

CLAS 0210

Sport in the Ancient Greek World



Class 16

Wednesday 3 March

The Pythian Games and
the site of Delphi



759 - ΔΕΛΦΟΙ. Ἡ Ἱερὰ Ὁδὸς καὶ ὁ Θησαυρὸς τῶν Ἀθηναίων.
DELPHE. La Voie Sacrée et le Trésor des Athéniens.



Delphi

stadium

museum

theater

temple of Apollo

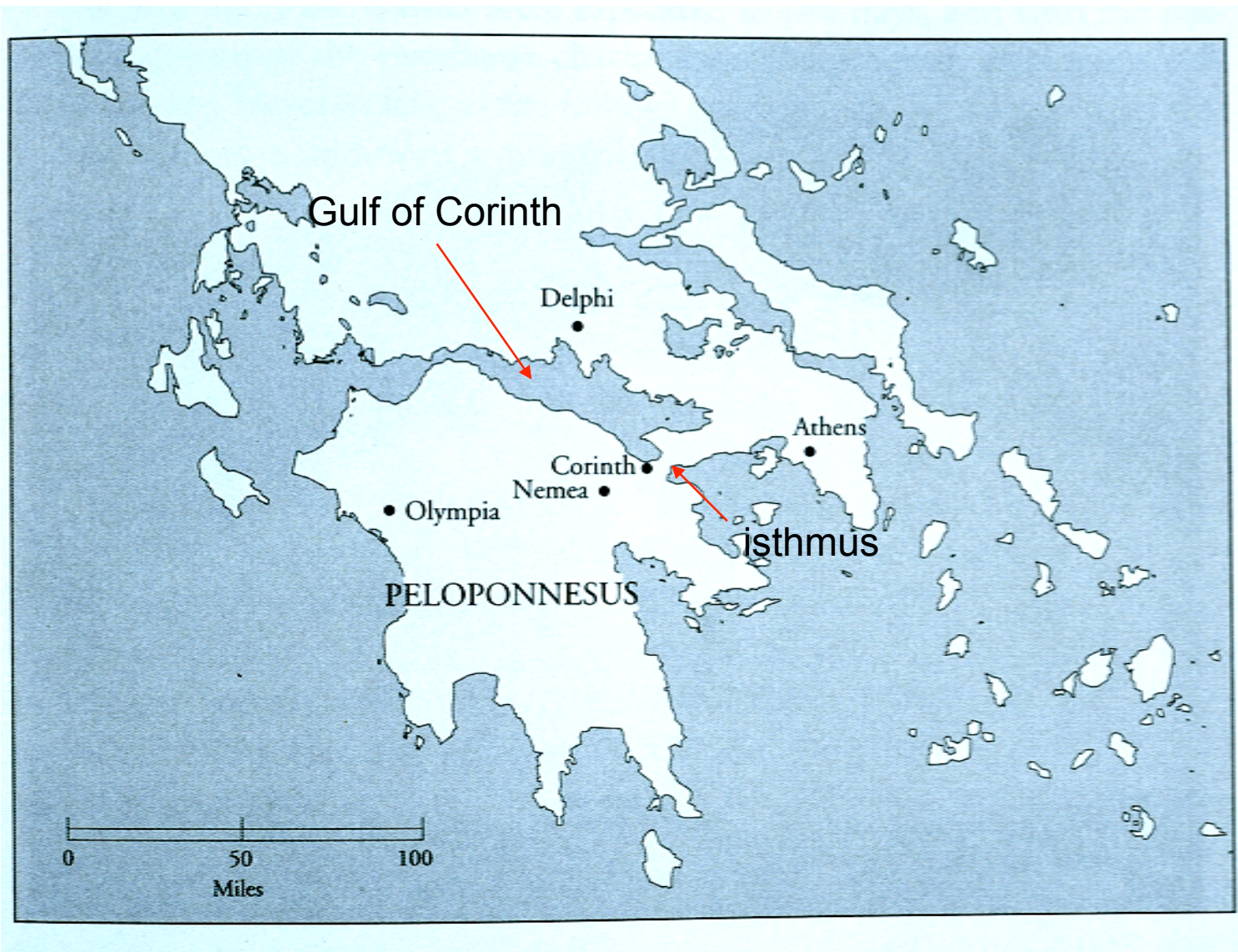




Image NASA
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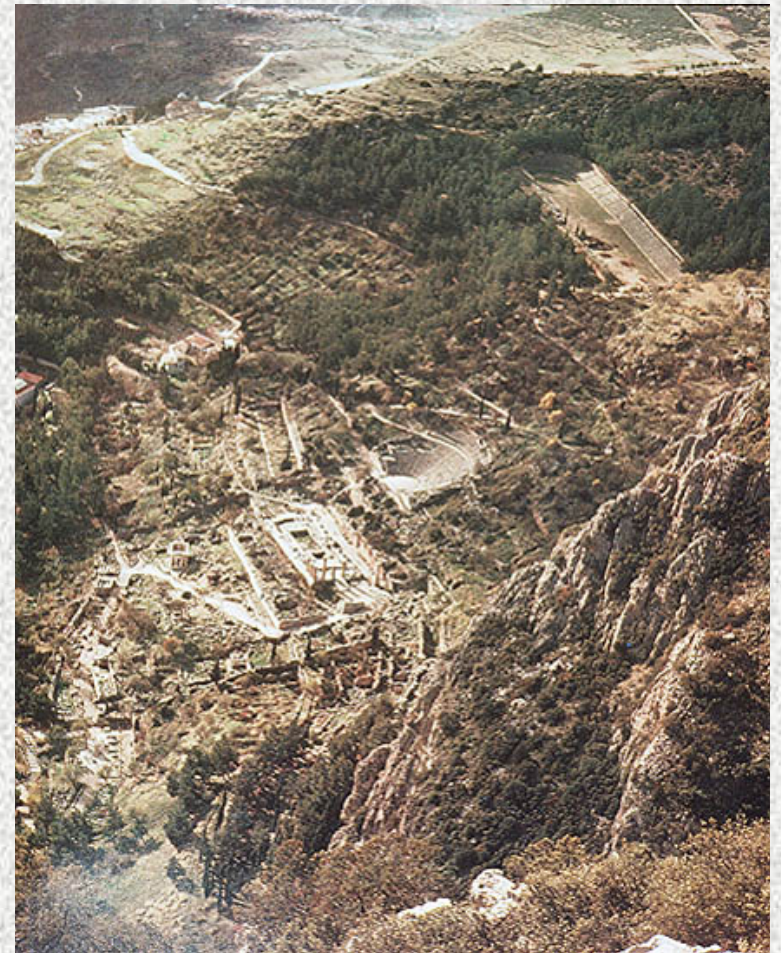
Pointer 38°28'15.29" N 22°29'17.66" E elev 121 m Streaming |||||100%

Eye alt 5.98 km



Delphi's landscape setting

Beneath the cliffs of Mt. Parnassus





Roman copy

- The omphalos (navel-stone) marking the center of the world at Delphi

Temple of Apollo



Temple of Apollo

- Earliest temple: wooden
- First stone temple 7th century BC (burned down in 548 BC)
- Second stone temple built ca. 500 BC (destroyed by landslide)
- Third stone temple finished ca. 305 BC (what you see today)



Oracle of Apollo

priestess (pythia)





Red-figure vase showing the Pythia seated on the Delphic tripod, with a priest



Did the Pythia inhale ethylene??

Aetiological myths of Delphi

- Apollo comes to power by slaying the python...
“the reddish-scintillating serpent in the shade of the luxurious laurel-tree, the earth-born, huge-bodied monster, guardian of the oracle” [Euripides].
- This killing required purification: Apollo goes into exile in Thessaly, where he works as a slave for 8 years, to atone for the blood he had shed.
- The earliest festival at Delphi included a ritual enactment of the slaying of the python in its nest, every 8 years.

- Pre-586 BC, contests at Pythian Games probably purely musical.
- **1st Sacred War**, for control of the sanctuary and its oracle.
- Delphi taken over by the **Amphictyonic League**, which instituted the first games in 586 BC.
- Prizes initially were golden tripods, but quickly became **crowns of laurel** (in recognition of the founding myth)



