note 27). C. ROUECHÉ aptly writes of an occasion which "does not seem to have been of much importance outside Caria and Phrygia" (*op.cit.* [cf. note 22] 182–187; cf. also *SEG* XLI 1334 and XLVII 1788/1789 for a similar case in Perge). It is good to remember that in the Hellenistic period Boiotian Akraiphia sent its *theoroi* to 'the cities in Boeotia' for the proclamation of the Ptoia as sacred contest (cf. PARKER, "*Panhellenic*" *festivals* [cf. note 27] 19 sub 11); I take it that the *theōroi* sent to the Panboiotian contest of the Delia, celebrated in honour of Apollo of Delion in the territory of Tanagra, all came from Boiotian cities (cf. C. BRÉLAZ/A. ANDREIOMENOU/P. DUCREY, *Les premiers comptes du sanctuaire d'Apollon à Delion et le concours pan-béotien des Delia*, in: *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 131, 2007 [2009], 235–308, esp. 246 LL. 9 and 19; end of the 2nd cent. B.C.); cf. also R. PARKER, *The Thessalian Olympia*, in: *ZPE* 177, 2011, 111–118, especially 118: "a policy of 'selective globalisation' of ... festivals", in Hellenistic period.

Permission was not required but cities were in the habit of asking for imperial permission and authorization. They may have done so in the face of attempts by local politicians to divert the funds for other purposes. In 2nd cent. A.D. Oinoanda the popular assembly asked Hadrian to confirm the founder's promise to finance the new *Demostheneia*. Hadrian did so but adds emphatically: "he will pay all expenses out of his own capital". Somewhat later the provincial governor is asked to confirm the decision of the assembly to introduce tax-free status for all items sold during the days of the festival in the concomitant market. The governor explicitly stipulates that "the city's revenues are in no way diminished".⁶⁵ Clearly the imperial government did not want the creation of new festivals and the concomitant reinforcement of the urban identity and of loyalty towards the emperor to be detrimental to the urban budgets.

In literary sources, both Roman and Greek, and in senatorial circles in Rome, the culture of the Greek *gymnasion* and the concomitant contests were strongly criticized. 'Nudity' and 'homo-erotic practices' were standard elements in such criticism. In the writings of Greek authors belonging to the Second Sophistic ambivalent feelings about the value of Greek athletics have recently been detected by König;⁶⁶ and rightly so. His attempts to find similar doubts in the epigraphic texts, however, are problematic.⁶⁷ Admittedly, as Hadrian's letter shows, urban elites apparently preferred sometimes to invest part of the money, earmarked for the financing of athletic contests, in building-projects, or to economize on (or even suppress) the costs of contests, in particular the prize-money. This does not detract, however, from the overall impression that cities and elites happily supported the infrastructure and 'culture' of Greek athletics. Misbehaving magistrates are an eternal phenomenon. Those who preferred to invest in musical games often found themselves confronted with the fact that after the foundation of such games, it is the athletic contests in the

⁶⁵) Cf. M. WÖRRLE, *Stadt und Fest im kaiserzeitlichen Kleinasien. Studien zu einer agonistischen Stiftung aus Oinoanda*, Munich 1990, 172–182. An English translation of the inscription in MITCHELL (cf. note 64).

⁶⁶) KÖNIG (cf. note 10). See also his introduction in *Greek Athletics* (cf. note 24) 1–16, for some glimpses "behind the celebratory façade of inscriptions recording *gymnasion* benefactions" (14) and for corrections or modifications of "the much more idealised vision we find in many literary or epigraphic representations of athletic victory and *gymnasion* education" (16). Cf. also König's article mentioned in note 10 in fine; for Roman views on Greek athletics cf. CROWTHER, *Athletika* [cf. note 16] 375–422.

⁶⁷) See my remarks in Nikephoros 20, 2007, 301–307 and in note 16 above in fine.

city which continued to enjoy greater popularity and to generate honorary inscriptions and statues for athletes. Actors are largely absent in honorific epigraphy.

As for senatorial criticism of emperors like Domitian, who in 86 A.D. founded the quadrennial Kapitolia in Rome, the conclusion seems inevitable that even in Rome such criticism did not prevail. The Kapitolia flourished for many years to come. In the provinces nobody cared what senators thought about Greek athletics, that “infectious disease”, as they called it.⁶⁸ Nor did the difference between good and bad emperors have much of an impact on the provincials, though they often implemented senatorial decisions on *damnatio memoriae* and had (part of) the name of ‘condemned’ emperors erased in the inscriptions in their cities.

On their part, the Greeks did everything they could to make it easier for emperors not merely to passively tolerate Greek agonistic culture but to actively support it. Greek cities and Greek provincial Leagues – the so-called *Koina* – were smart enough to incorporate Roman elements into the contests and the religious festivals in which they were embedded. The *Koina* founded *Rhomaia* or *Rhomaia Sebastia* in the context of an emperor cult in provincial temples.⁶⁹ *Kaisareia*, *Augousteia*, *Sebasta (Rhomaia)*, *Tiberieia*, *Claudieia* and *Vespasianeia* mark the first century A.D.⁷⁰ Some of these festivals were new creations, in other cases names referring to the Caesar (*Kaisar*) were added to existing festivals. *Kaisareia* were in some cities new festivals, in other cities *Kaisareia* was simply added to the name of existing games.⁷¹ In the 2nd cent. A.D. *Traianeia* and *Hadrianeia* followed. While under Antoninus Pius and M. Aurelius no contests seem to be on record with names referring to the emperor, from Commodus onwards *Kommodeia*, *Severeia* and *Antoniniana* abound, sometimes as new festivals, more often combined with existing ones: *Kommodeia Olympia*, *Severeia Olympia*, *Antoniniana Pythia*.⁷² In one

⁶⁸) Pliny The Younger, *Letters* 4.22.

⁶⁹) S. MITCHELL, *Anatolia. Land, Men, and Gods in Asia Minor*, Oxford 1993, 219.

⁷⁰) L. ROBERT, *Opera Minora Selecta* VI, Amsterdam 1989, 712. Even *Ἀυτοκρατορία* are attested: *SEG* XXX 1528. A republican predecessor is a stadion-race during the *Amphiaraiia kai Rhomaia* which took place to celebrate the good tidings of the Roman victory over Mithridates: *SEG* LI 585.

⁷¹) Examples in L. ROBERT, *Opera Minora Selecta* VII, Amsterdam 1990, 759–762.

⁷²) E. MIRANDA, *Testimonianze sui Kommodeia*, in: *Scienze dell’Antichità. Storia, Archeologia, Antropologia* 6–7, 1992/1993 [1996], 69–88. For the *Anton(e)iniana* cf. e.g. J.-Y. STRASSER, *Les Antōninia Pythia de Rome*, in:

of Menander Rhetor's treatises a connection is made between the emperor's temperance (*sōphrosynē*) and the temperance which subsequently characterizes "spectacles, *festivals and agōnes*" (emphasis added). Not that we can be asked to believe that in practice the emanation of the imperial virtue really worked that way; but it is significant that a relation is established between emperors and *agōnes* altogether.⁷³ The celebration of imperial birth-days led to the creation of special contests. *Agōnes* were often embedded in ceremonies of the emperor-cult, during which imperial images were carried around in processions.⁷⁴ Local contests often were 'upgraded' by adding an *epitheton ornans* that referred to an emperor. Examples abound; we single out a few items chosen at random. In Lydian Hierokaisareia the local *Artemeisia* were re-baptized as *Sebasta Artemeisia*; in nearby Thyateira the *Tyrimneia*, celebrated in honour of the local Apollo Tyrimnos, were re-named as the great *Sebasta Tyrimneia*.⁷⁵ In Pisidian Termessos an *agōn* dedicated to Zeus Solymeus, becomes an *agōn Sebasteios Solymeios*, and in Selge an inscription records an *agōn Kaisareios Kesbeleios*; Apollo Kesbeleios was the local deity in whose honour the *agōn* was originally celebrated.⁷⁶

Athletic contests have always been embedded in a religious festival; why that is the case is a moot question.⁷⁷ I for one feel at home with M. Golden who, after a detailed survey of ancient mythological and modern theories about the cultic origin of sport, pragmatically concludes that "a connection of sport and religion" is not very exceptional "in a society in which every part of life was pervaded by cult activity and invocations of the god."⁷⁸ Whatever the truth, except for contests financed by and called after private deceased benefactors, most games were organized in honour of deities, whether 'thematic' or 'sacred crown' or 'eiselastic sacred crown'. In the Imperial period the cult of the emperor was added to the Greek pantheon. In this way the organization of athletic contests and the performance of athletes in such contests became an expression of loyalty towards emperor and

Nikephoros 17, 2004, 181–220; L. ROBERT, *Hellenica* XI/XII, Paris 1960, ch. 18 (*Antoniniana Asklep[i]jeia Pythia*).

⁷³ M. MAUSE, *Sport und Kaiser: Gedanken zum römischen Herrscherbild*, in: *Laverna* 15, 2004, 1–10, esp. 7.

⁷⁴ P. HERZ, *Herrscherverehrung und lokale Festkultur im Osten des römischen Reiches (Kaiser/Agone)*, in: H. CANKI/J. RÜPKE (edd.), *Römische Reichsreligion und Provinzialreligion*, Tübingen 1997, 239–264 (summary in *SEG* XLVII 2326).

⁷⁵ L. ROBERT, *Hellenica* VI, Paris 1948, 43–48 and 72–79.

⁷⁶ *SEG* XLI 1249 and 1256.

⁷⁷ S. INSTONE's remarks (see note 8) are to be recommended.

⁷⁸ GOLDEN (cf. note 2) 10–23, esp. 23.

empire. The quest for local identity joined the willingness to pay tribute to the emperor and the empire. One stayed Greek but at the same time became Roman.

The connection between athletics and empire may also be apparent from the fact that the association of athletes carried the word *oikoumenikos* in its titulature. The epithet may well refer to the 'ecumenical' claims of imperial rule: "athletes performed themselves – as cultural agents whose job it was to represent an oecumenical, or global, cultural policy of Roman dynasts and emperors."⁷⁹ In this connection an inscription from Phrygian Hierapolis and a coin from Cilician Anazarbos may be relevant. In both documents the context is clearly agonistic and both carry the expression *Sunthusia Oikoumenēs*. L. Robert suggested that these words refer to the delegations from the cities of the Greek world, whose members participated as *theoroi/sunthutai* in the sacrifices made during the celebration of a sacred-crown or perhaps even an eiselastic sacred-crown contest.⁸⁰ The reference to the *oikoumenē* may be more ideological than realistic. Most delegations, as in Aphrodisias (see above n.64), may well have come from neighbours in a more or less restricted vicinity. Ideology or reality, what matters is that the cities, with the oecumenical claim for their *agōnes*, reflect the oecumenical claims for an emperor who is ruler of the *oikoumenē*.

A special case may serve to sum up the various functions fulfilled by Greek sport in the eastern part of the Roman Empire. It is the case of the Spartan aristocrat P. Aelius Damokratidas (end of the 2nd cent. A.D.). In Sparta he was high priest in the imperial cult of the city and he had established a fund, the revenues of which were to be used to finance a local magistracy; as a result he earned the epithets 'patriotic and friend of the emperor'. Moreover – and highly relevant for our purpose – he carried the title 'the best of the Greeks' (*aristos Hellēnōn*). This title means that he had won the 'race in armour' in the contest of the *Eleutheria* ('Festival of Liberty'). This festival had been founded in the Boiotian city of Plataea in the 5th century B.C. by 'the combined assembly of the Greeks' after and in honour of the victory of the Greeks over the Persians in 479 B.C. In the 2nd cent. A.D. this festival was still held but it was now called the *Eleutheria Kaisareia*. Here we kill several birds with one stone: authentic Greek identity oriented toward the glorious past, pride in one's home-city, worship of the emperor (*Kaisareia*) and presumably also re-interpretation of

⁷⁹) O. M. VAN NIJF, *Global players: athletes and performers in the Hellenistic and Roman world*, in: *Hephaistos* 24, 2006, 225–234, esp. 232–235.

⁸⁰) L. ROBERT, *Opera Minora Selecta* VI, Amsterdam 1989, 713 and 719.

the old battle between Greeks and Barbarians (Persians) in the light of the emerging war between Romans and Parthians. In Van Nijf's words: "L'athlétisme grec était une façon grecque de faire le Romain."⁸¹ The Greeks were supported and appreciated by the emperors; the latter, in their turn, received loyalty.

Both parties knew very well that they needed each other. Two letters of Claudius illustrate this situation. During his reign the 'association of wandering athletes assembled around Herakles' had participated in the contests organized by two client-kings of Rome in Kom-magene and Pontos respectively, in honour of the emperor. The athletes sent two decrees to Claudius, in which they emphasized the kindness of the two kings to the athletes and their own gratitude in return. Claudius rejoices at the benevolence of the kings and their sympathetic plan to organize a festival in his honour and at the kings' friendliness towards the athletes. Sport and its representatives function here as a kind of diplomatic 'lubricant'. The association may well have helped the kings to organize the contest and may even have encouraged them to do so. In another letter Claudius writes that the association had congratulated him on the occasion of his victory over the Britanni and had sent a golden wreath. Claudius respectfully thanked the athletes and interpreted the wreath as a sign of "your piety towards me". The athletes were loyal to the emperor and, as another letter shows, the emperor rewarded their loyalty by confirming all the privileges given to them by Augustus.⁸²

⁸¹) O. M. VAN NIJF, *Aristos Hellenôn: succès sportif et identité grecque dans la Grèce romaine*, in: *Mètis* 3, 2005, 271–294, esp. 289.

⁸²) P. FRISCH, *Zehn agonistische Papyri*, Opladen 1986, nr. 6 (pp. 98–117). In a recently published letter of Claudius to the Koans (47 A.D.) the emperor emphasizes the close connection between the organization of *agōnes* (and the concomitant *panegyreis*) and the loyalty of the organizing city to the emperor. *Agōnes* are an expression of the city's gratitude for the 'unshaken permanence of our rule'. The emperor reciprocates with privileges and benefactions for the organizing cities (D. BOSNAKIS/K. HALLOF, *Alte und neue Inschriften aus Kos III*, in: *Chiron*, 38, 2008, 213–217).

**Hadrien, l'Empereur philhellène,
et la vie agonistique de son temps.
À propos d'un livre récent:**

**Hadrian und die dionysischen Künstler.
Drei in Alexandria Troas neugefundene Briefe des Kaisers an die
Künstler-Vereinigung¹**

Brigitte Le Guen
Paris

Cet article a pour objet les trois lettres récemment publiées que l'Empereur Hadrien adressa à l'association des Technites dionysiaques en 128 ap. J.-C. et qui concernent également la confrérie des athlètes. Après un bref résumé de chacune d'entre elles, je m'intéresse au nouveau cycle de fêtes dotées de concours athlétiques et/ou littéraires qu'Hadrien instaura pour le temps d'une Olympiade, afin de remplacer l'ancienne *periodos* bien connue. Ce faisant, je mets l'accent aussi bien sur les modifications entraînées par ses décisions que sur leur signification. Après quoi, j'examine d'un regard neuf les prix et autres privilèges (tels les pensions) dont bénéficiaient les artistes et athlètes vainqueurs. Enfin, je tente d'explicitier les raisons pour lesquelles l'Empereur écrivit de telles lettres, tout en élucidant la véritable nature des relations entre le pouvoir impérial et les principaux acteurs de la vie agonistique, culturelle et religieuse de l'époque.

Grâce aux efforts conjugués de Georg Petzl et d'Elmar Schwertheim un document d'un intérêt considérable pour l'histoire de la vie agonistique de l'Empire au II^e siècle de notre ère a été porté récemment à la connaissance de la communauté scientifique internationale. On ne saurait trop les en remercier. Il s'agit d'un ensemble de trois lettres adressées à une association d'artistes dionysiaques par l'Empereur Hadrien. La dix-huitième puissance tribunicienne dont il est alors revêtu permet de les attribuer à une période comprise entre le 10 décembre 133 et le 9 décembre 134. Lorsque les fouilleurs du site d'Alexandrie de Troade les ont exhumées en août 2003, elles étaient gravées sur une même plaque de marbre rectangulaire (ht: 1,81 m; lg: 0,90 m; pf.: 0,09 m), brisée en 16 morceaux, mais entière et surmontée d'un fronton en relief orné de deux acrotères d'angle. Elles sont aujourd'hui exposées au musée de Çannakale.

¹ Georg PETZL et Elmar SCHWERTHEIM (avec des contributions de Gudrun HEEDERMANN, Emmanuel HÜBNER et Sebastian SCHARFF), *Hadrian und die dionysischen Künstler. Drei in Alexandria Troas neugefundene Briefe des Kaisers an die Künstler-Vereinigung*, Bonn 2006 (Asia Minor Studien, Band 58), viii + 103 pages, 11 planches.

Il n'y a guère à s'étonner du lieu de leur découverte. Comme l'inscription elle-même nous apprend que, dans sa lettre la plus ancienne, Hadrien avait autorisé la confrérie à «faire inscrire sur des stèles, là où [elle] le voul[ait]» les mesures qu'il avait édictées (l. 55–56), on peut penser que son choix s'était porté, entre autres cités, sur Alexandrie de Troade, qui requérait la participation de ses membres pour assurer tout ou partie de sa vie agonistique, et que le hasard des trouvailles archéologiques a fait le reste. Il est vrai cependant que la présence du document dans cette *polis* pourrait s'expliquer aussi d'une autre manière, l'Empereur ayant exigé que sa seconde missive «fût inscrite sur des stèles par les soins des cités où se tenaient les concours ayant fait l'objet de [ses] prescriptions et par les soins des associations dans leurs sanctuaires» (l. 82–84). Mais cette alternative n'emporte pas mon adhésion. D'abord parce qu'aucun des concours organisés par Alexandrie de Troade ne fait l'objet de la moindre remarque ni de la moindre décision impériale dans l'ensemble du texte. Ensuite, parce que l'inscription a été trouvée au cœur de la ville antique en un lieu propice à l'affichage de documents officiels² et non à un emplacement évoquant le *hiéron* d'une corporation dionysiaque.

La mention de *σύνοδοι* au pluriel (l. 84), au terme de la deuxième lettre d'Hadrien, ne doit pas davantage surprendre. À la lecture du document on comprend en effet que la première lettre, quoique rédigée spécifiquement à l'attention de «l'association, thymélique et itinérante, des technites que patronne Dionysos, vainqueurs dans les concours sacrés et couronnés» (l. 5–7), aborde des questions qui ne concernent pas exclusivement ses membres. Loin s'en faut. Elle se fait en réalité l'écho des plaintes et autres réclamations portées par écrit à la connaissance de l'Empereur ou exposées oralement en sa présence, lorsqu'il séjournait à Naples à une date, aujourd'hui débattue, sur laquelle je reviendrai,³ et que les éditeurs assimilent à la célébration, en août/septembre 134, de la 34^e édition des *Sébastas*. Quel que soit le moment exact qu'il faille retenir, à Naples s'étaient donc trouvés réunis différents acteurs du monde agonistique grec: non seulement des délégués de l'association des artistes, des représentants des assemblées provinciales et des cités de Grèce continentale et d'Asie Mineure telles Thessalonique, Périnthe, Laodicée, Hiéropolis, Philadelphie ou encore Tralles et Thyatire (l. 75–76), mais aussi des musiciens, des athlètes et des ambassadeurs de leur propre confrérie.

² Voir *infra*. Gudrun HEEDERMANN in: *Hadrian und die dionysischen Künstler*, 5, précise que deux autres fragments d'inscriptions ont été trouvés près de la plaque de marbre portant les lettres impériales.

³ Cf. ici-même, p. 217.

De là l'extrême diversité des sujets débattus, auxquels la correspondance mise au jour à Alexandrie de Troade apporte des réponses: modalités d'attribution des prix aux compétiteurs (l. 15–16, 22–25, 81–83), nature et date de versement des pensions aux hiéroniques (l. 25–28, 45–46, 49–51), limitation des fraudes de toutes sortes (l. 13–28, 43–44), châtement des compétiteurs au comportement répréhensible (l. 28–32), modification de l'acquittement de la taxe du centième aux xystarques (l. 34–40), confirmation des privilèges des technites (l. 47–48, 51–52, 87–88), exonération pour les athlètes et les artistes de l'impôt sur les sépultures (l. 48–49), organisation d'un nouveau cycle agonistique (l. 60–81), etc. En l'absence d'un contexte précis plusieurs d'entre elles restent pour nous assez énigmatiques.⁴

L'ouvrage débute par un exposé clair et concis de Gudrun Heedemann sur les circonstances et le lieu exact de la découverte (p. 1–5). Trouvée face contre terre, la plaque de marbre avait été réutilisée pour la gravure de l'inscription et érigée contre le mur arrière d'un bâtiment public à plusieurs étages, situé à proximité du temple à podium de l'ancienne agora. Cet édifice richement décoré fut en usage du début du I^{er} jusqu'au V^e siècle, si l'on en croit le matériel archéologique (monnaies et tessons de céramique) trouvé *in situ*. Vient ensuite le texte grec des première (l. 1 à 56), deuxième (l. 57 à 84) et troisième (l. 85 à 88) lettres impériales avec, en regard, une traduction allemande. Après quoi (p. 18–20) figure un appareil critique assorti de remarques portant sur l'écriture, la langue et le style des inscriptions. Celles-ci servent d'introduction à de nouvelles considérations sur la date du document, sa nature – même s'il manque le verbe *λέγει*, on a vraisemblablement affaire à un édit, du moins dans les première et deuxième lettres, comme paraît l'indiquer le vocabulaire: *τῶν διατεταγμένων* (l. 18), *ὡς ἐγὼ διέταξα* (l. 55), *καὶ διατετάχθεν* (l. 80), *τὸ διατεταγμένον* (l. 81) –, mais aussi sa composition et son destinataire. Puis, dans l'ordre de leur gravure sur la pierre, chacune des lettres fait l'objet d'explications nourries, présentées paragraphe par paragraphe, le texte grec et sa traduction étant alors de nouveau donnés. Si variés sont les thèmes abordés et si nombreux les renseignements fournis qu'historiens, philologues et épigraphistes y trouvent tous leur content. Deux annexes prolongent et complètent l'étude de l'inscription. L'une, rédigée par Sebastian Scharff, concerne à la fois les prix remis aux vainqueurs, sur les lieux mêmes des concours, et les «Prämien» que

⁴) Ainsi des comptes des Corinthiens que le proconsul doit vérifier et des sommes que doivent toucher dans cette cité les hiéroniques (l. 32–34, avec le commentaire des éditeurs, p. 47–48), mais aussi des statues élevées à Éphèse par des trompettes et des hérauts (l. 40–43, avec le commentaire des éditeurs, p. 51–54).

leur octroyaient leurs villes natales (p. 95–99). L'autre, due à Emmanuel Hübner, traite des *Sébastas* de Naples (p. 101–103). Une traduction en turc de l'inscription, un index épigraphique ainsi qu'une liste des illustrations et 11 planches photographiques terminent le livre.

Depuis la parution du texte, nonobstant sa grande lisibilité – la peinture en rouge de la plupart des lettres est généralement bien conservée et se voit encore sur les photos d'ensemble et de détail de l'inscription (pl. 3.2, 7 à 11) –, plusieurs spécialistes ont proposé d'en corriger certains passages peu compréhensibles, notamment dans les dernières lignes, où la gravure est de moindre qualité. Ainsi de C. P. Jones,⁵ W. Slater⁶ et B. Puech, à laquelle S. Follet et J.-Y. Strasser ont prodigué leurs conseils.⁷ Je me permets de renvoyer le lecteur à leurs articles respectifs, sans présenter ni discuter leurs judicieuses suggestions. J'ajoute seulement que, grâce à eux, l'on possède désormais, outre la traduction en allemand des éditeurs, deux traductions en anglais (celles de C. P. Jones et de W. Slater), et une traduction *in extenso* en français (celle de B. Puech) qui complète les passages de la seconde lettre d'Hadrien, traduits et de commentés par Éric Guerber dans son livre récent, *Les Cités grecques dans l'Empire romain. Les privilèges et les titres des cités de l'Orient hellénophone d'Octave Auguste à Dioclétien*.⁸

Si l'on résume à grands traits le contenu de ce document d'une richesse extraordinaire, on peut dire que la première lettre inscrite sur la pierre – qui est aussi chronologiquement la plus ancienne, la seconde faisant explicitement référence à des points qui y sont abordés (cf. l. 60 et l. 81–83) – traite essentiellement de divers aspects économiques et financiers de la vie agonistique. Comme à l'époque hellénistique, les concours organisés au deuxième siècle de notre ère n'étaient pas seulement d'importantes manifestations culturelles ou des spectacles sportifs et artistiques consacrant la valeur des meilleurs; c'était aussi une affaire d'argent considérable.⁹ Il y en avait tant en jeu

⁵ C. P. JONES, *Three New Letters of the Emperor Hadrian*, in: ZPE 161, 2007, 145–156. Tout au long de cet article, les abréviations utilisées sont celles de l'*Année philologique*.

⁶ W. SLATER, *Hadrian's Letter to the Athletes and Dionysiac Artists concerning Arrangements for the Circuit of Games*, in: JRA 21, 2008, 610–620.

⁷ B. PUECH in: AE 2006, 1403 a–c.

⁸ É. GUERBER, *Les Cités grecques dans l'Empire romain. Les privilèges et les titres des cités de l'Orient hellénophone d'Octave Auguste à Dioclétien*, Rennes 2009, 224–233.

⁹ Voir B. LE GUEN, *Comment parler de l'argent des concours grecs ou "à la grecque"?* in: EAD. (dir.), *L'Argent dans les concours du monde grec*, Saint-Denis 2010, 21–34 et l'ensemble des autres contributions du volume.

que, quand ce n'était pas le fait de quelques magistrats intéressés et peu scrupuleux (l. 44), les cités, souvent confrontées à des problèmes de trésorerie (fussent-ils temporaires), avaient tendance à détourner à d'autres fins les sommes affectées et réservées pour les concours, ou à interrompre – nécessité faisant loi – une compétition dispendieuse (l. 12–15), voire à omettre la célébration des *agônes* inscrits pourtant à leurs calendriers festifs (l. 19). Les concurrents également n'hésitaient pas à tricher, dans leur désir de remporter la palme de la victoire et, avec elle, des espèces sonnantes et trébuchantes.¹⁰ Sur tous ces points, l'Empereur, en sa qualité de premier protecteur «des théâtres et des stades» (l. 81) – *i. e.* des deux centres principaux de la *paideia* grecque traditionnelle – affiche la plus grande fermeté et prend des mesures tant dissuasives que punitives. Le commentaire linéaire que proposent les éditeurs les éclaire avec plus ou moins de bonheur, tout en fournissant la bibliographie y afférant.¹¹

La deuxième lettre, quant à elle, qui témoigne de la ratification des décisions prises à Naples, a une raison d'être totalement différente: elle vise avant tout à faire connaître le nouveau cycle agonistique décrété par Hadrien, et partant la fixation d'un calendrier panhellénique permettant, pour la durée d'une olympiade, un enchaînement harmonieux des principaux concours sacrés et thématiques de

¹⁰ Les allusions au fouet que l'on trouve aux lignes l. 28–32 s'expliquent sans doute de la sorte, tout en renvoyant de manière plus générale à une conduite répréhensible de la part des athlètes.

¹¹ On aurait aimé néanmoins une bibliographie récapitulative, en fin de volume. Par exemple, les ouvrages traitant des associations de technites dionysiaques à l'époque impériale sont à chercher p. 27 (n. 31), p. 28 (n. 38, pour l'ouvrage en allemand de F. Poland publié en 1909 à Leipzig), p. 31 (n. 48, pour la dissertation en latin de F. Poland). On complétera cette liste par les livres suivants: P. FOU-CART, *De collegiis scenicorum artificium apud Graecos*, Paris 1873; O. LÜDERS, *Die dionysischen Künstler*, Leipzig 1873; M. SAN NICOLO, *Ägyptisches Vereinswesen zur Zeit der Ptolemäer und Römer*, Munich ²1972 (1912); D. MAGIE, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor to the end of the Third Century after Christ*, Princeton 1950, 617–619, 899–900, 940–941, 1477–1478; E. CSAPO/W. SLATER, *The Context of Ancient Drama*, Michigan 1995, 239–255. Aux articles de C. A. Forbes, J. Jory, H. W. Pleket, s'y rapportant et mentionnés respectivement par les éditeurs (p. 29, n. 42; p. 27, n. 31; p. 31, n. 52), on ajoutera ceux de J. GÉRARD, *Juvénal et les associations d'artistes grecs à Rome*, in: REL XLVIII, 1970 [1971], 309–331 et H. LAVAGNE, *Rome et les associations dionysiaques en Gaule (Vienne et Nîmes)*, in: L'Association dionysiaque dans les sociétés anciennes, Rome 1986, 129–148. Sur les associations d'artistes et d'athlètes, on lira également avec profit, F. MILLAR, *The Emperor in the Roman World*, Londres 1977, 456–463 et C. ROUECHÉ, *Performers and Partisans at Aphrodisias in the Roman and Late Roman Period*, Londres 1993, 223–237 (Appendix III. The activities of the synods).

l'époque. Aussi est-il abondamment question des dates de célébration de nombreuses fêtes.

De son côté, la troisième et dernière lettre se résume à un texte extrêmement bref où la titulature de la confrérie est elle-même présentée sous une forme abrégée à laquelle on ne doit attribuer aucune signification particulière:¹² l'Empereur y réaffirme le droit pour les artistes membres de la confrérie de prendre place aux banquets, comme ils l'ont toujours fait. Les agonothètes en conséquence sont fermement priés de les organiser, sans tenter de se soustraire à leur devoir.¹³

Dans les limites imparties à cet article de synthèse, il m'est bien évidemment impossible de revenir sur la totalité des analyses proposées par Georg Petzl et Elmar Schwertheim. C'est pourquoi j'ai choisi d'organiser mon propos autour de trois thèmes qui, dans la correspondance impériale, m'ont paru revêtir un intérêt majeur. Le parti pris des éditeurs d'un commentaire fractionné en autant de paragraphes que contient le texte ne les met pas suffisamment en valeur, à mon sens.

1. Un nouveau circuit agonistique imposé par Hadrien: le calendrier des *agônes* grecs et «à la grecque»

La seconde lettre fait apparaître clairement, chez l'empereur féru d'hellénisme, deux objectifs principaux:

– Le premier consiste à intégrer, dans un circuit agonistique revu et corrigé, les concours grecs qu'il a lui-même créés ou refondés (*Hadrianeia*, *Olympeia*, *Panhellènia*, attribués aux années 1, 3, 4 de l'Olympiade), quitte pour cela à proposer des remaniements plus ou moins drastiques du calendrier traditionnel: ainsi les *Isthmia* doivent suivre désormais les *Pythia*, au lieu de les précéder.

¹² Le *corpus* épigraphique documentant les associations dionysiaques des époques hellénistique et impériale montre que les abréviations sont courantes dans la présentation de leur titulature, sans qu'il faille les sur-interpréter: même les lettres ici étudiées ne comportent aucune mention du nom de l'Empereur, pourtant attesté avant 134, à Ancyre, dans l'intitulé de la confrérie œcuménique (*SEG* VI, 59 = E. BOSCH, *Quellen zur Geschichte Ankaras*, Ankara 1967, n° 128).

¹³ Voir par exemple un décret trouvé à Gérasa et daté des années 102–114 (*SEG* VII, 825) par lequel l'association œcuménique des technites remercie un agonothète du nom de T. Flavius Gerhenus d'avoir offert à ses membres de somptueux banquets.

– Le deuxième vise à permettre l'enchaînement d'*agônes* purement grecs (principalement ceux formant l'ancienne *pérides*: *Olympia* de Pise, *Isthmia* de Corinthe, *Pythia* de Delphes et *Némeia* de Némée) et d'*agônes* «à la grecque», à l'instar des *Kapétolia* de Rome ou des *Aktia* de Nikopolis. À aucun moment en effet, il n'est question de *ludi* ou de *spectacula* romains, ainsi que le soulignent à fort juste titre les éditeurs (p. 72).

Pour faciliter la discussion, je reproduis, dans un tableau comparatif, l'enchaînement des concours pour l'Olympiade 133–137, tel que l'ont élaboré les éditeurs, et à leur suite William Slater dans le *Journal of Roman Archaeology* et Jean-Yves Strasser, pour la notice de Bernadette Puech, dans l'*Année épigraphique*.¹⁴

Dates	Éditeurs	W. Slater	J.-Y. Strasser
133 ap. J.-C.	228 ^e Olympiade	227 ^e Olympiade	
juillet/août	<i>Olympia</i> d'Olympie	<i>Olympia</i> de Pise	<i>Olympia</i> d'Olympie
août/septembre	<i>Isthmia</i> de Corinthe	<i>Isthmia</i> de Corinthe	<i>Isthmia</i> de Corinthe
début octobre	Mystères, panégyrie d'Éleusis	Mystères, panégyrie d'Éleusis	Mystères, panégyrie d'Éleusis = <i>Éleusinia</i>
octobre/novembre 1 ^{er} <i>Maimaktèrion</i> , durée de 40 jours	<i>Hadrianeia</i> d'Athènes 40 jours	<i>Hadrianeia</i> d'Athènes 40 jours	<i>Hadrianeia</i> d'Athènes 40 jours

¹⁴ Les références bibliographiques sont données dans les notes 6 et 7. On consultera également avec profit le livre de P. GOUW, *Griekse atleten in de Romeinse Keizertijd (31 v. Chr. – 400 n. Chr.)*, Amsterdam 2009, pour les nombreuses discussions qu'il contient sur la nouvelle période instituée par Hadrien, mais aussi pour les tableaux chronologiques récapitulatifs ainsi que les cartes qu'il fournit (notamment aux pages 67, 71, 75, 79, 83–84). Il propose, avec un point d'interrogation, le mois de mars pour les *Panathènaia* d'Athènes, la mi-avril pour les *Koina Asias* de Smyrne, la fin mai pour les *Koina Asias* de Pergame, le début juillet pour les *Koina Asias* d'Éphèse, la fin août pour les *Pythia* de Delphes et l'automne pour les *Isthmia* de Corinthe. Curieusement il situe en juillet les *Sébastia* de Naples et place le concours de Patras en octobre.

134 ap. J.-C.			
janvier	<i>Éleusinia</i> de Tarente	<i>Éleu[sini]a?</i> de Tarente	<i>Éleusinia</i> de Tarente
1 ^{er} mai – 12 juin (kalendes de mai aux ides de juin): 40 jours	<i>Capitolia</i> de Rome, fondées en 86 par Domitien	<i>Kapètolia</i> de Rome	<i>Capitolia</i> de Rome
août/septembre	<i>Sébasta</i> de Naples	<i>Sébasta</i> de Naples	<i>Sébasta</i> de Naples
23 septembre: 40 jours	<i>Aktia</i> de Nikopolis	<i>Aktia</i> de Nicopolis	<i>Actia</i> de Nicopolis
début novembre (par traversée maritime)	concours de Patras	Patras (in <i>paraplous</i>)	concours de Patras
1 ^{er} novembre – 1 ^{er} jan- vier (kalendes de no- vembre aux kalendes de janvier)	<i>Hèraia</i> d'Argos <i>Némeia</i>	<i>Hèraia</i> = <i>Aspis</i> <i>Némeia</i>	<i>Hèraia</i> d'Argos <i>Némeia</i>
135 ap. J.-C.			
printemps navigation (<i>plous</i>)		<i>Panathènaia</i> (Athènes)	Panathénées (Athènes) <i>Koina Asias</i> (Smyrne) <i>Koina Asias</i> (Pergame) <i>Koina Asias</i> (Éphèse)
juillet – août	<i>Panathènaia</i> d'Athènes		
fin de l'été/ début de l'automne			<i>Pythia</i> de Delphes <i>Isthmia</i> de Corinthe <i>Koina</i> d'Achaïe et d'Arcadie de Mantinée
septembre: 40 jours + 2 j. de trajet	<i>Koina Asias</i> (Smyrne)	<i>Koina Asias</i> (Smyrne)	
octobre: 40 jours + 4 j. de trajet	<i>Koina Asias</i> (Pergame)	<i>Koina Asias</i> (Pergame)	
décembre: 40 jours	<i>Koina Asias</i> (Éphèse)	<i>Koina Asias</i> (Éphèse)	
136 ap. J.-C.			
avril/mai? (B.L.G)			<i>Olympeia</i> d'Athènes
été	<i>Pythia</i> de Delphes	<i>Pythia</i> de Delphes	
automne	<i>Isthmia</i> de Corinthe	<i>Isthmia</i> de Corinthe	

137 ap. J.-C.			
début d'année	<i>Koina</i> d'Achaïe et d'Arcadie de Mantinée <i>Panhellènia</i> d'Athènes	<i>Koina</i> d'Achaïe et d'Arcadie de Mantinée	
4 janvier – février: 40 jours		avec variante (p. 619): [<i>Hadrianeia</i> de Smyrne	<i>Hadrianeia</i> de Smyrne
février – mars		<i>Olympia</i> d'Éphèse	<i>Olympia</i> d'Éphèse
mars – avril		<i>Balbilleia</i> d'Éphèse + <i>Hadrianeia</i>]	<i>Balbilleia</i> d'Éphèse <i>Panhellènia</i> d'Athènes
mai		<i>Panhellènia</i> d'Athènes	
juillet – août	<i>Olympia</i> d'Olympie	<i>Olympia</i> d'Olympie	<i>Olympia</i> d'Olympie

Commençons par quelques remarques ponctuelles.

1. Pour les éditeurs, «la panégyrie d'Éleusis», évoquée à la l. 62 de l'inscription, correspondrait à la cérémonie des Mystères. Mais, de leur propre aveu, les indications chronologiques fournies ensuite par le texte cadrent fort mal avec une telle interprétation (p. 73). Sur ordre de l'Empereur, les *Hadrianeia* doivent en effet débiter le lendemain de l'achèvement de la fête éleusinienne, soit très précisément le premier jour du mois de *Maimaktérion* (troisième mois de l'automne). Or, cette date ne peut être celle du lendemain des Mystères, car la tradition en a fixé le commencement en *Boèdromion* (mois ouvrant la nouvelle saison). Il est heureusement possible aujourd'hui de sortir d'une telle impasse. Simone Follet a en effet brillamment résolu le problème, en expliquant qu'il fallait sans hésiter voir dans «la panégyrie d'Éleusis» la mention du concours pentétérique des *Éleusinia*, attesté depuis le V^e s. avant notre ère, hypothèse envisagée *in fine* par G. Petzl et E. Schwertheim (fin de la p. 73 et début de la p. 74). Il faisait suite, cette année-là, à la tenue des Mystères. Son interprétation rejoint du reste celle de Kevin Clinton, lequel a montré, de manière indépendante,¹⁵ que les *Éleusinia* avaient lieu dans la seconde quinzaine de *Pyanepsion*, la première année de l'Olympiade et juste avant les *Hadrianeia*.

¹⁵ K. CLINTON, *Eleusis II. Commentary*, Athènes 2008, 265.

2. Concernant l'*agôn* de Tarente, nommé sans autre précision dans le texte (l. 63), rien ne prouve, ainsi que l'a fait remarquer W. Slater, qu'il équivalait aux *Éleusinia* de la cité, selon l'hypothèse des éditeurs (p. 75), même si celle-ci est plausible. Ces fêtes sont en effet connues par des inscriptions toutes postérieures,¹⁶ datées de 150–200 après J.-C. À suivre W. Slater, il pourrait tout aussi bien être question d'une fête appelée *Éleuthéria*. Jean-Yves Strasser a montré néanmoins avec de bons arguments l'intérêt de Sparte pour Éleusis, les divinités éleusiennes et le *Panhellénion*, à l'époque d'Hadrien.¹⁷ Or, Tarente était l'une de ses anciennes colonies. Un lien de la sorte pourrait y expliquer l'existence d'*Éleusinia*.

3. L'instauration des *Sébastas* de Naples fait depuis longtemps l'objet de controverses parmi les spécialistes (cf. p. 102). Les éditeurs (p. 75, n. 214) ainsi qu'Emanuel Hübner (2. Exkurs, p. 101–103) ont adopté pour leur fondation l'an 2 après J.-C. J'aurais personnellement tendance à leur donner raison, en dépit du passage où Dion Cassius (55, 10, 9) rapporte qu'un débat sénatorial eut lieu à leur propos en 2 av. J.-C. Rien n'empêche en effet qu'à cette date la décision ait été prise de créer un concours pentétérique (Strabon 5, 4, 7) dont la première célébration ne serait intervenue que quatre ans plus tard. Aucun témoignage littéraire ne serait alors à rejeter ni corriger, l'équivalence, fournie par le papyrus de Londres 1178, entre l'année 194 ap. J.-C. et les 49^{es} *Sébastas* constituant la preuve ultime que ces fêtes se tinrent pour la première fois en 2 de notre ère.

4. Ainsi que l'indiquent les éditeurs (p. 76 et n. 218), les *Aktia* fondées par Octave furent célébrées vraisemblablement tout d'abord le 2 septembre 27 av. J.-C., en commémoration de la victoire d'Actium. Elles furent ensuite déplacées au 23 septembre, jour anniversaire de la naissance d'Octavien.

5. Quant aux Panathénées d'Athènes, Hadrien exige qu'elles aient lieu «après les *Némeia*, de façon que le concours soit terminé le jour du calendrier attique où il s'est terminé jusqu'à maintenant» (l. 66). Puis il mentionne différents *agônes* anatoliens, avant de préciser «de là (= de Pergame), les concurrents se rendront aux *Pythia* et aux *Isthmia* qui suivent les *Pythia*». De l'avis de G. Petzl et E. Schwertheim, les

¹⁶ Cf. SEG XLIII, 731; L. MORETTI, *Iscrizioni Agonistiche Greche*, Rome 1953, 85.

¹⁷ Voir J.-Y. STRASSER, *Études sur les concours d'Occident*, in: Nikephoros 14, 2001, 135–155.

