

the ASCSA's website (<https://www.ascsa.edu.gr/news/newsDetails/videocast-from-kallias-to-kritias-athens-in-the-second-half-of-the-5th-century>). The archive includes fifteen of the original conference papers, with the addition of another paper by Sioumpara on the Acropolis' Chalkotheke, which was not published in the volume.

A word should also be said about the images in this volume. Figures are not integrated into the text but are placed after each essay's bibliography and consist of a mixture of black-and-white and colour images, depending on published source and institution. In the case of architectural renderings and plans, such as those by Valavanis et al. and Manidaki, the greyscale makes highlighted areas of note difficult to discern. Moreover, many of the images are printed at a very small scale, often not filling the page. This creates an optical loss in terms of the rich elements of iconography, sculptural characteristics and stratigraphic layers, which is particularly frustrating for so many topics that rely heavily on precise visual details.

Overall, however, the volume is at its strongest when it makes the connection between material culture and the political and social experience of a half century of Athenian visual developments. The variety of perspectives from an international slate of scholars illustrates the value of close examination, much of which can only be accomplished through physical contact with objects and sites. While many of these essays are still clearly works in progress, as a 'state of the field' volume, it will be intriguing to contextualise them within the interminable trajectory of studies of Athenian art and archaeology for years to come.

*Johns Hopkins University*

JACQUELYN H. CLEMENTS

[jclements1@jhu.edu](mailto:jclements1@jhu.edu)

## THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF OLYMPIA

BARRINGER (J. M.) *Olympia. A Cultural History*. Pp. xx + 281, ills, maps, colour pls. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2021. Cased, £28, US\$35. ISBN: 978-0-691-21047-6.

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This book is an impressive study of the archaeological remains of Olympia. Given the sheer abundance of findings at this site, it is understandable that B. decided to restrict its scope. Firstly, its time frame is limited; it spans mainly from c. 600 BCE, when the first monumental architectural work (the temple that is now called 'Temple of Hera') was built until 'the late Roman period, when pagan cult practices were officially abolished by the Christian emperor Theodosius in 393 A.D.' (p. 5) – although it is left open as to how this decree affected Olympia (cf. pp. 206, 237). Other periods are touched on too. In revealing the time frame of the study, B. disagrees with the common view, still widely held, that the sanctuary and its games experienced their peak during the sixth and fifth centuries, followed by a time of decline. Throughout the book her assertion is backed up with plenty of proof.

Regarding the content, the book concentrates mainly on architectonic work and sculpture 'particularly (but not exclusively)' (p. 5) within the Altis, i.e. the most sacred inner part of the sanctuary. Yet, objects outside the Altis are also discussed to some extent, such as the Leonidaion, or briefly presented.

It is the overall goal of the study 'to obtain a coherent understanding of the site as it developed, not just in terms of its architecture but also in terms of its meaning, to

understand why objects were placed where they were (when we know) and what the intended effect was' (p. 5). In this respect readers certainly gain many useful insights.

The book is structured as follows. It starts with a prologue discussing not only the relationship between the city of Elis and Olympia and the earliest traces of cult in the area of the sanctuary, but also other topics such as the Heraia, the festival for females in Olympia, and the huge number of dedications of armour and weapons that vastly outnumber the findings of other ancient sanctuaries.

Chapter 1, 'The Shape of the Altis and Practical Matters', rather thought-provokingly suggests rethinking the dimensions of the Altis. It is questionable, though, whether this approach of shifting the borders of the Altis further northwards to include the Kronos hill and eastwards up to the sanctuary of Demeter, will find a broad consensus. In the second half of the chapter, where the 'practical matters' are discussed, B. deals with topics such as the water supply, how and where people were fed and housed or how the sacrifice of a hundred bulls, taking place in the middle of the festival, could be imagined.

The following chapters follow a chronological order. Chapters 2–5 – 'The Archaic Period, c. 600–480 B.C.', 'The Fifth Century B.C.', 'The Fourth Century B.C. and the Hellenistic Period' and 'Roman Olympia' – form the centrepiece of the book. Each of these chapters provides helpful summaries at the beginning and the end, and a map showing what the sanctuary looked like in the time period being examined. Buildings, monuments and statues are discussed in depth according to the goal of the study, outlined above, thereby showing how impressively familiar B. is with the abundant relevant archaeological scholarly literature.