Delphi stadium



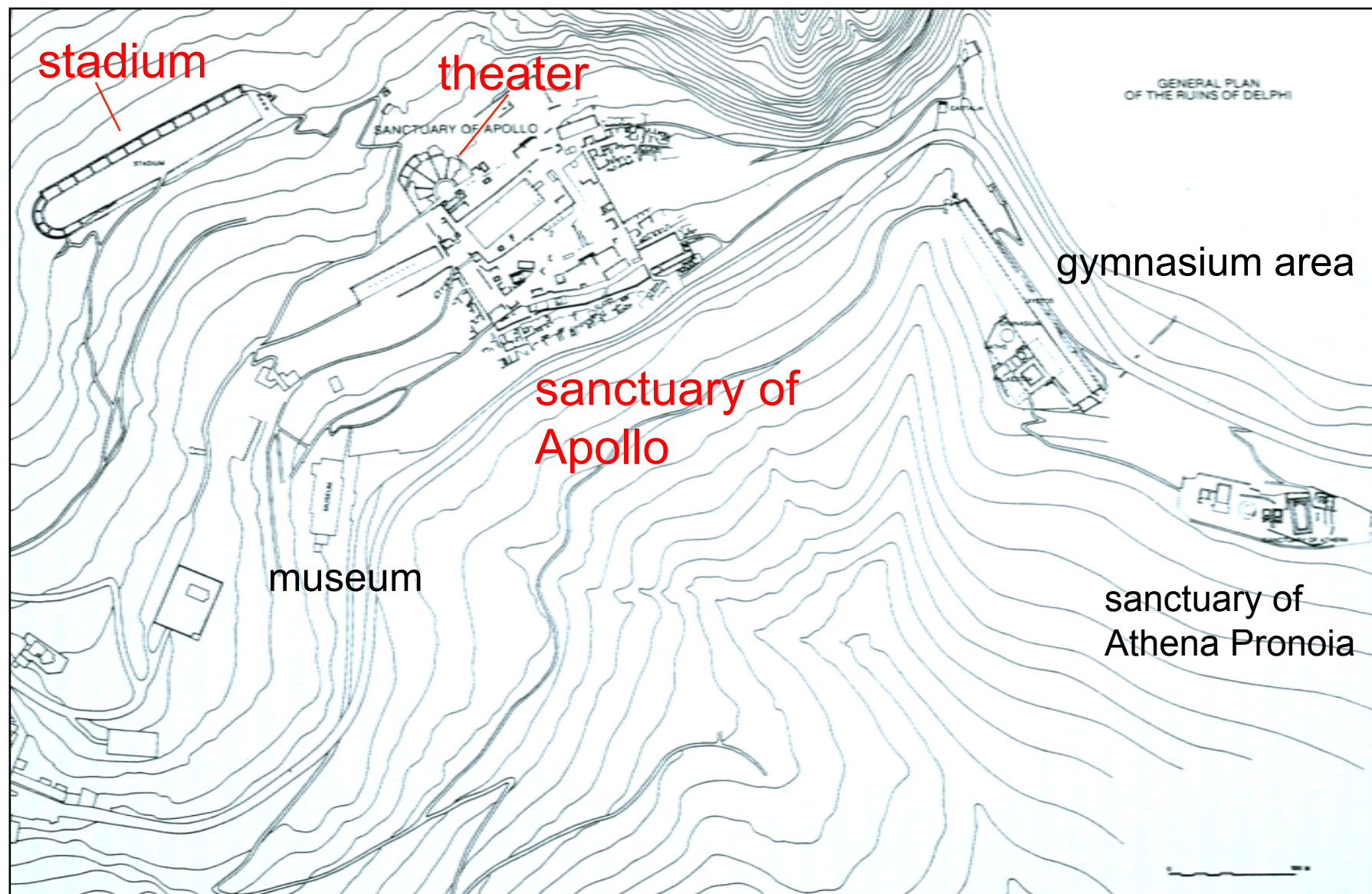
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starting line