Panathénées étaient célébrées en août 135 (p. 78) et représentaient la dernière fête organisée cette même année sur le sol grec. Pour eux, en effet, les compétiteurs mettaient alors le cap vers l'Asie Mineure afin de participer, de septembre à décembre, aux *Koina Asias* des cités de Smyrne, Pergame et Éphèse. Dans cette optique, les *Pythia* auraient été reportées à l'été 136, comme les *Isthmia* qui, du même coup, de triétériques qu'elles étaient, seraient devenues tétraétériques (p. 81). Un autre scénario cependant a la préférence de W. Slater:¹⁸ si les *Pythia* et les *Némeia* avaient été déplacées de la 3^e à la 4^e année de l'Olympiade, c'était précisément pour permettre aux concurrents d'assister aux concours micrasiatiques, après s'être présentés aux Panathénées dont la célébration ne devait plus avoir lieu en août, mais au printemps. Ainsi les six premiers mois de l'année n'étaient pas laissés sans compétitions. Là réside en effet la solution, comme il ressort clairement des remarques de P. Gouw:¹⁹ la date des Panathénées était passée de l'été au printemps, lorsqu'au début de son règne l'Empereur Hadrien les avait réorganisées, en instaurant une nouvelle ère panathénaïque. Ce déplacement eut toutefois des conséquences majeures que W. Slater n'a pas envisagées, mais que J.-Y. Strasser a tirées: les compétiteurs prenaient la mer pour les côtes égéennes de l'Asie Mineure dès la fin des Panathénées, à une saison plus propice à la navigation que le mois de septembre imposé par le schéma des éditeurs, et revenaient avant l'automne en Grèce continentale, où ils concouraient successivement aux *Pythia* de Delphes, *Isthmia* de Corinthe et aux *Koina* d'Achaïe et d'Arcadie de Mantinée. Aussi les *Pythia* et les *Némeia* continuaient-elles d'être fêtées la 3^e année de l'Olympiade.

6. Examinons maintenant les *Olympeia* mentionnées à la ligne 71 du texte, après ces différents concours: «de là (= d'Asie Mineure), les concurrents se rendront ensuite aux *Pythia* et aux *Isthmia* qui suivent les *Pythia*, à Mantinée au concours du *koinon* des Achéens et des Arcadiens, puis aux *Olympeia*. Cette année-ci seront célébrées les *Panhellènia*». Comme aux lignes suivantes (l. 73–74), il est dit «après les *Balbilleia*, ce seront les *Panhellènia* et après les *Panhellènia* les *Olympia*», les éditeurs ainsi que W. Slater ont pensé qu'il s'agissait, dans les deux cas, des Jeux Olympiques, le lieu de célébration ne

¹⁸ W. SLATER, *Hadrian's Letter to the Athletes and Dionysiac Artists concerning Arrangements for the Circuit of Games*, in: JRA 21, 2008, 620.

¹⁹ P. GOUW, *Hadrian and the Calendar of Greek Agonistic festivals. A new proposal for the third year of the Olympic cycle*, in: ZPE 165, 2008, 96–104.

faisant l'objet d'aucune précision.²⁰ Ils en ont aussi déduit que les *Koina* d'Achaïe et d'Arcadie avaient lieu à Mantinée la même année que les *Panhellènia* et les *Olympia* (de Pise), soit en 137 de notre ère. À en croire même W. Slater, les athlètes et artistes auraient eu le choix de demeurer en Grèce continentale, après la tenue des *Koina* de Mantinée, ou de traverser l'Égée, pour participer aux *Hadrianeia* de Smyrne, puis aux *Olympia* et *Balbilleia* d'Éphèse, avant de faire de nouveau voile vers Athènes et d'être présents aux *Panhellènia*. Dans le même ordre d'esprit, les éditeurs avaient qualifié cette «variate» (sous la plume de W. Slater) de «Korrektur» ou encore d'«Erweiterung» du cycle agonistique (p. 85). Toutefois le grec n'autorise en rien une telle interprétation. L'expression «ἐν τῷδε ἔτει» (l. 71), qui fait suite à la référence aux *Olympeia*, signifie en effet «dans l'année que voici» et introduit la présentation des compétitions de la nouvelle année agonistique (en l'occurrence l'an 137 après J.-C.), avec notamment la tenue des *Panhellènia*, chères à l'Empereur. Les concours mentionnés juste avant sont obligatoirement antérieurs. Du même coup, il ne peut plus s'agir des *Olympia* d'Élide. La seule interprétation possible est qu'il est question des *Olympeia* d'Athènes.²¹ C'est du reste ainsi que Jean-Yves Strasser comprend le passage. Quoiqu'aucune date ne soit assignée à cette fête athénienne dans le tableau de l'*Année épigraphique* que présente B. Puech (seul figure un point d'interrogation), il faut lui attribuer l'année 136 et peut-être encore plus précisément le 19 *Mounikhion* (avril/mai), choisi à l'origine par les Pisistratides, si aucune modification n'avait été introduite depuis.²²

7. Dans la version du nouveau cycle agonistique fixé par Hadrien, ainsi que l'ont remarqué très justement les éditeurs (p. 71), l'Olympiade débutait donc par la plus célèbre fête de l'ancienne période, les *Olympia* de Pise, et elle s'achevait, de manière non moins significative, sur les *Panhellènia* d'Athènes que l'Empereur lui-même avait créées, afin de redonner à la cité un lustre qu'elle avait peu ou prou

²⁰ L. ROBERT in: OMS V, 661, attirait pourtant déjà l'attention sur le fait qu'il n'était pas toujours aisé de voir s'il s'agissait des *Olympia* de l'Élide ou de quelque autre concours «olympique», quand seule la mention *Olympia* était indiquée.

²¹ Les différences de graphie que l'on constate pour le nom de la fête (*Olympia* et *Olympeia*) ne sont en elles-mêmes guère probantes, car elles sont par exemple utilisées toutes les deux à propos des *Olympia* d'Éphèse (l. 73).

²² Telle est la suggestion de S. FOLLET, *Athènes au II^e et III^e siècles. Études chronologiques et prosopographiques*, Paris 1976, 346, qui précise qu'entre les deux dates proposées pour l'instauration des *Olympeia* (l'achèvement de l'*Olympion* en 128/9 et la consécration de la statue de Zeus *Olympios* en 131/2), «il vaudrait mieux admettre l'année attique 128/9», Hadrien portant l'épithète d'*Olympios* dès l'année 129.

perdu, et dont la première célébration est associée à l'année 137 (p.83).

À considérer l'ensemble du circuit tel qu'il est défini par Hadrien, il est clair qu'il n'inclut pas la totalité des *agônes* sacrés et thématiques de quelque renom que l'on était en droit d'attendre. C'est que l'Empereur avait principalement en tête d'inscrire, dans un cycle officiel, ses nouvelles créations, et de préciser, le cas échéant, les remaniements induits tant par ces ajouts que par la prolifération des concours depuis l'époque augustéenne. Il avait à cœur que les artistes et les athlètes pussent sans trop de difficultés assister aux festivités qu'il avait jugé dignes de retenir, afin de leur conférer l'éclat et la popularité qu'il souhaitait. En conséquence, il n'y a pas lieu de s'étonner que les *Néméia* célébrées, selon l'ancienne *périodos*, au cours des deuxième et quatrième années de l'Olympiade, ne soient mentionnées qu'une seule fois, au terme de l'année 134. Hadrien n'évoque pas leur tenue, à la fin de l'année 136, après celle des *Olympeia* d'Athènes, pour la bonne raison qu'elle ne posait alors aucun problème.

La seconde observation qui peut être faite concerne la très grande souplesse du calendrier agonistique. Alors qu'on lui aurait volontiers conféré un caractère rigide et quasi immuable au motif de la perpétuation des traditions religieuses ancestrales, force est de constater sa flexibilité. À plusieurs reprises le pragmatisme l'emporte clairement sur le poids des ans et les nouvelles divinités bousculent, sans trop de peine, semble-t-il, les plus anciennes. Du même coup – et William Slater en a tiré, le premier, les conséquences avec beaucoup d'à propos (p.617) –, le spécialiste devra dorénavant faire preuve de la plus grande prudence, lorsqu'il tentera d'asseoir la chronologie d'un concours donné, en alléguant des documents qui ne seront pas contemporains.

On soulignera aussi, avec les éditeurs (p.74) et W. Slater (p.615) la durée tout à fait remarquable de certains *agônes* que, sans cette correspondance impériale, il eût été difficile de soupçonner. Ainsi 40 jours sont prévus pour pas moins de 6 concours: les *Hadrianeia* d'Athènes, les *Aktia* de Nikopolis, les *Koina Asias* de Smyrne, de Pergame et d'Éphèse, les *Hadrianeia* de Smyrne. Les *Olympia* d'Éphèse et les *Balbilleia* qui les suivent atteignent même une durée de 52 jours!

Reste une question à examiner, à ce point de l'analyse: l'époque où, à Naples, Hadrien rencontra les différents acteurs du monde agonistique de son temps et commença à élaborer son nouveau dispositif. G. Petzl et E. Schwertheim – ainsi que plusieurs spécialistes après eux – ont pensé qu'il s'agissait des *Sébastia* d'août–

septembre 134 après J.-C.²³ Créé par Octave Auguste, ce grand concours quinquennal avait un statut isolimpique qui l'assimilait aux célèbres Jeux Olympiques quant aux honneurs décernés (*τιμαίς*) et peut-être aussi quant aux classes d'âge (*ἡλικίαις*) des compétiteurs.²⁴ Mais à la différence de ces derniers, dotés d'un programme uniquement athlétique, il incluait aussi des épreuves musicales. En font foi de nombreux documents épigraphiques (palmarès individuels, mais aussi fragments de catalogues de vainqueurs). Un tel *agôn* aurait ainsi fort bien pu fournir à Hadrien une excellente occasion pour s'entretenir avec des athlètes, mais aussi avec des artistes de toute spécialité, des magistrats désignés par leurs associations respectives ou encore des organisateurs de concours.

Une telle interprétation a cependant été remise en cause dernièrement par Stéphanie Schmidt,²⁵ qui s'est prononcée en faveur de l'été 133, auquel faisait suite le cycle de la 228^e Olympiade. Celle-ci a souligné avec beaucoup d'à-propos que la date de la rédaction des lettres impériales, associée à la dix-huitième puissance tribunicienne d'Hadrien, ne disait rien du moment où l'Empereur avait discuté avec ses différents interlocuteurs, ajoutant que la difficulté à fixer précisément dans le temps la rencontre napolitaine tenait principalement au fait qu'il était le plus souvent absent du centre du pouvoir, en déplacement à travers les provinces de son Empire, et que la chronologie de ses voyages était loin de faire l'unanimité au sein de la communauté scientifique.²⁶ La présence d'Hadrien est néanmoins encore attestée à Athènes au début de l'année 132, tandis que, le 5 mai 134,²⁷ il écrit depuis Rome une lettre à la confrérie œcuménique des athlètes. Il pourrait ainsi s'être rendu à Naples, siège probable d'une filiale de l'association œcuménique des technites, avant le mois d'août/septembre de l'année 133, c'est-à-dire avant le début du cycle agonistique marqué par la célébration des Jeux Olympiques. Il y aurait entendu les requêtes auxquelles il apporta une réponse écrite au plus tôt le 10

²³ SCHWERTHEIM, *Hadrian und die dionysischen Künstler* (v. d. n. 1) 23; GOUW, *Hadrian and the Calendar of Greek Agonistic festivals* (v. d. n. 19) 96; JONES, *Three new letters of the Emperor Hadrian* (v. d. n. 5) 145; B. PUECH in: AE 2006, 545.

²⁴ Ce point n'est pas sûr et T. KLEE a montré, dans un ouvrage déjà ancien, que les limites d'âge pour les fêtes «iso-» n'étaient pas toujours équivalentes à celles en vigueur dans les *agônes* qu'elles prenaient comme modèles (*Zur Geschichte der gymnischen Agone an griechischen Festen*, Leipzig/Berlin 1918, 49–51).

²⁵ S. SCHMIDT, *Zum Treffen in Neapel und den Panhellenia in der Hadrianinschrift aus Alexandria Troas*, in: ZPE 170, 2009, 109–112.

²⁶ Voir A. R. BIRLEY, *The Restless Emperor*, Londres/New York 2000.

²⁷ IG XIV, 1054, l. 11 = J. H. OLIVER, *Greek Constitutions of Early Roman Emperors from Inscriptions and Papyri*, Philadelphie 1989, n° 86.

décembre 134. Si l'on se reporte à la deuxième lettre d'Hadrien, elle ne fait du reste pas la moindre allusion aux *Sébastas* qui s'y seraient déroulés parallèlement aux consultations de l'Empereur. Elle semble même laisser entendre que les provinces et les cités (l. 60) n'avaient dépêché des ambassades à Naples dans aucun autre but que de discuter, en présence du *princeps*, de la réorganisation des concours.²⁸

Par ailleurs la simple logique voudrait que le nouveau circuit ait été mis au point avant qu'il ne débutât, en d'autres termes avant que ne commençât la 228^e Olympiade. À suivre l'argumentation de Stéfanie Schmidt, si l'on devait se résoudre à l'idée que les pourparlers entre Hadrien et les divers représentants des disciplines agonistiques eurent lieu en 134, il faudrait attendre l'année 137 pour que la *périodos* instaurée par Hadrien coïncidât avec le début d'une nouvelle Olympiade. La première célébration des *Panhellénia* serait du même coup reportée à 141, ce qui semble une date peu crédible, car bien trop éloignée de la création du *Panhellénion*.

Serions-nous malgré tout contraints de renoncer à l'hypothèse séduisante de Stéfanie Schmidt, et de revenir à la date de célébration des *Sébastas* de Naples d'août 134 pour la rencontre avec l'Empereur, il s'ensuivrait qu'une partie des concours constitutifs de la 228^e Olympiade se seraient déjà tenus, alors même qu'était décidée l'instauration d'un nouveau circuit agonistique. Dans cette hypothèse, il faut croire qu'Hadrien aurait eu essentiellement en tête les *Panhellénia* – sa création la plus récente. Il était impératif que, pour leur première célébration, elles fussent intégrées à la *périodos* qu'il avait conçue. Dans ce scénario, comme dans celui de Stéfanie Schmidt, la deuxième lettre d'Hadrien laisse toutefois entendre que les communautés organisatrices de concours, présentes ou représentées à Naples, avaient été prévenues des décisions de l'Empereur, le plus vite possible, avant même qu'il ne les portât à la connaissance de l'association dionysiaque.

2. Prix et pensions

À la suite de L. Robert,²⁹ des générations d'historiens et d'épigraphistes ont appris à opposer deux grandes catégories de concours:

²⁸) Lettre 2, l. 60–61: «L'organisation que j'ai décidée pour les concours à propos desquels des entretiens et des requêtes ont eu lieu à Naples en ma présence, je vous l'ai expliquée et je la communique par lettre aux assemblées provinciales (*ethnè*) et aux cités dont les ambassades étaient là-bas à ce propos».

²⁹) Parmi des attestations très nombreuses, on mentionnera L. ROBERT, *Smyrne et les Sôtéria de Delphes*, in: REA 38, 1936, 5–28 (repris dans OMS II, 768–786); *Études anatoliennes. Recherches sur les inscriptions grecques de l'Asie mineure*,

d'un côté ceux dits «sacrés» et/ou «sacrés et stéphanites» (*hiéroï kai stéphanitai*), car associés à la seule remise d'une couronne aux vainqueurs sur les lieux de leur succès, de l'autre ceux liés à des prix monétarisés (*théma, -ta; argyrion*) et qualifiés pour cette raison de «thématites», «thématiques», «argyrites», etc. Cependant, depuis plusieurs années déjà, il a été montré que les choses étaient bien plus complexes qu'une telle dichotomie le laissait entendre:³⁰ sous la permanence de la terminologie, à des fins idéologiques évidentes, se dissimulent en réalité des situations bien différentes. Tous les concours, quelle que soit leur position dans la hiérarchie agonistique, sont en effet *hiéroï* par essence, puisque tous sont célébrés en l'honneur d'une ou de plusieurs divinités; et tous les concours sont aussi «stéphanites» en puissance, les vainqueurs se voyant toujours remettre une couronne (*stéphanos*), attribut de la victoire: en attestent, par exemple, sur la longue durée tant les Dionysies que les Panathénées athéniennes. D'où les jeux possibles dans l'emploi de ces adjectifs sur les pierres, les monnaies et dans la littérature: ils sont utilisés soit en leur sens commun, soit en leur sens «technique», hérité de l'époque archaïque, qui par concours sacré et/ou stéphanite entendait exclusivement les célèbres *agônes* de la *péïodos*: *Olympia* de Pise, *Pythia* de

Paris 1937, 176sq.; *Deux concours grecs à Rome*, in: CRAI, 1970, 6–27 (repris dans OMS V, 647–668 et *Choix d'écrits*, Paris 2007, 247–266); *Une vision de Perpétue martyre à Carthage en 203*, in: CRAI, 1982, 228–276 (repris dans OMS V, 791–839); *Discours d'ouverture*, in: Actes du VIII^e Congrès international d'épigraphie grecque et latine (Athènes 1982), Athènes 1984, tome 1, 35–45 (repris dans OMS VI, 709–719 et *Choix d'écrits*, Paris 2007, 267–278).

³⁰ Cf. H. W. PLEKET, *Games, Prizes, Athletes, and Ideology*, in: *Stadion* 1, 1975, 49–89; ID., *Einige Betrachtungen zum Thema "Geld und Sport"*, in: *Nikephoros* 17, 2004, 77–89; R. PARKER, *New "Panhellenic" Festivals in Hellenistic Greece*, in: R. SCHLESIER/U. ZELLMANN (dir.), *Mobility and Travel in the Mediterranean from Antiquity to the Middle Ages*, Münster 2004, 9–22; W. SLATER/D. SUMMA, *Crowns at Magnesia*, in: *GRBS* 46, 2006, 275–299; B. LE GUEN, *Le palmarès d'un acteur-athlète: retour sur Syll.³ 1080 (Tégée)*, in: *ZPE* 160, 2007, 97–107; W. SLATER, *Paying the pipers*, in: B. LE GUEN (dir.), *L'Argent dans les concours du monde grec*, Saint-Denis 2010, 263. En revanche, on ne saurait utiliser sans la plus grande prudence le chapitre III, «La fondation d'un concours sacré: un bienfait impérial convoité», du livre d'É. GUERBER, *Les Cités grecques dans l'Empire romain* (Rennes 2009, 215–301), tant il abonde en inexactitudes (sur les couronnes qui n'auraient été que d'olivier, par exemple), voire en affirmations erronées (p. 218, n. 18: l'auteur soutient que les vainqueurs des concours isélastiques recevaient des sommes d'argent et des indemnités alimentaires [*ὄψωνία*]; p. 226, n. 34, il fait des *ἄρχοντες* de la confrérie œcuménique des «présidents», alors que ce sont simplement des magistrats, comme on en connaît au sein des corporations de technites d'époque hellénistique), pour ne pas parler des fautes d'orthographe et de grammaire.

Delphes, *Néméa* de Némée et *Isthmia* de l'Isthme de Corinthe.³¹ Si ceux qui y triomphaient bénéficiaient sur place d'une couronne d'un feuillage variant selon les divinités honorées, ils étaient aussi diversement récompensés dans leurs cités d'origine pour la gloire qu'ils avaient fait rejaillir sur elles, en remportant la palme de la victoire.

Dès l'époque hellénistique – et le phénomène perdure sous l'Empire³² –, on constate que de nouveaux concours «sacrés et stéphanites» furent instaurés sur le modèle des anciens formant la période, d'où leur appellation d'isolympique, d'isopythique, etc.³³ Aussi les vainqueurs de ces compétitions recevaient-ils les mêmes récompenses que celles fixées par le règlement des grands concours sacrés correspondants (*Olympia*, *Pythia* ...), sauf si leurs cités en avaient décidé autrement pour tout ou partie des épreuves, lorsqu'elles avaient reconnu la création du nouvel *agôn* et accepté, ce faisant, d'y dépêcher des ambassadeurs et d'y offrir des sacrifices.

Dans le même temps, l'adjectif *hiéros* en arriva à désigner, dans la documentation disponible, tantôt un *agôn* effectivement sacré (et stéphanite, *i. e.* avec uniquement pour prix une couronne remise à l'issue de la compétition) et tantôt un concours rétribué (*i. e.* doté d'un prix monétarisé), quand l'opposition entre concours «non rémunéré» et concours «rémunéré», au sens technique de ces termes, n'était pas en jeu.³⁴ La nouvelle inscription d'Alexandrie de Troade en fournit la plus éclatante des illustrations.

Elle répartit d'entrée de jeu l'ensemble des concours (l. 13: *pantas tous agônas*), tous statuts confondus, en deux catégories distinctes, fondées sur la nature de l'argent monnayé (*argyrion*), offert en récompense:³⁵

³¹) Avant même la réorganisation des concours par Hadrien, on voit sous l'Empire l'ancienne *pérides* s'élargir peu à peu et inclure les *Héraia* d'Argos, les *Aktia* de Nikopolis et les *Kapétolia* de Rome, auxquelles il convient peut-être d'ajouter les *Sébasta* de Naples, selon J.-L. FERRARY, *Rome, Athènes et le philhellénisme dans l'Empire romain, d'Auguste aux Antonins*, in: *Filellenismo e tradizionalismo a Roma nei primi due secoli dell'Impero*, Rome 1996 (Atti dei convegni Lincei 125), 195.

³²) Dès lors, comme on sait, l'autorisation impériale était nécessaire pour créer un concours. Désignée par le terme de *dôréa*, elle apparaissait comme un cadeau fait par l'Empereur aux cités désireuses d'instaurer un nouvel *agôn*.

³³) Voir Cl. VIAL, *À propos des concours de l'Orient méditerranéen à l'époque hellénistique*, in: F. PROST (dir.), *L'Orient méditerranéen de la mort d'Alexandre aux campagnes de Pompée*, Toulouse-Rennes 2003, 311–328.

³⁴) LE GUEN, *Le palmarès d'un acteur-athlète* (v. d. n. 30) 101, n. 29.

³⁵) Cette distinction fondamentale n'est pas comprise d'É. GUERBER, *Les Cités grecques dans l'Empire romain* (Rennes 2009, 220–221). Tout d'abord, celui-ci note que les bourses de monnaie scellées récompensant les vainqueurs relevaient de

– les uns donnent droit pour les compétiteurs (*agônistais*, l. 15–16) à des prix en espèces (*athla*, l. 10, 15–16, 21), accompagnés d'une couronne pour les vainqueurs; afin d'éviter toute tentative de fraude, ceux-ci sont même sommés de s'emparer, sous les yeux du public, et du petit sac contenant le montant du prix et de la couronne (l. 23–25), tandis que la veille de la cérémonie, l'agonothète a, lui, le devoir de recompter l'argent de la récompense, en présence d'un délégué de l'autorité romaine (l. 23);

– les autres donnent droit à des *syntaxeis* (l. 10, 19, 25, 46) pour les vainqueurs (*tois neikèsasîn*, l. 10) ou plus précisément pour les hiéroniques, c'est-à-dire pour les vainqueurs dans les concours sacrés,³⁶ comme il est dit ensuite (*tois hiéronikais*, l. 25–26). Signe que la tentation était grande d'agir autrement, il est alors spécifié que ces *syntaxeis* seront à acquitter en numéraire et non en nature (l. 27–28).

Mais que faut-il entendre exactement par ce terme? Comme le note avec justesse W. Slater (p. 615, n. 6), G. Petzl et E. Schwertheim semblent avoir eu du mal à le saisir,³⁷ car ils en donnent des traductions diverses qui ne sont pas tout à fait synonymes: «Prämien» (p. 36, 59, 60), «Zuschüssen» (36), «Preise – nicht unbedingt Bargeld ...» (p. 37), «épathlon» (p. 36, à la fin de la note 70). Ils parlent même de «Zuwendungen und/oder Privilegien» (p. 57, 58, 61).³⁸ Or, les *syntaxeis* ne recouvrent jamais les exemptions de taxes ou de liturgies, lesquelles ressortissent au chapitre des privilèges (*timiai*,

la responsabilité de l'agonothète, mais pouvaient être un «ajout provenant de la cité». Ce faisant, il confond deux choses, le devoir imparté au magistrat (l'agonothésie n'est pas exactement une liturgie, c'est une magistrature qui demande à son titulaire de contribuer financièrement, sur ses propres fonds, à son éclat) et l'origine des fonds. À n'en pas douter, la cité avait décidé du contenu des sacs remis en prix; à charge ensuite pour l'agonothète de remettre la somme fixée, sans en détourner une partie, sinon la totalité (d'où le contrôle imposé par Hadrien à travers la présence d'un représentant de l'autorité romaine). Puis É. GUERBER émet l'hypothèse que «l'ajout serait plutôt constitué par les "contributions" monétaires (*syntaxeis*)» dont il fait alors (à juste titre) des «rentes viagères» et qu'il qualifie de «prix honorifiques». Ceux-ci, à ses yeux, seraient versés *conjointement aux sommes d'argent* (ital. B.L.G.) qui font également partie du «prix». Le contre-sens est patent.

³⁶ Ils sont attestés déjà à l'époque hellénistique: voir W. SLATER, *Paying the pipers*, in: B. LE GUEN (dir.), *L'Argent dans les concours du monde grec*, Saint-Denis 2010, 270–272.

³⁷ Les *syntaxeis* sont pareillement assimilées, de manière confuse, à des «indemnités» ou à des «contributions» par É. GUERBER, *Les Cités grecques dans l'Empire romain*, Rennes 2009, 222.

³⁸ Il en va pareillement de S. SCHARFF, *Exkurs*, in: *Hadrian und die dionysischen Künstler*, 97.

puis *dôréai* sous l'Empire) dont bénéficiaient les associations de technites dionysiaques depuis l'époque hellénistique et qu'elles ne cessaient de revendiquer à chaque changement du pouvoir en place.³⁹

En réalité, les *syntaxeis* ne sont que des «pensions (vraisemblablement viagères)», des «*Zuwendungen*» (p. 9, 11, 13, etc.), ou encore des «*opsonia*», pour reprendre le terme latin équivalent que finissent par proposer les éditeurs (p. 59, avec la note 160, à 61) et dont use aussi S. Scharff dans son *Annexe*.⁴⁰ Tous invoquent alors, avec raison, le témoignage de plusieurs *papyri*⁴¹ et surtout de deux lettres échangées entre Pline et Trajan, qui ne sauraient être plus claires.⁴² Confronté, en tant que gouverneur de la province du Pont-Bithynie, à une demande des athlètes de recevoir le jour même de leur victoire, et non à leur retour chez eux, les *syntaxeis*, qui leur revenaient de droit dans des concours auxquels Trajan avait conféré une dignité particulière, en leur appliquant le qualificatif inédit d'«isélastiques», Pline demanda conseil à l'Empereur sur la conduite à adopter. Ce dernier lui répondit sans ambiguïté: «La récompense assignée au vainqueur, dans les concours isélastiques, ne me paraît due qu'à compter du jour où il a fait son entrée dans la ville (*εἰσελάσειν*).» L'indicatif aoriste employé là par Trajan trouve un écho remarquable dans l'utilisation par Hadrien du subjonctif aoriste *εἰσελάσῃ* (1.49). À l'instar de la correspondance entre Pline et Trajan, la lettre d'Alexandrie de Troade

³⁹) Voir *inter al.* B. LE GUEN, *Les Associations de Technites dionysiaques*, Nancy 2001, vol. 2, Index général, s.v. Associations de Technites (rubrique: privilèges). On notera toutefois qu'avec la *pax romana*, les artistes demandent avant tout la confirmation de leurs avantages fiscaux, financiers et sociaux, et non plus l'*asylia* et l'*asphaleia* qui leur étaient vitales à la période hellénistique.

⁴⁰) Il est vraiment regrettable pour le lecteur qu'il n'y ait pas eu, de la part des éditeurs et de S. Scharff, un effort pour harmoniser leurs points de vue à propos du terme de *syntaxis*. Au lieu de cela, on trouve des interprétations parfois contradictoires, mais non signalées comme telles. Il est en effet question des *syntaxeis* non seulement aux pages 36–38, lorsque G. Petzl et E. Schwertheim commentent les 1. 8–18 de la première lettre d'Hadrien, mais aussi aux pages 55–61, lorsqu'ils analysent les 1. 45–51 et dans l'*Exkurs* de S. Scharff, aux pages 95–100. Le plus souvent, il manque les renvois internes attendus (e.g. entre la n. 159, p. 59 et la n. 300, p. 96). Sur le sens de *syntaxeis*, on lira avec profit les remarques de W. SLATER in: JRA 21, 2008, 615–618.

⁴¹) Voir notamment pour Hermoupolis Magna l'article de M. DREW-BEAR, *Sur deux documents d'Hermoupolis*, in: Tyche 1, 1986, 89–94. On consultera également avec profit un autre papyrus d'Hermoupolis, cité par L. ROBERT in: OMS VI, 718, mais aussi par les éditeurs, PETZL/SCHWERTHEIM, *Hadrian und die dionysischen Künstler* (v. d. n. 1) 61, n. 166 et n. 165. Il montre que les pensions étaient transmissibles aux héritiers «pour le temps où le testateur avait la couronne» agonistique.

⁴²) Livre X, *Lettres* 119–120 (et non 118–119, comme indiqué par les éditeurs p. 59, n. 159).

lie en effet étroitement les *syntaxeis* et les *agônes* isélastiques, même si, à aucun endroit du texte, elle ne les nomme ainsi, pour des raisons peut-être politiques. Mais elle marque aussi nettement toutes les distances qu'a prises Hadrien par rapport à Trajan. Là où son prédécesseur avait naguère opposé un refus catégorique aux requêtes des athlètes, Hadrien leur donne presque entièrement satisfaction: de fait, ils auront droit au versement de leur pension, dès qu'ils auront fait parvenir aux autorités de leur patrie un courrier comprenant la notification officielle de leur victoire, et ce directement ou par l'intermédiaire d'un tiers.⁴³ Pour des hommes perpétuellement en voyage et rarement de retour dans leurs foyers, c'était un avantage considérable. On comprend mieux, dans ces conditions, pourquoi il était impératif de rappeler aux cités qu'en dépit du tout récent dédoublement, à Éphèse, des anciennes *Balbilleia* en *Balbilleia* et *Hadrianeia*, les vainqueurs des *Hadrianeia* devaient recevoir les mêmes *syntaxeis* que lorsque la fête des *Balbilleia* n'avait pas subi de modifications (l. 45-46).

De l'analyse qui vient d'être menée, il ressort tout d'abord que le tableau récapitulatif dressé par S. Scharff (p. 100) est à corriger: *ἄθλον* ne désigne pas de «l'argent ou bien une couronne» («*Geld* oder *Kranz*»), mais uniquement un prix en argent; *σύνταξις* ne désigne pas de l'argent («*Geld*»), des récompenses en nature («*Naturalien*») et des privilèges («*Ehrungen*»), mais uniquement une pension, acquittée mensuellement⁴⁴ ou annuellement;⁴⁵ enfin plusieurs *papyri* montrent que le substantif grec *ὀψώνιον* n'a pas uniquement le sens de *σιτηρήσιον* (indemnités journalières de nourriture) qu'on lui reconnaît, *e. g.*, sur l'inscription d'Olympie qui porte le règlement des *Sébastas* de Naples.⁴⁶

Il apparaît aussi que la principale distinction opérée par Hadrien à propos des concours les plus renommés de son temps se fait, d'une part, entre des concours «sacrés» donnant lieu à une couronne et de l'argent et, d'autre part, des concours «sacrés isélastiques» donnant lieu à une pension. On ne saurait en conséquence parler de concours sacrés opposés tout simplement à des concours rémunérés, pas plus

⁴³ La papyrologie nous en a livré plusieurs exemplaires, attestant par là-même de la validité de la pratique.

⁴⁴ Cf. *Milet* VI 1, 147, l. 18-21. Les vainqueurs aux *agônes* promus *eisélastikoi* par Trajan bénéficiaient également, leur vie durant, d'une pension versée mensuellement.

⁴⁵ Les trois fragments dans lesquels M. DREW-BEAR in: *Tyche* 1, 1986, 89-94, a vu un seul et même papyrus font état d'une demande de versement de pension d'un montant de 1820 drachmes, correspondant à neuf mois.

⁴⁶ *Die Inschriften von Olympia*, n° 56, l. 12-15.

que de concours couronnés opposés à des *agônes* rétribués (*argyritai*). Sur ce point les enseignements du document d'Alexandrie de Troade revêtent le plus grand intérêt. Qu'ils aient été sacrés au sens «technique» du terme ou non, tous les concours étaient bel et bien devenus sous l'Empire une question financière d'une importance extrême et plus d'une combinaison était possible entre argent, prix symboliques⁴⁷ et privilèges, comme le montre le jeu incessant de promotions et de dégradations des concours, avec ajouts (et retraits) de qualificatifs, aux conséquences diverses et variées pour les vainqueurs comme pour les compétiteurs. Les apparences néanmoins devaient rester sauvées et le mérite ne pas être entaché par des considérations basement matérielles: c'est la raison pour laquelle, il faudra attendre quelque 50 ans après la gravure du document d'Alexandrie de Troade, pour commencer à trouver sur les monnaies et les mosaïques la représentation conjointe de couronnes et de sacs d'argent, comme l'a noté W. Slater avec l'acuité dont il est coutumier⁴⁸ et comme K.M.D. Dunbabin en a apporté la preuve, avec force images à l'appui, dans un article synthétique récent.⁴⁹

3. L'Empereur et la vie agonistique de son temps

On ne peut qu'être surpris de la teneur du développement que les éditeurs consacrent à l'association des technites dionysiaques destinataire des trois lettres d'Hadrien (p.27–33), tant il est réducteur. Il vise en effet essentiellement à expliciter les termes qui la désignent, en les comparant aux variantes attestées sous l'Empire, à des dates antérieures et postérieures à l'année 134, ainsi qu'à la titulature portée par l'association œcuménique des athlètes, en activité à même époque. Il contient d'abord un rappel des différentes interprétations données par les spécialistes aux qualificatifs de «hiéroniques» et de «stéphanites», mais aussi de *περιπολιστική, θυμελική, μεγάλη, νεωκόρος* (p.28–29) et *ιερά* (p.32), attribués à la confrérie dans la documentation principalement épigraphique et papyrologique. Une brève

⁴⁷ Voir, à ce propos, les opinions divergentes de L. ROBERT, *Inscriptions agonistiques de Smyrne*, in: *Hellenica* VII, 1949, 107, n. 5 et de PLEKET, *Games, Prizes, Athletes, and Ideology* (v. d. n. 30) 58.

⁴⁸ SLATER, *Hadrian's Letter to the Athletes and Dionysiac Artists* (v. d. n. 6) 617.

⁴⁹ K.M.D. DUNBABIN, *The prize table: crowns, wreaths, and moneybags in Roman art*, in: B. LE GUEN (dir.), *L'Argent dans les concours du monde grec*, Saint-Denis 2010, 301–345.

réflexion sur la structure de l'association dionysiaque, dotée sous Hadrien d'un centre à Rome, vient ensuite clore l'ensemble (p. 33).

Outre les erreurs et inexactitudes que l'on peut relever ici ou là, le plus étonnant est qu'à aucun moment, il n'est fait le moindre rapprochement avec ce que l'on sait des corporations dionysiaques ou des associations de hiéroniques de l'époque hellénistique. Comme si la rupture était totale entre les trois derniers siècles avant notre ère et les suivants. Or, à l'époque de la découverte de l'inscription d'Alexandrie de Troade, G. Petzl et E. Schwertheim disposaient déjà de deux synthèses récentes sur les confréries de technites.⁵⁰ Depuis, le lecteur peut également se reporter à l'article de S. Aneziri, *World travellers: the associations of Artists of Dionysus*,⁵¹ qui souligne à bon droit les ruptures et continuités entre le monde des souverains hellénistiques et celui des Empereurs. Nombre de questions que se posent les éditeurs trouvent en réalité une réponse dans le passé des confréries.

Dans la dénomination des corporations nées, d'après la documentation aujourd'hui disponible, à partir du III^e siècle avant notre ère, sur le pourtour du bassin méditerranéen, seuls apparaissent une précision géographique – leur(s) centre(s) de rattachement ou leur aire principale de rayonnement – et le nom de leur(s) patron(s), à savoir toujours Dionysos, mais aussi les souverains régnants, dans le cas du royaume lagide et de ses possessions extérieures. La raison d'être

⁵⁰ Cf. B. LE GUEN, *Les Associations de Technites dionysiaques à l'époque hellénistique*, Nancy 2001, 2 vol., 579 p.; S. ANEZIRI, *Die Vereine der dionysischen Techniten im Kontext der hellenistischen Gesellschaft. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte, Organisation und Wirkung der hellenistischen Gesellschaft*, Stuttgart 2003; B. LE GUEN, *Remarques sur les associations de Technites dionysiaques de l'époque hellénistique* (à propos de l'ouvrage de Sophia ANEZIRI, *Die Vereine der dionysischen Techniten im Kontext der hellenistischen Gesellschaft. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte, Organisation und Wirkung der hellenistischen Gesellschaft*, Stuttgart 2003), in: Nikephoros 17, 2004 [2006], 279–299. Certes, les éditeurs renvoient à deux reprises au seul ouvrage de S. Aneziri (p. 24, n. 25, à propos des synagonistes; p. 28, n. 36, au sujet des artistes «hiéroniques» et des «stéphanites»), mais ils ne l'exploitent pas dans une perspective qui aurait pu être plus fructueuse.

⁵¹ S. ANEZIRI, *World travellers: the associations of Artists of Dionysus*, in: R. HUNTER/I. RUTHERFORD, *Wandering Poets in Ancient Greek Culture. Travel, Locality and Pan-Hellenism*, Cambridge 2009, 217–236. S. Aneziri précise que son traitement de l'époque impériale est moins développé que celui de la période hellénistique, car il n'existe pour l'Empire aucune synthèse du matériel documentaire (p. 220, n. 19). Qu'il me soit néanmoins permis de préciser que je travaille personnellement à une telle synthèse, ainsi que je l'ai annoncé dans mon livre de 2001 (v. d. n. 50) vol. 1, 33–34. Giovanna di Stefano dit également préparer la publication de sa thèse de doctorat consacrée aux associations de technites d'époque romaine, dans un article sommaire et incomplet, *Les appellations de technites: une tentative d'interprétation*, in: DHA 30/2, 2004, 175–181.

principale de ces diverses confréries consistait à participer aux concours sacrés et stéphanites les plus célèbres du monde grec. L'indique clairement un décret promulgué, dans les années 170 av. J.-C., par l'association d'Ionie et de l'Hellespont⁵² qui énumère successivement les *Pythia* et *Sôtèria* de Delphes, les *Mouseia* de Thespies et les *Agriônia* de Thèbes. Il n'en va pas autrement sous l'Empire, alors même que de nombreux concours sont créés, refondés, voire hissés au rang d'*agônes* sacrés ou mieux encore eisélastiques.⁵³ La donne a néanmoins considérablement changé, car les cités organisatrices de compétitions ne dépendent plus peu ou prou d'un monarque grec ou hellénisé, mais de Rome. Or, Grecs et Romains ne portaient absolument pas le même regard sur les technites qui, d'un point de vue juridique, ne jouissaient pas d'un statut identique chez l'un et l'autre peuple. Jusqu'au début du premier siècle de notre ère, en vertu de la loi, le citoyen romain qui pratiquait une activité dramatique perdait ses droits politiques et ses droits civils étaient restreints. Toutefois, après cette date, semble-t-il, la législation se mit à opérer de subtiles distinctions entre les artistes exerçant une *ars ludicra* contre salaire et ceux participant aux concours sacrés, n'incriminant plus désormais que les premiers.⁵⁴ Dans la titulature de la confrérie œcuménique, la

⁵² B. LE GUEN, *Les Associations de Technites dionysiaques*, Nancy 2001, vol. 1, TE 45.

⁵³ Sur ce point on pourra, par exemple, se reporter au compte rendu de S. MITCHELL, *Festivals, games, and civic life in Roman Asia Minor*, in: JHS 80, 1990, sur les ouvrages de M. WÖRRLE, *Stadt und Fest im kaiserzeitlichen Kleinasien. Studien zu einer agonistischen Stiftung aus Oinoanda*, Munich 1988 et de R. ZIEGLER, *Städtisches Prestige und kaiserliche Politik. Studien zum Festwesen in Ostkilikien im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert n. Chr.*, Düsseldorf 1985, mais également aux articles de A. J. S. SPAWFORTH, *Agonistic Festivals in Roman Greece*, in: A. CAMERON et S. WALKER, *The Greek Renaissance in Roman Greece*, Londres 1989 (BICS Suppl. 55), 183–193, de T. SPAWFORTH, *'Kapetōlia Olympia': Roman Emperors and Greek Agōnes*, in: S. HORNBLOWER/C. MORGAN (dir.), *Pindar's Poetry, Patrons and Festivals. From Archaic Greece to the Roman Empire*, Oxford 2007, 377–390 et d'O. VAN NIJF, *Athletics, festivals and Greek identity in the Roman East*, in: *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 45, 1999, 175–200.

⁵⁴ Voir *Dig.* III,2,2,5–2,4,1, et sur ce texte principalement les commentaires respectifs de H. LEPPIN, *Histrionen. Untersuchungen zur sozialen Stellung von Bühnenkünstlern im Westen des Römischen Reiches zur Zeit der Republik und des Principats*, Bonn 1992, chapitre VIII, 71–83 et de Ch. HUGONOT, *De l'infamie à la contrainte. Évolution de la condition sociale des comédiens sous l'Empire romain*, in: Ch. HUGONOT/F. HURLET/S. MILANEZI (dir.), *Le Statut de l'acteur dans l'Antiquité grecque et romaine*, Tours 2004, 213–240. Cf. également S. ANEZIRI, *Die Vereine der dionysischen Techniten im Kontext der hellenistischen Gesellschaft* (v. d. n. 50) 329 et EAD., *World travellers* (v. d. n. 51) 220–223. Concernant l'*infamia* des athlètes et des auriges, je remercie vivement Wolfgang Decker de m'avoir signalé la discussion qui se trouve dans l'ouvrage de G. HORSMANN, *Die*

référence aux compétitions d'un rang panhellénique à travers l'emploi des termes de «hiéroniques» et de «stéphanites» visait, en toute certitude, à protéger de l'*infamia* ceux d'entre ses membres qui étaient dotés de la citoyenneté romaine.⁵⁵ Dans le même temps, ces mentions renvoyaient à la fois à une réalité avérée et à un idéal revendiqué. Une réalité avérée, puisque certains artistes avaient bel et bien triomphé dans des *agônes* qualifiés indifféremment de «sacrés» ou de «sacrés» et «stéphanites».⁵⁶ Un idéal revendiqué, étant donné que d'autres aspiraient à remporter la palme de la victoire en de pareilles circonstances, au sein d'une confrérie dont telles étaient et la vocation et la priorité. Ajoutons cependant que si les *agônes* sacrés et stéphanites restaient encore bel et bien sous l'Empire des concours où le vainqueur ne recevait qu'une couronne sur les lieux mêmes de sa victoire, exactement comme à l'époque de l'ancienne *périodos*, ils étaient aussi devenus autre chose, une occasion de recevoir une couronne et un prix en numéraire.⁵⁷ La lettre d'Hadrien l'évoque sans

Wagenlenker der römischen Kaiserzeit. Untersuchungen zu ihrer sozialen Stellung, Stuttgart 1998.

