

CLAS 0210

Sport in the Ancient Greek World



Class 6

Monday 8 February

Olympia and
preparations for the
Olympic program

Olympic Games held at 1st full moon
after summer solstice
= mid-July, or approx. 11th-16th July

Aelian

How many days did the Games last?

- Until 684 BC, only 6 competitions = 1 day
- * Introduction of chariot races in 25th Olympiad required the addition of a second day
- * In 632 BC (37th Olympiad), boys' contests were added, and a third day included
- * Eventually, 5 days were needed and became standard

Judges



Iphitos, king of Elis (cf. Achilles's role in Homer)

agonothetai ["games organizers"]

Hellanodikai ["judges of the Greeks"]

2 in 584 BC at 50th Olympiad

9 by the 75th Olympiad

Fixed at 10 in the mid-4th century BC

- always citizens of the nearby city-state of Elis
- chosen by lot
- served for a single Olympiad (like jury service?)
- received special training for 10 months at Elis
- housed in a special building, the *Hellanodikaion*
- wore purple cloaks [reminder of royal origins]
- wide-ranging powers to punish, fine, or disqualify

The Zanes at Olympia

(bases for statues of Zeus, paid for with fines levied in cases of bribery)



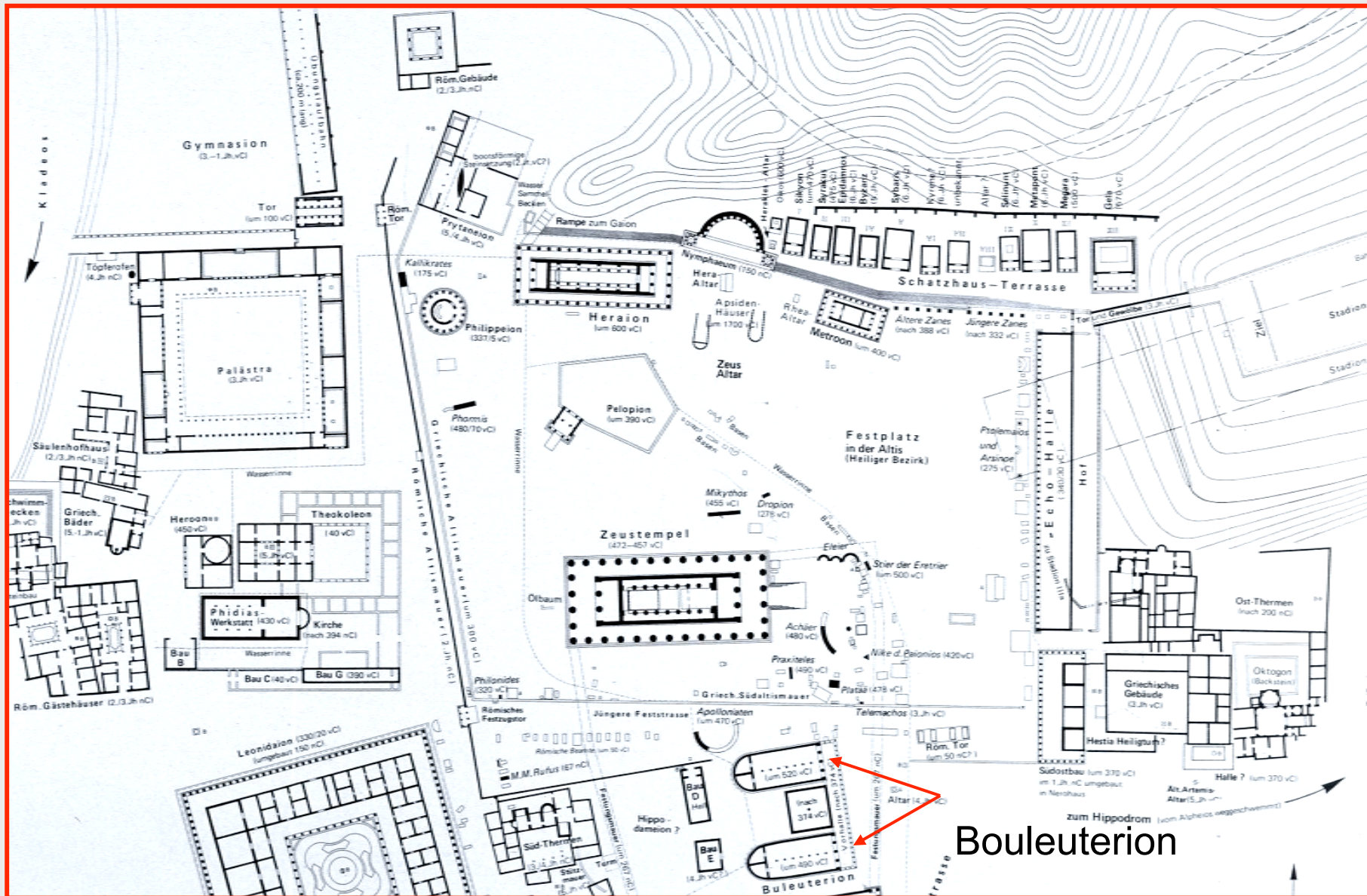


A dirty wrestling match



mastigophoros
("whip-bearer")