The title of the final chapter, 'The Last Olympiad', should be understood in a metaphorical sense. In fact, its first part rather deals in brief with the sanctuary's transformation into a Christian settlement. The second part is a four-page summary of the book, unfortunately being somewhat hidden in this chapter rather than being singled out as a standalone section. In this final summary it is stated that the book 'has endeavoured to illuminate the site, its monuments and activities from a variety of angles – religious, military, athletic, political, mythological, social' (p. 241). At this point, it could be argued that, although the book does 'illuminate . . . monuments' from all those various angles, less attention is given to the 'activities'. In principle, this is perfectly justified as the book has its particular scope and goals – that are clearly outlined in the introduction. However, the title and subtitle of the book might be a bit misleading in that respect, and the book is not a 'comprehensive . . . history of one of the most important sites in the ancient Greek and Roman world', as stated on the inside of the dust jacket. One wonders whether the subtitle was an idea of the publishers, as within the study itself, there is no reference of it being a cultural history of Olympia.

The cult festival for Zeus, the contests, the political activities and the mythological stories around Olympia, though mentioned on many occasions, are not focused on. The book deals with the archaeological evidence. To give an example: the chest of Kypselos – that is, incidentally, only known about from literary sources – is discussed at length (pp. 98–102), whereas the *ekecheiria* – the famous Olympic truce – is not addressed. Nor is there any discussion of the various priests or officials such as the *hellanodikai* or of the Olympic *boule*. A comprehensive cultural history of Olympia would also have needed to refer more extensively to the wealth of information provided by ancient authors. A tiny error seems to be symptomatic of the fact that less attention is devoted to the ancient texts: the contest between Kleitomachos and Aristonikos reported by Polybius (27.9) is a boxing match and not a *pankratton* (p. 182). Furthermore, the focus of the study lies clearly on the Altis. That means that there would be more to say about buildings or venues such as the stadium, the hippodrome, the gymnasium or the various baths.

But not to get sidetracked – this book provides a profound discussion of the architectural works and statues of the Altis and also of some other pieces and topics and is very informative on the issues it focuses on; for example, the interpretation of dedications such as the Achaian Monument or the observations on the change of the image of Zeus from a bellicose Zeus to a Zeus who ‘adjudicates and awards victory’ (p. 140). Of course, some statements might remain controversial, but that is inspiring rather than anything else.

It is another merit of the study to have put together and processed the vast amount of publications dealing with the discussed topics. The extensive bibliography, spanning pp. 245–67, reveals the extent of scholarly literature that was considered. The book is richly illustrated. It contains plenty of helpful drawings, maps, plans and photographs. The quality of the latter appearing within the text is sometimes sub-optimal (e.g. p. 149), but the colour plates are excellent.

B.’s book can be recommended to scholars and students especially of archaeology but also of ancient history and to any readers interested in these fields. It stands together with other renowned works giving an overview of the site between the rivers Alpheios and Kladeos such as E.N. Gardiner, *Olympia: its History and Remains* (1925); A. Mallwitz, *Olympia und seine Bauten* (1972); H.-V. Herrmann, *Olympia: Heiligtum und Wettkampfstätte* (1972); U. Sinn, *Das antike Olympia* (2004); H. Kyrieleis, *Olympia. Archäologie eines Heiligtums* (2011); as well as the extensive catalogue for the Berlin exhibition on ancient Olympia in 2012: H.-J. Gehrke, W.-D. Heilmeyer et al. (edd.), *Mythos Olympia* (2012), and can be considered a new standard up-to-date archaeological monograph on Olympia.

University of Graz

WERNER PETERMANDL  
[werner.petermandl@uni-graz.at](mailto:werner.petermandl@uni-graz.at)

## ATTIC VASES IN LEIPZIG

PFISTERER-HAAS (S.) *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum. Deutschland. Leipzig, Antikenmuseum. Band 4. Attisch rotfigurige Keramik.* (Deutschland, Band 108.) Pp. 96, ills, b/w & colour pls. Munich: Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften in Kommission bei C.H. Beck, 2021. Cased, €98. ISBN: 978-3-7696-3785-4.  
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With the fourth volume dedicated to the Leipzig Antikenmuseum, the *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum* continues the publication of the Greek pottery held at this remarkable university collection. While its Italic wares still await treatment, the published volumes – the first two issued in socialist Eastern Germany, the subsequent ones after German unification – testify to the collection’s troubled history as each of them refers to it under a different name. From ‘Leipzig, Archäologisches Institut der Karl-Marx-Universität’ (1959) via ‘Leipzig, Antikenmuseum der Karl-Marx-Universität’ (1973) and ‘Leipzig, Antikenmuseum der Universität’ (2006) to the present ‘Leipzig, Antikenmuseum’, the shifts in nomenclature document not only the political upheavals of the twentieth century but also the changing perception of university collections. Some seventy years ago, many were still seen as the semi-private fiefdoms of archaeology chairs; today they serve the public as museums and stress their inclusive openness as part of universities’ ‘third mission’.