⁵⁵) On comprend mieux, dans ces conditions, les lignes de sa première lettre, dans lesquelles Hadrien explique que les artistes continuent de dépendre de la législation de l'association, non seulement après qu'ils l'ont quittée, mais également après obtention de la citoyenneté romaine (l. 51–52).

⁵⁶) Ces vainqueurs constituèrent dans certaines cités des associations à part entière bien avant la formation de confréries œcuméniques plus larges d'athlètes et d'artistes, et avant même le début de l'époque impériale (cf. W. C. WEST, *M. Oulpios Domestikos and the athletic synod at Ephesus*, in: *Ancient History Bulletin* 4, 1990, 84–89 (n° 4); G. M. ROGERS, *The Sacred Identity of Ephesos*, Londres/New York 1991, 56–65; Ph. GAUTHIER, *Les décrets de Colophon-sur-mer en l'honneur des Attalides Athénaios et Philétairos*, in: *REG* 119, 2006, 485, n. 10). On corrigera en conséquence l'affirmation d'ANEZIRI, *World travellers* (v. d. n. 51) 221, qui fait remonter l'existence de groupes de hiéroniques dans les cités au tout début de l'époque impériale. Une lettre adressée par Marc Antoine au *koinon* d'Asie (P. Lond. 137 = R. K. SHERK, *Roman Documents from the Greek East*, n° 57), que cite pourtant S. Aneziri (221, n. 26), fait en effet référence au prêtre d'une association regroupant «*τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς οἰκουμένης ἱερονικῶν καὶ στεφανειτῶν*», en qui le contenu du document laisserait voir plutôt des athlètes que des artistes, même si ce point a été longuement débattu parmi les spécialistes. Cependant cette association d'élite, incluant déjà dans sa titulature une référence à l'*oikouménè*, aurait très bien pu comprendre à la fois des athlètes et des artistes. C'est elle qui aurait pu donner naissance ensuite aux deux confréries plus larges dites respectivement «xystique» et «thymélique». Les deux groupes les constituant (les athlètes et les hiéroniques pour l'une, les artistes et les hiéroniques pour l'autre) pouvaient, le cas échéant, prendre seuls certaines décisions, exactement comme le firent les synagognistes, à l'époque hellénistique (voir B. LE GUEN, *Les Associations de Technites dionysiaques*, Nancy 2001, vol. 1, TE 44).

⁵⁷) Voir *supra*.

détours. Mais le recours au vocabulaire agonistique traditionnel, en usage dès la période archaïque, laissait entendre des pratiques immuables où l'argent n'avait pas sa place et donc l'infamie non plus. Aussi la titulature que s'était donnée l'association œcuménique lui permettait-elle de se jouer, à plus d'un titre, des normes juridiques romaines.

Une autre conséquence de l'interprétation qui vient d'être donnée des termes de «hiéroniques» et de «stéphanites», en référence aux concours panhelléniques sacrés et stéphanites les plus réputés, est qu'il est totalement erroné de les expliquer en supposant l'existence de trois groupes d'artistes différents, comme l'ont fait P. Frisch⁵⁸ et J. Nollé,⁵⁹ ou de traduire l'expression grecque «*συνόδῳ θυμηλικῆ περιπολιστικῆ τῶν περὶ τὸν Διόνυσον τεχνειῶν ἱερονεικῶν στεφανειῶν*», à la manière des éditeurs, par «[die] Wandernde Theatersynodos der um sich gruppierenden Künstler, Hieroniken, Stephaniten», laquelle laisse planer le doute sur le nombre de catégories d'artistes constituant la confrérie. En français, il faut résolument opter pour «l'association, thymélique et itinérante, des technites que patronne Dionysos, vainqueurs dans les concours sacrés et stéphanites».

Mais pas plus qu'ils ne représentaient trois groupes distincts, les technites n'en formaient un unique, comme l'affirme J. Ebert.⁶⁰ Deux entités seulement existaient: les vainqueurs (ou «hiéroniques-stéphanites») et les autres qui soit ne réussissaient pas à l'emporter soit ne le pouvaient pas, du fait de leur spécialité artistique.⁶¹ Du reste, en 48 après J.-C., une lettre de Claude, trouvée à Milet, fait expressément état d'une association constituée de deux catégories d'artistes dionysiaques: l'élite et les autres (*τοῖς περὶ τὸν Διόνυσον ἱερονεῖκαις καὶ τεχνεῖταις*).⁶² La même distinction figure sur un papyrus conservant

⁵⁸ P. FRISCH, *Zehn agonistische Papyri*, Opladen 1986, 26. Selon lui, il faudrait distinguer trois groupes d'artistes au sein de la confrérie dionysiaque: les membres n'ayant pas remporté de victoire ou technites, les hiéroniques ou vainqueurs dans les concours sacrés et les stéphanites qui représenteraient les artistes couronnés dans un *agôn* sans déclaration de vainqueur (soit un *agôn* qui se solda par un match nul).

⁵⁹ De l'avis de J. NOLLÉ (*IK 44-Side II*, n° 121, 427 et n. 15 et 16), ils auraient dû porter le nom de synstéphanites (cf. PETZL/SCHWERTHEIM, *Hadrian und die dionysischen Künstler* [v. d. n. 1] 28).

⁶⁰ Compte rendu de P. FRISCH, *Zehn agonistische Papyri*, in: GGA 241, 1989, 16.

⁶¹ Voir S. ANEZIRI, *Les synagonistes du théâtre grec aux époques hellénistique et romaine: une question de terminologie et de fonction*, in: B. LE GUEN (dir.), *De la scène aux gradins. Théâtre et représentations dramatiques après Alexandre le Grand*, Toulouse 1997 (Pallas 47), 53–71 (notamment 58, 64–68).

⁶² A. REHM, *Das Delphinion in Milet I*, 3, Berlin 1914, 381–382 (n° 156).

une autre lettre de Claude aux artistes dionysiaques et les fragments d'une de ses décisions,⁶³ même si les termes utilisés sont légèrement différents. Il y est en effet question de <τοῖς> ἀπὸ τῆς οἰκουμένης περὶ τὸν Διόνυσον ἱερονεῖταις στεφανείταις καὶ τοῖς τούτων συναγωνισταῖς, mot attesté déjà en Asie Mineure à l'époque hellénistique avec le sens de «collègues auxiliaires» ou encore «d'assistants dans les concours».⁶⁴

La remarque est d'importance car elle permet de corriger une affirmation des éditeurs pour qui l'association des technites serait postérieure à celle des athlètes fondée sous Claude ou peu avant (p. 30). Le papyrus mentionné ci-dessus rapporte en effet la décision de ce dernier de conserver à la confrérie les droits (νόμιμα) et privilèges (φιλόανθρωπα) qui lui avaient été octroyés ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ Σεβαστοῦ, c'est-à-dire par l'Empereur Auguste, décédé et divinisé à l'époque de la rédaction de sa lettre. Ainsi l'association dionysiaque non seulement existait à coup sûr du temps de Claude, mais elle s'était formée avant même qu'il n'accédât au trône. La lettre exhumée à Milet et datée de 48 après J.-C., à laquelle il a été fait également référence précédemment, le confirme en des termes proches, car elle reconnaît aux artistes les δίκαια concédés par le Sénat et les Empereurs qui l'ont précédé (c'est un pluriel et non plus un singulier qui est utilisé). On peut en conséquence avancer avec certitude à l'époque augustéenne la date de création de la confrérie dite œcuménique.⁶⁵

Concernant les autres qualificatifs portés par l'association à laquelle s'adresse Hadrien (p. 28–33), les éditeurs affirment que l'adjectif περιπολιστική apparaît sous les Antonins et renvoie à une association d'itinérants, non à une association itinérante, les problèmes évoqués dans la correspondance royale étant ceux d'artistes allant d'agônes en agônes. Je ne crois pas qu'il y ait là matière à distinction,

⁶³) *BGU* IV, 1074; le document est republié et discuté par P. VIREECK in: *Klio* 8, 1908, 413 sqq.; il est revu et corrigé par P. FRISCH, *Zu den Kaiserbriefen an die ökumenische Synode der dionysischen Künstler*, in: *ZPE* 52, 1983, 215–218.

⁶⁴) *Bull. ép.* 1976, 721. W. PLEKET, *Some Aspects of the History of Athletic Guilds*, in: *ZPE* 10, 1973, 210, n. 46, parle, quant à lui, de «subordinate performers». Voir aussi ANEZIRI, *Les synagonistes* (v. d. n. 61) 63–64 et EAD., *World travellers* (v. d. n. 51) 223 et note 36. Selon cette dernière, il s'agit de tous les artistes qui ne pouvaient prétendre à la victoire du fait de la discipline qu'ils pratiquaient. Ainsi des acteurs de second rang, de certains musiciens, des instructeurs et membres de chœurs dramatiques, des costumiers, mais aussi des pantomimes, du moins au début de l'Empire.

⁶⁵) *Milet* I, 3, 156: διαφυλάξας τὰ ὑπὸ τῶν πρὸ ἐμοῦ Σεβαστῶν καὶ τῆς συνκλήτου δεδομένα δίκαια, ἀποδέχομαι καὶ πειράσομαι αὐξῆσαι αὐτὰ ... Comme on le voit, l'Empereur va même jusqu'à dire qu'il essaiera d'accroître encore les droits des artistes.

voire lieu à débat, une confrérie formée de technites perpétuellement en voyage étant de fait une confrérie caractérisée par les voyages de ses membres.⁶⁶ Il me semble en revanche plus important de souligner la concomitance entre la date à laquelle l'adjectif commence à être utilisé dans la documentation et celle où l'association se voit doter d'un siège central à Rome.

Indiquant une première fois les lieux de provenance des inscriptions où figure le terme de *περιπολιστική* en lien avec la confrérie œcuménique (p. 28–29, n. 38), les éditeurs complètent ensuite leur liste en ajoutant Héraclée pontique aux cités de Thyateira, Pessinonte, Athènes, Ankara et Nysa (p. 31, n. 51). Renvoyant à la publication de Lloyd Jonnes (*IK 47-Heraclea Pontica*, n° 2), ils livrent alors, au nominatif et sous une forme qui ne tient pas compte des crochets de restitution, le début d'une lettre comprenant un décret pris par l'association ainsi définie: *τῆ ἱερᾷ Ἀδριανῆ Ἀντ[ων]εῖ[νῆ] περι[πολι]στικῆ θυμ[ε]λ[ικ]ῆ μεγαλῆ νεωκόρω ἐπὶ Ῥώμης συνόδω.*

Ce document pose néanmoins plusieurs problèmes, généralement ignorés depuis sa première édition par G. Hirschfeld, fondée sur une copie réalisée *in extremis* par un Grec d'Héraclée, peu de temps avant la réutilisation de la pierre et sa disparition.⁶⁷ Pendant longtemps en effet, on a pensé que la lettre avait été gravée en 130, date déduite de la mention des consuls ordinaires, Q. Fabius Catullinus et M. Flavius Aper, sur la face B de la pierre servant de base à la statue honorifique qui s'y trouvait évoquée. La face A, quant à elle, portait le décret par lequel l'association vantait les mérites d'un de ses bienfaiteurs, Marcius Xénokratès, et lui octroyait, entre autres privilèges, plusieurs statues. G. Hirschfeld, il est vrai, avait lu simplement dans un premier temps les lettres ANT..EI, qu'il n'avait pas comprises, puis en avait proposé la restitution *Ἀντ[ων]εῖνῆ*, transcrite par erreur *Ἀντω[ν]εῖνῆ* dans toutes les éditions ultérieures, excepté celle de Lloyd Jonnes.⁶⁸ Toutefois il n'avait pas alors remis en question sa datation initiale de 130 après J.-C.⁶⁹ Si j'insiste, c'est qu'il y a là une vraie difficulté, qui pourrait être résolue par la restitution *Ἀντ[ι]νοῦεῖνῆ* que j'ai proposée

⁶⁶ Cf. F. POLAND, *Geschichte des griechischen Vereinswesens*, Leipzig 1909, 144 et A. W. PICKARD-CAMBRIDGE, *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens*, Oxford³ 1988, 291 (réimpression avec suppléments et corrections de la deuxième édition de 1968).

⁶⁷ G. HIRSCHFELD, *Sitzungsberichte der königlichen preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Berlin 1888, 882, n° 44.

⁶⁸ C'est dans le *corpus IK 47-Heraclea Pontica*, n° 2, que l'on trouve pour la première fois le crochet de restitution à la bonne place dans l'adjectif lacunaire qui pourrait être formé sur le nom de l'Empereur Antonin.

⁶⁹ *GIBM* IV, n° 794, n. 1, A, l. 21–24.

naguère⁷⁰ et dont L. Jonnes n'a manifestement pas eu connaissance.⁷¹ Dans cette hypothèse, non seulement l'usage de l'adjectif *περιπολιστική* remonterait à Hadrien, tout comme l'emploi d'un adjectif formé sur le nom de l'Empereur (Franz Poland y voit le signe d'une meilleure et d'une plus solide organisation des technites),⁷² mais encore l'installation à Rome de l'association (*ἡ ἐπὶ Ρώμης σύνοδος*).⁷³ On comprendrait aisément qu'elle ait voulu rappeler sa vocation itinérante (*περιπολιστικῆ*) au moment même où elle était dotée d'un centre principal. C'est à dessin que j'utilise un passif, car la confrérie ne pouvait

⁷⁰ Voir B. LE GUEN, *Une inscription d'Héraclée du Pont de 130 après J.-C.?* in: Congrès international sur la mer Noire I (juin 1988), Samsun 1990, 668–680.

⁷¹ La date attribuée à l'inscription (*IK 47-Heraclea Pontica*, n° 2, p. 4) est la suivante: «Second Century A.D.». L. Jonnes souligne, à la page 6, le paradoxe suivant: «the consuls recorded here date from A.D. 130, but the association would not at that time have yet been known as Antonine». Pour l'expliquer, il suggère que la décision de l'association aurait été gravée après l'érection de la statue. Pareille interprétation n'est guère plausible pour deux raisons: elle implique tout d'abord un délai incompréhensible de huit ans au moins entre la consécration de la statue et la gravure du décret la stipulant, vu que l'association ne peut être qualifiée d'antonienne qu'à compter de l'accession d'Antonin au trône, soit au plus tôt le 10 juillet 138. Par ailleurs, puisque la décision d'octroyer des statues à Marcus Xénokratès avait été prise par l'association en activité sous Hadrien, c'est la titulature qu'elle portait alors qui devait nécessairement figurer, quand bien même la gravure aurait été réalisée ultérieurement. Le décret conservé dans les archives de l'association en témoignait et c'est uniquement sur la foi de ce document que la gravure ultérieure (s'il y en avait eu une) pouvait être effectuée. Rien ne prouve, d'autre part, l'affirmation selon laquelle le Marcus Xénokratès honoré par l'association œcuménique (*IK 47-Heraclea Pontica*, n° 2) serait le même homme que le médecin homonyme de la légion des *evocatii* de l'Empereur Antonin (*IK 47*, n° 7; cf. *LGPN V.A.*, s. v. et É. SAMAMA, *Les Médecins dans le monde grec*, Genève 2003, 318). Ils peuvent très bien avoir été père et fils. Au vu de la lettre de la confrérie, il est plus vraisemblable de croire que le Marcus Xénokratès qui y est récompensé exerçait le métier de musicien, d'acteur, voire de mime: le terme *ergon*, l. 6–7, est employé par exemple sur la base d'une statue érigée pour un mime à Tralles (L. ROBERT in: *REG* 1936, 245). De même le verbe *kosmein* (l. 5) s'entend au propre comme au figuré, notamment pour des athlètes ayant embelli, du seul fait de leur participation, les concours d'une cité (L. ROBERT in: *Anatolian Studies* Buckler, Manchester 1939, 230, l. 22–24).

⁷² F. Poland, *Geschichte des griechischen Vereinswesens*, Leipzig 1909, 144 (cité par les éditeurs, p. 31, n. 48).

⁷³ La même expression figure sur une inscription de Nysa datée de l'époque d'Antonin (*IK-Ephesos Ia*, n° 22, l. 16 et 70). Elle évoque le don de livres «étonnants» qu'un évergète de la cité carienne, bien en cour sous Hadrien, fit à la bibliothèque située dans le *téménos* des artistes de Rome. Voir au sujet de cette inscription, B. LE GUEN, *Sur un passage controversé d'une inscription de Nysa*, in: Erol Atalay Memorial, Izmir 1991, 97–100. À propos de Rome, siège du synode des technites, on consultera aussi E. J. JORY, *Associations of actors in Rome*, in: *Hermes* 98, 1970, 242, n. 3.

s'installer à Rome qu'avec l'accord de l'Empereur, ainsi que nous l'apprend l'exemple de l'association des athlètes. À leur demande,⁷⁴ Hadrien leur avait octroyé un «τόπον» (emplacement) et un édifice destiné à abriter leurs archives «οἶκημα ὡς τὰ γράμματα ἀποτίθεσθαι τὰ κοινά»,⁷⁵ mais ils n'en bénéficièrent effectivement que sous Antonin. Dans le cas des technites, on ne sait de qui venait précisément l'initiative. L'intérêt tout particulier que leur porte Hadrien pourrait tout au moins laisser entendre qu'il avait fortement encouragé leur implantation dans la capitale de l'Empire. Toujours est-il que l'existence d'un centre permanent, accueillant très certainement aussi les archives de la confrérie, comme l'avait fait naguère Thèbes pour l'association hellénistique de l'Isthme et de Némée, pourvue de plusieurs filiales, et par là même comparable, d'une certaine manière, à la confrérie œcuménique,⁷⁶ ne mettait pas fin à l'existence de lieux d'établissement secondaires des technites: le document d'Alexandrie de Troade évoque en effet au pluriel les sanctuaires des associations d'artistes et d'athlètes et il est clair que Sidè,⁷⁷ Milet,⁷⁸ Sardes,⁷⁹ ou encore Athènes,⁸⁰ Nîmes,⁸¹ Apamée⁸² et peut-être Naples en étaient dotées.

⁷⁴ Si l'on se fie bien sûr à ce qu'il est dit dans le document.

⁷⁵ IG XIV, 1054 = IGUR I, 235, face B, l. 7–8. Voir M. L. CALDELLI, *Curia Athletarum, IERA XYSTIKE SYNODOS e organizzazione delle terme a Roma*, in: ZPE 93, 1992, 75–87; U. SINN, *Olympia und die curia athletarum in Rom*, in: Stadion 24, 1998, 129–135; P. GOUW, *Griekse atleten in de Romeinse Keizertijd (31 v. Chr. – 400 n. Chr.)*, Amsterdam 2009, 10–11.

⁷⁶ Pour ANEZIRI, *World travellers* (v. d. n. 51) 229, la différence principale entre les deux associations est que le *koinon* de l'Isthme et de Némée laissait toute liberté de manœuvre aux filiales qui le constituaient, alors que la confrérie œcuménique était structurée autour d'une autorité centrale (celle de l'Empereur), comme au préalable l'avait été la corporation hellénistique d'Égypte. Je partage entièrement ce point de vue.

⁷⁷ G. E. BEAN, *Side Kitabeleri. The Inscriptions of Side*, Ankara 1965, n° 147 (= IK 43-Side I, n° 31).

⁷⁸ MDAl(I) 15, 1965, 121–122, n° 5 (= MCCABE, *Miletos*, n° 350).

⁷⁹ Journal des Savants 1975, 169, n. 79.

⁸⁰ Les différentes lettres adressées par Hadrien à l'association des technites d'Athènes en sont, à mon sens, une preuve incontestable (cf. J. H. OLIVER, *Hadrian's Epistle of the Dionysiac Artists at Athens*, in: AAA VII, 1974, en particulier celle publiée d'abord par D. J. GEAGAN, *Hadrian and the Athenian Technitai*, in: TAPHA 1972, 155–156, où il est question de τῆ[] τῶν Ἀθηνῶν συνόδω, etc.).

⁸¹ IG XIV, 2496 = IGR I, 18 = IGF, 101. Sur une explication de la présence à Nîmes d'une association de technites, voir J. H. OLIVER, *The empress Plotina and the sacred thymelic synod*, in: Historia 24, 1975, 125–128.

⁸² Bull. ép. 1976, 721.

Au sujet de l'adjectif *θυμελική*, les éditeurs précisent à juste titre qu'il équivaut à *μουσική*, le terme de *μουσικὸν ἀγώνισμα* étant employé (l. 24) pour désigner le type de compétitions auxquelles prenaient part les technites. On le sait, par *μουσικός* les Grecs entendaient, de façon très large, toutes les spécialités relevant de l'art des Muses, et non, de manière exclusive, le chant (en solo comme en chœur) ou la pratique d'un instrument. C'est ainsi qu'ils classaient dans les disciplines «musicales», les récitations de poèmes, les récitations d'éloges en vers et en prose, les auditions de musique instrumentale, les auditions de musique accompagnées de chant, les prestations de chœurs avec accompagnement musical, mais encore les représentations dramatiques.

À l'époque hellénistique, lorsqu'ils souhaitaient faire preuve d'une plus grande précision, pour désigner un concours musical au sens strict du terme, ils recouraient à l'adjectif *θυμελικός*, renvoyant à l'aire centrale du théâtre où se pratiquaient les épreuves y afférant. Ils réservaient aux concours exclusivement dramatiques l'adjectif *σκηνικός*, qui évoquait l'utilisation de la *skènè* ou bâtiment de scène.⁸³ Mais comme l'a montré M. Wörrle dont les éditeurs citent les propos (p. 29, n. 41), *θυμελικός* perdit son sens fort sous l'Empire et eut tendance à se substituer, ici ou là, à *μουσικός* dans son acception de «musical et scénique».⁸⁴ Au vu de la documentation existante, ce n'est qu'à partir de Claude que l'adjectif *θυμελικός* fut régulièrement employé dans la titulature de la confrérie, les technites qui la constituaient étant ce qu'ils étaient déjà à l'époque hellénistique, à savoir des spécialistes de la scène, aussi bien hommes de théâtre (acteurs, poètes dramatiques, choreutes, accessoiristes ...) que musiciens de toute sorte.⁸⁵

Dans le même temps *θυμελική* s'opposa à l'adjectif *ξυστική*, choisi pour caractériser l'association œcuménique des athlètes: plus que de la nature des concours auxquels prenaient part les deux grandes corporations en activité sous l'Empire, ces deux termes se seraient fait

⁸³) Voir B. LE GUEN, *Les fêtes du théâtre grec à l'époque hellénistique*, in: REG 123, 2010/2, 495–520.

⁸⁴) Cf. M. WÖRRLE, *Stadt und Fest im kaiserzeitlichen Kleinasien. Studien zu einer agonistischen Stiftung aus Oinoanda*, Munich 1988, 227–228 et PETZL/SCHWERTHEIM, *Hadrian und die dionysischen Künstler* (v. d. n. 1) 29, avec les notes.

⁸⁵) Trop souvent encore les technites sont réduits dans la littérature critique à des acteurs. Il n'en est rien. É. Guerber fait erreur lorsqu'il glose par «scénique» l'adjectif thymélique qualifiant le synode œcuménique auquel s'adresse Hadrien (*Les Cités grecques dans l'Empire romain. Les privilèges et les titres des cités de l'Orient hellénophone d'Octave Auguste à Dioclétien*, Rennes 2009, 223).

l'écho, par synecdoque, de leurs lieux d'entraînement principaux: les théâtres et les gymnases. Le parallèle, en effet, est des plus frappants entre la désignation de la confrérie des athlètes dans la lettre qu'Hadrien lui adresse en 134 (*συνόδῳ ξυστικῇ τῶν περὶ τὸν Ἡρακλέα ἀθλητῶν ἱερονεικῶν στεφανειτῶν*)⁸⁶ et la dénomination de la corporation des artistes de scène sur le document d'Alexandrie de Troade (*συνόδῳ θυμελικῇ περιπολιστικῇ τῶν περὶ τὸν Διόνυσον τεχνειτῶν ἱερονεικῶν στεφανειτῶν*).

Pour ce qui est de l'ensemble des qualificatifs appliqués à cette dernière du temps d'Hadrien et de ses successeurs (nom de l'Empereur, adjectifs *περιπολιστικῇ, μεγάλη* et *ἱερά*, tournure prépositive *ἀπὸ τῆς οἰκουμένης*), E. Schwertheim les juge déconcertants (*verwirrend*) et s'interroge sur leurs sens et fonction: étaient-ils pour les technites une manière de se distinguer d'autres associations? Faisaient-ils office d'épithètes à valeur honorifique ou décorative? À ses yeux, ce serait seulement sous Hadrien que la confrérie aurait été constituée en une corporation itinérante et uniquement après sa mort et sa *consecratio* qu'elle serait devenue *ἱερά* et aurait été dite *Ἀδριανῆ σύνδοσ*.⁸⁷ Je n'en crois rien, car non seulement ces deux expressions figurent déjà sur des inscriptions de Nîmes datées du vivant d'Hadrien,⁸⁸ ainsi qu'E. Schwertheim le remarque lui-même, mais elles se liraient peut-être également sur le document d'Héraclée du Pont, s'il remontait bien à l'année 130 de notre ère. Du reste l'adjectif *ἱερά* apparaît seul beaucoup plus tôt, conjointement à la formule *θυμελικῇ σύνδοσ*, sur la base d'une statue érigée par la section locale des technites de Sidè en l'honneur de l'Empereur Claude,⁸⁹ mais aussi sur le fragment d'une autre base de statue consacrée, vraisemblablement à même époque, par les artistes dionysiaques de Téos à un généreux agonothète des

⁸⁶ IG XIV, 1054 = IGUR I, 235, face B, l. 5–6.

⁸⁷ SCHWERTHEIM, *Hadrian und die dionysischen Künstler* (v. d. n. 1) 31–32.

⁸⁸ IGR I, 17 (= IG XIV, 2495); dans l'article d'ANEZIRI, *World travellers* (v. d. n. 51) 223, n. 38, qui fait référence à cette inscription, on remplacera Nicaea par Nemausus. E. Schwertheim mentionne aussi IGR I, 18 et 19, mais les lacunes sont trop nombreuses pour que l'on puisse en tenir compte. Sur les inscriptions de Nîmes relatives aux technites (IGR I, 17 à 21 = IG XIV, 2495–2500 = IGF 100, 101, 102, 104, 106 et CIL XII, 3183 + add. p. 836 = IGF 105), voir P. GHIRON-BISTAGNE, *Les concours grecs en Occident, et notamment à Nîmes*, in: *Le théâtre antique et ses spectacles*, Lattes 1992, 225–232; P. GHIRON-BISTAGNE, *Les artistes dionysiaques de Nîmes à l'époque impériale*, in: EAD. (dir.), *Realia. Mélanges sur les réalités du théâtre antique*, Montpellier 1990–1991 (Cahiers du GITA 6), 57–78.

⁸⁹ G. E. BEAN, *Side Kitabeleri, The Inscriptions of Side*, Ankara 1965, n° 147. On le trouve par exemple ensuite sur des inscriptions d'Apamée et d'Ancyre datées du règne d'Hadrien.

Dionysia Kaisarèa pentétériques.⁹⁰ C'est à cette date aussi que la tournure *ἀπὸ τῆς οἰκουμένης* commence à être attestée dans la documentation. Claude en personne réprime alors les artistes de l'entourage d'un notable de Vienne, Valerius Asiaticus, lequel, avec sa claque susceptible de faire applaudir son nom, aurait pu représenter une menace de sédition, aux dires de Tacite (*Annales* XI,1). Sans doute faut-il voir un lien entre ces deux faits, l'Empereur estimant qu'une association œcuménique (qui, par essence, s'opposait au concept même de troupe privée) était moins à redouter qu'une multitude de petites compagnies toujours en mesure de se comporter comme celle de Vienne et donc d'inquiéter le pouvoir en place.⁹¹

Toujours est-il que l'adjectif *ἱερά* se justifie encore davantage à compter du moment où, sous Trajan, le nom de l'Empereur se trouve officiellement associé à celui de Dionysos dans la titulature de la confrérie. Un décret des technites d'Ancyre, daté précisément du 7 décembre 128, évoque par exemple sans la moins ambiguïté (l. 17) la piété de la cité envers les deux divinités (*ἀμφοτέρους τοὺς θεοὺς*) Dionysos et Hadrien.⁹²

En réalité, l'une des nouveautés les plus importantes à rapporter au règne d'Hadrien est le titre de *Néos* Dionysos qu'il porte sur certains documents. Certes, l'appellation n'est pas neuve. On se souvient en effet que Marc Antoine, à la suite des souverains lagides et du roi du Pont, Mithridate VI, avait été le premier Romain à être ainsi nommé et

⁹⁰ *CIG* 3082 (= MCCABE, *Téos*, n° 27). Si l'association œcuménique est née sous Auguste (voir ici-même, p. 230), il semblerait que ce soit à partir de Claude qu'elle ait commencé vraiment à se développer et que les confréries encore indépendantes se soient peu à peu fondues dans une corporation unique, dotée de branches multiples. L'inscription de Tralles (*IK* 36.1-Tralleis, 50, l. 7–8) qui autorise les restitutions de la titulature de la *synodos* mentionnée sur le document de Téos, montre que la confrérie d'Ionie et de l'Hellespont avait encore conservé, sous L. Verus et Marc-Aurèle ou Marc-Aurèle et Commode, la dénomination qu'on lui connaît à la période hellénistique – à un détail près: la substitution de la préposition *apo* à celle de *épi*. Cf. ANEZIRI, *World travellers* (v. d. n. 51) 228 – et donc qu'elle n'avait pas encore rejoint l'association œcuménique, dont la centralisation s'accroît sous le règne d'Hadrien. Ses différentes phases de développement vont de pair avec le net accroissement des concours que l'on constate aux deux premiers siècles de l'Empire, sous l'effet de la *pax romana*, à l'époque d'Auguste d'abord, puis des Julio-Claudiens et enfin d'Hadrien.

⁹¹ On se reportera sur ce point à l'analyse extrêmement convaincante de H. LAVAGNE, *Rome et les associations dionysiaques en Gaule (Vienne et Nîmes)*, in: *L'Association dionysiaque dans les sociétés anciennes*, Rome 1986, 129–148.

⁹² *SEG* VI, 59 (= E. BOSCH, *Quellen zur Geschichte Ankaras*, Ankara 1967, n° 128).

à passer, de son vivant, pour la réincarnation du dieu du théâtre.⁹³ Inséré toutefois dans la désignation de l'association œcuménique des artistes dionysiaques, le qualificatif de «Nouveau Dionysos» inaugurerait un programme des plus ambitieux, dans lequel l'Empereur en personne apparaissait comme un gage d'universalisme, au service d'une politique d'intégration.⁹⁴ Il le donnait aussi pour une nouvelle promesse de bonheur, à l'image du dieu bienfaiteur de l'humanité, en tant que dispensateur du vin, principe du renouveau végétal et porteur d'espoir outre-tombe. Aussi méritait-il qu'on lui vouât un culte. Or, sur ce point l'ouvrage de G. Petzl et d'E. Schwertheim ne dit mot.

C'est là, à mon sens, sa plus grande faiblesse. Il ne trace en effet aucun lien entre le circuit agonistique, tel qu'il se trouve revu et corrigé par Hadrien, et la nature de la confrérie destinataire de ses trois lettres, s'en tenant au constat que l'Empereur avait mis en place une nouvelle organisation de la vie agonistique au bénéfice des artistes – et des athlètes – qui y jouaient un rôle majeur. Sophia Aneziri ne rapproche pas non plus clairement les créations ou refondations de concours, qui se multiplient sous l'Empire, des noms portés par les associations thymélique et xystique, et des déductions qu'elles autorisent quant à leurs relations avec le pouvoir. Il existe cependant de nombreuses études prouvant la relation quasi systématique des *agônes* sacrés et/ou stéphanites au culte des Empereurs, quelles qu'en aient été les modalités.⁹⁵ Elles autorisent à affirmer que si Hadrien avait tellement à cœur les intérêts des technites (pour ne pas parler des athlètes), c'est qu'il incombait en priorité à la confrérie œcuménique, dont ils étaient membres, d'assurer leur tenue. Elle était devenue une pièce maîtresse de la politique religieuse de l'Empire et du culte

⁹³ À propos du dionysisme de Mithridate, voir B. LE GUEN, *L'accueil d'Athéniôn, messenger de Mithridate VI, par les artistes dionysiaques d'Athènes en 88 av. J.-C.*, in: *Studi Ellenistici XIX*, 351–357. Sur le dionysisme des Attalides, cf. B. LE GUEN, *Kraton, son of Zotichos: Artists' associations and monarchic power in the Hellenistic period*, in: P. WILSON (ed.), *Greek Theatre and Festivals*, Oxford 2007, 275–278 (avec rappel de la bibliographie antérieure).

⁹⁴ Voir, par exemple, M. CLAVEL-LÉVÊQUE, *L'Empire en jeux*, Paris 1984; pour le réveil du dionysisme romain sous Trajan, cf. R. TURCAN, *Les Sarcophages romains à représentations dionysiaques. Essai de chronologie et d'histoire religieuse*, Paris 1966, 368–375.

⁹⁵ S. R. F. PRICE, *Rituals and Power. The Roman imperial cult in Asia Minor*, Cambridge 1984, 101–132 notamment; Ph. A. HARLAND, *Honours and Worship: Emperors, Imperial Cults and Associations at Ephesos (first to third centuries C. E.)*, in: *Studies in Religion/Sciences religieuses* 25, 1996, 319–334, surtout 324–328; É. GUERBER, *Les Cités grecques dans l'Empire romain*, Rennes 2009, 216, affirme: «(...) il apparaît que ces *agônes hiéroï kai stéphanitai* furent quasi systématiquement liés au culte des empereurs mais selon des modalités différentes».

impérial en particulier.⁹⁶ L'adjectif *ἱερά* le rappelle, comme le double patronage de la confrérie, dont la signification est encore plus prégnante, lorsque l'Empereur y revêt le titre de «Nouveau Dionysos» et qu'est utilisé un qualificatif formé sur son nom. Si tant est qu'il en ait subsisté, le rôle dévolu à l'association dans la célébration des Empe-reurs ne laisse même plus la moindre place au doute, quand on la voit parée du titre emblématique de «néocore». Elle l'affiche en effet dans la lettre qu'elle adresse à la cité d'Héraclée du Pont dont la datation pourrait, je le rappelle, remonter à l'époque d'Hadrien: il y aurait alors plus qu'une coïncidence entre ce privilège et l'octroi à la confrérie d'un siège permanent à Rome. Quoi qu'il en soit, la continuité ne saurait être plus claire avec la période hellénistique au cours de laquelle les associations de technites servirent à l'envi les cultes royaux, civiques et dynastiques, participant ainsi pleinement à la diffusion de l'idéologie monarchique.

En guise de conclusion, il convient de revenir sur les apports du document exceptionnel d'Alexandrie de Troade à l'histoire culturelle, politique et religieuse de l'Empire sous le règne d'Hadrien. On y voit l'ampleur du contrôle que l'Empereur exerce désormais sur le monde des concours. Non seulement il fixe le calendrier des principaux d'entre eux, mais il en surveille également la mise en place, le financement et le fonctionnement, allant jusqu'à exiger l'affichage de leurs règlements (I.52–53). N'hésitant pas à intervenir, quel que soit le statut – panhellénique ou local – de l'*agôn* concerné (le cas des Nicomédiens le montre bien, I.74–75), il rappelle à l'ordre les cités qui, telles Milet et Chios, omettent de célébrer des compétitions (*exelipon*, I.19), alors que celles-ci reviennent de droit aux technites (de manière révélatrice, le terme utilisé en grec est le verbe *apodounai*, I.19). Il tient sous sa coupe les agonothètes, en imposant aux autorités romaines (du gouverneur provincial au légat, en passant par le proconsul et le questeur) de vérifier qu'ils remplissent correctement leurs fonctions et procèdent aux versements en argent impartis aux vainqueurs. Il promet également le fouet aux concurrents fautifs ...

De surcroît, la titulature des associations œcuméniques d'athlètes et d'artistes traduit la mainmise que l'Empereur a dorénavant sur elles. Il tient donc en son pouvoir les deux composantes essentielles de la *paideia* grecque que sont le théâtre et le gymnase. Philhellène par excellence, au moment précis où il crée une nouvelle *períodos*

⁹⁶ Voir par exemple H. LAVAGNE, *Rome et les associations d'artistes dionysiaques en Gaule (Vienne et Nîmes)*, in: *L'Association dionysiaque dans les sociétés anciennes*, Rome 1986, 129–148 et É. GUERBER, *Les Cités grecques dans l'Empire romain*, Rennes 2009, 215–219; 233–238.

associant dans un même ensemble les deux bassins de la Méditerranée, les concours grecs et les concours «à la grecque», Hadrien confère aussi à Athènes un statut d'exception. En lui reconnaissant la célébration de trois concours sacrés (*Hadrianeia*, *Olympeia* et *Panhellènia*), privilège dont ne jouit aucune autre cité, il lui redonne en effet le rang de capitale culturelle qui était le sien au V^e siècle avant notre ère,⁹⁷ et favorise par là, indirectement, les tendances archaïsantes néo-attiques, alors en vigueur dans la littérature comme dans les arts.

Avec Hadrien, les confréries retrouvent ainsi avec éclat le rôle qui avait été le leur durant la période hellénistique. Si elles ne servent plus des monarques, mais des Empereurs, elles demeurent l'un des principaux vecteurs de la culture hellénique.

⁹⁷ Voir FOLLET, *Athènes aux II^e et III^e s.* (v. d. n. 22) 343–349 et FERRARY, *Rome, Athènes et le philhellénisme* (v. d. n. 31) 183–210.

Un départ de course à pied sur une lampe romaine¹

Jean-Yves Strasser

Paris

Dans l'Antiquité grecque, on a recouru à divers procédés pour que les coureurs à pied parcourent la même distance et partent en même temps. Barrière amovible individuelle ou collective, l'*hysplex* a connu au cours des siècles plusieurs mutations et améliorations. Si l'on en connaît maintenant bien le mécanisme, la barrière représentée sur plusieurs documents d'époque romaine a été l'objet de moins d'attention. Aux deux reliefs et aux deux mosaïques (Batten Zammour, Tébessa) déjà connus, il faut désormais ajouter une lampe romaine conservée à Berlin, figurant deux Amours au départ. Malgré quelques différences de détail et des difficultés d'interprétation indiscutables, il doit s'agir à chaque fois du même type de barrière de départ: une simple latte de bois – la *regula* – posée sur des supports, et que les coureurs au départ doivent repousser en même temps pour s'élancer. Si ce dispositif rudimentaire n'apparaît que dans des documents de la partie occidentale de l'Empire, c'est qu'il ne s'était sans doute imposé que dans les compétitions sportives de l'Occident, y compris les grands concours grecs de Rome et d'ailleurs. Examen au passage de la question des courses de haies dans l'Antiquité et des petits côtés du sarcophage avec scène de palestra du Louvre.

L'une des évolutions majeures du sport moderne au XX^e siècle a été le recours croissant aux technologies les plus pointues. Les objectifs sont bien connus: d'une part accroître les performances, d'autre part mesurer et enregistrer celles-ci avec de plus en plus de précision.² Le sport antique grec, dans sa plus que millénaire existence, n'a bien entendu jamais connu de pareilles mutations. Bien qu'on ne puisse en aucun cas comparer l'état des technologies antiques et modernes, ce n'est pas seulement les faiblesses des premières qui expliquent cet état de fait. Les raisons tiennent sans doute plutôt dans un conservatisme global qui touche la pratique sportive; les disciplines sportives sont largement codifiées dès la fin de l'époque archaïque, et, si mutations il y a eu, celles-ci apparaissent à l'échelle de l'histoire multiséculaire des

¹ Cet article était rédigé quand nous avons pu enfin avoir connaissance de l'article de St. LEHMANN, que nous remercions ici de nous l'avoir aimablement envoyé, paru dans des mélanges introuvables en France, *Läufer am Start. Zur Ikonographie von Gruppen startender Athleten in der antiken Kunst*, in: C. MUȘEȚEANU/M. BĂRBULESCU/D. BENEĂ (éd.), *Corona laurea. Studii în onoarea Luciei Țeposu Marinescu*, Bucarest 2005, 269–276.

² Cf., pour un panorama général sur la question, le livre au titre évocateur de J. M. CARTER/A. KRÜGER, *Ritual and Record: Sports Records and Quantification in pre-modern Societies*, New York 1990, dont l'intitulé fait écho au plus célèbre ouvrage d'A. GUTTMANN, *From Ritual to Record: the Nature of modern Sports*, New York 1978 (trad. française récente: *Du rituel au record: la nature des sports modernes*, Paris 2006).

ἀγῶνες grecs comme rares et plutôt précoces. Il y a certes des exceptions,³ mais il est probable que peu de choses séparent une course, un pentathlon ou un combat de l'époque de Solon et les mêmes compétitions à l'époque de saint Jean Chrysostome, alors qu'un observateur contemporain sera étonné des photographies d'épreuves sportives remontant seulement aux Jeux Olympiques d'Athènes de 1896.

Seules les installations sportives ont, dans une faible mesure d'ailleurs, profité des progrès techniques de l'Antiquité,⁴ sans toutefois chambouler le geste sportif, sauf dans un cas précis, nous semble-t-il: celui du départ des courses, courses à pied, seul cas qui nous intéressera ici, et courses hippiques.