Theater at Delphi: 2nd century BC, 31 rows of seats







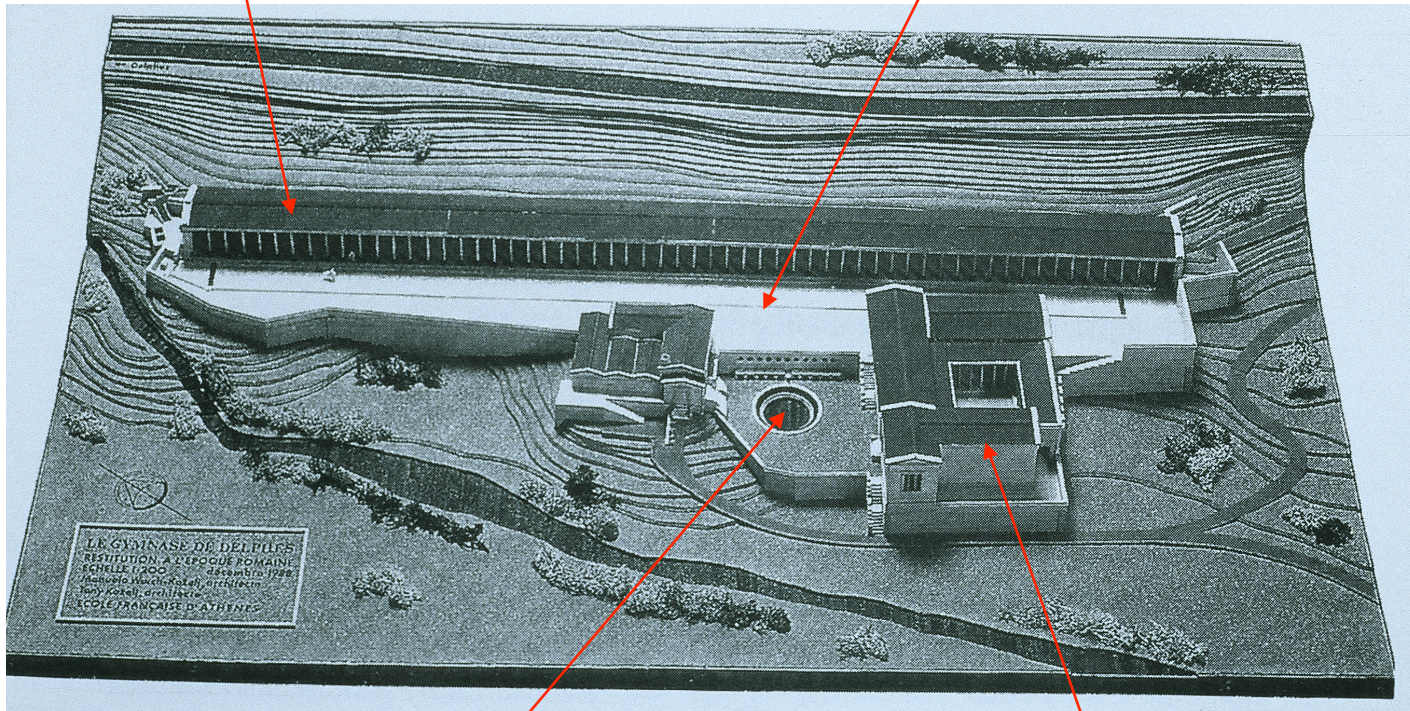
theater and Temple
of Apollo

remains in
gymnasium area

Model of Delphi gymnasium

roofed colonnade

open-air running track



circular pool

palaistra



circular bathing pool

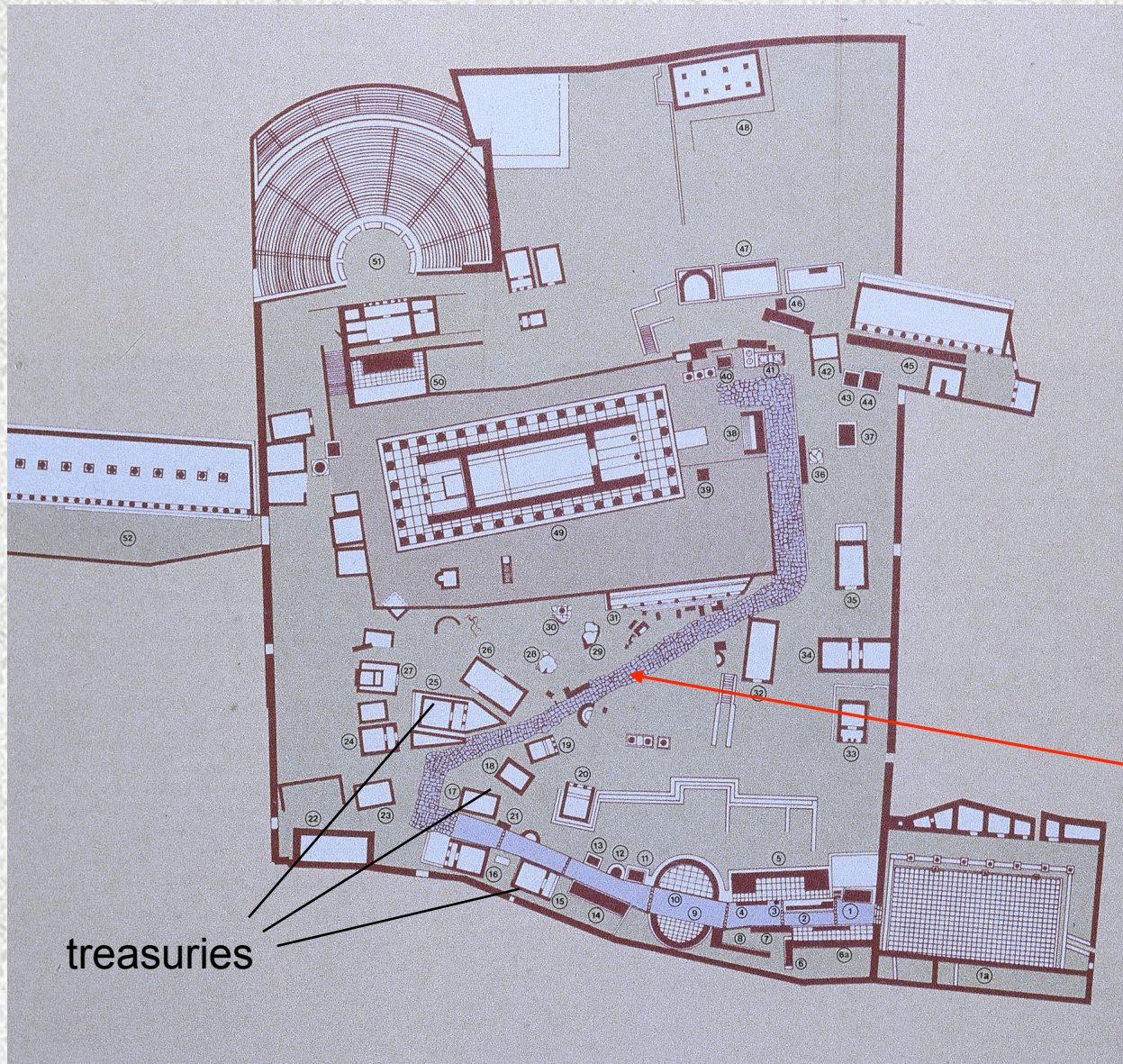
- running track