Attic red-figure vase, 5th
century BC



Bouleuterion

Examples of staff required to run the Games

- *exegetes* (explainers)
- *auletes* (flute-player during sacrifices)
- *xyleus* (provider of poplar wood for sacrificial fire)
- *grammateus* (announcer of participant athletes)
- observers of the sacred truce
- performer of daily morning sacrifices
- wine-pourer
- key-holder
- cooks and head-cooks, bakers
- architect responsible for building maintenance
- doctor

Athletes in training

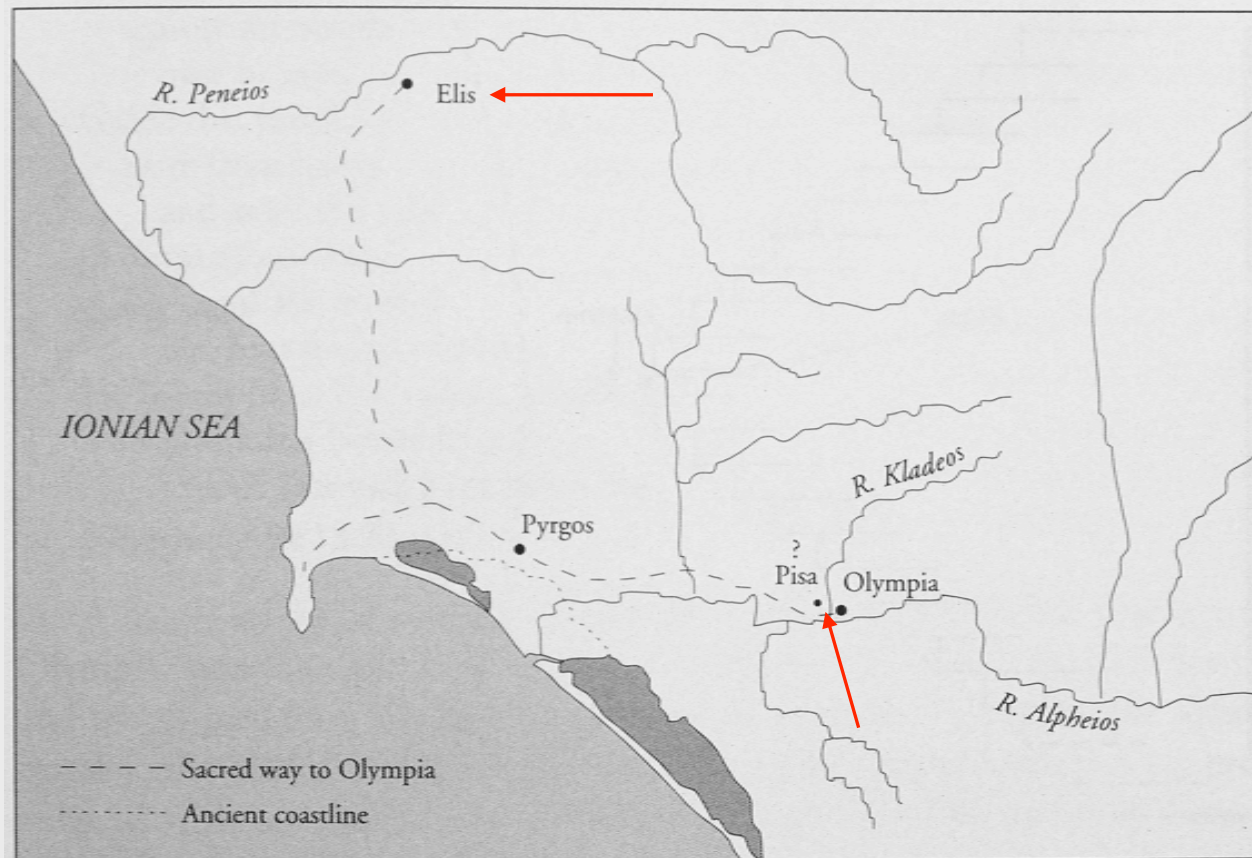


trainer

auletes



The ritual procession from Elis to Olympia



Map 9

The athletes' route from Elis to Olympia. Two days before the Olympics began, the judges, athletes, and their trainers began their 36-mile journey along the sacred way to Olympia.