Comme l'a montré la belle étude de Panos Valavanis sur l'*hysplex*,⁵ non seulement les Grecs se sont très tôt ingénies à inventer un système efficace pour le départ des courses, mais ils l'ont perfectionné, et ce en recourant à une technologie empruntée à l'art de la guerre. Rappelons les origines de ce dispositif. Pour assurer l'équité des courses à pied, il convient que tous les candidats parcourent la même distance d'une part et partent en même temps d'autre part.⁶ Le premier objectif est atteint grâce à la *balbis*, ligne de départ dont B. Rieger a récemment fait une étude approfondie.⁷ Non seulement la *balbis* autorise un alignement des concurrents sur une même ligne, mais elle facilite le départ grâce aux rainures dans lesquelles les athlètes, le pied gauche

³) Par exemple le passage des «gants» de boxe anciens, constitués de lanières de cuir souple, aux gants «modernes», en lanières dures. Cette transformation, qui n'est pas totalement expliquée, s'est faite aux alentours de 400 av. J.-C., comme le rappelle Pausanias quelques siècles après, et il ne semble pas y avoir eu, dans la boxe grecque, d'importants changements postérieurs à cette transformation; nous suivons là, même s'il y a sans doute des nuances à apporter, les conclusions de H. M. LEE, *The Later Greek Boxing Glove and the "Roman" Caestus: A Centennial Reevaluation of Jüthner's 'Über antike Turngeräthe'*, in: Nikephoros 10, 1997, 161–178. Nous reviendrons ailleurs sur la course en armes.

⁴) On pensera aux aménagements hydrauliques ou aux passages voutés pour l'entrée des athlètes, cas tous admirablement documentés par l'exemple de Némée, cf. St. G. MILLER, *Nemea II: The Early Hellenistic Stadium*, Berkeley/Los Angeles 2001.

⁵) P. VALAVANIS, *Hysplex. The Starting Mechanism in Ancient Stadia. A Contribution to Ancient Greek Technology*, Berkeley/Los Angeles 1999.

⁶) Les Grecs avaient toutefois inventé pour les courses hippiques un système qui, tout en ne respectant pas ces deux principes, leur a paru satisfaisant: dans l'hippodrome d'Olympie, les chevaux et les chars partaient les uns après les autres et ne parcouraient pas exactement la même distance; le décalage dans le temps compensait le décalage dans l'espace.

⁷) B. RIEGER, *Von der Linie (gramme) zur Hysplex. Startvorrichtungen in den panhellenischen Stadien Griechenlands*, Hildesheim 2004 (Nikephoros Beiheft 9).

en appui et les bras tendus vers l'avant,⁸ calent leurs orteils.⁹ Les plus anciens exemples datent sans doute de la fin du VI^e s. av. J.-C., à Némée, Corinthe et peut-être Olympie. Mais il n'y eut jamais de standardisation ni même de généralisation de ce dispositif, à peine peut-être une certaine normalisation au IV^e s. av. J.-C. dans les stades qui accueillent les concours de la période, les plus importants du monde grec, à savoir les Olympia de Pise, les Pythia de Delphes, les Isthmia de Corinthe et les Nemea de Némée. Ailleurs le départ était au mieux régulé par une simple *grammè*, une ligne droite derrière laquelle se postent les coureurs. Et la *balbis* a même disparu dans certains cas au profit de l'*hysplex*.

Ce dernier vise cette fois à créer un départ simultané de tous les concurrents, comme nos starting-blocks modernes. Il faut distinguer trois générations au moins d'*hysplex*, sur plusieurs siècles, cas tout à fait singulier dans la faible évolutivité générale constatée *supra* dans le sport grec. Comme pour d'autres aménagements sportifs, Corinthe a semble-t-il joué un rôle pionnier. On y construit un *hysplex* de première génération dès le V^e siècle av. J.-C. : des piquets verticaux fixés dans la *balbis* portent des barres amovibles tenues horizontalement par des cordes. Chaque coureur a devant lui une barre tenue par une corde. Toutes les cordes convergent vers un starter positionné à l'arrière du dispositif, starter qui, en relâchant les cordes, abaisse simultanément toutes les barres et libère ainsi les coureurs.¹⁰

Ce système rudimentaire a été remplacé dès le IV^e siècle¹¹ par un dispositif que les fouilles de Némée ont permis de restituer dans tous

⁸) L'article de P. ROOS, *The Start of the Greek Foot-Race*, in: *Opuscula Atheniensis* 6, 1965, 149–156, imprécis sur plusieurs points, reste utile pour étudier la représentation de la posture des athlètes au départ.

⁹) Cf. St. G. MILLER, *Ancient Greek Athletics*, Yale 2004, 34–43; RIEGER, *Von der Linie* (vd. n. 7), *passim*; EADEM, *Ancient Starting Devices for Runners*, in: E. ALBANIDIS (éd.), 8th International Congress of the European Committee for Sport History, Université de Thrace 2004, 149–157; EADEM, *Antike Startvorrichtungen für Läufer*, in: R. WÜNSCHE/Fl. KNAUSS (éd.), *Lockender Lorbeer, Sport und Spiel in der Antike*, Munich 2004, 73.

¹⁰) Le système fut d'abord décrit par O. BRONEER, *Starting Devices in Greek Stadia*, in: *AJA* 76, 1972, 205–206; description complète chez MILLER, *Ancient* (vd. n. 9), 37–39.

¹¹) MILLER, *Ancient* (vd. n. 9), 40, attribue à Philon de Corinthe la paternité de l'*hysplex* de seconde génération. Néanmoins, rien ne permet de conclure que ce personnage mentionné par *IG IV²* 1,98 et qualifié là de *ὁ ἐργώνας τῆς ὑπλακος*, est l'inventeur du système. Cela nous semble même hautement improbable, puisque les travaux au stade de Némée datent des années 320, alors que l'inscription d'Épidaure est du III^e siècle, et qu'*ἐργώνας* désigne simplement l'entrepreneur des travaux; sur ce dernier texte, cf. *BE* 2003, 93, et sur sa date M. SÈVE in: *REG* 106, 1993, 310–311.

ses détails. Il s'agit de l'adaptation rapide d'une innovation militaire, la catapulte. Le principe de celle-ci, à savoir la libération de la pression exercée sur le bras de l'arme, est appliqué à une unique barrière de départ pour tous les concurrents. Une barrière légère en corde est tendue entre deux forts piquets qui, comme le bras de la catapulte, sont mis sous tension par un ensemble de nerfs de bœufs. Contrairement à la catapulte, la position initiale est bien sûr verticale, la barrière étant maintenue par deux cordelettes, une à chaque bout. Il suffit au starter de libérer la tension en relâchant ces cordelettes pour que les deux piquets abaissent d'un seul mouvement toute la barrière, libérant les coureurs.¹² Efficace, cet *hysplex* est adopté dans les stades construits au IV^e s. av. J.-C.

Les premiers *hysplex* et la *balbis* coexistent dans une sorte de symbiose matérielle, puisque l'*hysplex* est ajouté directement sur la *balbis* et que les coureurs continuent à utiliser les rainures. Mais la troisième génération d'*hysplex* renonce elle purement et simplement à la *balbis*. En effet, sans doute à partir du II^e siècle av. J.-C., on construit des *hysplex* monumentaux en pierre où chaque coureur se retrouve dans une espèce de stalle de départ devant sa propre barrière, sorte de portillon qui, grâce à des dispositifs ingénieux, doit s'abaisser en même temps que celui de ses concurrents.¹³ L'absence de *balbis* rend la position des pieds des coureurs et de tout leur corps beaucoup plus libre, l'essentiel étant encore une fois que tous partent au même moment.¹⁴

S'appuyant sur deux représentations d'époque impériale, P. Valavanis a conclu que l'*hysplex* de seconde génération était toujours en usage à l'époque impériale, et ce même au IV^e s. de notre ère.¹⁵ C'est en soi tout à fait possible, et même probable dans les nombreux stades où l'on n'a pas construit d'*hysplex* en pierre de troisième génération. Mais les deux documents invoqués ne peuvent en aucun cas être des *hysplex* «à catapulte». Ils représentent, comme d'autres documents connus ainsi qu'une lampe conservée à Berlin, un système de départ connu des spécialistes du sport romain sous le nom de *regula*. Il y a en fait quatre témoignages iconographiques déjà identifiés pour cette barrière de départ, deux en sculpture, deux sur mosaïque.

¹² VALAVANIS, *Hysplex* (vd. n. 5); MILLER, *Ancient* (vd. n. 9), 39–43; la meilleure présentation pour comprendre ce mécanisme est sans doute celle de St. Miller dans le documentaire réalisé par la chaîne Arte et diffusé en DVD, *Quand les dieux couronnaient les hommes*, 2004, puis repris dans *Les champions d'Olympie. La véritable histoire des premiers jeux*, 2008.

¹³ Pour un résumé synthétique, RIEGER, *Von der Linie* (vd. n. 7), 407–410.

¹⁴ Souci permanent des Grecs, on le verra, pour la course à pied pendant un millénaire, cf. RIEGER in: Lockender Lorbeer (vd. n. 9), 73.

¹⁵ VALAVANIS, *Hysplex* (vd. n. 5), 53–57.

Le premier est un fragment de bas-relief connu uniquement par un dessin du XVI^e s.¹⁶ Ce dernier a appartenu à un codex regroupant une importante collection de dessins de monuments et sculptures romains réunie dans le Codex Vaticanus 3439, dit aussi Codex Ursinianus. Le folio 58, entièrement consacré aux spectacles du stade et du cirque et qu'on a cru être extrait du célèbre recueil de dessins rassemblés dans le codex Coburgensis réalisé au milieu du XVI^e siècle,¹⁷ ne serait en fait qu'une copie d'un autre codex, le Pighianus.¹⁸ La page 58b^v comporte deux scènes agonistiques, qui ont aussi été copiées dans l'immense collection Dal Pozzo¹⁹ et qui ornaient un sarcophage romain de la fin du II^e s. ou du début du III^e s.,²⁰ dont seule une face est aujourd'hui conservée. Celle-ci représente une course mettant aux prises trois athlètes, dont le plus à droite se tient devant une table de prix portant l'une de ces couronnes monumentales offertes aux vainqueurs sous l'Empire.²¹ L'original se trouve aujourd'hui à Rome, Via della Scala, mais l'autre partie qui figure sur le second dessin et qui nous intéresse, bien qu'elle appartienne sans doute au même sarcophage, est perdue (dessin fig. 1). O. Jahn²² et O. Kern²³, de même

¹⁶ O. KERN, *Ein neues Coburgensisblatt*, in: MDAI(R) 5, 1890, 150–156, pl. 7; R. AMEDICK, *Die Sarkophage mit Darstellungen aus dem Menschenleben: vita privata*, Berlin 1991 (Die antiken Sarkophagreliefs 1.4), n° 309, pl. 89.2; LEHMANN, *Läufer am Start* (vd. n. 1), 275. L'illustration in: *Lo sport nel mondo antico. Ludi, munera, certamina a Roma. Mostra organizzata in occasione dei campionati mondiali di atletica leggera*, Rome 1987, 37, fig. 3, est à l'envers.

¹⁷ O. KERN, *Ein neues Coburgensisblatt* (vd. n. 16).

¹⁸ H. WREDE/R. HARPRATH, *Der Codex Coburgensis: das erste systematische Archäologiebuch. Römische Antiken-Nachzeichnungen aus der Mitte des 16. Jahrhunderts: 7.9.–2.11.1986*, Kunstsammlungen der Veste Coburg, Coburger Landesstiftung, Coburg 1986, 117.

¹⁹ C. VERMEULE, *The Dal Pozzo-Albani Drawings of Classical Antiquities in the Royal Library at Windsor Castle*, in: Transactions of the American Philological Society, New Series, Vol. 56, n° 2, 1966, 55, n° 8781.

²⁰ AMEDICK, *Sarkophage* (vd. n. 16), n° 226, pl. 89.

²¹ Nous préparons une étude sur les origines et les usages de cette couronne agonistique monumentale; voir en attendant D. SALZMANN, *Kaiserzeitliche Denkmäler mit Preiskronen. Agonistische Siegespreise als Zeichen privater und öffentlicher Selbstdarstellung*, in: M. LÄMMER (éd.), *Agonistik in der römischen Kaiserzeit*, St. Augustin 1998 (Stadion Band 24,1), 89–99; J. RUMSCHEID, *Kranz und Krone: besondere Arten des Kopfschmuckes und ihre Bedeutung in der römischen Zeit*, Tübingen 2000 (Istanbuler Forschungen 43); K. DUNBABIN, *The prize table: crowns, wreaths, and moneybags in Roman art*, in: B. LE GUEN (éd.), *L'argent dans les concours du monde grec. Actes du colloque international*. Saint-Denis et Paris, 5–6 décembre 2008, Saint-Denis 2010, 301–345.

²² O. JAHN, *Zeichnungen antiker Monumente im Codex Pighianus*, in: *Berichte der Königlichen Sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften* 20, 1868, 184.

²³ KERN, *Ein neues Coburgensisblatt* (vd. n. 16).

qu'un érudit qui avait annoté le dessin,²⁴ avaient déjà compris globalement de quoi il s'agissait. Devant un hermès barbu,²⁵ quatre coureurs se tiennent derrière une barrière en attendant le signal du départ que leur donnera un personnage à droite, dont toute la partie supérieure est perdue, mais qui ne nous paraît pouvoir être que le héraut.²⁶ Comme l'a remarqué P. Valavanis, le personnage de gauche tient la barrière par le bas,²⁷ celui de droite par le haut. Notons aussi que celle-ci est plus longue que la distance qui sépare les deux piquets qui la soutiennent, et dépasse donc à droite et à gauche. La posture des athlètes indique qu'ils n'en sont qu'à se préparer pour le départ, celui-ci n'est pas imminent.²⁸

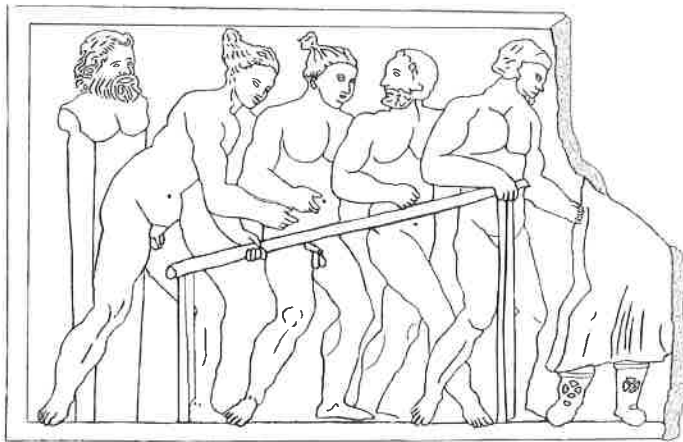


Fig. 1: Codex Vaticanus Latinus 3439, dessin de l'auteur

²⁴ Nous recopions le texte transmis par O. KERN, *Ein neues Coburgensisblatt* (vd. n. 16), 155: *repagulum quod erat in circo ante carceres aliquando funiculus. Albam lineam vocabant, a Graecis γραμμὴ dicitur, vide Cassiodorum et Julium Pollux.*

²⁵ Sur les hermès près des lignes de départ, cf. nos remarques in: *Klio* 86, 2004, 155–159.

²⁶ Son habit nous paraît caractéristique; nous y reviendrons dans une étude d'ensemble sur la mosaïque agonistique de Batten Zammour, cf. *infra*.

²⁷ Ce qui lui a fait écrire qu'il s'agissait du moment où les athlètes remontaient un *hysplex* de seconde génération en position de départ. Outre que nous ne partageons pas cette interprétation, nous ne croyons pas qu'une telle tâche, qui exigeait un contrôle technique, était confiée aux athlètes.

²⁸ VALAVANIS, *Hysplex* (vd. n. 5), 53–54, a voulu y voir une simple variante de l'*hysplex* de seconde génération, la corde tendue entre les piquets (les *ankones*) ayant été selon lui remplacée par une tige en bois.

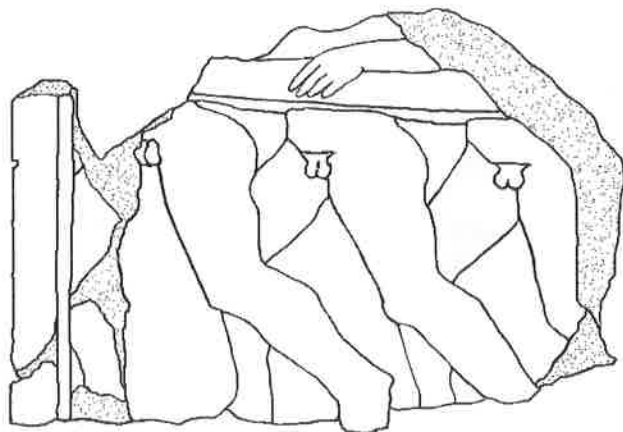


Fig. 2: Relief du Latran, dessin de l'auteur

Le second témoignage iconographique sur la *regula* doit être, malgré l'avis contraire de P. Valavanis²⁹ et de St. Lehmann³⁰, un relief très fragmentaire conservé au Latran³¹ (dessin fig. 2), et rapproché du précédent document par O. Kern.³² N'est conservée que la partie inférieure de quatre hommes nus; l'un se tient debout à gauche, mais la seule jambe gauche conservée ne permet aucune conclusion quant à l'identité et à l'activité du personnage.³³ En revanche, la posture des trois hommes tournés vers la gauche est caractéristique: la jambe gauche avancée et fléchie, le pied droit en légère extension, nous les retrouverons dans la mosaïque de Batten Zammour et la lampe de Berlin. Bien sûr, les hommes nus sont représentés largement de profil,

²⁹ P. 54, n. 168: «Rather, it shows a crew of men (slaves) who are pushing some equipment (the winch of a well).» Valavanis rejoint ainsi l'interprétation de O. BENNDORF/O. SCHÖNE, *Die antiken Bildwerke des Lateranensischen Museums*, Leipzig 1867, n° 37, qui parlent de «Ferculumträger».

³⁰ LEHMANN, *Läufer am Start* (vd. n. 1), 270: «Motivisch ist das Reliefbild von der Zeichnung im Codex Ursinianus abhängig, stilistisch wirkt das Fragment allerdings wie eine neuzeitliche Arbeit. Auch die Funktion der Startanlage scheint hier nicht erkannt worden zu sein, so daß auf dieses Stück nicht weiter eingegangen werden soll.» Nous ne sommes pas compétent pour juger du style, mais le relief ne nous paraît pas pouvoir dériver du dessin du XVI^e siècle: les positions des corps, des membres sont complètement différentes; quant au personnage de gauche, il eut été maladroit de le dénuder quand celui du dessin est vêtu et chaussé. Nous laissons aux spécialistes de la sculpture le soin de trancher.

³¹ Photos dans *Lo sport* (vd. n. 16), 37, fig. 2 (d'où Nikephoros 9, 1996, pl. 18/2), LEHMANN, *Läufer am Start* (vd. n. 1), 275.

³² *Ein neues Coburgensiblatt* (vd. n. 16), 155-156.

³³ Comme l'a montré Kern, ce personnage ne peut être l'équivalent de l'homme habillé sur le dessin du Codex Vaticanus.

donnant l'impression de filer vers la gauche en laissant l'objet au premier plan à leur droite. Mais nous croyons que l'état fragmentaire du relief fausse le point de vue.³⁴ De toute manière, il est exclu d'y voir des esclaves portant quelque chose: la main du second est non-chalamment posée sur la poutre, elle ne la porte pas. Même si le relief n'est pas d'une grande qualité, la musculature des jambes correspond bien à celle de coureurs. Dernier point, déjà souligné par O. Kern: la barrière est ici beaucoup plus épaisse que sur le Codex Vaticanus.



Fig. 3: Mosaïque de Tébessa, l'organisateur et la barrière, dessin de l'auteur

Le troisième témoignage sur cette *regula* est lui aussi connu depuis longtemps, puisqu'il a été découvert en 1886, mais l'objet figuré n'a été identifié comme tel que tout récemment par M. Khanoussi³⁵ et, parallèlement, par R.-D. Pausz et W. Reitinger.³⁶ La mosaïque trouvée à Tébessa est en elle-même assez célèbre, puisqu'il s'agit de la mosaïque dite du «jeu de l'oie», des «jeux» ou de «Fortuna Redux».³⁷

³⁴) Si, dans le dessin du Codex Vaticanus, l'on ne regarde que la partie sous la barrière, on a la même impression de déplacement le long de la barrière, alors que l'interprétation de la scène ne fait aucun doute.

³⁵) MDAI(R), 98, 1991, 319 et n. 32, suivi par J.-P. THUILLIER, *Stace, Thébaïde, VI: les jeux funèbres et les réalités sportives*, in: Nikephoros 9, 1996, 151–167, ici, n. 30.

³⁶) R.-D. PAUSZ/W. REITINGER, *Das Mosaik der gymnischen Agone von Batten Zammour, Tunesien*, in: Nikephoros 5, 1992, 119–123.

³⁷) S. GSELL, *Musée de Tébessa*, Paris 1902, 67–70, pl. 9, 1. Le dessin de VALAVANIS, *Hysplex* (vd. n. 5), 56, est ici tout à fait malheureux.

Depuis l'étude de F. Baratte,³⁸ il faut y voir – sans pour autant exclure d'autres interprétations non-contradictaires – une représentation de spectacles, *venationes* et jeux athlétiques, organisés au retour d'une navigation maritime heureuse et lucrative. Seule la partie inférieure se réfère aux compétitions sportives, et certains points restent à élucider. Lors de son transfert au musée de Théveste, la mosaïque a subi quelques dégâts;³⁹ il est toujours utile de se référer à la première publication,⁴⁰ et surtout à une aquarelle de J. Chabassière réalisée en 1888 et qui a servi à une reproduction en couleurs publiée par la société de Constantine.⁴¹ Malgré quelques imprécisions,⁴² qui ne concernent d'ailleurs pas le répertoire inférieur qui nous intéresse, c'est à partir d'elle que nous avons fait le dessin fig. 3.⁴³ On y voit un organisateur de la compétition⁴⁴ et, à sa gauche, une barre posée sur deux supports dont des bases triangulaires assurent la stabilité au sol. St. Lehmann a écarté ce témoignage comme incertain, car il n'y a pas de coureurs derrière la barrière.⁴⁵ Quant à J.M. Blas de Roblès, il a voulu y reconnaître le tréteau sur lequel on posait le timon d'un char;⁴⁶ nous ne connaissons pas de parallèle, et surtout, un tréteau vide nous semble une très curieuse manière d'indiquer que des courses de

³⁸ Fr. BARATTE, *Quelques remarques à propos de la mosaïque de «Fortuna Redux» de Tébessa*, in: BNSAF 1973, 77–79, pl. XI,3, suivi par K. M. D. DUNBABIN, *The Mosaics of Roman North Africa: Studies in Iconography and Patronage*, Oxford 1978, 74, n. 39, photo pl. XXIV, fig. 5; elle est ignorée de I. KAJANTO, *Interpreting Fortuna Redux*, in: D. KREMER (éd.), *Homenagem a Joseph M. Piel: por ocasião do seu 85º aniversário*, Tübingen 1988, 35–50.

³⁹ Qu'on observe en comparant les représentations anciennes et la photo fournie par K. Dunbabin.

⁴⁰ Faite parallèlement par F.-M. ALLOTTE DE LA FUÏE in: *Recueil de Constantine* 24, 1886–1887, 211–219 et par A. HÉRON DE VILLEFOSSE, *ibid.*, 240–245, planche en face de la page, reprise de l'article paru in: *Revue de l'Afrique française* 5, 1887, 388–399, pl. 3.

⁴¹ Elle est reprise, avec une référence erronée, par J. M. BLAS DE ROBLÈS/CL. SINTÈS, *Sites et monuments antiques de l'Algérie*, Aix-en-Provence 2003, 232.

⁴² Cf. p. ex. pour le navire, les photographie et aquarelle côte à côte chez S. FERDI, *Mosaïques des eaux en Algérie. Un langage mythologique des pierres*, Alger 1998, 172.

⁴³ Dessin sommaire chez G. LAFAYE, *Lusoria tavola*, in: *Dictionnaire des Antiquités grecques et romaines* III, 1405, fig. 4678, beaucoup plus précis chez S. REINACH, *Répertoire de la peinture grecque et romaine*, Paris 1922, 259, fig. 1.

⁴⁴ Nous évitons volontairement tout terme technique trop précis, car on ignore au fond la fonction exacte de ce personnage.

⁴⁵ LEHMANN, *Läufer am Start* (vd. n. 1), 270, n. 4: «Allerdings lassen die erhaltenen Hinweise keine Athleten erkennen, daher muß die Deutung offen bleiben.»

⁴⁶ BLAS DE ROBLÈS/SINTÈS, *Sites* (vd. n. 41), 233.

char avaient aussi été organisées à l'occasion de ces spectacles.⁴⁷ On imagine mal le commanditaire de la mosaïque, qui a donné les *ludi*, utiliser un procédé aussi elliptique et modeste pour figurer un spectacle aussi prestigieux que les courses de chars; la présence d'un personnage tenant une mappa sur la même mosaïque irait plus dans ce sens, mais l'argument n'est pas décisif, puisque cette mappa apparaît dans d'autres contextes, compétitions athlétiques – comme c'est le cas dans la mosaïque de Batten Zammour – ou *venationes*. Malgré la faible largeur de la barrière – qui n'est pas forcément réaliste de ce point de vue –, de quoi pourrait-il s'agir d'autre que d'une barrière de départ dans ce contexte de *ludi gymnici*? Car ce qui nous paraît assurer le contexte athlétique de la scène, c'est la présence d'un athlète nu, Marcellus, tout à gauche, tenant une palme. Sans cela, l'identification de l'objet eut été bien aléatoire. Surtout, on a bien l'impression que la zone inférieure forme un tout en rapport avec les compétitions gymniques, l'unité étant donnée par le singulier sol rayé. L'identification comme barrière de départ nous paraît donc très possible. C'est alors un témoignage bien plus tardif que les sculptures d'époque antonine, puisqu'il date du début du IV^e siècle,⁴⁸ peut-être vers 325.⁴⁹ Ce n'est en aucun cas une difficulté, puisqu'il y a un autre témoignage iconographique sur la *regula* précisément contemporain.

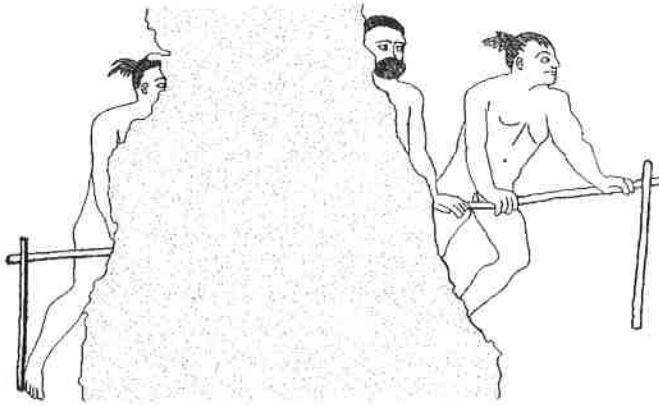


Fig. 4: Mosaïque de Batten Zammour, scène de départ, dessin de l'auteur

⁴⁷) Il faut toutefois noter ici qu'un personnage à la mappa figure sur la mosaïque, mais même la mappa peut se référer aux compétitions athlétiques, comme c'est le cas dans la mosaïque de Batten Zammour. Il y a toutefois eu des compétitions hippiques, puisque deux chevaux sont figurés avec un taureau dans le registre du milieu.

⁴⁸) DUNBABIN, *Mosaics* (vd. n. 38).

⁴⁹) BARATTE, *Quelques remarques* (vd. n. 38).

En effet, cette barrière apparaît sur la mosaïque agonistique de Batten Zammour, retrouvée près de l'antique Capsa en Tunisie.⁵⁰ Nous avons ailleurs déjà commenté certaines scènes de ce document exceptionnel et préparons une étude sur ce qui nous paraît être la représentation d'un grand concours de Rome. La première scène de l'angle supérieur gauche a immédiatement été identifiée à juste titre comme un départ de course (fig. 4). La mosaïque est endommagée à cet endroit. Seuls trois athlètes sont conservés, mais il y en avait certainement un quatrième dans la lacune. Comme dans le dessin du Codex Vaticanus, on trouve un starter, un arbitre cette fois en l'occurrence, portant une baguette, comme il en apparaît d'autres sur la mosaïque. Là, les coureurs ne tiennent pas la barrière, mais si deux d'entre eux se contentent de poser leurs mains sur elle, assez fine comme dans le codex, l'athlète de droite est si penché qu'il est évident qu'il fait porter une partie de son poids sur la barrière. Celle-ci doit donc reposer sur de solides taquets, qui ne sont pas visibles. En revanche, dans ce chef d'œuvre de précision, un détail est d'importance: la barrière est clairement posée à l'arrière des poteaux, du côté des coureurs. Toujours à la différence du sarcophage perdu, le départ semble cette fois imminent: le regard des trois coureurs est tendu vers celui qui donnera l'ordre de départ.

Une autre représentation du même dispositif n'a, elle, pas été reconnue jusqu'ici. Elle se trouve sur une lampe conservée à Berlin, provenant d'un lot de lampes sans doute acheté au Caire. En tout cas, celle-ci a été rapportée d'Égypte par C. Schmidt en 1931 et publiée par G. Heres (fig. 5).⁵¹ C'est une lampe à bec rond, dont l'épaule présente un profil du type Loeschke 7b.⁵² Avec son bec en cœur et son bandeau lisse, sa forme se rapproche du type 10b dans le classement récemment proposé par J. Bussière.⁵³ Elle est munie de deux oreilles latérales. La datation de ces types est assez vague; ils appartiennent grosso modo à la seconde moitié du II^e siècle et à la première moitié

⁵⁰ Pour l'essentiel, voir M. KHANOUSSI, *Spectaculum pugilum et gymnasium. Compte rendu d'un spectacle de jeux athlétiques et de pugilat, figuré sur une mosaïque de la région de Gafsa (Tunisie)*, in: CRAI 1988, 543-560; REITINGER/PAUSZ, *Das Mosaik* (vd.n. 36); les plus belles photographies se trouvent chez H. SLIM in: M. BLANCHARD-LEMÉE/M. ENNAÏFER/H. et L. SLIM (éd.), *Sols de l'Afrique Romaine. Mosaïque de Tunisie*, Paris 1995, 190-196.

⁵¹ G. HERES, *Die römischen Bildlampen der Berliner Antiken-Sammlung*, Berlin 1972, n° 353, p. 64, pl. 39, n° d'inv. 31304. Dimensions: long. 7,9 cm; lar. 7,5 cm; haut. 2,4 cm.

⁵² Voir J. BUSSIÈRE, *Lampes antiques d'Algérie*, Montagnac 2000 (Monographies Instrumentum 16), 29, 90-91, 105 sq.

⁵³ Cf. les types très proches des lampes BUSSIÈRE, n° 2979-2983.

du III^e siècle, donc plus proches des deux reliefs représentant des scènes de départ que des deux mosaïques; la grosseur du trou d'évent, presque comparable à celle du trou de mèche, est plutôt un caractère tardif.



Fig. 5: Lampe de Berlin, Antikensammlung
(BPK, Berlin, Dist. RMN/© Georg Heres)

Le décor, lui, est à notre connaissance unique en son genre dans les lampes romaines. Deux Amours ailés et aux cheveux noués⁵⁴ se tiennent derrière une barrière, dans une position identique, la jambe gauche fléchie en avant, les mains posées sur la barrière.⁵⁵ G. Heres s'est mépris sur le sens de la scène: les Amours seraient représentés «eine Hürde (?) vor sich her nach rechts schiebend», sans qu'on voie bien ce que l'auteur entendait par là.

⁵⁴) Sur cette coiffure, cf. H. HILLER, *Zwei bronzenne Figurenlampen*, in: G. HELLENKEMPER SALIES et al. (dir.), *Das Wrack. Der antike Schiffsfund von Mahdia*, Cologne 1994, 515–530 et surtout les éros de Pompéi; cf. aussi récemment St. F. SCHRÖDER, *Katalog der antiken Skulpturen des Museo del Prado in Madrid. Vol. 2: Idealplastik*, Mayence 2004, n° 19.

⁵⁵) La surface endommagée ne permet pas de s'assurer que l'Amour de gauche pose bien sa main droite sur la barrière; la position du coude indiquerait qu'il la tient plutôt légèrement au-dessus.

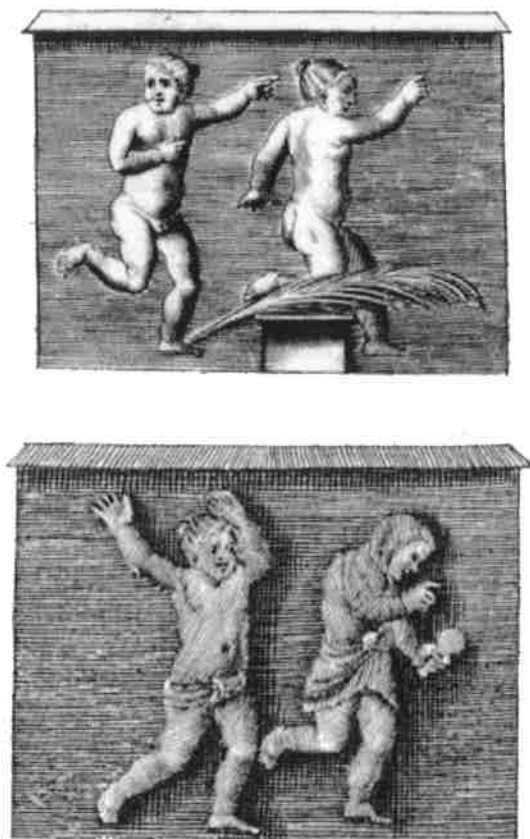


Fig. 6: Petits côtés du sarcophage du Louvre, d'après J. Spon

C'est l'occasion de préciser que les courses de haies n'ont pas existé dans l'Antiquité grecque, malgré les hypothèses de B. Schröder,⁵⁶ E. Mehl,⁵⁷ R. Patrucco⁵⁸ et M. Bonanno Aravantinou.⁵⁹ Les uns et les autres s'appuient sur un document à notre avis mal interprété. Il s'agit des petits côtés aujourd'hui perdus d'un sarcophage d'enfant, dont le long côté est conservé au Louvre.⁶⁰ La face principale montre

⁵⁶ B. SCHRÖDER, *Der Sport im Altertum*, Berlin 1927, 106–107.

⁵⁷ E. MEHL in: RE VII A (1948), 2521, s. v. *Turnkunst*.

⁵⁸ R. PATRUCCO, *Lo sport nella Grecia antica*, Florence 1972, 129, fig. 45–46.

⁵⁹ M. BONANNO ARAVANTINOU, *Un frammento di sarcofago romano con fanciulli atleti nei Musei Capitolini. Contributo allo studio dei sarcofagi con scene di palestra*, in: Boll. d'Arte 15, 1982, 67–84.

⁶⁰ F. BARATTE/C. METZGER, *Musée du Louvre. Catalogue des sarcophages en pierre d'époques romaine et paléochrétienne*, Paris 1985, 178–179, n° 88;

neuf enfants s'affrontant dans le pentathlon, la lutte, le pancrace et la boxe, en présence des arbitres, tandis que le centre de la composition est occupé par la remise de la palme et de la couronne au vainqueur, encadré par le trompette et le héraut.⁶¹ Les petits côtés ne sont connus que par un dessin et une gravure. Le premier est conservé à Windsor dans la collection Dal Pozzo.⁶² La seconde représentation est due à J. Spon,⁶³ qui reproduit un dessin qu'il a vu dans les papiers de Pierre-Antoine Rascas, sieur de Bagarris et du Bourguet (fig. 6).⁶⁴ Or l'hypothèse d'une course de haies ne peut s'appuyer que sur le dessin de la collection dal Pozzo, qui est le plus connu il est vrai et le plus reproduit.⁶⁵ Le petit côté droit y représente de fait un «obstacle», qu'un enfant semble franchir à droite, tandis qu'un autre est debout, les bras levés, devant cet objet. Mais on ne peut se référer à cette copie. La conservation de la face avant permet en effet de juger de la valeur respective des deux copies. Or celle transmise par Spon est très bonne; bien sûr, il y a, par rapport à l'original, quelques variations dans les attitudes et surtout dans la direction de quelques visages, mais les scènes sont comprises dans le détail. Il n'en va pas de même dans le dessin de Windsor: un personnage – l'arbitre du combat de lutte – manque complètement; les positions des athlètes sont profondément

AMEDICK, *Sarkophage* (vd. n. 16), n° 118, pl. 81; J. HUSKINSON, *Roman Children's Sarcophagi: their Decoration and its Social Significance*, Oxford 1996, pl. 5, fig. 23 (la description qu'en offre l'auteur n'est pas satisfaisante).

⁶¹ Sur ces représentations, nous renvoyons toujours à l'étude fondamentale de BONANNO ARAVANTINO, *Un frammento* (vd. n. 59); voir aussi le chapitre *Palaestra* dans AMEDICK, *Sarkophage* (vd. n. 16), 82–96.

⁶² Windsor, Royal Library, Recueil Dal Pozzo, vol. X, fol. 59, n° 8052, mentionné par VERMEULE, *The Dal Pozzo-Albani Drawings* (vd. n. 19), 65 («Front and two ends of a sarcophagus: erotes in athletic contests in a Palaestra»).

⁶³ *Miscellanea Eruditae Antiquitatis*, Lyon 1685, 228 (disponible en ligne sur le site des Archives historiques et documentaires sur Lyon, ADHOC).

⁶⁴ Sur ce personnage, la vieille notice de J.-G. MICHAUD, *Biographie universelle ancienne et moderne: histoire par ordre alphabétique de la vie publique et privée de tous les hommes ...*, Paris 1843, t. 35, 203–205, n'a été remplacée que par la biographie introductive à la correspondance entre Rascas et le célèbre Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc, due à Ph. TAMIZEY DE LARROQUE, *Pierre-Antoine de Rascas, sieur de Bagarris*, Aix-en-Provence 1887 (Les correspondants de Peiresc, XII), 5–30 (repris dans *Les correspondants de Peiresc: lettres inédites publiées et annotées par Philippe Tamizey de Larroque*, Paris/Genève 1972). Il appartient à cette République des Arts et des Lettres européenne, au sein de laquelle circulent de nombreux dessins d'œuvres antiques; pour un exemple de dessin transmis par Rascas, N. J. BARKER, *Un-discarded images: illustrations of antique musical instruments in 17th- and 18th-century books, their sources and transmission*, in: *Early Music* 35.2, 2007, 191–212.

⁶⁵ Dessins chez PATRUCCO, *Lo sport* (vd. n. 58) et SCHRÖDER, *Der Sport* (vd. n. 56).

modifiées, quand il n'y a pas tout simplement de grossières erreurs d'observation.⁶⁶ Surtout, l'esprit d'ensemble de cette copie est un véritable contresens: l'artiste n'y voyait pas des luttes athlétiques, mais d'aimables jeux d'enfants joyeux aux corps amollis, aux poses parfois alanguies, ce qui correspond à un autre type de représentations sur sarcophages;⁶⁷ le lanceur de javelot – une originalité de cette scène – devient ainsi une sorte d'Amour tenant une guirlande! Le dessinateur donne d'ailleurs volontiers aux enfants la coiffure bouclée des Amours telle qu'on la trouve dans de nombreux autres sarcophages,⁶⁸ alors que tous les athlètes portent ici le cirrus, cette sorte de chignon caractéristique des athlètes d'époque impériale.⁶⁹ C'est l'imprécision, pour ne pas dire la fantaisie du dessinateur, qui a introduit des difficultés d'interprétation dans la scène du côté droit.

Le petit côté gauche ne pose guère de problèmes: deux enfants coiffés du cirrus courent, dans une attitude caractéristique, devant une table de prix portant une palme. C'est la suite en quelque sorte des compétitions de la face avant, sur laquelle ne figure aucune course. Le côté droit est en réalité plus original, car il dépeint une véritable scène enfantine, sans équivalent dans les sarcophages d'enfants à notre connaissance. Deux garçons, qui sont l'un et l'autre sur le même niveau du sol, contrairement à ce que laissait croire le dessin dal Pozzo, courent. Mais ce ne sont pas des athlètes enfants, ils n'en ont pas la coiffure et surtout ils ne sont pas nus; leur attitude de course n'a d'ailleurs pas grand-chose à voir avec les représentations traditionnelles d'athlètes. Celui de gauche, portant un *perizonium*, lève les bras, comme le font naturellement bon nombre de petits enfants quand ils courent par jeu, tout simplement pour se dépenser. Quant à celui de droite, il porte un vêtement à manches et à capuchon, allant jusqu'au genou, et qui n'est que mal attesté. C'est une variante du *cucullus*, habit porté habituellement, mais pas seulement, par des génies et des démons;⁷⁰ de jeunes enfants sont parfois représentés encapuchonnés.⁷¹ Il porte

⁶⁶ Ainsi dans le combat de boxe: le bras tendu du boxeur victorieux posé sur la tête du vaincu devient le bras de l'arbitre.

⁶⁷ Sur cette catégorie bien connue de sarcophages, AMEDICK, *Sarcophage* (vd. n. 16), et HUSKINSON, *Roman Children's Sarcophagi* (vd. n. 60), 16–17, avec le catalogue.

⁶⁸ P. ex. BARATTE/METZGER, *Sarcophages* (vd. n. 60), n° 93, 101–104; HUSKINSON, *Roman Children's Sarcophagi* (vd. n. 60), *passim*.

⁶⁹ J.-P. THUILLIER in: MEFRA 110, 1998, 351–380.

⁷⁰ W. DEONNA, *De Télésphore au «moine bourru»: Dieux, génies et démons encapuchonnés*, Bruxelles 1955 (Collection Latomus 21); L. D'AMBROSIO, *Il cucullus: uomini e geni*, in: RSA 22–23, 1992–1993, 179–237.

⁷¹ DEONNA, *De Télésphore* (vd. n. 70), 8; il y a des représentations d'enfants morts encapuchonnés, cf. p. 130.

dans sa main gauche un hochet, d'un type connu:⁷² monté sur une tige, le corps sphérique creux, sans doute en terre cuite, renferme de petits cailloux, de petites graines ou des billes de terre cuite, un peu comme des maracas. Les hochets (*crepitacula*) avaient des formes très variées. Il ne semble pas ici s'agir d'un hochet métallique, alors même que l'enfant devait appartenir à un milieu favorisé, mais plutôt d'un modèle robuste et modeste comme en est conservé un à Autun.⁷³ Le hochet est le premier jouet des bébés romains, mais ici il s'agit d'un objet tenu par un enfant plus grand; il est d'ailleurs intéressant de noter que le hochet très comparable retrouvé à Autun, en forme de poëlon fermé, est trop lourd pour un bébé: il conviendrait mieux à un enfant plus âgé comme celui représenté sur le sarcophage.

