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OLYMPIC VICTOR LISTS AND ANCIENT GREEK HISTORY

This is the first comprehensive examination of Olympic victor lists. The origins, development, content, and structure of Olympic victor lists are explored and explained, and a number of important questions, such as the source and reliability of the date of 776 for the first Olympics, are addressed. Olympic victor lists emerge as a clearly defined type of literature that has largely escaped the attention of modern-day scholars. This book offers a new perspective on works by familiar writers such as Diodorus Siculus and a sense of the potential importance of less well-known authors such as Phlegon of Tralleis.

Paul Christesen is assistant professor of ancient Greek history at Dartmouth College.

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PREFACE

In the course of bringing this project to completion I have been immeasurably aided by more individuals than I can properly thank. The Class of 1962 at Dartmouth College generously provided a fellowship that made it possible to carry out much of the research for this book. I was also fortunate to spend a summer as a Margo Tytus scholar at the Department of Classics at the University of Cincinnati and to make use of their wonderful facilities.

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A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY, TRANSLITERATIONS, AND EDITIONS

This book is aimed primarily at scholars who specialize in classical antiquity, but I have made an effort throughout to ensure that the narrative is as accessible as possible to a broader audience. In the interests of brevity, I have refrained from explaining terms and abbreviations that might be unfamiliar to nonspecialists but that can be found in the standard reference book for all things Greek and Roman, the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*. I have supplied definitions of terms not found in the *OCD* in notes to the main text. Both specialists and nonspecialists will want to consult Section 1.4 for discussion of the terminology used to distinguish different kinds of Olympic victor lists.

Much of the evidence for Olympic victor lists consists of fragments.¹ In collections such as Felix Jacoby's *Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (*FGrH*) and Karl Müller's *Fragmenta Historicum Graecorum* (*FHG*), a fragment is considered to be either a verbatim quote from a lost text or a reference that makes clear the content of a piece of a lost text. Jacoby also compiled what he called *testimonia*, which provide evidence for an author's biographical details and corpus. Throughout the discussion that follows, the terms *fragment* and *testimonium* are employed in accordance with the usages of Jacoby and Müller.

All dates are BCE unless otherwise specified. In some cases dates are cited in a split-year format, such as 884/3. This is a necessary convention because both Olympiads and Athenian archon years, two of the basic time-reckoning systems used by ancient Greeks, began in

¹ On the difficulties involved in using fragments to reconstruct original works, see Baron 2006, 1–14 and *passim*; Brunt 1980; and the articles assembled in Most 1997.

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the summer and hence straddle two Julian years. Some events dated on the basis of Olympiads or Athenian archons can be assigned to a specific point in time and hence to a specific Julian year. In other cases, that is not possible, and the date is indicated in a split-year format.

All translations of ancient Greek sources are those of this author unless otherwise specified. Greek names have been transliterated in such a way as to be as faithful as possible to original spellings while taking into account established usages for well-known people and places. Unless otherwise specified, all ancient Greek texts are taken from the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (*TLG*), and authors' names are spelled as in the *TLG*. The latter practice, in combination with the transliteration system used here, can have the unfortunate effect of producing variant spellings for homonyms, such as King Theopompos of Sparta and Theopompus of Chios. I have, nonetheless, employed the spellings from the *TLG* because many of the authors cited below are sufficiently obscure to make easy reference to the *TLG* desirable. I have also adopted the titles for individual works suggested by the *TLG*. Many of those titles are Latinized (e.g., Pausanias' guide to Greece is given the appellation *Graeciae Descriptio*). This custom has the weight of tradition behind it, but is not without its problems. When dealing with works not specifically listed in the *TLG*, I have as a rule directly transliterated the Greek title. It is, unfortunately, impossible to achieve complete consistency in transliterating the names of people, places, authors, and works without detaching oneself completely from earlier conventions or ruthlessly Latinizing all Greek names and words.

All citations pertaining to Eusebius' *Chronographia*, with the exception of the Greek version of the Olympic victor list found in that work, refer to the 1911 translation of Josef Karst. All citations of line numbers in the Greek version of Eusebius' Olympic victor list refer to the text printed in Appendix 4.1. All citations pertaining to Jerome's translation of Eusebius' *Chronikoi Kanones* refer to the second edition of Rudolf Helm's *Die Chronik des Hieronymus*.²

² Helm 1956. On the intricacies of properly citing Jerome's translation of the *Chronikoi Kanones*, see Burgess 2002.

A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY, TRANSLITERATIONS, AND EDITIONS

The texts of inscriptions and papyri are marked in accordance with the Leiden system, which can be briefly summarized as follows:

αβ.	Letters that survive in part, but not sufficiently to exclude alternative readings
[αβ]	Letters not now preserved that the editors believe to have been part of the original text
{αβ}	Letters inscribed/written in error by the cutter/scribe and deleted by the editors
<αβ>	Letters supplied by the editors because the cutter/scribe either omitted them or inscribed/wrote other letters in error
(αβ)	Letters supplied by the editors to fill out an abbreviation in the text as transmitted
[[αβγδ.[εζ]]	A passage that has been erased and can [or cannot] now be read
[. . .]	Lost letters that cannot be restored, of the number indicated
[- - -]	A lacuna or space of indeterminate size
^v	One letter-space uninscribed
<i>vacat</i>	(Remainder of) line uninscribed/left blank ³

Series of letters that are capitalized indicate places where the reading of the letters is clear, but the meaning is not.

³ The descriptions given here are taken from Rhodes and Osborne 2003, xxv–xxvi.