Arete, passage # 145 (p.99-101)

Dio Chrysostom

- speech delivered in AD 97 at Olympic Games
- portraying the philosopher Diogenes at the Isthmian Games of 358 BC

Stadia in need of preparation



Delphi



Olympia



Arete passage #81,
pp.63-65

Record of contracts
let for the preparation
of Delphi for the
Pythian Games in
246 BC

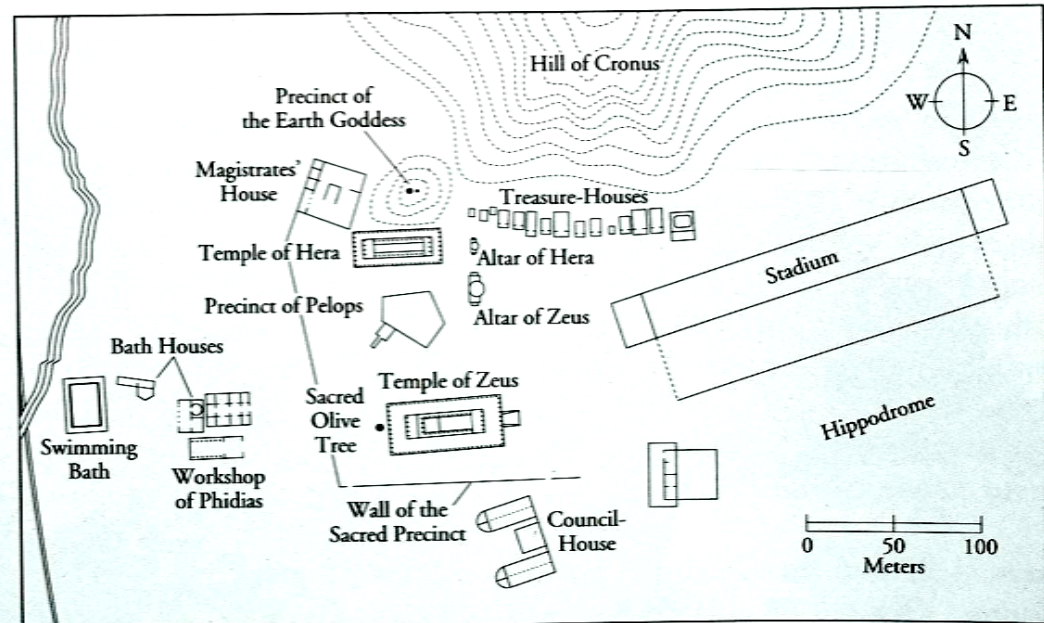
pick for preparation of the ground

For the standard 5-day Olympic program, see
Swaddling p.53



Olympia

Map 8a
Olympia in the fifth
century B.C.

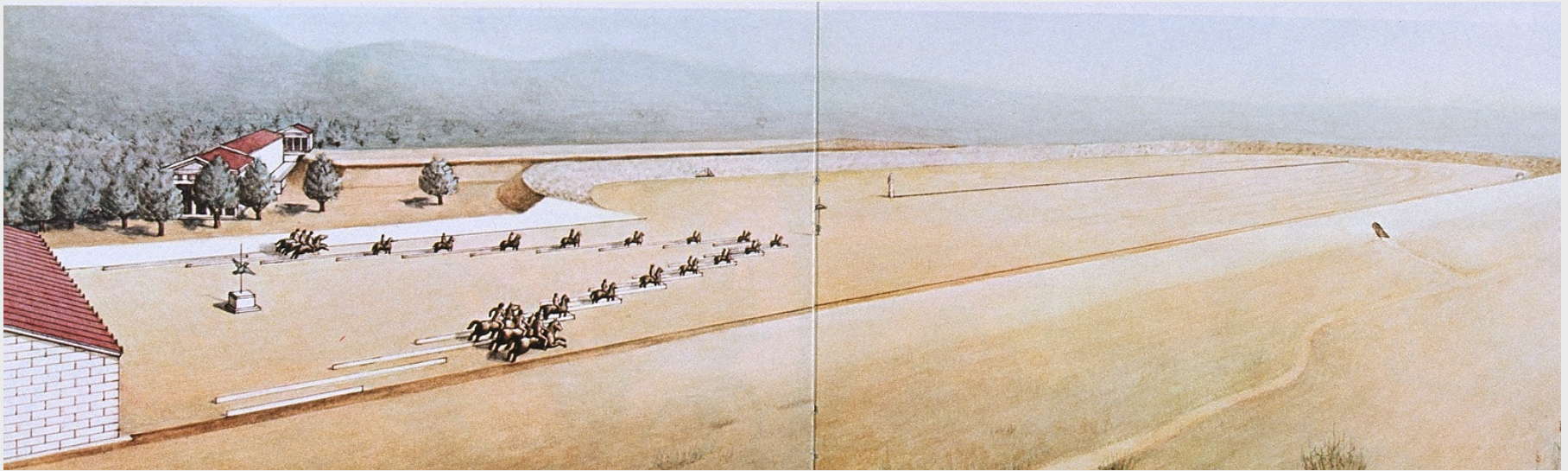


the **altis** (the sanctuary area proper)

swearing-in ceremony at the **altar of Zeus Horkios**
(Zeus of the oaths)

sacrifices to Poseidon Hippios, Hera Hippiia, Athena
Hippiia, as well as Tyche (“fortune”, “good luck”) and
even Taraxippos (god of the hippodrome)

Hippodrome at Olympia



The four-horse chariot race



6th-century BC
black-figure vases