Faut-il donner à cette scène inhabituelle une signification particulière? Nous le pensons. Le vêtement des deux enfants est en tout cas très rare, le hochet est unique à notre connaissance sur les sarcophages. Pollux nous apprend que les hochets servent à éloigner les mauvais esprits.⁷⁴ Il y a sans doute ici plus qu'une scène de la vie quotidienne enfantine, thème déjà assez peu courant. Ce petit côté doit avoir une signification funéraire, comme au demeurant en ont une les scènes agonistiques.⁷⁵ Le hochet pourrait être ici un *apotropaion* destiné à détourner le mauvais œil, comme ailleurs des griffons montent la garde, le plus souvent sur les petits côtés.

La lampe de Berlin représente sans aucun doute possible un départ de course à pied. La figuration assez schématique de la barrière comme un simple Π n'apporte pas grand-chose à notre connaissance de la barrière de départ. Devant celle-ci, aux pieds des *erotes*, sont déposés deux objets que Heres n'a pas identifiés. Celui de gauche nous paraît être un haltère, symbolisant ici le pentathlon, puisqu'il sert dans le saut en longueur, qui est l'une des cinq épreuves de cette discipline. Différentes formes d'haltères existent;⁷⁶ ici, même si le relief

⁷² G. COULON, *L'enfant en Gaule romaine*, Paris 1994, 74–75; *Jouer dans l'Antiquité, Catalogue d'exposition, nov. 1991–février 1992, Marseille*, Marseille 1991, 51–53; M. MANSON, *Jouets de toujours, de l'Antiquité à la Révolution*, Paris 2001, 14–16.

⁷³ *Jouer dans l'Antiquité* (vd. n. 72), 51, fig. 13.

⁷⁴ *Onomasticon*, IX, 127.

⁷⁵ La référence essentielle reste les pages de F. CUMONT, dans ses *Recherches sur le symbolisme funéraire des Romains*, Paris 1942, 457–484. Nous n'avons pu voir St. DIMAS, *Untersuchungen zur Themenwahl und Bildgestaltung auf römischen Kindersarkophagen*, Münster 1998.

⁷⁶ Cf. J. JÜTHNER, *Die athletischen Leibesübungen der Griechen II*, Vienne 1968, 162–180; D. KNOEPFLER, *Haltère de bronze dédié à Apollon Hékabolos dans la collection G. Ortiz (Genève)*, in: CRAI 38, 1994, 337–379; *Lockender Lorbeer* (vd. n. 9), 119–127.

est grossier,⁷⁷ il doit s'agir d'un modèle aminci au milieu pour permettre une meilleure préhension.⁷⁸ Nous ne sommes en revanche pas parvenu à reconnaître avec certitude l'objet de droite. Un manche, qui s'affine vers le haut peut-être, est surmonté d'une partie clairement distinguée du manche et qui s'évase plus ou moins de manière symétrique. Nous avons songé d'une part à un flambeau, car c'est un accessoire courant des *putti*,⁷⁹ mais aucun flambeau n'a cette forme dans les représentations d'époque romaine.⁸⁰ Ce pourrait d'autre part être un ustensile agonistique, et plus précisément une sorte de hache double permettant d'ameubler le sol. Dans les représentations d'époque classique, l'outil utilisé est toujours une pioche bien reconnaissable.⁸¹ Les représentations sont rarissimes à l'époque impériale et la pioche à tranchant court qu'on voit sur un sarcophage⁸² – comme notre outil agricole – n'a alors ni la forme qu'on lui connaît sur les représentations d'époque classique – où l'outil s'apparente davantage à la pioche de terrassier ou au pic –, ni celle de l'objet de la lampe: seule la mosaïque de Batten Zammour représente cet outil pour ameubler la terre comme une sorte de hache, mais à un seul tranchant.⁸³ Un tel ustensile serait toutefois en adéquation avec l'ensemble de la scène, puisque l'haltère désigne le saut en longueur du pentathlon, pour lequel précisément un outil pour ameubler la terre est nécessaire, comme par ailleurs pour la lutte, dernière épreuve du pentathlon, qui comprenait par ailleurs une course.

⁷⁷ Le créateur de la lampe a de plus voulu introduire une sorte de profondeur dans le dessin, et a donc évité une représentation frontale des deux objets, ce qui en rend l'identification plus difficile.

⁷⁸ JÜTHNER, *Die athletischen Leibesübungen* (vd.n.76), 178–180; un tel modèle est, nous semble-t-il, celui que tient l'athlète qui s'apprête à sauter dans la mosaïque de Batten Zammour.

⁷⁹ Cf. LIMC, art. *Eros*, n° 366–387, p. 881–882.

⁸⁰ On aurait aussi attendu un strigile, mais aucun exemplaire connu n'a cette forme.

⁸¹ Les représentations abondent, cf. e.g. *Lockender Lorbeer* (vd.n.9), 98, 100, 108, 123, 131, 132, 134, 137.

⁸² Nous ne connaissons personnellement que deux représentations sur des sarcophages: sur le petit côté, sans doute, d'un exemplaire perdu, connu seulement désormais par un dessin, VERMEULE, *The Dal Pozzo-Albani Drawings* (vd.n.19), n° 8765–8766, fig. 226, G. KOCH/H. SICHTERMANN, *Römische Sarkophage*, Munich 1982 (*Handbuch der Archäologie*), 433, n° 65, fig. 461, cf. BONANNO ARVANTINOU, *Un frammento di sarcofago* (vd.n.59), 70; et sur le devant d'un sarcophage conservé aujourd'hui au musée Getty de Malibu, AMEDICK, *Sarkophage* (vd.n.16), n° 69, mais l'extrémité de la pioche est cassée.

⁸³ C'est à notre connaissance le troisième et dernier témoignage d'époque impériale, dans la scène illustrant le pentathlon (cf. la photographie in: CRAI 1988, 548, fig. 4); on y voit même deux exemplaires de pioche.

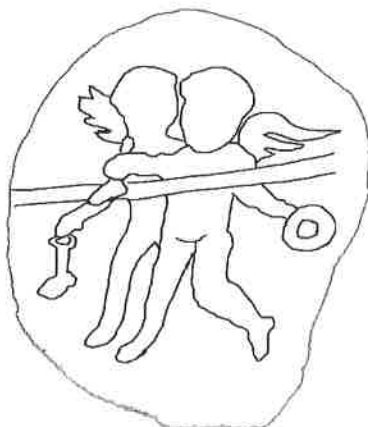


Fig. 7: Gemme de Hanovre, dessin de l'auteur

Un dernier document pose un problème que nous ne saurions trancher. Il ne nous montre assurément pas une scène de départ à proprement parler, mais, peut-être, une *regula*. Il s'agit d'une pâte de verre de piètre qualité conservée à Hanovre.⁸⁴ Les auteurs l'ont décrite ainsi: «Zwei nackte geflügelte Amoretten laufen nebeneinander, jeder einen Arm um den Rücken des Gefährten. Beide sind in Dreiviertelseitenansicht dargestellt, die Oberkörper in Drehung nach vorn, der Kopf des vorderen im Dreiviertelprofil, des hinteren fast frontal. Der vordere Knabe hält in der nach hinten gestreckten Hand einen Kranz. Der andere trägt in der vorgestreckten Hand eine abwärts gerichtete Fackel. Unter ihren vorgesetzten Füßen kurze Grundlinie.» En fait, le bras de l'Amour de droite est clairement à l'horizontale, tendu devant la poitrine de son camarade; le bras gauche de ce dernier est entièrement caché par le corps du premier. Un objet au moins est mal identifié: si la couronne ne pose pas de problème, ce que les auteurs ont pris pour un flambeau est un anneau qui porte des strigiles et peut-être quelque récipient pour l'huile, comme on en connaît de nombreux exemples.⁸⁵ L'objet que l'Amour au premier plan porte dans sa main

⁸⁴) M. SCHLÜTER/G. PLATZ-HORSTER/P. ZAZOFF, *Antike Gemmen in deutschen Sammlungen, 4. Hannover, Kestner-Museum, Hamburg, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Wiesbaden*, 1975, n° 841. Description: «Glaspaste, schwarzbraun mit schmalen Querstreifen und weißem Überzug, opak. Hochoval, beiderseits flach, Kante gerade»; dimensions: 0,82 x 0,69 x 0,27 cm.

⁸⁵) Pour un anneau conservé avec un strigile, cf. E. KOTERA-FEYER, *Die Strigilis*, Berne/Francfort 1993 (Europäische Hochschulschriften, Reihe 38; Archäologie, Bd. 43), pl. 38; avec deux strigiles, D. VANHOVE (éd.), *Le Sport dans la Grèce antique – Du jeu à la compétition*, Bruxelles 1992, 230, n° 93 (= *L'olympisme dans*

droite est indistinct. Toute la pâte de verre est traversée en son milieu par ce que les auteurs ont considéré comme un «Gußüberstand». Mais le dernier objet mentionné, porté par l'Amour au premier plan, semble passer devant celui-ci, ce qui amènerait à faire de ce trait horizontal un élément du moule (cf. notre dessin fig. 7), et non un défaut de fabrication. L'un et l'autre personnage se tiennent-ils derrière une barrière? Cela est peu probable, car le motif représenté se retrouve ailleurs sans barrière.⁸⁶ Si c'était une barrière, elle serait en rapport avec la course, mais pas avec le départ: elle est trop haute, et les Amours sont en pleine course. Ce serait toutefois d'autant plus intéressant que le gemme est daté du tournant de notre ère, et serait dans ce cas bien antérieur aux autres représentations de scène de départ. Mais nous laissons à plus compétent que nous le soin de reprendre ce document.

De ces quatre ou cinq représentations de départ ainsi que de la mosaïque de Tébessa, si elle figure bien une *regula*, nous pouvons tirer les conclusions suivantes. D'abord, il a existé à l'époque impériale un système différent des *hysplex*, de quelque type que ce soit. Ensuite, ce dispositif beaucoup plus rudimentaire est constitué d'une barrière de bois d'épaisseur variable – plutôt mince, mais elle peut être épaisse comme dans le relief du Latran – reposant sur des piquets de section variable. Ceux-ci peuvent être fichés dans le sol, mais à Tébessa ils sont simplement portés par des supports reposant sur le sol. En outre, cette barrière est, au moins dans un cas, posée sur des taquets à l'arrière des supports, tandis que d'autres représentations, moins précises il est vrai, la montreraient plutôt posée directement sur le dessus. Enfin, avant le départ, les athlètes prennent cette barrière en main, et elle est assez robuste pour qu'on puisse s'y appuyer, au moins légèrement.

Nous avons déjà évoqué le terme de *regula* pour désigner cette barrière, du moins sa partie horizontale. Cette identification a été proposée par J.-P. Thuillier et nous ne pouvons qu'y souscrire. Le rapprochement avec un passage de la *Thébaïde* de Stace paraît décisif:⁸⁷

*ut ruit atque aequum summisit regula limen, / corripuere leues
spatium*

l'Antiquité, II, 1^{er} février 1996, Lausanne 1996, 75); avec deux strigiles et une pyxis, *Lockender Lorbeer* (vd. n. 9), 273; avec une paire de strigiles et la chaîne pour aryballe, *L'olympisme dans l'Antiquité*, 23 juin 1993, Lausanne 1993, 150; sur des mosaïques, à Aquincum, Ostie et Salzbourg par exemple.

⁸⁶) Cf. T. GESZTELYI, *Antike Gemmen im Ungarischen Nationalmuseum*, Budapest 2000, n° 27.

⁸⁷) V. 593–595.

Dès que la barrière fut tombée, les mettant sur la même ligne, ils s'élançèrent allègrement dans la carrière.

Confrontant les témoignages iconographiques et les paroles du poète, J.-P. Thuillier conclut: «La description de Stace est ici très précise sur le plan technique, elle est confirmée par l'iconographie romaine et elle nous donne même le nom de cette barrière qui s'appelait donc en latin *regula*.» Il n'y a en latin qu'une seule autre attestation du mot en ce sens, à notre connaissance, et elle est assez significative puisqu'elle émane de Servius dans son commentaire de l'*Énéide* de Virgile, à propos des vers 315–316 du livre V:⁸⁸

corripiunt spatia audito raptim eunt, ut "corripit Aeneas aditum custode sepulto". limenque relinquunt aut regulam, aut signum de creta factum.

Après avoir entendu le signal du départ, ils s'élancent dans la carrière, comme "Énée [s'élança] tandis que le gardien est enseveli dans sa torpeur". Ils partent de la ligne de départ, de la barrière ou de la ligne tracée à la craie.⁸⁹

Là comme ailleurs, Stace s'est en fait inspiré dans sa description de la course à pied chez Virgile, et on verra *infra* que Servius et Stace se réfèrent en fait aux mêmes réalités.

On connaît peut-être aussi le nom grec de ce dispositif, le *κανών*. Ce terme désigne en fait tout type de barrière dans tous les matériaux.⁹⁰ C'est aussi le mot pour désigner l'instrument dont on se sert pour mesurer les performances dans le saut en longueur.⁹¹ Mais *κανών* recouvre par ailleurs un concept que des textes, tous tardifs, mettent

⁸⁸) Cité par Th. AIGNER/B. MAURITSCH-BEIN/W. PETERMANDL, *Laufen. Texte, Übersetzungen, Kommentar*, Vienne/Cologne/Weimar 2002 (Quellendokumentation zur Gymnastik und Agonistik im Altertum 7), 335. La traduction de *regula* par «Richtschnur» ne nous paraît pas satisfaisante, et en contradiction avec la définition donnée p. 460 («Bei Statius wird *regula* als eine Sperrvorrichtung beschrieben»).

⁸⁹) Le début paraphrase le récit de la course à pied lors des jeux offerts par Énée: *Haec ubi dicta, locum capiunt signique repente corripiunt spatia audito limenque relinquunt*. La citation est, elle, tirée du livre 6, v. 424, lors de la descente aux Enfers d'Énée; mais *corripit* est ici une adaptation libre de Servius, les manuscrits comme les commentaires portant tous *occupat*.

⁹⁰) M.-Chr. HELLMANN, *Recherches sur le vocabulaire de l'architecture grecque d'après les inscriptions de Délos*, Athènes 1992 (BEFAR 278), 186–187.

⁹¹) Pollux, *Onomasticon*, III,51, cf. G. DOBLHOFER et alii, *Weitsprung. Texte, Übersetzungen, Kommentar*, Vienne/Cologne/Weimar 1992 (Quellendokumentation zur Gymnastik und Agonistik im Altertum 2), 82.

en relation avec le départ.⁹² Si les témoignages de la Souda⁹³ et d'un scholiaste d'Aristophane ne permettent pas exactement de savoir de quoi il s'agit,⁹⁴ un scholiaste de Denys le Périégète décrit le *kanon* comme une sorte de barrière qui s'abat: "Υσπληγξ δὲ κυρίως τὸ μηχάνημα τὸ ἀποκροῦν τὸν κανόνα τοῦ δρομέως.⁹⁵ Il est impossible de savoir ce que le scholiaste désigne précisément par là; ce pourrait être, plutôt que la *regula*, la barrière individuelle qui s'abaisse dans les *hysplex* de la troisième génération. Il nous paraît toutefois possible que les Grecs parlaient de *κανών* là où les Romains disaient *regula*.

Le principe de la *regula* est très simple: les coureurs, au signal du héraut ou de l'arbitre, soulèvent ensemble la barrière et la jettent par terre. Nous ne pouvons exclure qu'ils la projetaient non devant, mais derrière eux.⁹⁶ Une chute de la barrière vers l'avant présente en effet plusieurs difficultés: un danger, d'abord, celui de trébucher dessus, ou de rouler sur elle si sa section est ronde. Un risque de confusion ensuite: un athlète situé à une extrémité pourrait tenter de tricher en poussant la barrière vers ses adversaires, et non vers l'avant, voire la pousser certes vers l'avant, mais en la retenant pour que les coureurs placés au centre soient gênés. Le problème ne se pose pas si les athlètes doivent jeter la barrière par-dessus leur tête: pour que le dispositif fonctionne, il faut alors la collaboration de tous et personne ne peut partir avant les autres. Car là est bien le point essentiel: comme les *hysplex* bien plus sophistiqués, ce système rudimentaire doit offrir un départ égal, un «seuil égal» pour reprendre littéralement l'expression de Stace.

Mais pourquoi un tel système a-t-il été utilisé alors que les Grecs avaient de longue date perfectionné une machinerie qui peut nous paraître plus satisfaisante, moins rustique et plus spectaculaire? C'est qu'à notre avis cette *regula* a été utilisée essentiellement dans l'Occident romain,⁹⁷ et d'abord dans des lieux qui n'avaient pas vocation à recevoir d'*hysplex*.⁹⁸

⁹²) *Laufen* (vd. n. 88), 458.

⁹³) *Souda*, s. v. Ἄφεξ ἀπὸ βαλβίδων (= *Laufen* [vd. n. 88], 351) et s. v. Ὑσπληγξ.

⁹⁴) Schol. Aristoph., *Lysistrate*, 1000 b–d (= *Laufen* [vd. n. 88], 24).

⁹⁵) Schol. Dion Perieg. 121 (= *Laufen* [vd. n. 88], 84).

⁹⁶) Ce n'est qu'une hypothèse, mais on ne peut pas, nous semble-t-il, décider entre les deux possibilités théoriques.

⁹⁷) Ce qu'indiquait déjà, par intuition, en 1895, Fr. HAUSER, *Zur Tübinger Bronze II*, in: *JÖAI* 10, 1895, 194–195, ici 195: «Es handelt sich also möglicherweise hier um einen Vorgang, welchen nur die römischen Circusspiele kannten.»

⁹⁸) Sur l'utilisation de ce dispositif, nous nous séparons donc nettement de LEHMANN, *Läufer am Start* (vd. n. 1), 271, qui pense qu'il n'a servi que dans des

Tous les témoignages se réfèrent en effet aux réalités des compétitions athlétiques organisées en Occident, précisément en Italie et en Afrique du Nord. C'est clair pour les bas-reliefs, puisqu'il s'agit de vestiges trouvés à Rome. La mosaïque de Tébessa se réfère sans doute à des compétitions locales. C'est ce qu'on a cru aussi pour la mosaïque de Batten Zammour, mais nous montrerons ailleurs qu'il s'agit de la représentation d'un grand concours de type grec, un *ἀγών*, probablement l'un de ceux organisés à Rome même,⁹⁹ beaucoup moins probablement à Pouzzoles, à Naples ou en Afrique.¹⁰⁰ La lampe conservée à Berlin vient d'Alexandrie, mais c'est une lampe romaine qui s'insère dans une série de thèmes agonistiques bien connus, mettant en scène ou non des *Amores*.¹⁰¹

Les témoignages littéraires se rapportent eux aussi aux réalités italiennes. En effet, même si les compétitions décrites par Stace dans la *Thébaïde* sont les Nemea de Némée – avec un programme toutefois homérique –, les descriptions des épreuves mélangent rappels virgiliens – eux-mêmes en relation avec les concours grecs de Nicopolis –,¹⁰² évocation des spectacles de Rome et influences des concours grecs.¹⁰³ Surtout, Stace écrit pour un public romain, pour lequel le dé-

concours mineurs. Pareillement, sa conclusion p. 272, ne nous convainc pas: «In dem römischen Sarkophagrelief und dem spätantiken Mosaikbild finden sich keine Hinweise auf einen konkreten gymnischen Agon, dennoch wird über die Bildkomposition, das Aussehen und die Anzahl der Läufer, die Darstellung der Konstruktionsweise der Startanlage sowie über den agonistischen Bildkontext jeweilige zeitgenössische 'Lebenswirklichkeit' eingefangen, ungeachtet der Tatsache, daß die Bildsprache typologisch in einer griechischen Tradition steht und ikonographische Details auf die römische 'Gegenwart' verweisen.» Nous pensons au contraire que, d'une part, la mosaïque se réfère à un concours bien particulier, d'autre part que tant la 'Bildsprache' que les détails iconographiques sont gréco-romains.

⁹⁹) À cette époque, vers 300–325, si tous sont encore organisés, il peut s'agir des Kapetōlia, de l'Agon Solis ou de l'Agon Minervae.

¹⁰⁰) Comme nous le verrons ailleurs, deux scènes nous semblent peu adaptées au contexte des Eusebeia de Pouzzoles et des Sebasta de Naples, ou encore à celui d'un concours africain.

¹⁰¹) Il n'y a aucune étude d'ensemble, ce qui paraît d'ailleurs bien difficile à réaliser compte tenu de la dispersion de la documentation; voir toutefois les exemples d'Amours et d'Éros chez E.-M. CAHN-KLAIBER, *Die antiken Tonlampen des Archäologischen Instituts der Universität Tübingen*, Tübingen 1977 (Tübinger Studien zur Archäologie und Kunstgeschichte 2), n° 183 et 241 (juste pour la bibliographie, la scène est mal décrite).

¹⁰²) Cf. M. L. CALDELLI, *Virgilio, Eneide V: i giochi funebri e le realtà sportive*, in: G. PACI (éd.), *Contributi all'epigrafia d'età augustea*. Actes de la XIII^e rencontre franco-italienne sur l'épigraphie du monde romain, Macerata, 9–11 septembre 2005, Macerata 2007 (Ichnia 8), 91–114.

¹⁰³) Cf. J.-P. THUILLIER, *Stace, Thébaïde* (vd. n. 35); H. LOVATT, *Epic games and real games in Statius, Thebaid 6 and Virgil, Aeneid 5*, in: S. BELL/GI. DAVIES

part se donnait avec une *regula*, non un *hysplex*. Il est donc tout aussi normal de retrouver la *regula* dans le commentaire servien, ou plutôt celui d'Aelius Donatus qui est contemporain des deux mosaïques représentant la *regula*.

Mais si c'est un dispositif «occidental», ce n'en est pas moins un système qui a pu être utilisé dans les *ἀγῶνες*, les concours à la grecque, et pas seulement dans des *spectacula* ou des *ludi* romains. Rien n'est certain dans le fragment du Latran. À Tébessa, ce sont sans doute de simples *ludi gymnici*. Mais la mosaïque de Gafsa montre un *agôn*, et à notre avis le dessin du Codex Vaticanus, avec son hermès, ses athlètes au cirrus et son héraut peut aussi se référer à un concours grec. Et Stace est parfaitement familier des concours grecs, en particulier des *Sebasta* de Naples.¹⁰⁴

Si même dans les plus prestigieux concours d'Occident on a pu utiliser la *regula*, c'est à notre avis d'une part pour une raison historique,¹⁰⁵ d'autre part pour une raison pratique. En effet, il existe depuis longtemps à Rome des courses à pied:¹⁰⁶ il fallait bien qu'il y eut un dispositif de départ, même rudimentaire, et cela été, à notre avis, à partir d'une certaine époque, la *regula*. Mais surtout les Romains ont importé les concours grecs et leurs courses. Or, il est tout à fait envisageable qu'ils n'aient pas adopté l'*hysplex* en vigueur à cette époque dans le monde grec,¹⁰⁷ car d'une part ils avaient la *regula* et, d'autre part, ils n'avaient pas de stade permanent.

On sait que les premiers spectacles gymniques grecs ont été donnés à Rome dans des lieux qui n'étaient pas destinés à cela.¹⁰⁸ César et

(éd.), *Games and Festivals in Classical Antiquity*, Proceedings of the Conference held in Edinburgh 10–12 July 2000 (BAR International Series 1220), Oxford 2004, 107–114; pour une analyse essentiellement littéraire du passage, cf. H. LOVATT, *Staius and Epic Games: Sport, Politics and Poetics in the Thebaid*, Cambridge 2005, 55–100.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. LOVATT, *Epic games* (vd. n. 103); de nombreux passages des *Silves* se réfèrent aux *Sebasta* de Naples; Stace a aussi participé aux *Kapetôlia* romains.

¹⁰⁵ On ne peut évidemment affirmer avec certitude que la *regula* était utilisée dans le stade de Domitien: même si la mosaïque de Gafsa décrit un concours de Rome, elle pourrait véhiculer davantage une vision stéréotypée des épreuves que la réalité exacte, mais en l'occurrence nous ne le croyons guère.

¹⁰⁶ J.-P. THUILLIER, *Le sport dans la Rome antique*, Paris 1997, 115; ID. in: J.-P. THUILLIER/W. DECKER, *Le sport dans l'Antiquité. Égypte, Grèce et Rome*, Paris 2004, 241–242.

¹⁰⁷ Précisons toutefois que certains stades en Grèce n'avaient pas d'*hysplex*. Comment s'y déroulaient les départs? Nous n'en savons rien.

¹⁰⁸ N. B. CROWTHER, *Greek Games in Republican Rome*, in: AC 52, 1983, 268–273 (= *Athletika. Studies on the Olympic Games and Greek Athletics*, Hildesheim 2004 [Nikephoros Beihefte 11], 381–385).

Auguste font se dérouler les épreuves sur le Champ de Mars.¹⁰⁹ Quand Stace, qui écrit la *Thébaïde* dans les années où les Kapetôlia sont fondés et le stade de Domitien est construit, décrit les lieux des épreuves, ceux-ci rappellent le cirque, et surtout le cirque par excellence, le Circus Maximus.¹¹⁰ Même dans les stades construits en Occident pour accueillir les concours grecs,¹¹¹ il y avait un obstacle à construire un *hysplex*, tout du moins un *hysplex* monumental de troisième génération: ils servaient en effet à d'autres spectacles en dehors des concours grecs qui n'avaient lieu que tous les quatre ans. C'est une certitude en tout cas pour le stade de Domitien, qui a accueilli *munera* et *venationes*.¹¹² Et on a fait l'hypothèse que le stade de Pouzzoles qui accueillait les Eusebeia servait aussi pour les courses hippiques et les *venationes*.¹¹³ Même au III^e siècle, des compétitions sportives sont organisées dans le Circus Maximus. Un relief aujourd'hui perdu représente, semble-t-il, des coureurs tournant autour de la *spina* du cirque.¹¹⁴ En

¹⁰⁹ Suétone, *César* 39,3 et *Auguste* 43, cf. CROWTHER, *Greek Games* (vd. n. 108) et R. W. FORTUIN, *Der Sport im augusteischen Rom. Philologische und sporthistorische Untersuchungen (mit einer Sammlung, Übersetzung und Kommentierung der antiken Zeugnisse zum Sport in Rom)*, Stuttgart 1996 (Palingenesia 57), *passim*.

¹¹⁰ LOVATT, *Epic games* (vd. n. 103), 111: «Staius' events seem to take place in a circus, continually evoking the Circus Maximus. The increasing impact of permanent venues for the staging of spectacle is shown by the change in the balance between portraying the primitive and evoking the contemporary Roman spectacle. Yet the stadium is not their venue; despite the Greekness of their dramatic setting (Nemea), the spectacle of Greek athletics unrolls here in the most traditional and Roman of venues, the Circus Maximus.»

¹¹¹ Dans les très rares stades d'Occident dont on a conservé des traces archéologiques, on n'a pas repéré pour l'instant de dispositif de départ. On n'a pas d'information sur la piste du stade de Domitien, A. M. COLINI, *Stadium Domitiani*, Rome 1943, 97: «Arena. Siamo purtroppo privi di ogni informazione su questo punto: la analogia dei monumenti simili della Grecia ci porta ad immaginarla con una zona centrale costituente la pista, della lunghezza dello stadio olimpico, e stalli alle estremità per regolare la partenza dei corridori, forse decorati di erme»; toutefois, la pl. A *in fine* montre que la zone de départ éventuelle – qui se trouve sous les fontaines aux extrémités de la place Navone – a quand même été fouillée en 1941, cf. p. 78–79; sur les fouilles récentes sur la Piazza Navone, sous un bâtiment de l'École Française de Rome, cf. MEFRA 118.1, 2006, 320–323, 119.1; 2007, 259–270, 121.1, 2009, 297–314.

¹¹² Au moins pendant l'indisponibilité du Colisée, après l'incendie sous Macrin.

¹¹³ G. CAMODECA, *Lo stadium di Puteoli, il sepulchrum di Adriano in Villa Ciceroniana e l'Historia Augusta*, in: RPAA 78, 2000–2001, 147–175, ici 152 (rappel de l'hypothèse émise par Humphrey d'un «hippostadion») et 157 (podium pour la sécurité des spectateurs).

¹¹⁴ Nous ne le connaissons que par la description qu'en a faite VERMEULE, *The Dal Pozzo-Albani Drawings* (vd. n. 19), 29: «Fol. 44; No. 8447. Footrace in the

revanche, le médaillon de Gordien III¹¹⁵ généralement invoqué pour illustrer la course dans le Grand Cirque¹¹⁶ ne doit sans doute pas l'être. Les deux personnages de gauche sont très indistincts et interprétés différemment suivant les dessins et les auteurs. Si de nombreux exemplaires ne permettent pas d'élucider la scène,¹¹⁷ celui du British Museum permet de trancher:¹¹⁸ il doit s'agir de gladiateurs, puisque le personnage tout à gauche, qu'on prend généralement pour un coureur, tient une épée; c'est donc une scène exactement parallèle à celle de droite qui représente deux hommes armés d'un bouclier, mais son sens précis nous échappe;¹¹⁹ en revanche, le centre est bien occupé par des compétitions gymniques, et plus exactement par la lutte, la boxe et le pancrace. Le cirque ou l'amphithéâtre n'en étaient pas moins appropriés à accueillir des compétitions gymniques. Quand une cité n'avait pas de stade, comme à Tébessa, une installation sur de simples poteaux posés à terre, toute provisoire, suffisait amplement. Nul besoin d'un *hysplex* compliqué: un dispositif aussi léger s'inscrivait dans la tradition romaine des *spectacula* gymniques et était adapté aux exigences des compétitions grecques tout en satisfaisant dans chaque cas

Circus Maximus: The runners proceed counter-clockwise around the spina, with an obelisk in the center. Compare Codex Ursinus (Cod. Vat. Lat. 3439), fol. 55.»

¹¹⁵ H. A. GRUEBER, *Roman Medallions in the British Museum*, Londres 1874, 46, n° 5, pl. 41.4; H. COHEN/F.-B. FEUARDENT, *Description historique des monnaies frappées sous l'Empire Romain communément appelées médailles impériales*, Tome V, Paris 1885, 50, n° 282 (dessin peu clair); F. GNECCHI, *I medaglioni romani*, Milan 1912, II,1, 90, n° 27, pl. 104, n° 10; A. BANTI, *I Grandi Bronzi Imperiali*, vol. IV.2, Florence 1987, 298, n° 80 et 299, n° 81. Photographie et dessin (emprunté à W. SMITH, *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, Londres 1890) dans J. NELIS-CLÉMENT/J.-M. RODDAZ (éd.), *Le cirque romain et son image: Actes du colloque tenu à l'institut Ausonius, Bordeaux, 2006*, Bordeaux 2008 (Mémoires, 20), 379. Le meilleur dessin, reproduit dans *Lo Sport* (vd. n. 16), 95, fig. 3, tiré de la contribution d'Em. BRAUN in: *Annali dell'Institut* 1839, planche O (la référence dans *Lo Sport* est erronée), est toutefois imprécis pour les deux personnages de gauche.

¹¹⁶ C'est une interprétation communément acceptée pour la scène la plus à gauche, depuis H. Cohen jusqu'à M. TAMEANKO, *Monumental Coins, Buildings and Structures on Ancient Coinage*, Iola 1999, 123 et *The Circus Maximus portrayed on Roman coinage*, in: *The Celator* 9.4, 1990.

¹¹⁷ La scène est décrite ainsi par GRUEBER, *Roman Medallions* (vd. n. 115): «Wounded gladiator being led away by an attendant», description qui s'est répandue au sein des collectionneurs et des catalogues de vente. BANTI, *I Grandi Bronzi* (vd. n. 115), les décrit comme «due lottatori che sembrano ritirarsi»; GNECCHI, *I medaglioni* (vd. n. 115), pour l'ensemble du registre du bas, parle de «gruppo di lottatori e due soldati».

¹¹⁸ On en trouve des illustrations sur Internet, et aussi les photographies très précises de reproductions modernes, p. ex. sur le site acsearch.info.

¹¹⁹ Un gladiateur cherchant à s'échapper?

le besoin d'équité sportive. Car tel est bien le souci permanent pendant un millénaire, que le système fut perfectionné ou sommaire, que le concours fut mineur ou parmi les plus prestigieux, que l'on soit en Orient ou en Occident: que tous les coureurs partent ensemble, sur un pied d'égalité.

**B. Le Guen (éd.),
L'argent dans les concours du
monde grec,**

Actes du colloque international,
Saint-Denis et Paris, 5–6 décembre
2008, Saint-Denis, Presses Univer-
sitaires de Vincennes 2010

«Quel beau sujet!» s'exclame O. Picard dans ses remarques conclusives. Je ne sais s'il s'agit d'un «beau» sujet, mais c'était en tout cas un sujet qui venait à point nommé et qui était bien nécessaire: quand tant de colloques sur l'Antiquité semblent un peu tourner en rond et rabâcher les mêmes thèmes, B. Le Guen, qui a par ailleurs édité les actes de cette rencontre avec une remarquable célérité, a fait là un choix judicieux. Car, si on sait bien aujourd'hui que l'amateurisme grec est un mythe inventé au temps de Coubertin, et même pour ce qui concerne les concours stéphanites, il est difficile, en raison de la nature des sources, et il n'est donc pas fréquent d'affronter directement les réalités économiques et financières que n'oubliaient pas quant à eux les organisateurs et les acteurs des agônes grecs. Ceux-ci comprenaient, comme on sait, un programme sportif et un programme musical, chacune de ces deux composantes étant présente ou plus ou moins développée selon les concours qui ont affiché dans le vaste «monde grec» une grande diversité liée à la chronologie et à la géographie. B. Le Guen étant d'abord spécialiste du théâtre, de l'activité dramatique et des technites dionysiaques – elle prépare d'ailleurs un livre, très attendu vu la nouveauté de son approche, sur l'histoire du

théâtre grec d'après la période classique – il n'est pas étonnant que les épreuves thyméliques et scéniques aient été un peu favorisées dans cette rencontre, sans que les épreuves «sportives» soient oubliées.

Dans une introduction très éclairante qui fait le point sur les études déjà réalisées sur le sujet et les recherches de quelques «pionniers» qu'on retrouve bien évidemment dans la liste des contributeurs, l'éditrice justifie par avance ce choix en dénonçant l'«inflation» des publications relatives aux «Jeux» olympiques, inflation à vrai dire toute relative si l'on s'en tient aux ouvrages vraiment scientifiques, mais ce n'est pas pour autant que la question de l'argent ait été souvent abordée à propos des agônes plus sportifs (si l'on fait exception bien sûr des travaux essentiels sur ce point de H.W. Pleket). Par ailleurs, il reste, d'une façon générale, qu'il y a beaucoup plus d'études universitaires sur le théâtre et la «musique» qu'il n'y en a sur les sports, fussent-ils olympiques, en raison du caractère plus «littéraire» des premiers, pour s'en tenir à une répartition simplifiée. Il est bien vrai en tout cas qu'on s'est surtout intéressé à la période classique et aux concours de la «période» qu'on a abordés presque exclusivement sous l'«angle civique, social et religieux» (23). Et ce qui est vrai des Modernes l'était déjà des Anciens en dépit de quelques exceptions (Aristophane, Démosthène).

Le premier thème abordé regroupe quatre contributions portant sur l'organisation des concours. P. Wilson, qui avait déjà enquêté sur le coût des Grandes Dionysies athé-

niennes, se penche ici sur le financement des Dionysies rurales qui, si elles étaient moins coûteuses que celles de la cité, n'en constituaient pas moins un poids très lourd pour les dèmes. Sur les 18 dèmes d'Attique avec Dionysies, 15 présentaient un programme théâtral et 8 possédaient un théâtre permanent. Pour le financement privé, les chorégies pouvaient être supportées par un nombre de familles restreint dont les membres devaient se soutenir. Quant à la gestion du budget public, il est clair que pour les démarques c'est bien l'organisation de ces fêtes comme les Dionysies qui constituait leur tâche principale. Et ils devaient donc trouver des moyens que l'exemple du contrat de location à bail du théâtre du Pirée à quatre personnes pour 3300 drachmes, à la fin du IV^e siècle, nous permet d'imaginer en partie: mais, pour les habitants des dèmes, il fallait désormais payer pour assister à ces représentations ... religieuses données dans leur propre communauté. «A novelty in the Greek religious economy» (61) dont O. Picard souligne aussi le caractère choquant dans sa conclusion. Mais c'est une tendance qu'on a sans doute trop tendance à oublier lorsqu'il s'agit de l'Antiquité: à Rome aussi, on payait sa place pour assister aux courses de chars, à tel point que certains, appartenant même aux ordres supérieurs de la société, faisaient la queue en pleine nuit devant le Grand Cirque, à leurs risques et périls, pour bénéficier des places gratuites. Il ne faut pas négliger même dans un pareil domaine des logiques commerciales, et l'auteur s'attarde ici sur les enseignements que fournit entre autres le

théâtre de Thorikos: plusieurs de ces édifices d'Attique ont une capacité supérieure au nombre de leurs dévotes et attiraient des habitants d'autres dèmes à des fins rentables. A noter sur ce sujet l'article récent de Jessica Paga, *Deme Theaters in Attica and the Trittyes System*, in: *Hesperia* 79, 2010, 351–384, qui donne quelques chiffres différents sur le nombre de théâtres dans les dèmes et suggère que les Dionysies rurales se seraient tenues au niveau des trittytes.

Le même savant revient, en compagnie cette fois d'E. Csapo, sur les derniers jours de la chorégie à Athènes et la date de son remplacement par l'agonothésie: faut-il attribuer ce changement à Démétrios de Phalère gouverneur d'Athènes de 317 à 307 avant notre ère? Une telle décision, conforme à l'école aristotélicienne, aurait eu en effet «pour objectif de préserver les fortunes des familles athéniennes les plus riches et de démanteler l'organisation démocratique de la culture théâtrale et musicale de la cité» (84). En tout cas, l'analyse de différents documents, épigraphiques ou littéraires, exclut que l'abolition de la chorégie ait pu avoir lieu au début du gouvernement de Démétrios (décret de l'épimélète d'Acharnes, décret athénien honorant Nikostratos, et rôle des étrangers dans les finances et l'administration du théâtre athénien dans cette seconde moitié du IV^e siècle). Il s'agit finalement d'une décision qui, contrairement à ce que l'on a cru, ne fut pas prise soudainement et à un moment précis mais fut le résultat d'un processus long et complexe: et, aussi étonnant que cela puisse paraître, «il est possible que l'agono-

thésie ait été créée par la démocratie restaurée en 307» (104).

Mais en Grèce il n'y a pas qu'Athènes et l'Attique: D. Summa a le mérite d'examiner les traces de la vie théâtrale dans les Locrides, ces contrées économiquement modestes, et d'apporter quelques données nouvelles, alors qu'on a longtemps pensé qu'il n'y avait presque rien en-dehors de la Locres Epizéphyrienne, où l'on a d'ailleurs mis au jour un théâtre hellénistico-romain. Si la Locride occidentale offre quelques mentions de concours et d'un agonothète (de Physkos) – il est dommage qu'il n'y ait pas une carte des sites envisagés, d'autant que certaines photographies ne sont guère lisibles (cf. la fig. 5, p. 120) – ce n'est pas pour autant que l'on dispose d'indications sur l'organisation théâtrale. En revanche, et c'est presque un peu surprenant, en ce qui concerne les Locriens de l'Est, on a connaissance, pour l'époque hellénistique et romaine, de divers athlètes et d'une vingtaine d'artistes de théâtre, originaires surtout de la cité d'Oponite: quelques rares textes permettent d'entrevoir le financement des concours, sur fonds publics (Naryx, qui possédait un théâtre «encore inédit») et privés (Halai, Oponite toujours – qui a la tradition musicale et théâtrale la plus affirmée – où l'on peut saisir le rôle d'un couple d'évergètes et donc celui des femmes en tant que bienfaitrices de la vie artistique).

Dans un article court et dense, qui est un peu un tour de force, L. Migeotte tente de rassembler toutes les sources de financement des concours dans les cités hellénistiques. Il part de huit cas qui vont du IV^e au

I^{er} siècle avant notre ère, en essayant de déterminer, quand c'est possible, les recettes et les dépenses, ces exemples étant plus ou moins développés en fonction des sources disponibles: Délos, Amorgos, Anaktorion, Ilion, Iasos, Bargylia, Tanagra, et Lébadée (où les Basileia comprenaient surtout des épreuves hippiques et athlétiques). Cela le conduit à établir une liste de sept catégories de financement, confirmées par d'autres documents: les revenus sacrés, les capitaux de fondations alimentés par des évergètes et qui pouvaient atteindre des sommes énormes (plus de vingt talents), les subventions publiques, les liturgies, à commencer ici par la chorégie, les contributions des cités, les «cotisations» individuelles (on a vu que les places de théâtre étaient normalement payantes), enfin les dons aussi bien individuels que collectifs et qui étaient donc irréguliers. On voit qu'une grande diversité a présidé à ces financements – il fallait réunir l'argent par tous les moyens – et les systèmes principaux se sont maintenus longtemps, conservatisme et innovation faisant bon ménage.

Dans les dépenses à envisager pour l'organisation d'un concours, il y avait évidemment les installations, les édifices, leur construction et leur entretien: c'est ce point qui constitue la deuxième partie de l'ouvrage avec deux articles qui recourent bien sûr certains des exemples déjà cités. J.-C. Moretti s'est chargé des théâtres (et des odéons) en Grèce continentale, dans les îles et en Asie mineure, en nous proposant d'abord une analyse portant sur les responsables de ces dépenses et sur les sommes engagées,

puis un ensemble de trois tableaux des plus commodes. Après avoir présenté les sources qui permettent de se pencher sur le cas de soixante-dix édifices environ, Moretti en relève les limites puisque, contrairement à ce qui existe pour Rome et les provinces occidentales, nous n'avons le prix global d'aucun théâtre grec en pierre, et les tentatives qui ont été faites, par exemple pour celui d'Epidaure, ne sont guère convaincantes. Avec les modes de financement, on revisite certains points vus dans l'article précédent. En fait, les inscriptions évergétiques portent plus sur les parties de l'édifice financées (gradins, estrade, front de scène, toit ...) que sur les sommes précises engagées: à l'époque impériale, les théâtres et leur nouvelle architecture coûtent de toute façon un prix beaucoup plus élevé, sans parler des restaurations nécessaires, en particulier à la suite de tremblements de terre. Du coup un autre point intéressant concerne le rythme de ces chantiers et la durée de construction qui a pu être très longue (Athènes, Délos, Aphrodisias).