The Tholos, in the Sanctuary of Athena Pronoia

Delphi, sanctuary plan



treasuries

Sacred
Way



Treasury of
the
Athenians





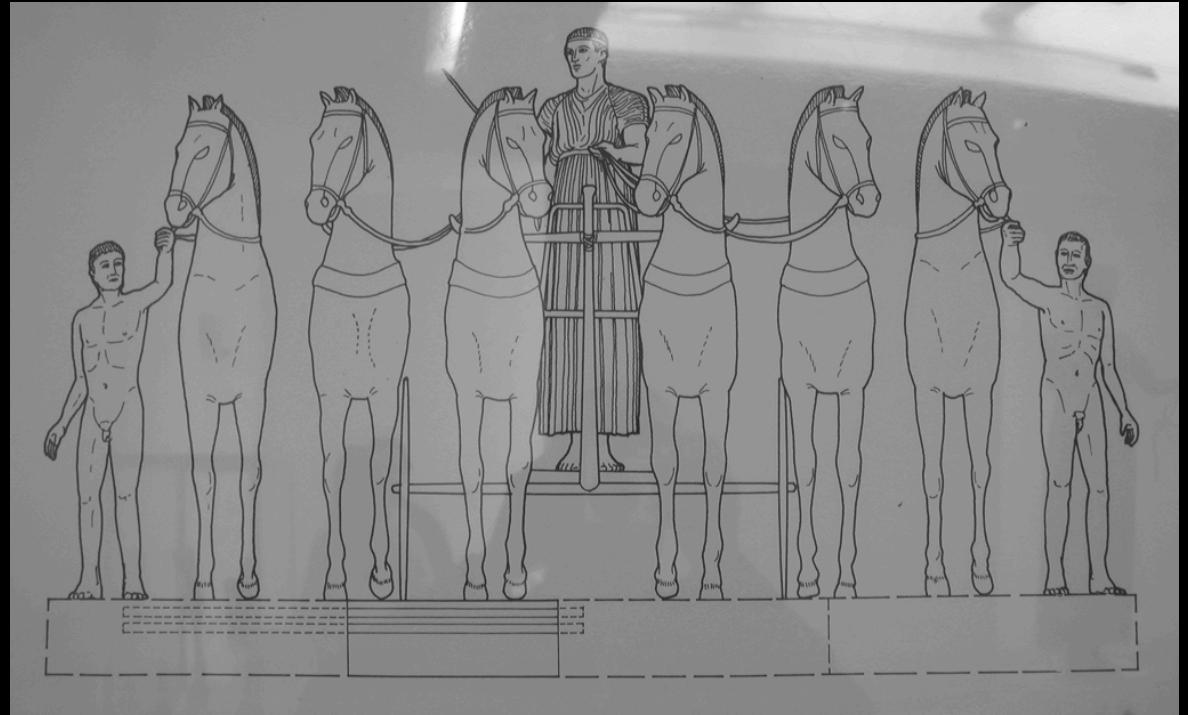
Sphinx of the Naxians



Cleobis & Biton



- Agias, the pankratiast
- by the sculptor Lysippos
- 4th century BC
- Delphi



Delphi charioteer
ca. 470 BC

