

New approaches to the temple of Zeus at Olympia

An international symposium at Budapest, 8-10 May 2014



Call for papers

Publications, congresses and exhibitions on ancient Olympia and its games proliferate, especially in those years when the modern summer olympics are celebrated. Nevertheless, the temple of Zeus at Olympia, the main temple of the sanctuary has received relatively little attention: it is praised in every handbook as the most perfect manifestation of Doric temple architecture, but it is mainly treated just as a background while dealing with its sculptural decoration. It is symptomatic that there are many books, which are exclusively devoted to the metopes and the pediments, the east pediment alone being discussed in two detailed monographs and most recently there was even a congress on its chryselephantine statue by Pheidias, but there is absolutely no systematic and detailed treatment of the entire temple from the 20th or 21st century. Moreover, recent publications have shown that much more attention should be paid to problems concerning the historical, economic and technical background of the construction, and old questions should be reconsidered.

The symposium, sponsored by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences is intended to adopt this new synoptic approach and invites to the interdisciplinary discussion of recent hypotheses related both to the sculptures and to the history of the entire monument. Papers dealing with archaeological or art historical problems, discussions of the architecture and the history of the monument including relevant epigraphic and numismatic studies are therefore most welcome. Topics include, but are not restricted to the following subjects: reconstruction and interpretation of the pediments and metopes; the economic and financial background of the temple building and sacred economy in general; Elean coinage and history; relations between individual poleis (Elis, Sparta, Athens, etc.) and Olympia; comparisons with other temples and (panhellenic) sanctuaries; afterlife of the temple (ancient damages, repairs, restorations).

Because recent studies concerning the sculptures of the temple have made use of innovative digital technologies, which are likely to make a significant contribution to our understanding of the entire temple as well, special attention will be paid to new research methodologies. The conference would like to bridge the gap between classical studies and ICT applied to archaeology and cultural heritage: specialists from both fields are therefore invited to present their results (theoretical considerations

as well as case studies) concerning innovative technologies (including material provenance studies), which are somehow related to the reconstruction and/or interpretation of the sanctuary, the temple and its sculptures.

Participation is free of charge, papers should not exceed 20-25 minutes. Contributions in English, German, French and Italian are welcome. Titles and abstracts (up to 300 words) including the name and address of the candidate should be sent to the following email address by 7th January 2014: olympiaseminar@gmail.com. Decision on acceptance will be sent by mid-February.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I would also like to ask you to forward this call to anyone, who might be interested in attending.

András Patay-Horváth

Budapest, 2nd July 2013