V. Mathé s'est quant à elle intéressée aux édifices «sportifs», stades et hippodromes: elle reprend la même présentation que pour les théâtres, mais avec un corpus beaucoup plus mince puisqu'il n'y a guère que 25 édifices à prendre en compte – et du coup sa carte (fig. 8) est nettement plus lisible que celle des théâtres mentionnés (fig. 7)! – Ainsi, il n'y a pas d'occurrence financière pour un hippodrome des îles de la Méditerranée (et on ne sait trop à quelle zone géographique doit être rattaché celui d'Alexandrie dans la répartition proposée ...). Le

tableau 3 regroupe les «mentions de financement de l'aménagement de l'espace pour les spectateurs» parce que ce serait l'objectif prioritaire des donateurs privés: mais il est clair que les gradins de pierre n'apparaissent qu'avec l'époque romaine comme le montre bien l'exemple emblématique du stade de Delphes, et il ne faut sans doute pas s'appuyer sur l'exemple très ambigu d'Epidaure pour soutenir le contraire (même s'il ne rentre pas dans les zones géographiques prises en compte dans cet article, le stade de Cumes, récemment fouillé, devra être examiné de près avec ses gradins très bien conservés). Même dans les stades, «le développement architectural des gradins ne semble pas apparaître avant l'époque impériale» (201), et il me semble que ce n'est pas ici une simple question technique ou financière, comme le laissent entendre les deux articles. Ainsi que j'avais essayé de le montrer en 1985 dans mon livre sur les jeux étrusques, on se trouve ici devant une ligne de fracture entre Grèce et (Étrurie-)Rome, devant une divergence profonde de mentalités: pour les Grecs, l'accent est mis sur les citoyens-athlètes qui trouvent dans la victoire sportive leur plus bel accomplissement, et ce n'est pas un hasard si le stade d'Olympie n'aura jamais la moindre structure en pierre pour des spectateurs normaux, aussi nombreux soient-ils. En revanche, à Rome, les citoyens sont sur les gradins et la fonction de spectacle prend alors tout son sens et tout son poids.

Et, dans le budget à établir, il y a bien sûr aussi les récompenses, les *praemia*, les «prix» dont le mot est à lui seul, en français et dans

d'autres langues, tout un programme. On reste dans les épreuves sportives avec W. Decker qui, en se penchant sur les prix des vainqueurs «avant l'invention de la monnaie», c'est-à-dire jusqu'à la première moitié du VI^e siècle, nous permet de revisiter l'histoire la plus ancienne du sport, et de revenir par exemple sur le début des *Olympia*, qui est peut-être contemporain de celui des autres concours panhelléniques, contrairement à ce qui est affirmé par une solide tradition qui les fait remonter à 776. Decker ne pouvait oublier l'Égypte puisqu'il est le grand spécialiste du sport dans cette civilisation: et la «stèle de la course» datée de 685 est là un document particulièrement intéressant. On ne néglige pas le monde sumérien, ni celui des Hittites, ni le monde minoen ou mycénien, avec des prix en or ou en argent, et parfois des récompenses moins directement matérielles comme l'entrée dans le cercle des hommes («Decker 2003» semble avoir été oublié dans la bibliographie). Mais c'est avec Homère que l'on franchit un saut qualitatif (cf. le tableau de la p. 240, tous ces prix qui peuvent être considérables correspondant aux dons de la caste noble). Après une allusion à Hésiode et au trépied rapporté lors d'un agôn musical, ainsi qu'aux récipients de bronze donnés en prix lors d'agônes funèbres, Decker, qui n'a pas oublié de signaler l'importance du mot grec «athlon», présente des remarques très suggestives à propos de la tablette de bronze de Francavilla Marittima.

W. Slater, avec «Paying the Pipers» nous emmène en Eubée à l'époque hellénistique pour tenter

de chiffrer, à l'aide du décret de Chalkis, le coût des Dionysia qui se tenaient dans les quatre cités de l'île. C'est d'entrée le caractère exorbitant de ce coût qui est mis en avant, surtout si on fait la comparaison avec une compétition gymnique, car un festival dramatique, avec ses chœurs, fait appel à des troupes et pas seulement à des individus. De façon très concrète et même très pittoresque – on songe en effet à ces troupes de comédiens errant sur les routes d'Europe, depuis le temps de Molière jusqu'au roman de Théophile Gautier, *Le capitaine Fracasse* – Slater tente, en dépit des incertitudes qui existent sur les programmes, de cerner le nombre de technites nécessaires qui déambulaient en Eubée pour remplir leurs obligations dans un calendrier serré: plus de 80 «acteurs» sans doute, et si l'on ajoute tous ceux qui n'étaient pas directement sur la scène, on arrive à un total de 200 personnes. Si l'on fait le compte de tous les revenus en argent et sous d'autres formes (nourriture ...) qui attendaient ces technites, sans oublier les prix accordés aux vainqueurs, on peut arriver à un coût total de 6000 drachmes par cité pour ces fêtes, à quoi s'ajoutent des dépenses entre autres pour des banquets, des sacrifices. En s'interrogeant sur le type de festival qu'étaient finalement ces Dionysia/Démétrieia, Slater est conduit à mettre en lumière une catégorie spéciale, à mi-chemin entre concours stéphanites et concours thématiques: ce sont pour lui des némètoi agônes. L'examen de plusieurs festivals, entre autres à Milet, Thespies, Tanagra, met en évidence les diverses stratégies utilisées par

les cités organisatrices pour échapper à des dépenses trop fortes, et celles des vainqueurs qui compaient bien sur leur propre cité pour «gagner» dans l'autre sens du terme.

S. Perrot nous ramène quant à lui à Delphes, à ses concours des Pythia et des Sôteria, pour examiner les récompenses et les rémunérations des musiciens. On est là en présence, en dépit de quelques épisodes ambigus, d'agônes stéphanites mais «l'argent arrive néanmoins dans les bourses des musiciens à l'occasion de ces grands festivals» (287). Et Perrot de signaler par exemple les récitals, ou les musiciens intervenant dans les odes épiniques. Certaines dépenses concernant l'équipement ou le vêtement montrent que quelques artistes devaient avoir une situation financière confortable, liée à leur participation à des concours chrématites: les rapprochements proposés avec la carrière actuelle des musiciens sont loin d'être dépourvus d'intérêt.

Le dernier article, signé de K.M.D. Dunbabin, et accompagné de 38 figures bien utiles, passionnera aussi les spécialistes du monde romain puisqu'il y est question des couronnes de feuillage ou de fleurs (wreaths), de métal (crowns), ainsi que des sacs d'argent que l'on voit si souvent sur les tables de prix dans l'iconographie «agonistique» de l'Empire romain. Et on voit par là-même une nouvelle fois que la frontière est un peu floue entre concours stéphanites et thématiques. Dunbabin de passer en revue un grand nombre de documents, à commencer par la désormais célèbre mosaïque de Baten Zammour, en

Tunisie: si c'est bien un héraut qui figure avec le trompettiste près de la table de prix, le parallèle avec les grands concours sacrés en est encore accentué. Longtemps ignorées, en dépit des efforts d'un savant comme N. Duval, les couronnes métalliques, qui apparaissent à la fin du IIe siècle de notre ère, sont fréquentes sur les monnaies, en particulier d'Asie mineure, et Dunbabin d'en explorer les principales significations: c'est désormais à ce type de couronne qu'est associée la victoire, même pour les concours les plus traditionnels. Leur destination finale ne semble pas évidente: étaient-elles dédiées aux dieux comme les trépieds archaïques? Si au III^e siècle les couronnes métalliques étaient bien devenues le symbole le plus évident de la victoire agonistique, la fin de l'article est consacrée à ces sacs de monnaie, de «vulgar cash», que l'on voit par exemple à Baten Zammour, à Piazza Armerina ou à Pouzzoles, sur une mosaïque qui les associe à un festival sacré aussi important que les Eusebeia: le caractère hybride des *certamina* trouve bien là sa parfaite illustration, et l'on rappelle les lettres d'Hadrien récemment publiées dans lesquelles l'empereur insistait sur le fait que ces sacs d'argent devaient être montrés à tous et emportés immédiatement par les vainqueurs.

Le livre, doté d'une bibliographie de 29 pages et de 6 index, est formellement tout à fait remarquable, en dépit de quelques rares fautes ou coquilles inévitables: *décades* pour *décennies* (90), *trésosier* (94), *attester de* (100), y appartenait (289) ... Mais on peut penser que le choix assumé (20) d'accorder en

français au féminin pluriel les noms grecs au pluriel neutre comme *Olympia*, *Pythia*, etc. ... n'est pas très heureux («les premières *Olympia*»), d'autant qu'on pense à des concours (ou même à des «jeux», *horribile dictu*). L'exemple des Dionysies et des Panathénées n'est pas pertinent puisque ces «fêtes» ont été francisées depuis longtemps (cela conduit d'ailleurs à des confusions: cf. la p.244 et sa n.83). On pourrait en dire autant de la décision curieuse concernant les index, pour les lieux et les personnes, où les noms français, anglais, italien d'une même ville ou d'un même personnage ont été traités à part: on a donc des entrées Atene, Athènes, Athens ou Hadrian, Hadrien – et parfois le nom français d'une réalité n'apparaît pas du tout. Mais il s'agit

là de détails qui ne touchent en rien le fond de ce très bel ouvrage, qui a l'insigne mérite, sinon d'ouvrir, du moins de parcourir avec succès une piste de recherche essentielle, dans un domaine qui est au cœur du monde grec sur la très longue durée de son histoire, et il faut encore souligner ici le rôle joué par B. Le Guen qui mérite bien de figurer parmi les pionniers de cette recherche évoqués plus haut. Les amoureux inconditionnels de la Grèce, de son «miracle» et de son art seront peut-être déçus, mais il est trop clair que, là comme ailleurs, l'argent était au centre de toutes les préoccupations. Gagner: oui, mais dans tous les sens du terme.

Jean-Paul Thuillier, Paris

**Claas Lattmann,
Das Gleiche im Verschiedenen:
Metapher des Sports und Lob des
Siegere in Pindars Epinikien,**

Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2010 (Untersuchungen zur antiken Literatur und Geschichte 102), XI/370 S., geb., ISBN 978-3-11-024710-7, € 109,95

Claas Lattmann (L.) setzt sich im vorliegenden, aus seiner Dissertation (Kiel 2008) hervorgegangenen Buch mit einem Themenkreis auseinander, der in der neueren Pindarforschung in den Hintergrund gerückt ist: L. beschäftigt sich mit dem Siegerlob in Pindars Epinikien, das in nur geringem Maße direkt ausgesprochen wird. Eng damit verbunden ist die Frage nach der Einheit des Epinikions, da die verschiedenen Liedelemente, wie Mythos und Gnomen, nicht offensichtlich zum Siegerlob beitragen. Seine Studie zeigt nun auf, dass der Sieger in den Epinikien vornehmlich in indirekter Weise gelobt wird; dabei kommt metaphorischen Prozessen eine besondere Bedeutung zu, auf denen letztlich die Einheit des Liedes beruht. So lautet die in der Einleitung (1) formulierte Zielsetzung denn auch: „Die folgende Studie versucht zu zeigen, daß Pindars Epinikien als textlich kohärente Lieder in ihrem allgemein-kulturge-schichtlichen und konkret-situativen Kontext einzig und allein dem Siegerlob dienen, und zwar in einem weitaus umfassenderen Maße als bisher erkannt. Dieses Siegerlob wird allerdings zum größten Teil indirekt mittels metaphorischer Prozesse erzeugt. Diese verankern die Lieder in ihrem situativen Kontext und führen sie zu einer engen inne-

ren Einheit.“ Dies zeigt L. nach einer kurzen Einleitung anhand von fünf Epinikien (*Olympie* 8, *Pythie* 4 und 9, *Nemee* 4 und 8) auf, die je in einem Kapitel mit Originaltext und deutscher Übersetzung zu Beginn behandelt werden. Seine Besprechung der einzelnen Lieder, bei der auch zahlreiche Textprobleme diskutiert werden, ist sehr ausführlich; hier wird im Folgenden einzig die Argumentationslinie in großen Zügen nachgezeichnet. Die Ergebnisse der Studie fasst ein letztes Kapitel zusammen. Abgerundet wird das Buch durch einen dreiteiligen Anhang, der eine Zusammenstellung abweichender Textentscheidungen, Tabellen zu Pindars Epinikien und die Gliederungen der untersuchten Lieder enthält, sowie durch ein umfangreiches Literaturverzeichnis und ein vierteiliges Register (Sachen, Namen, Griechische Wörter, Stellen).

In der kurz gehaltenen Einleitung (1–5) nennt L. die Zielsetzung seiner Untersuchung, die die Interpretationsmaxime von E. L. Bundy („There is no passage in Pindar and Bakchylides that is not in its primary intent enkomastic – that is, designed to enhance the glory of a particular patron“) weiterführt. So soll seine Studie aufzeigen, dass die einzelnen Elemente des Epinikions so gestaltet sind, dass sie in ihrer Gesamtheit das Siegerlob erzeugen. Eine besondere Bedeutung kommt dabei den Metaphern aus dem Bereich des Sports sowie dem Mythos zu, die indirekt auf die sportliche Leistung des Siegers Bezug nehmen können. Durch die indirekte Lobpreisung werde der Sieger schließlich in höherem Maße gepriesen als durch ein direktes Lob, das zusätz-

lich Angriffsfläche bietet. Die verschiedenen Bestandteile des so erzeugten Siegerlobes führen zuletzt nach dem Prinzip des „Gleichen im Verschiedenen“ zur Einheit des pindarischen Epinikions hin. Exemplarisch soll dies anhand von *Olympie* 8, *Pythie* 4 und 9 und *Nemee* 4 und 8 aufgezeigt werden, in denen jeweils ein anderer Aspekt pindarischer Epinikien zur Sprache kommt.

Im anschließenden Kapitel „*Nemee* 8: Das Loben und seine Poetologie“ (6–77) nimmt L. v. 16–22 als Ausgangspunkt für die Besprechung. Diese Verse, in denen sich der Sprecher als Läufer darstellt, diskutiert L. unter Einbezug des vorangehenden Aiakos-Mythos (v. 6–12) und des anschließenden Aias-Mythos (v. 23–34) und deutet die Worte des Sprechers in dem Sinne, dass dieser als edler Mann die Leistung des *laudandus* so besingen will, dass jener wie Aiakos geachtet und geehrt wird und nicht Aias' Schicksal erleidet. Durch die Metapher des Laufens parallelisiert sich der Sprecher dabei mit dem siegreichen Läufer Deinis und seinem Vater Megas und impliziert dadurch, dass das Epinikion ebenso erfolgreich wie diese beiden Läufer sein Ziel erreichen wird. An dieser Stelle schiebt nun L. aufgrund der komplexen Metaphorik in diesen Versen eine theoretische Abhandlung der Metapher ein. Aus seiner Gegenüberstellung der schulrhetorischen Theorie der Metapher und jener von Charles S. Peirce geht hervor, dass nur letztere Theorie Pindars Metaphern adäquat zu erschließen vermag. Da jene Theorie die Komplexität der Metapher erfasst, stellt L. die Frage, ob Pindars Publikum einen solchen Metaphern-

gebrauch verstehen konnte, und beantwortet sie positiv: Erstens beweise die bloße Existenz pindarischer Epinikien, dass man die Lieder verstand. Zweitens zeigt L. insbesondere anhand von Aischylos' *Sieben gegen Theben* auf, dass Metaphern zu Pindars Zeit ein verbreitetes Ausdrucksmittel waren. Drittens weist L. auf den Gebrauch von den für metaphorische Operationen charakteristischen Denkmeechanismen, wie Priamel, Personifikationen von Prinzipien und Gnommen, in Pindars Werk und zeitgenössischen Texten hin. Und viertens zeige die verbreitete Verwendung des Tekmerienverfahrens in der Wissenschaft des 5. Jh.s v. Chr. eine Vertrautheit mit Metaphern an. Aus den theoretischen Überlegungen zur Metapher ergibt sich schließlich, dass eine Aufgabe des Epinikions darin bestehe, „den Sieg als Teil des Weltganzen zu deuten“ (59); das Epinikion selbst wäre „als globale Metapher zu verstehen, die die Parallelität des Verschiedenen offenbart“ (61). So gilt es nun bei der Interpretation von Pindars Epinikien „nach dem Gleichen im Verschiedenen zu suchen“ (62). Nach diesen für die gesamte Untersuchung grundlegenden Überlegungen kehrt L. zu *Nemee* 8 zurück und bespricht die letzte Triade (v. 35–51), in der der Sieg von Deinis und Megas als vorbildhaft dargestellt wird und entsprechend zu würdigen ist. In *Nemee* 8 werden Deinis und Megas somit mit Aias und Aiakos parallelisiert und erscheinen als Vorbild edler Menschen, zu denen sich auch der *laudator* zählt, der seine Tätigkeit durch die Metapher des Laufens mit jener der Sieger parallelisiert. Auf diese Weise er-

halten Deinis und Megas ein implizites Lob, das größer als jedes explizite Lob ist und zugleich vor Missgunst schützt. Ihre Gleichsetzung mit Aiakos, als „Heroisierung“ der Athleten gedeutet (72), bringt L. schließlich mit der Heroisierung von Athleten zu Pindars Zeit in Verbindung, die indes in der aktuellen Forschung umstrittener ist, als aus seiner Darstellung hervorgeht.

L.s. Besprechung von *Nemee* 8 lässt die Vielschichtigkeit und komplexe Gestaltung eines pindarischen Epinikions erkennen, wird aber durch die Behandlung zweier für die gesamte Studie maßgeblicher Themen, nämlich die Bedeutung der Metapher und die Einbettung des Siegerlobes in den kulturhistorischen Kontext, im selben Kapitel überlagert. Dass das Publikum Pindars komplexen Metapherngebrauch verstehen konnte, sucht L. mittels einer aufwendigen Argumentation zu erweisen. Die Erörterung einer solchen Frage mag interessant sein, lenkt aber vom eigentlichen Anliegen der Studie ab: Diese soll aufzeigen, dass Epinikien ganz auf das Siegerlob ausgerichtet sind, das vornehmlich indirekt durch metaphorische Prozesse erzeugt wird, die ihrerseits das Lied zu einer Einheit werden lassen. Dazu präsentiert L. die Analyse eines Lesers, der, anders als Pindars Publikum beim Liedvortrag, das Epinikon von einer beliebigen Passage ausgehend, wie im Fall von *Nemee* 8 von v. 16–22 aus, interpretieren kann. Und, wie auch die folgenden Einzelinterpretationen zeigen, gelingt es L., mit Hilfe von Pindars Metapherngebrauch das aufgrund seiner Indirektheit erhöhte Siegerlob sowie die Einheit der besprochenen Lieder

sichtbar zu machen. Bei einem solchen Unterfangen mag man die sich gewiss aufdrängende Frage, ob auch Pindars Publikum die Lieder so verstehen konnte, hintanstellen; denn sie ist, abgesehen davon, dass sie sich nur ansatzweise beantworten lässt, für die Untersuchung an sich sekundär.

Im dritten Kapitel „*Olympie* 8: Die Teleologie des Siegs“ (78–116) geht die Besprechung vom Mythos (v. 31–52) aus. Angesichts der Laufmetapher in *Nemee* 8,19 schlägt L. vor, den Mauerbau von Troia, entsprechend der Wettkampfdisziplin des Siegers, metaphorisch als Ringkampf zu deuten: Der Mauerbau entspräche einem Ringkampf gegen die Stadt, bei dem der dritte, entscheidende Niederwurf durch Aiakos erfolgt. Wie Ringkämpfer werden zudem die drei Schlangen dargestellt. Und das viel diskutierte Schlangenzeichen (v. 45–46) deutet L. in dem Sinne, dass Neoptolemos als Angehöriger der dritten Generation als erster von Aiakos' Nachkommen Troia zu Fall bringen werde. Entsprechend wird der Aiakos-Mythos von drei Ringkämpfen gegen Troia strukturiert, bei denen jeweils der dritte Kämpfer den endgültigen Sieg für die Gruppe erringt: Aiakos als dritter der Erbauer, die dritte Schlange und die dritte Aiakidengeneration mit Neoptolemos. Metaphern aus dem Bereich des Ringens finden sich auch außerhalb des Mythos in v. 15–30 und v. 54–84, wo neben dem Sieger Alkimedon der mit ihm verwandte Timosthenes, weitere Familienmitglieder sowie ihre Heimat Aigina und der Trainer Mellesias gelobt werden. Aufgrund der Gestaltung dieser Passagen fasst L.

Olympie 8 als Gemeinschaftsepinikion für Alkimedon, Timosthenes und Melesias auf: Parallel zu dem im Mythos behandelten Mauerbau von Troia bilden auch sie eine Dreiergruppe, die in Alkimedons Olympiensieg ihren Höhepunkt findet. Das von L. erstellte Schema (113), das die Parallelen zwischen Mythos und aktuellem Anlass sichtbar macht, verdeutlicht schließlich, dass Alkimedons Sieg in diesem Lied als Ziel (*τέλος*) der beiden vorangegangenen Siege (Mauerbau durch Aiakos, bzw. Kampf der Aiakiden vor Troia) gedeutet wird. Dadurch erhält der Knabe ein gewaltiges Lob. Zusätzlich leitet L. aus seiner Deutung ab, dass es sich bei Melesias um ein Familienmitglied, vielleicht Alkimedons Großvater, handeln könnte. Und die ausführliche Beschreibung der Reiseziele von Apollon, Poseidon und Aiakos (v. 46–52) könnte die Anzahl Siege von Melesias, Timosthenes und Alkimedon parallelisieren. L.s Besprechung von *Olympie* 8 lässt gut erkennen, wie die Metapher des Ringens das ganze Lied strukturiert und es zu einer Einheit macht.

Das vierte Kapitel „*Nemee* 4: Ringerlob im Lobesringen“ (118–162) behandelt ein weiteres Epinikion für einen aiginetischen Ringkämpfer, das auffallend viele Wörter aus dem Bereich des Ringens enthält und in dem zahlreiche Dreiergruppen vorkommen. Die Besprechung beginnt L. mit v. 33–46 und v. 93–96, wo das Ringen explizit zur Sprache kommt. Die erste, kontrovers diskutierte Stelle deutet L. als ein Ringen von Neid und Lob; der Sieger Timasarchos wird dabei durch die Parallelisierung seiner Tätigkeit mit jener des *laudator*

indirekt gelobt. Auch in v. 93–96 werden Loben und Ringen parallelisiert und dadurch bekräftigt, dass der *laudator* ewigen Ruhm zu verschaffen vermag. Weitere poetologische Reflexionen enthält das Prooimion mit seiner Spiegelung in v. 79–85, in denen die wohltuende Wirkung des Epinikions für den Sieger, nämlich ewigen Ruhm, thematisiert wird. Im ersten Mythos (v. 25–32) werden drei kriegerische Erfolge von Telamon, entsprechend den drei Niederwürfen im Ringkampf, erzählt, wobei das Verhältnis von Herakles zu Telamon jenem zwischen Trainer und Schüler gleicht. Ein solches arbeitet L. auch im zweiten Mythos (v. 54–68) heraus, und zwar in zweifacher Weise: In den in ihrer Deutung umstrittenen v. 57–60 werde Peleus als Chirons Ringkampfschüler und Akastos als Hippolytas Schüler dargestellt. Als Ringkampf wird zudem, der Mythentradition folgend, der Kampf zwischen Peleus und Thetis beschrieben. Die inhaltlichen Bestandteile von *Nemee* 4 sind somit durch die Metaphorik des Ringens miteinander verbunden. Mehrere Dreiergruppen finden sich zudem in den Passagen zu Timasarchos und seiner Familie (v. 9–10, 17–19 und 75). So wird in *Nemee* 4 Timasarchos als Ringkampfschüler des Melesias den Aiakiden Telamon und Peleus gegenübergestellt, deren Heldentaten er fortführt, und er erhält auf diese Weise ein gewaltiges Lob; indirekt gelobt wird er zudem in den poetologischen Passagen, in denen ihm ewiger Ruhm verheißen wird. Wie bei *Olympie* 8 zeigt auch hier L.s Besprechung gut auf, wie die Metapher des Ringens die Struktur des Liedes bestimmt und es

auf diese Weise zu einer Einheit werden lässt.

Das fünfte Kapitel „*Pythie* 4: Die Politik des Epinikions“ (164–258) behandelt Pindars längstes Epinikion, bei dem L. insbesondere nach dem Anlass fragt; denn die gängige Annahme, das Lied diene der Rehabilitation des verbannten Damophilos, taxiert er aufgrund allgemeiner Überlegungen als unwahrscheinlich. Seine Besprechung geht von Medeas Prophezeiung (v. 13–56) aus, in der L. metaphorische Gleichsetzungen von Seefahrt und Wagenrennen herausarbeitet: Das Schiff *Argo* wird als Wettkampfpferd beschrieben (v. 22–25). Das zwölf tägige Tragen der *Argo* (v. 25–26) gleicht einem metaphorischen Wagenrennen von zwölf Runden. Und die auffällige Generationenzählung, die im Zusammenhang mit der Gründung von Kyrene auf zwölf Generationen kommt, schreibt L. ebenfalls der Metaphorik des Wagenrennens zu. Dieselbe metaphorische Deutung legt denn auch die Argonautenfahrt (v. 68–262) mit den zwölf Teilnehmern unter der Führung des „Wagenlenkers“ Iason nahe, deren eigentliches Ziel die Zeugung des Euphamiden-Geschlechts ist, dem Arkesilaos angehörte. Die den Mythos strukturierenden Wagenrennen sind schließlich als Spiegelung von Arkesilaos’ Viergespannsieg zu verstehen: Arkesilaos wird auf diese Weise zu einem modernen Iason oder Euphamos, und seine Herrschaft wird als verdient und gottgewollt dargestellt. Zur Legitimation von Arkesilaos’ Herrschaft trägt auch die Darstellung von Iason und Pelias (v. 78–167) bei, wie L. im Folgenden darlegt: Den verschiedenen,

bisher vorgebrachten Gleichsetzungen der beiden Heroen mit Arkesilaos und Damophilos, die er als unhaltbar zurückweist, stellt er die durchgängig positive Darstellung von Iason und die negative Darstellung von Pelias und Aietes gegenüber und macht als Kern des zweiten Mythenteils die Charakterisierung der Hauptpersonen aus. Und aus der Besprechung des Epilogs (v. 277–299) folgert L., dass es sich bei Damophilos nicht um einen verbannten Kyrenäer handelt, wie es die Scholiasten fälschlicherweise aus dem Lied erschlossen. Vielmehr sei Damophilos der gute Bote, der zum Zeitpunkt der Liedabfassung tatsächlich krank und entsprechend verhindert war. Thematisiert werde am Liedende somit Damophilos’ Bedeutung für das Siegerlob. Der vorangehende Eichenvergleich (v. 263–269), den man seit der Antike ebenfalls vor dem Hintergrund einer Verbannung von Damophilos deutete, spiegle hingegen die politische Situation Kyrenes, indem die Eiche für Kyrene und die Äste für die Tochterstadt Euhesperides stehen, für die Arkesilaos während der Festspiele in Delphi neue Siedler zu gewinnen suchte. *Pythie* 4 steht somit ganz im Zeichen der Legitimation von Arkesilaos’ Herrschaft und sollte eine Lösung der aktuellen politischen Probleme hinsichtlich Euhesperides bringen. Arkesilaos selbst wird dabei Iason gegenübergestellt und aufgrund von dessen positiver Charakterisierung indirekt gelobt. Dem Epinikion als Ganzes liegt, wie L. auch in einem Schema (258) veranschaulicht, der Gedanke zugrunde, dass politischer Erfolg auf sportlichem Erfolg beruhe. L.s Besprechung von *Pythie* 4 macht in

ihrem ersten Teil die Verwendung der Metapher des Wagenrennens im Mythos und ihre Bedeutung für das Siegerlob gut sichtbar. Bei seiner Deutung, insbesondere bezüglich der Rolle von Damophilos, stellt sich indes die Frage nach dem Verhältnis von *Pythie 4* zu der für denselben Sieg verfassten *Pythie 5* neu, das jedoch an keiner Stelle thematisiert wird. Zudem wird Arkesilaos in *Pythie 5*, anders als in *Pythie 4*, mehrmals direkt als tugendhafter, gebildeter Herrscher gelobt, der in der Gunst der Götter steht (v. 1–9, 14–16, 23–25, 109–117); zum Siegerlob trägt zusätzlich der Mythos mit der positiven Darstellung von Arkesilaos' Vorfahre Battos bei, der die Herrschaft über Kyrene von den Göttern erhalten hatte und sie als ein gottesfürchtiger, auf Frieden bedachter König ausübte (v. 55–62, 89–95). Da dieses Siegerlob angesichts der politischen Situation in Kyrene ebenfalls mit Arkesilaos' Herrschaft in Verbindung zu bringen ist, bleibt die Frage im Raum, zu welchem Ergebnis L.s Interpretationsansatz bei diesem Lied, auch im Vergleich zu *Pythie 4*, führen würde.

Das sechste Kapitel „*Pythie 9: Der Segen des Laufens*“ (260–309) behandelt ein zweites Lied für einen Pythiensieger aus Kyrene. Die Besprechung mit Alexidamos' Brautlauf am Liedende (v. 103–125) beginnend, hebt L. die metaphorische Parallelisierung von Laufen und Heirat in diesem Lied hervor. In der Folge deutet L. den Apollon-Mythos (v. 5–70) ebenfalls als metaphorischen Brautlauf. Für das Verständnis von Pindars Erzählung zentral ist dabei Chirons Antwort: Im ersten, in seiner Deutung um-

strittenen Teil (v. 39–43) amüsierte sich Chiron über einen aufgrund seiner jugendlichen Unerfahrenheit schüchternen und unbeholfenen Apollon, rechtfertigte gleichzeitig aber dessen Liebe. Kyrenes Genealogie werde hingegen wegen Apollons Scham nicht von Chiron, sondern zu Beginn des Mythos erzählt. So spricht Chiron in der Folge von Aristaios, der aus Apollons Verbindung mit Kyrene in Libyen hervorgehen und großen Segen bringen wird. Dass aus einer Liebesverbindung in einer neuen Heimat großer Segen erwachsen kann, illustriert auch der thebanische Mythos von Amphitryon und Alkmene (v. 80–88), der entsprechend eine Parallele zu den beiden in *Pythie 9* erzählten Mythen bildet. So demonstrieren der Apollon-Mythos und der Alexidamos-Mythos, wie ein Laufsieg segensreich wirken kann. In der Beschreibung von Telesikrates' Pythiensieg (v. 73–75) und seiner Siege an lokalen Spielen (v. 90–103) seien schließlich ebenfalls Laufen und Heirat metaphorisch verknüpft. Entsprechend ergibt sich in *Pythie 9* eine parallele Darstellung von Apollon, Alexidamos und Telesikrates, die L. mit einem Schema (304) veranschaulicht: Der Sieg selbst wird durch die metaphorische Gleichsetzung von Laufsieg und Heirat in seinem Wesen gedeutet und seine künftige positive Wirkung, d. h. Ruhm und Glück für Telesikrates und Kyrene, aufgezeigt. So macht L.s Besprechung von *Pythie 9* die einheitliche Gestaltung des Liedes gut sichtbar, in dem die Metapher des Laufens jedoch diskreter eingesetzt ist als beispielsweise die Metapher des Ringens in *Olympie 8* und *Nemee 4*.

Im kurzen Schlusskapitel (311–316) fasst L. die Hauptergebnisse der einzelnen Liedinterpretationen zusammen. Er stellt dann folgende Grundsätze zusammen, die sich trotz der unterschiedlichen Ausdeutung des Sieges in allen besprochenen Liedern wiederfinden: 1) Einziger und höchster Zweck des Epinikions ist das Siegerlob. 2) Dieses erfolgt vornehmlich indirekt. 3) Sprachliches Ausdrucksmittel des indirekten Lobes ist die Metapher. 4) Mythen werden zum Zweck des Siegerlobes radikal umgestaltet. 5) Sportmetaphorische Poetologie trägt ebenfalls indirekt zum Siegerlob bei, erhöht aber zugleich den Wert des eigenen Lobes. 6) Insbesondere die Metaphorik sorgt für eine hohe Kohärenz der Lieder. 7) Der sportliche Sieg selbst beruht auf dem Erfolg der Vorfahren und der Gunst der Götter. Vor diesem Hintergrund hält L. schließlich fest (315): „Insgesamt erweisen sich Pindars Epinikien sprachlich wie inhaltlich als höchst artifizielle und höchst komplexe Kunstwerke von großer semantischer Einheit, die in ihrer poetischen Verfaßtheit ein faszinierender Spiegel ihrer Entstehungszeit, der frühen Klassik, und in diesem Sinne wichtige zeithistorische Dokumente sind.“ Zwei Themenkomplexe hätten hier zum Abschluss der Untersuchung angeschnitten werden können: Einerseits stellt sich die Frage, ob die übrigen Epinikien Pindars in gleicher Weise mit Hilfe der Metaphorik gedeutet werden können und sich ihre Einheit so erweisen lässt. Dankbar wäre der Leser für eine kurze Beurteilung von Seiten L.s gewesen; denn die bereits für fünf Epinikien umfangreiche Untersuchung hat ausrei-

chend bewusst gemacht, wie aufwendig eine solche Liedanalyse ist. Andererseits bleibt die Frage im Raum, welche Stellung Pindars Metapherngebrauch innerhalb der Gattung des Epinikions einnimmt. Hier wäre ein Blick auf Bakchylides' Epinikien mit einer ersten Einschätzung durch L. interessant gewesen. Die frühere Epinikiendichtung ist hingegen nur in Bruchstücken bekannt, und es lässt sich daher nicht verfolgen, wie sich der Gebrauch von Metaphern in der Epinikiendichtung im Laufe der Zeit entwickelt hat. Doch könnte in diesem Zusammenhang die Frage nach Pindars Publikum aus einer anderen Perspektive beleuchtet werden; denn es ist in Betracht zu ziehen, dass das Publikum, falls sich der Metapherngebrauch in dieser Gattung allmählich entwickelt hatte, solche Metaphern erwartete und sie dann auch verstand.

Die Studie von Claas Lattmann zeigt somit gut auf, wie Metaphern das pindarische Epinikion strukturieren und es zu einer Einheit machen, die ganz im Zeichen des Siegerlobes steht. Dabei führt seine genaue Behandlung der Metaphern zu neuen, interessanten Deutungen hin. Dies gilt auch für seine Besprechung der fünf ausgewählten Epinikien als Ganze, bei der problematische Stellen unter Einbezug der kritisch aufgearbeiteten Sekundärliteratur eingehend diskutiert und erklärt werden. In der gründlichen Auseinandersetzung mit dem Text liegt denn auch das größte Verdienst dieser Untersuchung, die einen neuen Weg für das Verständnis von Pindars Epinikien bereitet. Gleichzeitig wirft sie aber eine Reihe von Fragen, beispielsweise

jene nach dem Metapherngebrauch in der Gattung des Epinikions oder nach der kulturhistorischen Bedeutung eines durch Indirektheit erhöhten Siegerlobes, auf, deren angemessene Behandlung eine entsprechende Betrachtung der übrigen

Epinikien von Pindar sowie jener von Bakchylides voraussetzen würde.

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Patrick Gouw,
Griekse atleten in de Romeinse
Keizertijd (31 v.Chr.–400 n.Chr.),
 Amsterdam: Vossiuspress UvA –
 Amsterdam University Press 2009,
 XVI, 441 S., 12 Abb., 15 Tab., 10
 Karten, ISBN 9789056295769

Greek sport increasingly attracts excellent young scholars. Patrick Gouw is one of them. In 2009 he defended his Ph.D. at the University of Amsterdam: a bulky volume consisting of two parts.

Part I contains a brief introduction (1–15), with sections on the ‘state of the art’ concerning the social status of athletes and the associations of athletes. Three substantial chapters follow: one on the mobility of athletes in the Imperial period (17–95) with special reference to the festival calendar and the existence of regional athletic circuits, which enabled athletes to plan their activities, i. e., to participate in both the major, international tournaments and in between a series of financially attractive games in a specific area (e. g. in Egypt, Syria, or parts of the interior of Asia Minor); the second chapter discusses records and honorific epithets (97–153), whereas the third (155–218) offers a medley of subjects: athletic careers, rewards and privileges; trainers, doctors and injuries; competition and comradeship; nicknames of athletes. For all these subjects G. has collected a wide range of relevant evidence and he provides interesting and on the whole convincing insights. Two minor comments on this third chapter must suffice here. In the section on trainers G. writes that in the Hellenistic and Roman periods

trainers become less visible in our sources than in the Classical and Hellenistic periods (177). In his recent *Greek sport and social status*, M. Golden has argued convincingly for the opposite view and raised the question how to explain this increased visibility and the willingness of athletes to share the credit of their success with trainers. I refer to my comments in Nikephoros 22, 2009, 225–227. In the section on the athletes’ earnings G. collects the evidence for prize-money in the so-called money-games and for allowances (*opsonia*) paid by the athletes’ mother-cities for victories in sacred-crown festivals. For the latter problem I am not sure that G. has taken into account the essential difference between sacred-crown games in general and the special category of ‘eiselastic sacred-crown games’. He is aware of the existence of the latter category (172/173) but in his discussion of the *opsonia* in Egyptian papyri (169–171) he apparently assumes that they were paid for sacred-crown games in general, rather than for the eiselastic ones only. In his comment on the eiselastic games he does quote Trajan’s famous letter (Pliny, *Ep.* X 118/119), but not Hadrian’s first letter from Alexandria Troas, with his comment on how to calculate the number of days for which *opsonia* were due. G. knows the Alexandria Troas dossier, since in his first chapter he analyses the emperor’s second letter (cf. *infra*).

Part II offers an admirable ‘Prosopographia athletarum’ (223–429). The result of truly painstaking labor and acumen, with lemmata on 160 athletes, in which all the available evidence on the athletes concerned

is pieced together (name, mother-city, social status, disciplines etc.). Two Appendices on problematic athletes (Aelius Granius and Tiberius Claudius Patrobios, respectively; 409–423), an English summary (425–429) and a very full and impressive bibliography (431–441) conclude this volume.

Let it be said at once that we have an extremely well-informed publication by an author who has managed admirably to find his way in the inextricable jungle of epigraphic publications, which in this field, as in many others, truly innovate research, and to combine all this with sound judgment and clear prose.

Important is G.'s theory about the organization of the festival calendar. He combines a detailed study of the reorganization of the calendar during a quadrennial Olympiad, presented by Hadrian in his second letter from Alexandria Troas (*SEG* LVI 1359 II; Greek text; bibliography, including G.'s article in *ZPE* 165, 2008, 96–104, on the date of the Athenian Panathenaia; see now also J.-Y. Strasser in: *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 123, 2010–2012, 585–622, especially notes 6 and 12 on the relation between G.'s work and Strasser's unpublished dissertation, Paris 2000), with an analysis of a number of well-known victory-catalogues. As a result the concept of 'regional circuits' seems unavoidable. Hadrian focused on a limited number of major festivals and their place in the calendar, in order to avoid any overlap between them and to enable the athletes to plan their program for four years. In his calendar there are empty periods; in other periods

athletes could decide whether they wanted to participate in the contests scheduled by Hadrian for those periods and, if not, which other festivals they would like to attend. In this way there is room for a 'western circuit' in the first half of a second Olympic year, consisting of games in Tarentum (and possibly in other cities in southern Italy and Sicily), Rome, Naples and Puteoli; in the first half of an Olympic year athletes could in January–April attend three major games on Asia Minor's west coast and subsequently decide to cross the Aegean to participate in the Athenian Panhellenia and in the Olympic Games; alternatively, they could skip the Panhellenia and focus on a number of games in the Peloponnese, before turning up in Olympia; a third possibility was to return to Asia Minor after the Panhellenia and to make their choice among the multitude of contests in Asia Minor. During the winter of the very end of the third and the beginning of the fourth Olympic year there was space for athletes to be active in Egypt and perhaps even in a 'Near Eastern circuit' (Syria, Palaestina, Cilicia). Interestingly enough, S. Remijsen has recently and independently also argued for the existence of an 'Egyptian circuit' (*Bulletin American Society of Papyrologists* 47, 2010, 196).

On 91–95 G. presents a tabular survey of the agonistic calendar of the four years of an Olympiad. G. has discovered in various victory-catalogues clusters of games belonging to regional circuits; whether within such circuits games were listed in a chronological sequence is another problem which deserves

further study on the basis of careful analysis of many more catalogues, as G. himself candidly admits. In one catalogue (49) a boxer lists victories in Patras and Tarentum, both neatly belonging to the 'western circuit' of the second Olympic year; 'Patras', however, followed upon and did not precede 'Tarentum'; so within that circuit the chronological sequence is not maintained.

The second chapter opens with an excellent discussion of the various ways ancient athletes gave expression to their drive for records. G. begins by making short shrift of the idea, defended by some modern historians and sociologists of sport, that sport records are a modern phenomenon. Modern records are often extremely quantitative due to the availability of technological devices. Ancient records resemble the 'record-mania' in professional tennis, where a Grand Slam and a 'Career Grand Slam' indicate victories in the four major tournaments either consecutively or in the course of a career (97). G. provides an excellent analysis of the various claims made by ancient athletes: 'first' of all men, of the people in their ethnos/region or in their city, who managed to realize a specific achievement. G. rightly points out that there is likely to have been a reliable system of agonistic book-keeping, which enabled athletes and their trainers to establish whether a given achievement was really new, and that athletes in later periods were aware that they stood in a long tradition of what predecessors had accomplished in the past. Most records concern victories in several disciplines (e.g. stadion, diaulos,

hoplitodromos; boxing/wrestling and pankration) or specific distinctions like winning the wrestling without taking a fall. G.'s analysis is confirmed by S. Brunet's recent article on wrestlers who won the Olympics without taking a fall (*ap-tōs*), getting caught in a waistlock (*amesolabētos*) or sitting out a round (*anephedros*) (ZPE 172, 2010, 115–124; see G. on 107/108). In another forthcoming article 'Living in the shadow of the past: Greek athletes during the Roman empire' (I owe a copy of the ms. to Donald Kyle), B. adds a survey of runners who managed to win the stadion, the diaulos and the hoplitodromos (cf. G. 108–110).

As to the sources available to the athletes for justifying their claims, G. points to archives in Olympia and numerous other towns, and to the role of the international association of athletes, with its 'general secretary' (*archigrammateus*). The latter was responsible for the registration of new members, but G. wonders whether he may also have been involved in the registration of victors and victories. G.'s suggestion can be corroborated by the fact that the association also employed several secretaries (*grammateis*), who 'étaient peut-être itinérants, allant de cité en cité, au gré des célébrations des concours' (J.-Y. Strasser in: Nikephoros 14, 2001, 146; cf. also *SEG* LV 1053). It is hard to believe that such itinerant secretaries were only interested in the registration of new members.

In the remainder of the second chapter G. examines the meaning of a number of honorary titles like *aleiptos*, *paradoxos*, *pleistonikes* and *periodonikes*. G. tends to as-

cribe specific meanings in equally specific contexts to them. As to *aleiptos*, G. distinguishes the concept ('unbeatable', used by gladiators, musicians and athletes alike) from the honorary title ('unbeaten'). It strikes me that the title is rarely used in agonistic texts; that is reasonable enough given the fact that only very few athletes will have managed to avoid a defeat in their long careers. Honorary inscriptions by definition list only victories (or, occasionally, draws in prestigious games) and, therefore, a priori I have a preference for 'unbeatable'. Apart from that I see no consistency in the use of the title. Aurelius Damas (Moretti, *IAG* 84) is a *pankratiastes periodoneikes*, without *aleiptos*; he occasionally also dabbled in boxing, where he was considerably less successful; he gained only four victories and decided to add lustre to this modest achievement by having himself called a *pyktes aleiptos*: he registered for so few contests that he had a good chance of winning them all and thus becoming a true *aleiptos*. In his main speciality he was so successful that he could simply call himself *periodonikes*. He did not need *aleiptos* there; he occasionally even may have lost a bout in that discipline. Others, who restricted themselves to one discipline, did call themselves *periodoneikes aleiptos* (G. on 122, with references to the evidence). One of them was an exceptional star-pankratiast, whose victory-inscription constitutes the absolute peak of athletic *braggadocio*: more than ten records are mentioned (most of them unparalleled) and *aleiptos* simply is another pearl in his crown; it is a function of ex-

ceptional pride in an exceptional career. The other practised the pankration only as a *pais* ('boy') and, therefore, is likely to have participated in relatively few contests. The epithet *aleiptos* served as compensation for the absence of a long and successful career.

As to *paradoxos* G. follows R. Merkelbach and S. Brunet, who argued that the title could only be used for and by athletes who excelled either in two disciplines or in one discipline in two age-categories. Others suggested that the title did not indicate specific achievements but had a general meaning like 'amazing, admirable' or simply 'champion' (so L. Robert in: *Les Gladiateurs* 250–252; overlooked by G.). True, there are examples of athletes who were both *paradoxos* and successful in two disciplines (*IAG* 80, 85; L. Robert, *DAMM* 101/102) or in one discipline in two age-categories (*IAG* 69, 78). There are, however, two texts where a *paradoxos* athlete gained victories in one discipline only (*IAG* 78, 83) and many more in which athletes won in two disciplines without being called *paradoxos* (*IAG* 67, 82, 85, 86; *I. Ilion* 125). So, all things considered, I feel that Robert's suggestion that it was not a specific but a general title still deserves credit; if we accept G.'s interpretation, we have to accept that in various victory-catalogues athletes were sloppy and forgot to mention an otherwise well-deserved title.

One of the most prestigious titles surely is *periodonikes*: 'victor in the Periodos'. Of old the *periodos* consisted of the 'Big Four' (Olympia, Pythia, Nemea and Isthmia). The received opinion, defended above

all by L. Robert, is that in the Imperial period the traditional (or 'old': *archaia*) *periodos* was extended with the Aktia, Sebasta and Kapitolia (cf. also C. Wallner in: *Nikephoros* 14, 2001, 92/93 note 3, and *SEG* LV 1978). G. comes up with an interesting new hypothesis (also defended independently by Strasser in his as yet unpublished Paris dissertation from 2000: see *art.cit.* note 12): until the mid-2nd cent. A.D. the *periodos* continued to consist of the 'Big Four'. Ca. 150 A.D. a new *periodos* came into being consisting of the Aktia, Sebasta, Kapitolia and *Eusebeia* (founded in 142 A.D.). An athlete, who won in both series, was a *periodonikes teleios*, a 'complete' *periodonikes*. A certain T. Aelius Aurelius Maron claimed to have been the first to have won the 'complete *periodos*'. Ca. 100 A.D. two predecessors had won victories in the 'Big Four', the Aktia, Sebasta and Kapitolia. G. assumes that Maron cannot have been a liar and that, therefore, his claim was correct. The difference in the two palmares was in Maron's victory in the *Eusebeia*.

In defense of this ingenious hypothesis, G. begins by adhering to I.E. Stephanis' interpretation of several inscriptions in which athletes are praised for having won the *periodos syn Aktioisi* or *syn Kapitoliois*: *syn* indicates an addition to rather than a part of the *periodos*. One inscription creates a problem: an athlete is said to have won 'the Olympia twice and the rest of the *periodos* with twice the Nemea and the Aktia and Heraia'. Since the Nemea without any doubt belong to the *periodos*, it seems reasonable to

interpret the Aktia and Heraia in the same way. On 140 G. needs an artificial assumption for *syn* indicating an addition: the athlete won the Olympics twice but in the rest of the *periodos* only once; in addition he won the Nemea twice, which means that all in all he had won thrice in Nemea. Simplicity is to be preferred to complicated hypotheses. In other inscriptions athletes are styled both *periodonikes* and *Aktionikes* which at first sight seems to justify Stephanis' theory; but on 190 note 222 G. candidly admits that *SEG* XXXVI 1051–1055 undermines this interpretation: an athlete is called *periodonikes*, *Kapitolionikes* and *Pythionikes*. Nobody argues that the Pythia did not belong to the *periodos*. Six pages later G. seems to have forgotten the wisdom of his footnote. An equally questionable assumption is made by G. in his interpretation of *IAG* 71. The pankratiast P. Aelius Aristomachos is *periodonikes*, without having won the Pythian games. He is praised in an epigram (ca. 119 A.D.) and an honorary inscription, erected ca. twenty years later, in which in addition to the victories mentioned in the epigram, a function as *xystarches* (imperial commissioner, for the games in Kyzikos) and as ambassador to the emperor in Rome and Pannonia is recorded. Aristomachos' victories were all in the category of the *paides*, with one exception, viz. a second victory in the Isthmia in the category of the 'beardless' (*ageneioi*). L. Robert argued that A. earned the title of *periodonikes* because compensation for the absence of the Pythia could be found in victories in the Aktia, Sebasta and Kapitolia. G., following

Stephanis, suggests that A. 'must' have won the Pythia after his success as *ageneios*; such a victory was simply implied in the title *periodonikes*: a perfect example of *petitio principii*. Given the remark in an early third cent. A.D. victory-catalogue (*IAG* 85) about a victory 'in the Aktian games of Augustus, belonging to the *periodos*' it seems wiser to subscribe for the time being to Robert's thesis and to translate all the *syn*-inscriptions as '(the *periodos*), the Aktia etc. *included*'. The athlete in *IAG* 85 knew perfectly well that originally the *periodos* consisted of the 'Big Four': in his catalogue he writes that 'he stood in the final in the Nemea, part of the *archaia periodos*'. The addition of *archaia periodos* added some lustre to an otherwise disappointing achievement in Nemea: he did not win!

The above merely serves to underline how rich and provocative G.'s work is. Parts of it deserve to be published as separate articles in more accessible languages. The data-base of the *Prosopographia* should become accessible to all interested scholars. I sincerely hope (but, alas, am not sure) that G. will soon be in a position to share many of his insights with the international community of scholars, 'agonistic' or otherwise. I have rarely seen a young scholar, who almost on his own, in a relatively short period, has managed to initiate himself so thoroughly in a field, known for its wealth in epigraphical and papyrological sources, not always as easily accessible as the traditional, much explored literary sources, and for its vast modern bibliography.

H. W. Pleket, *Leiden/Oegstgeest*

**Heleen Groot,
Zur Bedeutung der öffentlichen
Spiele bei Tacitus, Sueton und
Cassius Dio. Überlegungen zur
Selbstbeschreibung der römischen
Gesellschaft,**

Berlin 2008 (Antike Kultur und Geschichte, hg. v. K. Brodersen, Bd. 12), 426 S., ISBN 978-3-8258-1560-8

Zu den Themenbereichen, denen Altertumswissenschaftler stets neue Untersuchungen widmen, zählt das weite Feld der römischen Spiele. Hinsichtlich des zeitlichen Rahmens oder der thematischen Schwerpunktzusatzung sind dabei Unterschiede auszumachen, wodurch sich allerdings immer wieder neue Aspekte dieses vielschichtigen Phänomens eröffnen. Dazu dient auch Heleen Groots Buch, die überarbeitete und gekürzte Version ihrer im Mai 2006 vom Fachbereich Philosophie und Geschichtswissenschaften der Johann-Wolfgang-Goethe-Universität in Frankfurt/Main approbierten Dissertation: ihre ausführliche Studie beschäftigt sich mit dem Spielwesen des 1. Jh.s n. Chr., konkret zur Zeit der Kaiser von Augustus bis Domitian, vor allem in der Darstellung der Autoren Tacitus, Sueton und Cassius Dio.

In der Einleitung (9–23) legt die Autorin (im Folgenden: G.) das Grundkonzept ihrer Studie dar, in der die eben angeführten Historiographen die zentrale Rolle spielen. Unter Berücksichtigung des so genannten *linguistic turn* sowie des *New Historicism*, rezenter Tendenzen innerhalb der Sprach- und Geschichtswissenschaft, versucht G. einen neuen Zugang zu diesen literarischen Quellen zu finden. Zudem

kommt in ihren Ausführungen dem Begriff *Diskurs* wesentliche Bedeutung zu: Der „ganze Themenkomplex, die Bedeutung des Kontextes und der Kultur, in der ein Ereignis stattgefunden hat einerseits, sowie die Beziehung zwischen Sender einer Botschaft und Empfänger andererseits“, wird von G. als Diskurs bezeichnet. Dieser „ist immer kultur-, kontext- und zeitspezifisch und stellt einen mehr oder weniger kohärenten Wissenskörper dar“ (15). Am Ende dieses ersten Abschnitts erfolgt die Definition der Begriffe *Spiele* und *Spielwesen*: G. berücksichtigt in ihrer Arbeit die gesamte Palette römischer *spectacula*, d.h. sämtliche Vorstellungen, die im Theater, im Amphitheater oder im Zirkus geboten wurden; auch eher seltene Events wie „Athletenwettkämpfe und inszenierte Seeschlachten“ (22), womit (wohl) Agone griechischer Provenienz und Naumachien gemeint sind, finden Berücksichtigung. Der Schwerpunkt liegt allerdings nicht auf den Spielen an sich, wie die Autorin betont (22f.), sondern vielmehr auf dem öffentlichen Rahmen, der durch ihre Veranstaltung geschaffen wird, sowie ihrer politischen Funktion bzw. gezielten Funktionalisierung.

Nach diesen unerlässlichen Präliminarien stellt G. im ersten Kapitel die drei Autoren Tacitus, Sueton und Cassius Dio vor (25–50). Dabei geht es weniger um eine allumfassende Präsentation dieser Schriftsteller, sondern um das Aufzeigen der unterschiedlichen Diskurse, die bei ihrer Beurteilung des Spielwesens zum Vorschein kommen. Dass die Werke der drei Historiographen u. a. auf Grund ihres persönlichen

und zeitlichen Hintergrundes Unterschiede aufweisen, versteht sich von selbst. Bei Cassius Dio kommt noch die besondere Facette dazu, dass bei seiner Darstellung der Kaiser des 1. Jh.s n. Chr. ganz offensichtlich *principes* seiner Zeit als Modelle fungierten. So lassen sich in seinem Werk Parallelen zwischen Commodus und Nero, Septimius Severus und Vespasian, Geta und Titus sowie Caracalla und Domitian ausmachen.

Der nächste Abschnitt beschäftigt sich mit der grundsätzlichen Beurteilung der öffentlichen Spiele bei Tacitus, Sueton und Cassius Dio (51–118). G. hält fest, dass alle drei Autoren den *spectacula* gegenüber a priori positiv eingestellt waren; sie galten als wesentliche Bestandteile des öffentlichen und kulturellen Lebens. Gleichwohl werden in ihren Werken Kritikpunkte am Spielwesen sichtbar, u. a. die Politisierung der Veranstaltungen, die Entehrung der Aristokratie und des Prinzipats durch *spectacula*, das unwürdige Zuschauerverhalten sowie die zunehmenden Kosten der Spiele (vgl. 54: Tacitus; 77: Sueton; 95: Cassius Dio). Wenn die *modestia* im Umgang mit diesem Phänomen – scheinbar oder tatsächlich – nicht gegeben ist, wird auf Seiten der Historiographen Kritik formuliert, so das Fazit. Mit großer Akribie arbeitet die Autorin dabei die Unterschiede zwischen den einzelnen Autoren heraus und zeigt auf, welche Diskurse für die jeweilige Haltung ausschlaggebend sind. In einer abschließenden Synthese (112–118, inkl. Tabelle 1) werden die Ergebnisse übersichtlich zusammengestellt.

Das 3. Kapitel ist der Beurteilung der Kaiser und des Spielwesens durch Tacitus, Sueton und Cassius Dio gewidmet (119–226). Die Analyse geht der Frage nach, „inwieweit das Bild, das die Autoren von den verschiedenen Kaisern zeichnen, mit der von ihnen beschriebenen Haltung des betreffenden Kaisers den Spielen gegenüber übereinstimmt“ (119). Mit anderen Worten: Legt ein als *princeps bonus* konzipierter Kaiser in diesem Punkt ein akzeptables, maßvolles Verhalten an den Tag, ein *princeps malus* hingegen Maßlosigkeit, Verschwendungssucht etc.? Unter diesem Aspekt werden die Bilder der Kaiser bei den drei Autoren untersucht und mit deren Haltung zum Spielwesen verglichen. Das Ergebnis dieses umfangreichen Abschnitts ist wenig verwunderlich: die Spiele dienen dazu, die positiven bzw. negativen Charakterzüge eines Kaisers darzustellen bzw. das präsentierte Charakterbild entsprechend zu untermauern. Die Haltung eines *princeps* zu diesem Phänomen sowie sein Verhalten korrelieren jeweils mit dem Gesamtbild, das von ihm entworfen wird. Dabei sind allerdings Nuancierungen bei den drei Autoren auszumachen, wie aus der Synthese zu diesem Kapitel (209–226, inkl. Tabelle 2) schön ersichtlich ist.

Der folgende Abschnitt behandelt die Beurteilung der politischen Funktion der Spiele durch die drei Autoren (227–295). Um dieses weite Feld klarer ins Visier nehmen zu können, formuliert G. zehn Punkte, an denen ihrer Ansicht nach die politische Dimension des römischen Spielwesens in Erscheinung tritt (vgl. den übersichtlichen *consectus* auf 309). Davon seien

lediglich die Bedeutung der Präsenzpflicht eines Kaisers bei *spectacula* (Punkt 2), deren Funktion als Stimmungsbarometer (Punkt 3) oder die Sitzordnung als Spiegel der gesellschaftlichen Hierarchie (Punkt 5) genannt. Diese Analyse führt zu dem interessanten Ergebnis, dass die Beurteilung der politischen Funktion bei den herangezogenen Autoren sehr divergiert: „Für Tacitus ist es eine Schande, dass die Kaiser die Spiele politisch einsetzten, für Sueton, wenn sie es nicht taten“, so G. pointiert (288). Cassius Dio ist dahin gehend am besten zwischen Tacitus und Sueton anzusetzen, zeigt allerdings eine Tendenz hin zum Standpunkt Suetons (vgl. die angeschlossene Tabelle 3 auf 290–295).

Im 5. Kapitel bespricht die Autorin die sechs Diskurse, in denen die drei Geschichtsschreiber ihrer Interpretation zufolge stehen (297–304). Es sind dies der traditionalistische Diskurs, der so aufzufassen ist, dass die Spiele auf Grund der langen Tradition ein Existenzrecht innerhalb der römischen Gesellschaft haben, der *lascivia*-, *laetitia*- und *novitas*-Diskurs, die die Spiele als potenzielle Gelegenheiten für Ausschweifung, Freude oder Neuerungen beschreiben, schließlich der senatorische sowie kaiserliche Diskurs, womit laut Autorin angedeutet wird, dass im Machtgefüge des Staates der Senat bzw. der *princeps* die zentrale Rolle spielen möge. Präsenz oder Dominanz eines oder mehrerer dieser Diskurse bestimmen laut G. die Art, wie der jeweilige Autor die Spiele darstellt.

Der 6. Abschnitt ist (abermals) der politischen Funktion der römischen Spiele gewidmet (305–350),

wobei dieselben zehn Teilaspekte von Kapitel IV den strukturellen Rahmen bilden. Theater, Zirkus und Amphitheater fungierten im 1. Jh. n. Chr. längst als politische Räume, so das wenig überraschende Fazit (349 f.). Sie dienten auch als Bühnen der Politik, als Orte der Kommunikation und Interaktion zwischen Kaiser und römischer Bevölkerung.

Schließlich geht die Autorin im letzten Kapitel der Frage von Macht, Akzeptanz und Symbolisierung der Herrschaft in Zusammenhang mit dem römischen Spielwesen nach (351–370). Dabei greift sie aktuelle Ritualtheorien auf und wendet diese für die römische Gesellschaft an. Als ein Ergebnis dieses (lesenswerten) Abschnitts sei festgehalten, dass die Spiele in der Symbolisierung der Macht in Rom eine enorme Rolle spielten; ihre „eher politisch zu verstehende Funktion ... konnten sie gerade deshalb erfüllen, weil sie als Rituale gestaltet waren, mit einer Wiederholung von exakt vorgeschriebenen Abläufen“ (369).

In der Schlussfolgerung sind die wesentlichen Ergebnisse der Studie nochmals zusammengefasst (371–381), ein umfangreiches Literaturverzeichnis bildet den Abschluss der Indices muss als gravierendes Manko bezeichnet werden. Zumindest ein Stellenregister würde das Auffinden einzelner Passagen von Tacitus, Sueton, Cassius Dio oder auch anderen antiken Autoren erleichtern bzw. überhaupt ermöglichen.

Im Folgenden sind einige Gedanken formuliert, die sich im Laufe der Lektüre eingestellt haben.

Zunächst seien die Begriffe *Spiele* bzw. *Spielwesen* thematisiert: die Autorin subsumiert damit sämtliche Veranstaltungen, die im Theater, Zirkus oder Amphitheater stattfanden, sowie griechische Agone (22 f.). Innerhalb dieser Veranstaltungen erfolgt zumeist keine Differenzierung, im Festkalender seit der Republik verankerte *ludi* stehen also neben griechischen Agonen, außerordentliche Festivitäten etwa anlässlich der Einweihung des *amphitheatrum Flavium* neben Auftritten von Pantomimen. Die Studie hätte gewiss zusätzlich an Profil gewonnen, wenn man – soweit die Quellen dies ermöglichen – einzelne Veranstaltungen nach ihrem Typus unterschieden hätte. Eine derartige Differenzierung hätte wohl noch das eine oder andere Detail, die eine oder andere Facette der historiographischen Darstellung oder der persönlichen Präferenz römischer Kaiser zum Vorschein gebracht.

In diesem Zusammenhang ist auf die Etablierung griechischer Agone in Rom während des 1. Jh.s zu verweisen. Im Jahre 60 institutionalisierte Nero bekanntlich mit den *Neronia* erstmals einen genuin griechischen Agon in Rom, der jedoch auf Grund der über ihn verhängten *damnatio memoriae* 68 n. Chr. wiederum aus dem Festkalender gestrichen wurde. Diese Innovation hätte sich mehr Resonanz verdient, wie auch der Bericht des Tacitus (*ann.* XIV 20 f.; siehe 53; 68), wonach es im Vorfeld innerhalb der römischen Bevölkerung zu heftigen Debatten über die Einführung dieses Agons kam. Man kann in diesen zwei lesenswerten Kapiteln des Tacitus wohl eine zeitgenössische Diskussion und ihre Projektion in nero-

nische Zeit sehen.¹ Für die *Capitolia* gilt mutatis mutandis dasselbe wie für die *Neronia*. In den Ausführungen von G. führte Domitian „fünfjährlich stattfindende Spiele zu Ehren von Jupiter ein, die aus einem dreifachen Wettbewerb bestanden: Musik, Reiten und Gymnastik“ (170). Hinter diesen Worten verbirgt sich ein griechischer Agon erster Kategorie, der 86 n. Chr. begründet und bis ins 4. Jh. penteterisch ausgetragen wurde.² Das Programm der *Capitolia* bestand übrigens aus gymnischen, musischen und hippischen Bewerben, die Beschreibung der Autorin kann dahin gehend Verwirrung stiften (vgl. 346). Man hätte die *Capitolia* wie die *Neronia* jedenfalls in Zusammenhang mit dem *novitas*-Diskurs erwartet.

Kritik ist dezidiert an das Lektorat des Verlags zu richten. Im Buch findet sich eine Reihe von Verschreibungen oder Auslassungen, die sich auf den Lesefluss mitunter störend auswirken. Zudem weicht manchmal die Schriftgröße (z. B. 31) oder die Schriftart (z. B. 418) ohne ersichtlichen Grund ab. Diese Nachlässigkeiten sind allerdings

¹ So zu Recht Ch. MANN, *Griechischer Sport und römische Identität: die certamina athletarum in Rom*, in: Nikephoros 15, 2002, 125–158, hier: 144. Zum Begriff *Diskurs* vgl. übrigens a. a. O. 142, Anm. 75.

² Zu den *Capitolia* grundlegend M. L. CALDELLI, *L'Agon Capitolinus. Storia e protagonisti dall'istituzione Domiziana al IV secolo*, Rom 1993 (Studi pubblicati dall'Istituto Italiano per la storia antica, fasc. 54) und B. RIEGER, *Die Capitolia des Kaisers Domitian*, in: Nikephoros 12, 1999, 171–203.

nicht der Autorin, die nicht in ihrer Muttersprache schreibt, sondern eindeutig dem Verlag anzurechnen.

G. hat eine ausführliche Studie über das Spielwesen im 1. Jh. n. Chr. vorgelegt, die zum Teil bekannte, zum Großteil jedoch neue Aspekte bietet. Das Aufzeigen von oft kleinen Nuancen oder Differenzen zwischen Tacitus, Sueton und Cassius

Dio kann dabei als besondere Leistung gelten, weil dadurch die Unterschiede zwischen den Autoren und ihrer Darstellung der Kaiser evident werden. Die obigen Anmerkungen sind als Anregung zum Nachdenken bzw. als Nachlese zu verstehen.

Christian Wallner, Klagenfurt

Martin Brändl,

Der Agon bei Paulus,

Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006,

(Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe. Band 222), XIV und 523 Seiten, ISBN 3-16-149129-7,

ISBN 13: 978-3-16-149129-0

ISSN 03409570

Die vorliegende Monographie ist, wie der Autor versichert, die leicht überarbeitete, an der Evangelisch-theologischen Fakultät der Universität Tübingen eingereichte Dissertation; sie wurde von P. Stuhlmaier und H.-J. Eckstein betreut. Im Zentrum der ausführlichen Darlegungen steht das Problemfeld der Herkunft und der Charakteristik der Agon-Metaphorik in den Schriften des Paulus. Die Verwendung von Metaphern aus der Welt des Sports in Dichtung, philosophischen Schriften von den Vorsokratikern bis hin zu Kynikern und Stoikern und Alltagssprache setzt mit den homerischen Epen ein (vgl. etwa F. LOCHNER VON HÜTTENBACH, *Sportgleichnisse in der archaischen Epik und Lyrik der Griechen*, in: Festschrift Josef Recla – 60 Jahre, Graz 1960, 44–57) und reicht bekanntlich bis in die Gegenwart. Auch Theologen haben sich auf diese Thematik und hier vor allem auf die paulinische Sprache und bildhafte Ausdrucksweise konzentriert. Dabei wurden in der theologischen Forschung mit der nicht selten zitierten begriffsgeschichtlichen Studie von Victor C. PFITZNER, *Paul and the Agon Motif. Traditional Athletic Imagery in the Pauline Literature*, Leiden 1967 (Novum Testamentum, Band 16) neue Wege beschritten. Versuchte man im älteren

Fachschrifttum (zum Beispiel bei Rudolf Bultmann) noch eine Abhängigkeit des Apostels von den moralisierenden hellenistischen Philosophen und deren Postulat von der „Selbstvervollkommnung“ des Menschen zu rekonstruieren, so dominiert nunmehr die Auffassung, dass die „agonistische Bilderwelt“ bei Paulus anders zu erklären sei und sie auch andere Ziele verfolgt habe. Nach Brändl „vollzieht sich sein Agon nicht primär in einem moralisch-sittlichen Kampf, sondern im *Dienst für das Evangelium*“ (BRÄNDL 409 f.). Der *locus classicus* für sein agonistisches Verständnis und seine Metaphorik findet sich im *Ersten Korintherbrief*, wo der Autor neben anderen Fragen auch seinen missionarischen Aposteldienst kämpferisch verteidigt. Es heißt hier (9,24–27): (24) *Οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι οἱ ἐν σταδίῳ τρέχοντες πάντες μὲν τρέχουσιν, εἰς δὲ λαμβάνει τὸ βραβεῖον; οὕτως τρέχετε ἵνα καταλάβητε. (25) πᾶς δὲ ὁ ἀγωνιζόμενος πάντα ἐγκρατεύεται, ἐκεῖνοι μὲν οὖν ἵνα φθαρτὸν στέφανον λάβωσιν, ἡμεῖς δὲ ἀφθαρτον. (26) ἐγὼ τοίνυν οὕτως τρέχω ὡς οὐκ ἀδήλωσ, οὕτως πυκτεύω ὡς οὐκ ἄερα δέρων (27) ἀλλὰ ὑπωπιάζω μου τὸ σῶμα καὶ δουλαγωγῶ, μή πως ἄλλοις κηρύξας αὐτὸς ἀδόκιμος γένωμαι.* Die *Jerusalem Bibel* übersetzt den Text folgendermaßen: „(24) Wisst ihr nicht, dass die Läufer im Stadion zwar alle laufen, aber dass nur einer den Siegespreis gewinnt? Lauft so, daß ihr ihn gewinnt. (25) Jeder Wettkämpfer lebt aber völlig enthaltsam; jene tun dies, um einen vergänglichen, wir aber, um einen unvergänglichen Siegeskranz zu gewinnen. (26) Darum laufe ich nicht wie einer, der

ziellos läuft, und kämpfe mit der Faust nicht wie einer, der in die Luft schlägt; (27) vielmehr züchtige und unterwerfe ich meinen Leib, damit ich nicht anderen predige und selbst verworfen werde.“ Der Absatz setzt mit einer rhetorischen Frage ein: „Wisst ihr nicht ...“, er setzt also die trivialen Kenntnisse der Vorgänge im Stadion, wo nur ein Läufer den Kampfpriest gewinnen kann, bei seinem Auditorium voraus. Das verwendete Vokabular gibt die athletische Szenerie wieder: *ἐν σταδίῳ τρέχοντες – βραβεῖον – ὁ ἀγωνιζόμενος – στέφανος – τρέχω – πυκτεύω – ὑπωπιάζω μου τὸ σῶμα*. Wie schon frühere neutestamentliche Exegeten, so sieht auch Brändl hier einen unmittelbaren Zusammenhang mit den Isthmischen Spielen, zumal sich der Brief an die Korinther wendet. Bei seinen Hörern und Lesern kann Paulus erwarten, dass sie wissen, was im Stadion vor sich geht, und deshalb wählt er in diesem Abschnitt auch bewusst eine metaphorische Ausdrucksweise. Jeder soll ihn verstehen.

Diesem Interpretationsansatz gilt Brändls Hauptaugenmerk. Seine breitangelegte Abhandlung liefert dazu zahlreiche Belege. Bevor sie aber vor dem Leser ausgebreitet werden, schickt der Autor nach einem forschungsgeschichtlichen Überblick (BRÄNDL 3–24) im ersten Hauptteil zwei Kapitel voraus: *Die Agon-Metaphorik in der griechischen Tradition* (BRÄNDL 32–75). Hier werden die Vorsokratiker, Sokrates, Platon, Aristoteles, die Kyniker und Stoiker sowie der *ἀγὼν τῆς εὐσεβείας* in den Mysterienreligionen und als Synthese dazu *Paulus und die griechische Agon-Tradition*

behandelt. Das 2. Kapitel widmet sich der Agon-Metaphorik im hellenistischen Judentum (BRÄNDL 76–137), wobei vor allem Philon von Alexandria, ein ausgewiesener Kenner der griechischen Agonistik, eine zentrale Rolle spielt, daneben aber auch Stellen aus dem Alten Testament, ferner bei Flavius Iosephos, im vierten Makkabäerbuch und im Rabbinischen Schrifttum vorgestellt und interpretiert werden. Wie im vorangegangenen Abschnitt endet auch dieses Kapitel mit einer bilanzierenden Zusammenfassung: *Der pharisäische Jude Paulus und die Spiele* (BRÄNDL 178–185). Hier votiert Brändl für die These, dass Paulus in der „Zeit vor seiner Lebenswende als besonders gesetzestreue(r) Pharisäer und Eiferer“ für das traditionelle Judentum galt, „das der griechischen Gymnastik und Agonistik wie auch den römischen Spielen äußerst kritisch gegenüberstand“ (BRÄNDL 183). Damit distanziert sich der Autor deutlich von der konventionellen Forschungsmeinung, die Paulus eng mit der griechischen Athletik verknüpft. Im zweiten Hauptteil *Paulus und die Spiele* (BRÄNDL 140–244) untersucht Brändl die im paulinischen Corpus nicht leicht erfassbare Einstellung des Apostels zu den hellenisierten Wettkämpfen, wie sie Herodes und seine Nachfolger in Palästina inszenierten, und zu den panhellenischen Isthmien. Gegenstand des dritten Hauptteils ist *Die Agon-Metaphorik im Kontext der paulinischen Theologie* (BRÄNDL 246–408). Hier werden mehrere der von Paulus verwendeten Metaphern, und zwar der Wettlauf, der Siegeskranz und der polyvalente *terminus technicus* Agon sowie die Bilder-

sprache im Kontext der Gladiatorenspiele vorgestellt und analysiert. Beschlossen wird dieses Kapitel mit einer die Ergebnisse seiner Forschungen zusammenfassenden Synthese unter dem Titel *Theologie und Biographie* (BRÄNDL 409–422). Ein umfangreiches Quellen- und Literaturverzeichnis (BRÄNDL 423–455) sowie ein noch mehr Seiten zählender viergliedriger Registerteil (BRÄNDL 457–523) erleichtern dem Leser und Benutzer des materialreichen Werkes den Zugang zu antiken Quellen und speziellen Forschungsfragen.

Das besondere Fazit der Metaphorikstudien von Brändl ist darin zu sehen, dass Paulus nicht in jener literarischen Tradition der hellenistischen Diatribe steht, wie sie von den Kynikern und Stoikern konzipiert wurde. Für sie ist der Agon hauptsächlich ein Ringen um tugendhafte Weisheit. Den ideologisch-hintergründlichen Hintergrund für die Metaphern bei der Verwendung der agonistischen Terminologie und der bildhaften Ausdrucksweise wie sie mit *ἀγών, ἀθλητής, ἀρετή, βραβεῖον, δρόμος/τρέχειν, καλός, παγκράτιον, πάλη, πυγμή, πόνος, στέφανος* und verwandten Wörtern (vgl. das Register der zentralen griechischen Begriffe, BRÄNDL 518–523) assoziiert werden, liefert nicht die Popularphilosophie der nachklassischen Epoche, sondern das Alte Testament und insbesondere die oben schon erwähnte jüdische Tradition.

Werfen wir einen Seitenblick auf drei neuere rezeptionsgeschichtliche Studien zum Agon-Motiv bei Paulus, um eine Folie für die Beurteilung der Resultate von Brändl zu gewinnen. Bei diesen Autoren bzw.

der Autorin handelt es sich um Theologen bzw. um eine Theologin. (1) Rainer METZNER stellte in seiner Abhandlung *Paulus und der Wettkampf: Die Rolle des Sports in Leben und Verkündigung des Apostels (1 Kor 9.24–7; Phil 3.12–16)*, in: *New Testament Studies* 46, 2000, 565–583, fest, dass Paulus seit Jugendjahren mit der hellenistischen Agonistik und Gymnastik vertraut war und diese Erfahrungen ihn bei seiner missionarischen Tätigkeit zur Anwendung der Agon-Metapher stimulierten. Brändl stimmt der Überzeugung des Autors, der dem Apostel diese Vertrautheit bescheinigt, grundsätzlich zu, er meint allerdings einschränkend, dass sie nicht schon von Saulus, sondern erst von Paulus erworben wurde, und kritisch wird angemerkt, dass es Metzner nicht gelungen sei, „seine Annahmen durch isticum Lokalkolorit oder durch die Koinzidenz chronologischer, sozioökonomischer und missionsstrategischer Argumente zu erhärten“ (BRÄNDL 18f.). (2) Wenige Jahre später, aber noch vor Brändls Dissertationsabschluss, erschien die Monographie von Uta POPLUTZ, *Athlet des Evangeliums. Eine motivgeschichtliche Studie zur Wettkampfmotaphorik bei Paulus*, Freiburg/Breisgau 2004 (Herders Biblische Studien, Band 43). Mit den darin vorgelegten Ergebnissen setzt sich Brändl in seinem Forschungsüberblick auseinander. Während der Autor die Auffassung vertritt, dass Paulus weder in Tarsos noch später in Jerusalem – in beiden Orten gab es agonistische Einrichtungen und Veranstaltungen – in seiner Jugendzeit Erfahrungen in der Athletik sammeln konnte, betont die rö-

misch-katholische Theologin – sie war (ist?) übrigens wie Brändl selbst sportlich aktiv – die Kenntnis und Vertrautheit des Apostels mit der Agonistik seiner Zeit und meint, dass er „in seiner Geburtsstadt Tarsus wie auch während der pharisäischen Ausbildung in Jerusalem [...] sicherlich mit lokalen athletischen Wettbewerben in Kontakt gekommen“ (POPLUTZ 409; BRÄNDL 19) sei. In diesem Punkt stimmen Poplutz und Metzner überein. Das gilt auch für die Ansicht, dass die Rezeption von Agon-Motiven, wie sie die kynisch-stoische Diatribe kennt, bei Paulus nachweisbar sei. Gegenüber dieser Annäherung an die hellenistische Philosophie hält Brändl allerdings fest, dass bei Paulus wohl eher die „alttestamentlich-frühjüdischen Quellen“ (BRÄNDL 23) in Rechnung zu stellen sind, eine kritische Anmerkung, die freilich nur bedingt die Richtigkeit der These von U. Poplutz einschränkt. (3) Schließlich hat sich auch der 2010 verstorbene Jesuit Alois KOCH mit einem Aufsatz über *Paulus und die Wettkampfmotaphorik*, in: *Trierer Theologische Zeitschrift* 117.1, 2008, 39–55, zu Wort gemeldet. Anders als die vorangegangenen Schriften ist Koch im Unterschied zu den angeführten Theologen etwas skeptischer, was die Vertrautheit des Paulus mit der Agonistik betrifft. Die kynisch-stoischen Philosophen informieren über Einzelheiten des agonistischen Betriebs, was von den paulinischen Metaphern nicht in gleichem Maße behauptet werden kann. Die von Paulus angesprochene ‘Enthaltsamkeit – *enkrateia*’ der Athleten meint nicht, so Koch, „eine ‘völlige Enthaltsamkeit’, son-

dern bezieht sich auf die bis ins Letzte geregelte und auf die entsprechende athletische Übung ausgerichtete Lebensweise der Athleten. Die Trainings- und Ernährungs-Praktiken sind Paulus nicht bekannt; man darf die Frage stellen, ob er bei entsprechender Kenntnis die Vergleiche verwendet hätte“ (KOCH 55). Das Paradezitat 1 Kor 9 mit der Erwähnung des Wettlaufs und des Faustkampfes deutet Koch daher auch nicht als agonistische Konfrontation. Vor allem das Beispiel vom istsmischen Faustkampf habe nichts mit der Realität eines Agons zu tun, es beleuchte bei Paulus, so Koch, „die falsche Lebensrichtung des Menschen, die Egozentrik, die Sünde als Abkehr vom Heil Gottes [...]. Paulus will mit seinen Bildern und Vergleichen aus der Welt der antiken Athletik die Mühe und die Anstrengung verdeutlichen, die der Dienst am Evangelium vom Apostel, aber auch von jedem Christen verlangt. Diese Vergleiche veranschaulichen das sittliche Bemühen, zu dem der Christ sich in der Taufe verpflichtet hat“ (KOCH 55).

Vor diesem theologischen und rezeptionsgeschichtlichen Hintergrund sind meines Erachtens die Forschungsergebnisse von Brändl zu sehen. Abgesehen von dem großen Verdienst, die griechischen, lateinischen und jüdischen Textstellen zum metaphorischen Gebrauch des agonistischen Vokabulars gesammelt, kommentiert und für sporthistorisch interessierte Leser zugänglich gemacht zu haben, erweist sich der Autor bei der Beantwortung der Kernfrage nach dem Standort des Apostels im literarischen Traditionsfluss insofern als souverän, als er eine klare und

nachvollziehbare Position bezieht. Als ein besonders erhellendes und überzeugendes Beispiel für das methodische Vorgehen von Brändl sehe ich seine Interpretation des oben angeführten Korintherbriefs, den er mit dem paulinischen Missionsdrang unmittelbar verbindet. Auch wenn der Autor dabei den Konjunktiv verwendet, so ist die Intention bei der Formulierung des Resultats seiner Textexegese nicht übersehbar: „Paulus könnte Korinth auch deshalb zum Zentrum seiner Mission in Griechenland gewählt haben, weil es durch seine Lage, seine Geschichte und die Isthmischen Spiele zu einem Knotenpunkt des kulturellen und politischen Lebens im östlichen Mittelmeer geworden war und er das völkerumgreifende Fest für sein missionarisches Wirken nutzen wollte“ (BRÄNDL 242). Mit der Berücksichtigung dieses Missionierungsgedankens und des biographischen Aspekts bei Saulus/Paulus, der zwar einen Wandel in der Verwendung der Sportmetaphern im Laufe des Lebens nicht *a priori* ausschließt, und vor allem mit der Betonung der Abhängigkeit des Paulus von der jüdischen literarischen Tradition und nicht so sehr von der griechisch-hellenistischen Metaphorik bietet Brändl nicht nur eine kritische Synthese der bisherigen Forschungen, er weist mit seinen Thesen über den bisherigen Kenntnisstand und die vorhandene *communis opinio* hinaus. Dass dabei im Falle der paulinischen Bildersprache der Blick nicht nur auf dessen Vorgeschichte, auf dessen Genese zu lenken ist, sondern auch darauf, wie sie bei den Kirchenvätern verstanden und rezipiert wird, diesen Nach-

weis hat vor allem schon Werner WEISMANN in seinem Buch *Kirche und Schauspiele. Die Schauspiele im Urteil der lateinischen Kirchenväter unter besonderer Berücksichtigung von Augustinus*, Würzburg 1972 (Cassiciacum, Band 27) geführt. Weismanns grundsätzliche Beurteilung der Metaphern und Vergleiche bei Paulus stimmt mit den Ergebnissen von Brändl in mehreren Punkten überein, wenn er zu den bei den Kirchenvätern beliebten Vergleichen aus der sportlichen Welt feststellt: „Eingang in die christliche Predigt hat der in der kynisch-stoischen Diatribe gern gebrauchte Vergleich des Lebens mit einem Agon durch I Kor 9,24–27 gefunden. Paulus dürfte er über das hellenistische Judentum bekannt geworden sein. Der Apostel erinnert die Korinther daran, dass bei den sportlichen Wettkämpfen nur derjenige den Siegespreis erhält, der sich mit äußerster Kraft und unter Verzichten darum bemüht. Auch das christliche Leben ist solch ein Wettkampf. Paulus selbst widmet sich ihm mit ganzer Energie und ist ein zielbewusster Wettläufer und Faustkämpfer“ (WEISMANN 112). Diese Konkordanz mindert keinesfalls die Verdienste, die sich Brändl um ein besseres Verständnis der Bedeutung des Agons bei Paulus erworben hat.

Ingomar Weiler, Graz

***diocles*. Ein digitales Personenlexikon von Sportlern im Altertum**

Mehr denn je hat sich heute das Medium des *World Wide Web*, häufig bezeichnet als „Web 2.0“, in Form von digitalen Buchveröffentlichungen oder elektronischen Quelleneditionen der Altertumswissenschaft bemächtigt. In Graz entstand unter der Federführung von B. Mauritsch-Bein und W. Petermandl im Rahmen sporthistorischer Forschungen das Quellenarchiv *spectatores* (<http://www-gewi.uni-graz.at/spectatores/>),¹ das als digitales Arbeitsinstrument und virtuelles Nachschlagewerk in gewisser Weise das durch I. Weiler initialisierte Projekt, die Quellendokumentation zur Gymnastik und Agonistik im Altertum,² in die Moderne (e-Science) führt.

Das elektronische Archiv *diocles* (<http://www.diocles.de> oder <http://www.diocles.eu>)³ versucht als Personenlexikon die Sportler des griechisch-römischen Altertums, unter denen sich Angehörige fast aller Mittelmeerländer finden, systematisch zu erfassen und weitgehend anzuzeigen. Es werden damit die Grundlagen geschaffen für die Erforschung sozialer Athletenstrukturen ebenso wie für die Gewinnung allgemeiner Erkenntnisse in die Organisation und Kultur des Sports der Antike. Vor allem aber soll das Lexikon dazu dienen, das weit verstreute, auch für Spezialisten nicht mehr überschaubare Quellenmaterial zu erfassen und für weiterführende Arbeiten jeglicher Art verfügbar zu machen. Besonders beim Fund neuer Inschriften würde das Personenlexikon eine schnelle Information erlauben.

Der Begriff *Sportler* soll in erster Linie diejenigen historisch belegbaren Personen der Antike umfassen,⁴ die nach heutigem Sprachgebrauch als „Leistungssportler“ bezeichnet werden. Die Anfänge der Berufssportler reichen wohl ins 6. Jh. v. Chr. zurück, als in Griechenland die großen Nationalspiele und auch kleinere Feste entstanden. Terminologisch ergibt sich ein breites Personenspektrum, das sich hauptsächlich aus den Athleten der griechischen Agone (*gymnische* und *hippische* Bewerbe) und den Wettkämpfern der römischen Spiele (*ludi*) in den drei Hauptformen *ludi circenses*, *munera* und *venationes* zusammensetzt. Auch die Spektakel im Amphitheater, aus heutiger Sicht grausam und barbarisch erscheinend, waren – ebenso wie das griechische Pankration – ein bestimmendes Element der sportlichen Wirk-

¹ S. dazu W. PETERMANDL, *Zuschauer der Geschichte. Ein Internet-Archiv zum Publikum im Altertum*, in: Nikephoros 19, 2006, 45–56.

² I. WEILER (Hg.), *Quellendokumentation zur Gymnastik und Agonistik im Altertum*, 7 Bde., Wien/Köln/Weimar 1991–2002.

³ Das digitale Archiv *diocles* ist optimiert für die Browser *Mozilla Firefox* (ab 3.0) und *Google Chrome*. Die Nutzung von *Windows Internet Explorer* kann (je nach Version) zur Einschränkung von bestimmten Funktionen, beispielsweise des Alphabets, führen. Großer Dank gebührt Maximilian Friedel (Köln), der dem Verfasser bei der Programmierung und Einrichtung der Datenbank von *diocles* geholfen hat.

⁴ Die Anführung fiktiver Athleten, wie sie beispielsweise in den Satiren von Lucillius (1. Jh. n. Chr.) vorkommen, *AP XI 75,77,81,208*, soll in *diocles* nach Möglichkeit vermieden werden.

lichkeit. Bei Leichenspielen z.B. standen athletische Wettkämpfe und Gladiatorenkämpfe nebeneinander.

In einigen Fällen finden in *diocles* Personen Aufnahme, für die der Begriff „Sportler“ nur dann zutrifft, wenn man ihn in einem sehr weiten Sinne oder indirekt behandelt und dabei manchmal die reale sportliche Leistung oder den Wettkampfgedanken ausklammert. So wurden in den hippischen Wettbewerben Griechenlands nicht die Wagenlenker oder Reiter, sondern die Pferdebesitzer als Sieger ausgerufen. Bekanntlich wurde über diesen Umweg Kyniska zu Beginn des 4. Jh.s v. Chr. als erste Frau überhaupt Olympiasiegerin.⁵ Dessen ungeachtet soll die Spartanerin wie auch alle anderen griechischen Pferdeeigner in *diocles* als Sportler geführt werden.

Im Sport zu römischer Zeit gibt es in ähnlicher Weise zweifelhafte Beispiele: Die Auftritte der Kaiser Nero, Caligula, Didius Julianus et al. in Circus oder Amphitheater können i.a. nicht als Sport im Sinne eines fairen Leistungserlebnisses bezeichnet, sondern müssen als Vergnügen, Zeitvertreib oder „Kinderspiel“ abgetan werden, wie es Cassius Dio als Zeitzeuge im Falle der Schaukämpfe von Kaiser Commodus beschreibt.⁶ Laut Sueton kämpften im Jahre 46 v. Chr. Furius Leptinus, der aus einer Praetorenfamilie abstammte, und Quintus Calpenus, ein ehemaliger Senator und Advokat, im Rahmen der großen Gladiatorenspiele, die Caesar auf dem Forum Romanum ausrichten ließ.⁷ Auch auf weibliche Gladiatoren stößt der Benutzer von *diocles*: Erhalten hat sich ein Relief aus Halikarnassos, das heutzutage im Britischen Museum zu sehen ist. Es zeigt Achillia und Amazona in der Ausrüstung von *provocatores*.⁸ Ob Kämpfe zwischen Frauen ernstzunehmender Bestandteil von *munera* waren, darf angesichts der harten Ausbildung bezweifelt werden. Ferner soll *diocles* Tänzer (beispielsweise den Stierkämpfer Apphion Heronas aus Alexandria),⁹ Akrobaten oder Reiterakrobaten erfassen. Bekannt ist die Grabinschrift des Fuscus, der *cursor* der grünen Renngesellschaft gewesen ist.¹⁰

Bewusst abgrenzen möchte sich *diocles* von den Teilnehmern musischer Agone, die an großen panhellenischen Wettkampforten, außer in Olympia, auftraten, obschon ihre Wettkämpfe dort eine Einheit mit den gymnischen und hippischen Agonen bildeten. Auch die Herolde und Trompeter, deren Wettkämpfe in Olympia seit Beginn des 4. Jh.s v. Chr. feste Bestandteile wurden,¹¹ sollen in diesem Archiv keine Rolle spielen.

⁵) J. EBERT, *Griechische Epigramme auf Sieger an gymnischen und hippischen Agonen*, Berlin 1972 (ASAW, Phil.-hist. Kl. 63,2), Nr. 33. S. jetzt auch F. CANALI DE ROSSI, *Hippiká. Corse di cavalli e di carri in Grecia, Etruria e Roma, Vol. I: La gara delle quadrighe nel mondo greco*, Hildesheim 2011 (Nikephoros Beihefte, Bd. 18), 62 ff.

⁶) Cass. Dio 73,19,5.

⁷) Suet. *Caes.* 39,2–4.

⁸) CIG 6855 f.; vgl. F. MEIJER, *Gladiatoren*, Amsterdam 2003, 74.

⁹) R. MERKELBACH/J. STAUBER, *Steinepigramme aus dem griechischen Osten*, Bd. 1, Bonn 1998, 118.

¹⁰) ILS 5278. Vgl. J.-P. THULLIER, *Les cursores du cirque étaient-ils toujours des coureurs à pied?* in: *Latomus* 47,1988, 376–383; *AE*, 1993, 688.

¹¹) W. DECKER, *Sport in der griechischen Antike*, München 1995, 46.

Der Aufbau der elektronischen Prosopographie *diocles* versteht sich als „work in progress“, so dass der Datenbestand kontinuierlich erweitert und langfristig erschlossen werden soll. Gegenwärtig umfasst das Lexikon die Biographien von 16 Sportlern (Stand: November 2011), welche vorderhand dem Experimentieren und Testen der Datenbank dienen. Allein die Anzahl der bekannten Olympiasieger beläuft sich auf knapp über 1000,¹² was etwa einem Viertel aller möglichen Olympiasieger entspricht.

Im Übrigen ist dank der immer wieder zu erwartenden archäologischen Funde (Vasen, Münzen, Reliefe, Mosaik etc.) mit einer vollständigen Erschließung des Themas zu einem fixen Datum nicht zu rechnen. Das Quellenmaterial, aus dem die Nachrichten kommen, ist weit gespannt. Es umfasst die gesamte Literatur (Geschichtsschreibung, Dichterwerke, Briefsammlungen, Urkunden oder Fachschriften etc.). Eine herausragende Rolle spielen selbstredend Inschriften in lateinischer und griechischer Sprache sowie Papyri.

Konventionell publizierte Vorarbeiten zu einem solchen Unternehmen, darunter die Liste der überlieferten Olympiasieger von L. Moretti (nach wichtigen Vorarbeiten von G. H. Förster im 19. Jh.),¹³ die im Bereich der Erforschung der griechischen Agonistik ein Meilenstein war,¹⁴ haben dazu geführt, dass in einzelnen Bereichen nicht nur eine gewisse Übersicht gewonnen werden konnte, sondern auch einige recht vollständige Biographien antiker Athleten entstanden sind. Besondere Beachtung fanden seit jeher die Olympiasieger und die Periodoniken, denen es gelang, in allen panhellenischen Agonen Sieger zu sein.¹⁵ Hinzu sind einzelne Untersuchungen gekommen, wie beispielsweise die Abhandlung von J. Ebert über griechische Siegerepigramme,¹⁶ die eine Reihe von Sportlerbiographien erschlossen haben. Während frühere (wichtige) Arbeiten in erster Linie darauf bedacht waren, das Wesen der griechischen Sportarten zu erörtern und zu erklären,¹⁷ konnte

¹²) Vgl. W. DECKER, *Neue Olympiasieger aus Ägypten*, in: W. WAITKUS (Hg.), *Diener des Horus. Festschrift für Dieter Kurth zum 65. Geburtstag*, Gladbeck 2008 (*Aegyptiaca Hamburgensia*, Bd. 1), 67 Anm. 2.

¹³) H. FÖRSTER, *Die Sieger in den olympischen Spielen bis zum Ende des 4. Jh.s v. Chr.*, in: *Bericht über das Schuljahr, Gymnasium zu Zwickau*, Zwickau 1891, 1–30; 1892, 1–32.

¹⁴) L. MORETTI, *Olympionikai, i vincitori negli antichi agoni olimpici*, Rom 1957; DERS., *Supplemento al catalogo degli Olympionikai*, in: *Klio* 52, 1970, 295–303, überholt durch DENS., *Nuovo supplemento al catalogo degli Olympionikai*, in: *Miscellanea Graeca e Romana* 12, 1987, 67–91, erneut abgedruckt in: W. COULSON/H. KYRIELEIS (Hgg.), *Proceedings of an International Symposium on the Olympic Games, 5–9 September 1988, Athen 1992*, 119–128. S. auch J. EBERT, *Zur neuen Bronzeplatte mit Siegerinschriften aus Olympia, Inv. 1148*, in: J. EBERT (Hg.), *Agonismata*, Stuttgart/Leipzig 1997, 317–335.

¹⁵) R. KNAB, *Die Periodoniken*, Gießen 1934 (ND Chicago 1980).

¹⁶) EBERT, *Epigramme* (s. Anm. 14).

¹⁷) Stellvertretend für weitere Werke seien hier genannt J. JÜTHNER, *Die athletischen Leibesübungen der Griechen*, Bd. 2.1, Graz/Wien/Köln 1968; I. WEILER, *Der Sport bei den Völkern der Alten Welt*, Darmstadt ²1988.

im Laufe der Zeit durch weitere Publikationen ein gewisser Überblick über die namentlich bekannten Sportler, die in Olympia und an Festspielorten jenseits der Olympischen Stätte wirkten, gewonnen werden.¹⁸ Systematisch erfasst sind inzwischen auch die Sieger der Pythien in Delphi und diejenigen der Wettkämpfe von Nemea und am Isthmos von Korinth.¹⁹ Es mangelt jedoch weiterhin an einer geschlossenen Gesamtübersicht nicht nur der Sieger, sondern der Sportler der Antike, zumal erschwerend hinzukommt, dass Agone selbst in kleinen Polisgemeinschaften durchgeführt worden sind. Ein Stiftungsdekret aus dem 2. Jh. v. Chr. von der Kykladeninsel Amorgos z. B. beschreibt das sportliche Programm eines solchen lokalen Sportfestes zu Ehren des Kampfsportlers Aleximachos, Sohn des Kritolaos.²⁰

Die bis dato kaum (systematisch) erforschten Wagenlenker der römischen Kaiserzeit sind heute auf Grund der Prosopographie von G. Horsmann so gut wie vollständig erschlossen,²¹ und die Wettkämpfer im Amphitheater sind infolge einiger Arbeiten zu einem großen Teil bekannt.²² J.-P. Thuillier hat in seiner Publikation zum römischen Sport, die erwartungsgemäß die Circusakteure in den Mittelpunkt rückt, auch die Sportler thematisiert, die in Rom athletische Wettkämpfe, Sport als Freizeitvergnügen oder Körperer-

¹⁸) Ohne Anspruch auf Vollständigkeit s. H. BUHMANN, *Der Sieg in Olympia und in den anderen panhellenischen Spielen*, Diss. München 1972; M. B. POLIAKOFF, *Combat Sports in the Ancient World: Competition Violence and Culture*, New Haven/London 1987; W. DECKER, *Sport in der griechischen Antike*, München 1995; Ch. MANN, *Athlet und Polis im archaischen und frühklassischen Griechenland*, Göttingen 2001 (Hypomnemata Bd. 138); St. G. MILLER, *Ancient Greek Athletics*, New Haven/London 2004; U. SINN, *Das antike Olympia*, München 2004.

¹⁹) Th. KLEE, *Zur Geschichte der gymnischen Agone an griechischen Festen*, Leipzig/Berlin 1918; E. MARÓTI, *A Delphoi Pythia sportversenyeknek gyöztesei*, Budapest 2000; A. NAUMANN, *Die Isthmischen Spiele*, Diplomarbeit Deutsche Sporthochschule Köln 1990, 118–146; G. P. KOSTOUIROS, *εμέων ἄθλων διήγησις, τόμος α', ἔμμετρος ἐπιχώριος λόγος μετὰ σχολίων, τόμος β', Νεμεῶται. 286 Νεμεονίκες της Ἀρχαιότητος*, Nemea 2008. Eine Zusammenstellung der Isthmioniken von A. Farrington erscheint in Kürze als Beiheft der Reihe Nikephoros.

²⁰) B. LAUM, *Stiftungen in der griechischen und römischen Antike*, Leipzig 1914, Nr. 50, Z. 79–87; 100–103; *IG XII⁷* Nr. 515; vgl. DECKER, *Sport* (s. Anm. 11), 59 f.

²¹) G. HORSMANN, *Die Wagenlenker der römischen Kaiserzeit. Untersuchungen zu ihrer sozialen Stellung*, Stuttgart 1998 (Forschungen zur antiken Sklaverei Bd. 29).

²²) Angeführt seien hier L. ROBERT, *Les gladiateurs dans l'Orient grec*, Paris 1940; M. GRANT, *Gladiators*, London 1967; R. AUGUET, *Cruauté et civilisation: les jeux romains*, Paris 1970; A. CAMERON, *Bread and Circuses. The Roman Emperor and his People*, Oxford 1974; P. VEYNE, *Le pain et le cirque*, Paris 1976 (ND Frankfurt a. M./New York 1988); G. VILLE, *La gladiature en occident des origines à la mort de Domitien*, Rom 1981; MEIJER, *Gladiatoren* (s. Anm. 8); K.-W. WEEBER, *Panem et circenses. Massenunterhaltung als Politik im antiken Rom*, Mainz 1994; M. JUNKELMANN, *Das Spiel mit dem Tod. So kämpften Roms Gladiatoren*, Mainz 2000; Th. WIEDEMANN, *Kaiser und Gladiatoren. Die Macht der Spiele im antiken Rom*, Darmstadt 2001. Siehe jetzt auch Ch. MANN, „Um keinen Kranz, um das Leben kämpfen wir!“ *Gladiatoren im Osten des Römischen Reiches und die Frage der Romanisierung*, Berlin 2011 (Studien zur Alten Geschichte, Bd. 14).

tüchtigung zur militärischen Vorbereitung ausgeübt haben.²³ Eine geschlossene Sammlung der Sportler im antiken Rom ist jedoch bislang ein Desiderat der Forschung geblieben.

Zwar vermischen sich vor allem in Bezug auf die *vitae* berühmter Athleten der archaischen Zeit zuweilen historische Wahrheit und Legende, dennoch können einzelne unverbürgte oder die sportlichen Leistungen überhöhende Erzählungen einen Einblick in die Bedeutung und den Status solcher Athleten geben. Ein anderes Problem tritt insbesondere im römischen Sport zu Tage: Zahlreiche Wettkämpfer in Circus oder Amphitheater sind namentlich nur durch ihr zugelegtes Pseudonym (*signum* oder *supernomen*) überliefert, wie etwa die bereits erwähnte Achillia oder Eros, Narcissus, Serpentius etc. In *diocles* sollen indes auch Sportler mit Künstlernamen Aufnahme finden, da jene Akteure reale sportliche Leistungen vollbracht haben und de facto unter diesen Namen der Öffentlichkeit bzw. dem Publikum bekannt waren.

diocles möchte für Benutzer ein umfassendes Such- und Nachschlagewerk sein, das alle wesentlichen Fragen zu den namentlich überlieferten Sportlern des klassischen Altertums beantwortet. Die Vorteile eines Archivs in digitaler Form liegen auf der Hand: Zum einen bietet der Computer die Möglichkeit einer zeit- und ortsunabhängigen Datenbank-Recherche, d.h. beliebige Begriffe (Sportler, Disziplin, Zeit etc.) können sehr zügig gesucht und angezeigt werden. Zum anderen können Einträge der Datenbank jederzeit durch den Herausgeber korrigiert, ergänzt oder aktualisiert werden, beispielsweise durch neue wichtige Literatur.

Der Aufbau der einzelnen Artikel folgt einheitlichen Grundsätzen, nach denen mit der Namensnennung des Sportlers zunächst (wie es sich aus den Zeugnissen rekonstruieren lässt) seine Disziplin mit der zugehörigen Altersklasse und Sportstätte, das Jahrhundert seines Lebens und sein Herkunftsort bzw. -provinz angegeben werden. Daran schließt sich eine Biographie an, welche die wichtigsten Daten enthält und zum Verständnis sporthistorischer Zusammenhänge inhaltlich darüber hinausgehen kann. Darauf folgt die Quelle und ggf. Sekundärliteratur. Die Nachweispraxis innerhalb eines Artikels soll durch die Angabe des Autors und der zugrunde liegenden Überlieferung wissenschaftlichen Standards genügen.

Die Erstellung der Einzelartikel als laufende Arbeit setzt eine fachliche Kontrolle durch den Herausgeber voraus. Langfristiges Ziel des Vorhabens *diocles* ist die Drucklegung einer Prosopographie der griechischen und römischen Sportler; immerhin ist deren Zahl endlich. Eine Übersetzung der Artikel in die englische und französische Sprache wäre ein weiteres Desideratum. Die Realisierung des Projektes ist im Wesentlichen von der Mitarbeit kundiger Autoren, die sich um die wissenschaftliche Aufarbeitung des Sports im Altertum verdient machen möchten, abhängig, welche gebeten werden, Kontakt aufzunehmen.

Jan Tremel, Köln

²³) J.-P. THULLIER, *Le sport dans la Rome antique*, Paris 1996.

Ausstellung zum antiken Makedonien

Vom 13. Oktober 2011 bis zum 16. Januar 2012 fand im Louvre in Paris eine Ausstellung zum Thema „Au royaume d’Alexandre le Grand. La Macédoine antique“ statt, zu der ein Katalog gleichen Titels erschienen ist, herausgegeben von S. Descamps-Lequime und K. Charatzopoulou, Paris 2011.

Die Ausstellung, die überwiegend von Objekten aus dem Archäologischen Museum Thessaloniki, aber auch von zahlreichen Dokumenten aus den Magazinen des Louvre selbst bestritten wird, präsentiert folgende sport-historisch relevante Dokumente, die auch im Katalog, dessen Nummern im folgenden zur Identifizierung verwendet werden, ihre wissenschaftliche Darstellung erfahren:

87/16–19: vier Aryballoi, korinthisch, 1. Hälfte 6. Jh. v. Chr.

106: Aryballos, aus Akanthos, protokorinthisch, 610/605–580 v. Chr.

115/116: zwei Aryballoi, aus Toumba/Thessaloniki, korinthisch, ca. 550 v. Chr.

158/1: Dreifuß aus dem Grab Philipps II., Vergina, 336 v. Chr.

Er trägt die Inschrift: ΠΑΡ ΗΕΡΑΣ ΑΡΓΕΙΑΣ ΕΜΙ ΤΟ ΑΦΕΘΛΟΝ
(*Ich bin ein Preis von den [Agonen] der Argivischen Hera.*)

Damit können sowohl die *Heraia* als auch die *Hekatomboia* gemeint sein. Seit Alexander I. Philhellen versuchten die makedonischen Könige die Teilnahmeberechtigung an den griechischen Agonen damit zu rechtfertigen, daß sie als Argeaden aus der Stadt Argos stammten.

216/23: 66 Astragale, 4./3. Jh. v. Chr.

232/1–2: Gläserne Spielsteine (28 blaue, 21 transparente) und 5 Würfel aus Knochen für das Spiel der „5 Linien“, aus Sevasti, ca. 350 v. Chr.

246: Strigilis, aus Sindos, Anfang 5. Jh. v. Chr.

270: Tänzer, Tonfigur, Atelier: Amphipolis (?), 3. Jh. v. Chr.
Knieender Tänzer in der Haltung des *oklasma*, Attis (?)

271: Tänzer, Tonfigur, aus Amphipolis, 4./3. Jh. v. Chr.

275/1–4: Applikationen aus Ton, aus Gephyra, Wagenrennen, Biga, 2. Hälfte 4./Anfang 3. Jh. v. Chr.

300–302: Drei Aryballoi, aus Sindos, 1. Hälfte 5. Jh. v. Chr.,
Technik millefiori

326: Totenstele, aus Thessaloniki (?), 1. Jh. v. Chr.

Im Bildfeld der Stele ist Noumenios, Sohn des Koinos, der mit vierzehn Jahren verstorben ist, als Fackelläufer dargestellt.

344/2: rf. Skyphos, aus Edessa, 1. Hälfte des 4. Jh.s v. Chr.

Szene eines nackten Athleten mit Strigilis in der Rechten und Halter (?) in der Linken.

Gegenüber ein bekleideter Trainer, dazwischen an der Wand ein Diskus (?).

- 338: Ephebeninschrift, aus Thessaloniki, 96/95 v. Chr.
Dekret der Neoi ehrt den Gymnasiarchen Paramonos, Sohn des Antigonos. Es folgen die Namen der Epheben. Oben Lorbeerkranz.
- 397: Grabstele des Gladiators Euphrates, wohl aus Thessaloniki, 2./3. Jh. n. Chr.
Dargestellt als *retiarius* mit Dreizack und Messer, rechts und links neben dem Kopf je drei Kränze. Auch die Inschrift nennt sechs Siege.
- 415: Goldmedaille mit Kopf der Olympias, Mutter Alexanders des Großen, aus Abukir/Ägypten, 3. Jh. n. Chr.
- 416–418: Goldmedaille mit Köpfen Alexanders (2x) und Philipps II., aus der Umgebung von Tarsos, gegen 230 n. Chr.
Die Medaillen wurden als Preise an Athleten vergeben, die an Agonen siegreich waren, welche aus Anlaß kaiserlicher Präsenz in verschiedenen Städten Kleinasiens veranstaltet wurden.

Wolfgang Decker, Köln

Athanasios Anastasiou (Serres)

On the Original Meaning of the Gladiatorial Games

The gladiatorial combats were a “progressive” and improved form of human sacrifice at the tombs of important persons. To understand the gladiatorial combats one must understand the hidden logic of these rituals. It is important to recognize the primitive forms of belief in the journey of the human soul after its separation from the body. The practice of sacrificing human beings in order to give an escort to the soul of the deceased had been abandoned through slow and painful efforts. Still the idea of escorting the dead continued to persist well into the higher civilization as it appears from the psychopompic roles of deities and demons. So there is nothing improbable about the notion that the purpose of the gladiatorial combats was originally to give an escort to the deathless but feeble and unsettled human soul during its perilous journey through the terrors of the Underworld.

Lucas Christopoulos (Lausanne)

Early combat sports rituals in China and the rise of professionalism

Early wrestling rituals commemorating the legendary fight between the Yellow Emperor and Chiyou the bull-monster were held in the northern parts of China. Combat sports competitions became increasingly popular following the modifications of the military starting from the Warring States period to the Han dynasty. Strong individuals were promoted in the armies' hierarchy by showing their skills in combat sports or by their outstanding prowess of strength. The enrollment of Western mercenary troops influenced by the Hellenistic world of Central Asia will include their traditions of combat sports as an imperative exercise for close combat and warfare training. Greek professional acrobats and jugglers will arrive as well all the way from Roman Egypt and perform at the court of the Chinese Emperor. They will contribute to professionalism in acrobatics, combat sports and juggling entertainment in the Chinese world.

Steven Ross Murray/William A. Sands/Nathan A. Keck/Douglas A. O’Roark (Grand Junction, CO)

Efficacy of the Ankyle in Increasing the Distance of the Ancient Greek Javelin Throw

The ancient Greeks threw the javelin as part of their athletic festivals, especially the Olympic Games. They used a leather thong, called an *ankyle*, which they wrapped around the javelin, before inserting their first two fingers in a loop at one end, to aid their throws. Many scholars believe that the ankyle was used to add more thrust, as well as to provide a rifling effect, on the javelin to increase the distance of the throws. However, the effect of the use of the ankyle in the javelin throw is unknown, and the secondary litera-

ture on the subject is inconsistent. Here we show that the ankyle improves the distance of the javelin throw by 58 percent. We found that modern throwers threw a facsimile of an ancient Greek javelin a mean of 19.57 ± 2.74 m with the javelin alone, but threw for 30.99 ± 4.41 m with the ankyle. High-speed-video analysis reveals that the ankyle increases the launch velocity of the javelin 26.6 percent (i. e., 4.0 m/s to 5.4 m/s) by increasing the contact time with the javelin during the throw as well as increasing the effective length of the throwing arm. Our results are contradictory to what has been accepted by many scholars. Specifically, reports from the Napoleonic era indicate that the ankyle could increase the javelin throw by some 300 percent (E.N. GARDINER, *Throwing the Javelin*, in: *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 27, 1907, 249–273). D.C. YOUNG, *A Brief History of the Olympic Games*, Malden, MA, 2004, 37, states that the improvement was more likely from 15 to 35 percent, but no direct evidence is cited. Our results show that neither view is correct, and that the ankyle improves the distance of the javelin throw dramatically, but nowhere near the exaggerated claims from the Napoleonic era, but farther than Young's estimate.

Jannis Mouratidis (Thessaloniki)

The length of the running race in the ancient pentathlon

The question of the length of the race in the ancient pentathlon proved puzzling and intriguing. The purpose of this work is to reopen an old debate on the kind of race in the ancient pentathlon, a debate which has never been definitively resolved. Many scholars are of the opinion that the length of the race in the ancient pentathlon was the same as the *stadion*, i. e. one length of the stadium track, but it has also been pointed out that the race was probably five stades. The evidence shows that the race in the ancient pentathlon was a sprint, the *stadion*. However one cannot exclude the possibility that in some local competitions, it may have been one of the *diaulos* or race in armour. The above conclusion would be in agreement with Aristotle's remarks on the swiftness and power of the pentathlon contestants.

Zinon Papakonstantinou (Athens)

Agariste's Suitors: Sport, Feasting and Elite Politics in Sixth-Century Greece

Herodotus' description (6.126–130) of Agariste's wooing and betrothal articulates late archaic elite discourses of social distinction through commensality and sport. The use of sympotic and athletic trials is encountered in other Greek, mainly mythological, betrothal stories. Cleisthenes' and the suitors' attitudes towards drinking and intoxication correspond to elite perceptions on moderate and excessive drinking and their effects. Regarding sport, the year-long athletic trials of the suitors at Sicyon and the subsequent literary elaboration of the episode run contrary to the

trend, attested since the sixth century BC, towards the establishment of periodic panhellenic and local contests. Moreover, the Sicyon suitor contests ostensibly occurred in disregard, and perhaps in defiance, to late archaic views which mandated the subordination of athletic victors and victories to community interests.

George M. Hollenback (Houston)

Deaths in the Pan-Hellenic Games: The Case of Arrachion Reconsidered

Arrachion the pankratiast reputedly succumbed to a fatal choke hold immediately after forcing his opponent to surrender by dislocating his ankle. Robert H. Brophy III made a case that Arrachion's death couldn't have been the result of a choke hold, arguing instead that it was the result of a broken neck sustained during the maneuver used to dislocate his opponent's ankle. Because the new reading of the text presented in this paper supports neither a neck fracture nor strangulation as causes of death, an alternative cause of death – backed by recent medical findings – is proposed.

Nigel Nicholson/Elizabeth Heintges (Portland, OR)

Aging, Athletics and Epinician

This paper examines the relationship between aging and athletics in epinician and contemporary athletic discourse more generally. Central to epinician, as well as to dedications, vases and oral legends, is the image of the ageless athlete. Although this image is informed by a highly negative idea of aging in some lyric poetry, epinician also articulates a positive vision of old age, first, through descriptions of the old age that athletes can expect, and, second, through descriptions of equestrian victors, all of whom were beyond the age of athletic competition. Epinician's vision of old age remains, however, constrained by the central figure of the ageless athlete, with its typical repertoire of models and themes, and fails to offer a realistic sense of aging and physical decline.

María José García Soler (Vitoria-Gasteiz)

Euripides' Critique of Athletics in *Autolykus*, fr. 282 N²

In the art and literature of Antiquity the important role that sports played is frequently in evidence. Although most instances offer a positive view of the athlete, there was also criticism by poets, philosophers and doctors, who all expressed their disapproval of an occupation that endangered the athletes' lives and was much too highly valued by society. Fragment 282 N², from the Satyr play *Autolykus* by Euripides is especially representative in this respect since it expresses both views.

Simon Hornblower (Oxford)

Thucydides 5.49–50, the Olympic Games of 420 BC: Narrative Structure and Technique

This article re-examines the two splendid chapters (5.49–50) in which Thucydides describes the Olympic games and festival of 420 BC. It is argued, against criticism levelled against the author in 2008 by A. Köhnken, that the description employ narrative strategies, including and especially artful delays. In particular (1) Lichas' introduction at 5.50.4 is delayed (he could have been introduced at the beginning of ch. 49); Lichas' patronymic is also delayed (it could have been given earlier in book 5); the claim (Köhnken) that Thucydides' sole and exclusive motive in these chapters was to illustrate general 'fear' felt towards the Spartans is argued to be reductively monocausal, though the motive is valid as far as it goes. Other and simultaneous motives are suggested.

István Kertész (Budapest)

Some Considerations on the Historical Background of the Olympic Games in 300 B.C.

In his book on *Ancient Greek Athletics* S.G. Miller has reconstructed the Olympic Games held in 300 B.C. This has prompted my own interest in the origin and political background of the known victors in the Olympic Games of that year. The names and nationalities of eleven victors are known; and the most intriguing aspect for me is the successful participation of those from Magnesia on the Maeander, Mytilene, and Cyrene. In this paper I shall discuss the participation of the victors from those regions and try to shed some light on the development of those regions' relations with the Olympic movement and the general political conditions in that year. This is a worthwhile objective. The years around 300 B.C. were dominated by the political conflicts among the successors of Alexander the Great.

Kent J. Rigsby (Chicago)

A Victory List from Cos

In a victory list from Cos of Augustan date, the festival *Ἐλευ[σίν]ια τὰ καὶ Καισάρηα* is local, and not the Eleusinia of Athens. But no cult of the Eleusinian pair is known at Cos. Restore instead *Ἐλευ[θέρ]ια*, commemorating the end of the tyranny of Nicias of Cos and the victory of Octavian at Actium.

H.W. Pleket (Leiden)

Roman emperors and Greek athletes

This article consists of three sections. In the first it is argued that prior to (and also during) Roman domination in the Greek cities sport was a dominant feature of urban society and culture. The gymnasium and the contests organized both in the gymnasia and in the cities at large were ubiquitous phenomena in the Greek world. In the second section the role of the emperor as protector of the athletes' interests and privileges is discussed, with special reference to the recently published Hadrianic letters from Alexandria Troas. The final section focuses on why Roman emperors wanted to get involved in Greek athletics at all. Athletics were a crucial element in the self-identity of urban elites and it was in the emperor's interest to support these elites. At the same time athletic contests often served to express worship of and loyalty to the emperor. On the other hand emperors may have wanted to control at least the athletic part of the urban budgets.

Brigitte Le Guen (Paris)

Hadrien, l'Empereur philhellène, et la vie agonistique de son temps. À propos d'un livre récent: Hadrian und die dionysischen Künstler. Drei in Alexandria Troas neugefundene Briefe des Kaisers an die Künstler-Vereinigung

This paper deals with the three recently published letters addressed by the Emperor Hadrian to the Dionysiac Artists' guild in 128 CE, which also concern the Athletic Synod. After a brief summary of each of them, I first focus on the new four year long cycle of festivals with literary and/or athletic games that Hadrian set up, in order to replace the ancient famous *periodos*. My aim is to underline both the arrangements linked to his decisions and their meaning. Then, I will examine with a fresh eye the prizes and other privileges (like the pensions) that were offered to the victorious artists and athletes. I will finally try to find out the reasons why the Emperor wrote such letters, having in mind to illuminate the true nature of the relationships between the imperial power and the main actors of the agonistic, cultural, and religious life of the time.

Jean-Yves Strasser (Noyen-sur-Sarthe)

The start of a running race depicted on a Roman lamp

In ancient Greece, various methods were devised to ensure that runners covered the same distance and set off at the same time. Used as a moveable barrier for individuals or groups, the *hysplex* was subject to various modifications and improvements over the centuries. Even if the mechanism is nowadays well known, the barrier shown on several documents from the

Roman times has not received the same degree of attention. In addition, to the already familiar two reliefs and two mosaïques (Batten Zamour, Té-bessa) a Roman lamp kept in Berlin should now be considered, displaying two Cupid figures at the starting point. In spite of several differences in detail and indisputable difficulties of interpretation, it nevertheless concerns the same type of barrier: a simple wooden bar – the regula – resting on supports that the runners would need to push away at the same time in order to set off. If this rudimentary device only appears in documents from the Western part of the empire, it is because it was only used in Western sports competitions including the major Greek competitions of Rome and elsewhere. In the course of this article, the questions surrounding hurdle races in the antiquity and the short ends of the sarcophagus in the Louvre depicting palaestra scenes are also addressed.

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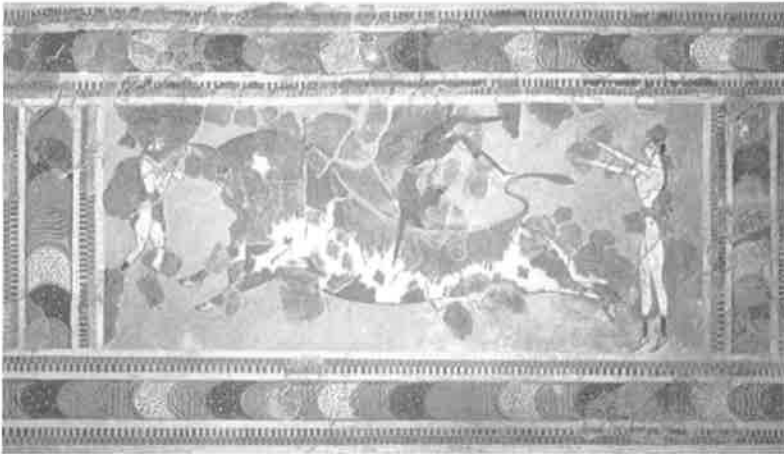
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Taf. 1/1 (zu Christopoulos p. 20): Lyre of Ur, heroic figure catching hold of two human-headed bulls, 2500 BC



Taf. 1/2 (zu Christopoulos p. 20): Fresco of Knossos with bull acrobatics, 1500 BC



Taf. 2/1 (zu Christopoulos p. 30): Bronze belt found in the necropolis of Kensengzhuang, Shaanxi province



Taf. 2/2 (zu Christopoulos p. 31): Dioscuri wearing crown of laurels on the coins of the Greco-Scythian king of Thrace, Adraspos, second Century BC



Taf. 2/3 (zu Christopoulos p. 31): Greco-Bactrian coin of Eucratides with the Dioscuri on the reverse side



Taf. 3 (zu Christopoulos p. 32): Statue of an acrobat found near the tomb of the Qin Emperor in 1999 in Xi'an



Taf. 4 (zu Christopoulos p. 32); Statue of an acrobat found near the tomb of the Qin Emperor in 1999 in Xi'an



Taf. 5 (zu Christopoulos p. 32): Statue of a wrestler found near the tomb of the Qin Emperor in 1999 in Xi'an



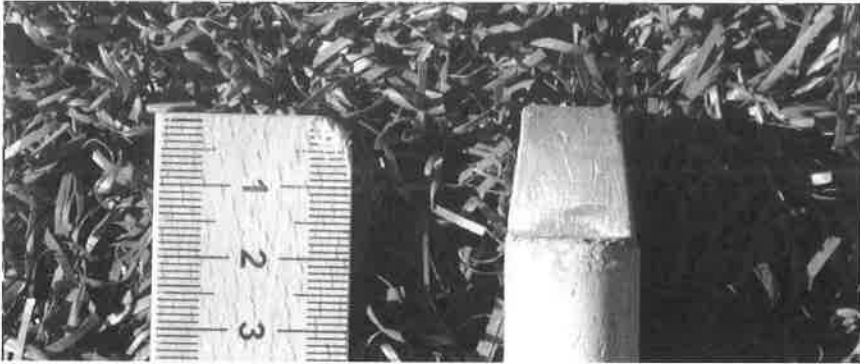
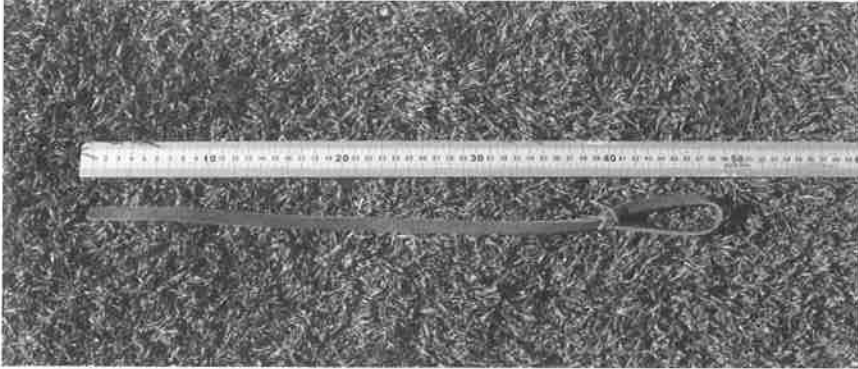
Taf. 6 (zu Christopoulos p. 32): Statue of a wrestler found near the tomb of the Qin Emperor in 1999 in Xi'an



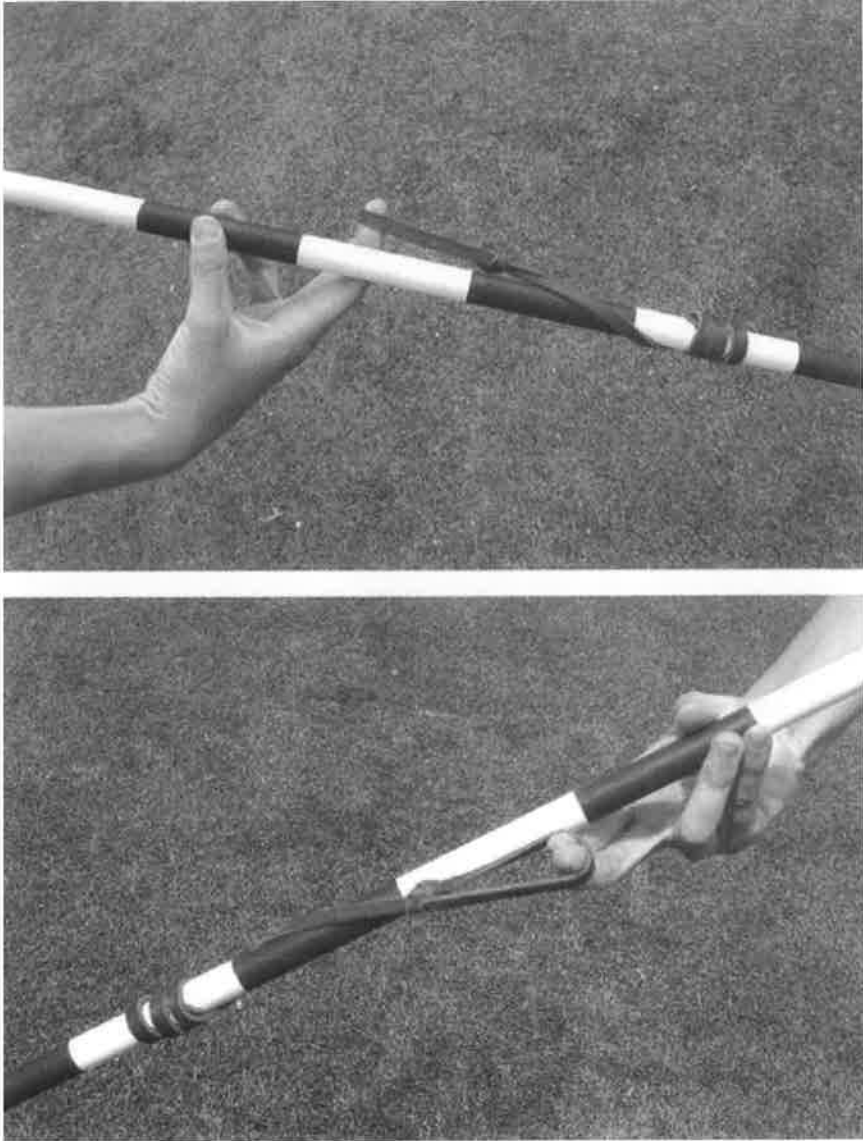
Taf. 7 (zu Murray et al. p. 46): Four pentathletes, one jumper, two javelin throwers, and one discus thrower, readying themselves for competition. Notice that both javelin throwers are pictured using the leather thong (Greek: ἀγκύλη, Latin: *amentum*) as part of their grip on the javelins. Panathenaic amphora, ca. 525 B. C. E. © Trustees of the British Museum. Used with permission.



Taf. 8 (zu Murray et al. p. 46, 49): An athlete holding a javelin, with a leather thong (Greek: ἀγκύλη, Latin: *amentum*) fastened around the shaft. Detail from an Attic red-figure cup, ca. 470 B. C. E. Paravey Collection, Louvre Museum, Paris, France. Photograph by Maria-Lan Nguyen. Used with permission.



Taf. 9 (zu Murray et al. p. 49): The ankyle, with a loop constructed from a bowline knot at one end (top), and the blunted, bronze-tipped javelin (bottom). Photographs by the authors.



Taf. 10 (zu Murray et al. p. 49): The ankyle was secured temporarily to the javelin by wrapping it back on itself three times around the javelin. The grip was completed by inserting the first two fingers into the loop of the ankyle and then using the last two fingers and thumb to hold on to the javelin. Photographs by the authors.



Taf. 11 (zu Murray et al. p. 49): The starting throwing position without the ankyle (top) and with the ankyle (bottom); note the hand position of the grip is very similar in both positions with respect to the center of the javelin. Photographs by the authors.