1 The Panathenaia: An Introduction

According to his honorary decree voted by the *demos* or people of Athens in 141/0, Miltiades, the son of Zoilos, of the Attic deme Marathon:

> also [ga]ve the he[mp] ropes [and] the rest of the things lacking f[or the conveya]nce of the *peplos* [and al]l the things for the procession and t[he sacrifices o]wed to the [gods] he [ma]de magnificently and [he put o]n t[he games] in a manner worthy both of the [office an]d of the [*demos*] which had elected [him] and he also [se]lected his daughte[r - c. 8 - as *kanephoro*]*s* [and he] also [sp]ent more for [these expe]nses and he celebr[ated the Panathena]ia conspicuously [and well] and [he paid for] al[l th]e expenses [from his private fu]nds.[1]

This passage describing Miltiades' actions as *agonothetes* or sponsor of the Panathenaia includes many well-known aspects of the festival: the *peplos* or robe for the goddess, the procession to the Akropolis with the animals for sacrifice, the games and the vast expense, here being met generously by the honorand from his own funds. Other sources add to this kaleidoscope of images: the procession and panoply voted by the people of Priene in 326 as a memorial of their ancient kinship and friendship with the Athenians; the young man boasting in court about his expenditures for victorious tribal teams of *pyrrhichistai* or dancers in arms in 410/9 and 403/2; the herald shouting out the name of King Ptolemy V to announce his victory for the tribe Ptolemais in the double-length, four-horse chariot race in 182/1; the Panathenaic prize amphorae, originally filled with olive oil and awarded to the victors in the individual contests in the games, and now perhaps the festival's most well-known image (Figs. 1.1–2).[2] Thus, in these and other

[1] *IG* II^2 968.48–55; date: Habicht 1988: 242–3.

[2] *I.Priene* 5.1–6 = *I.Priene 2014* 5.1–6; Lys. 21.1, 4; *IG* II^2 2314 + *SEG* XLI 114.40–2; for Panathenaic amphorae, see generally Bentz 1998; Tiverios 2007: 1–19; Themelis 2007: 25–9. The date of *I.Priene* 5 is derived from the reference to Diphilos, the Athenian general on Samos, in line 17, because he also seems to have been listed in this office in *IG* II^2 1628.119–20, a text certainly dated to 326/5; Hiller von Gaertringen on *I.Priene* 5; Develin 1989: 400; *LGPN* II s.v. Δίφιλος 34; Blümel and Merkelbach on *I.Priene 2014* 5.

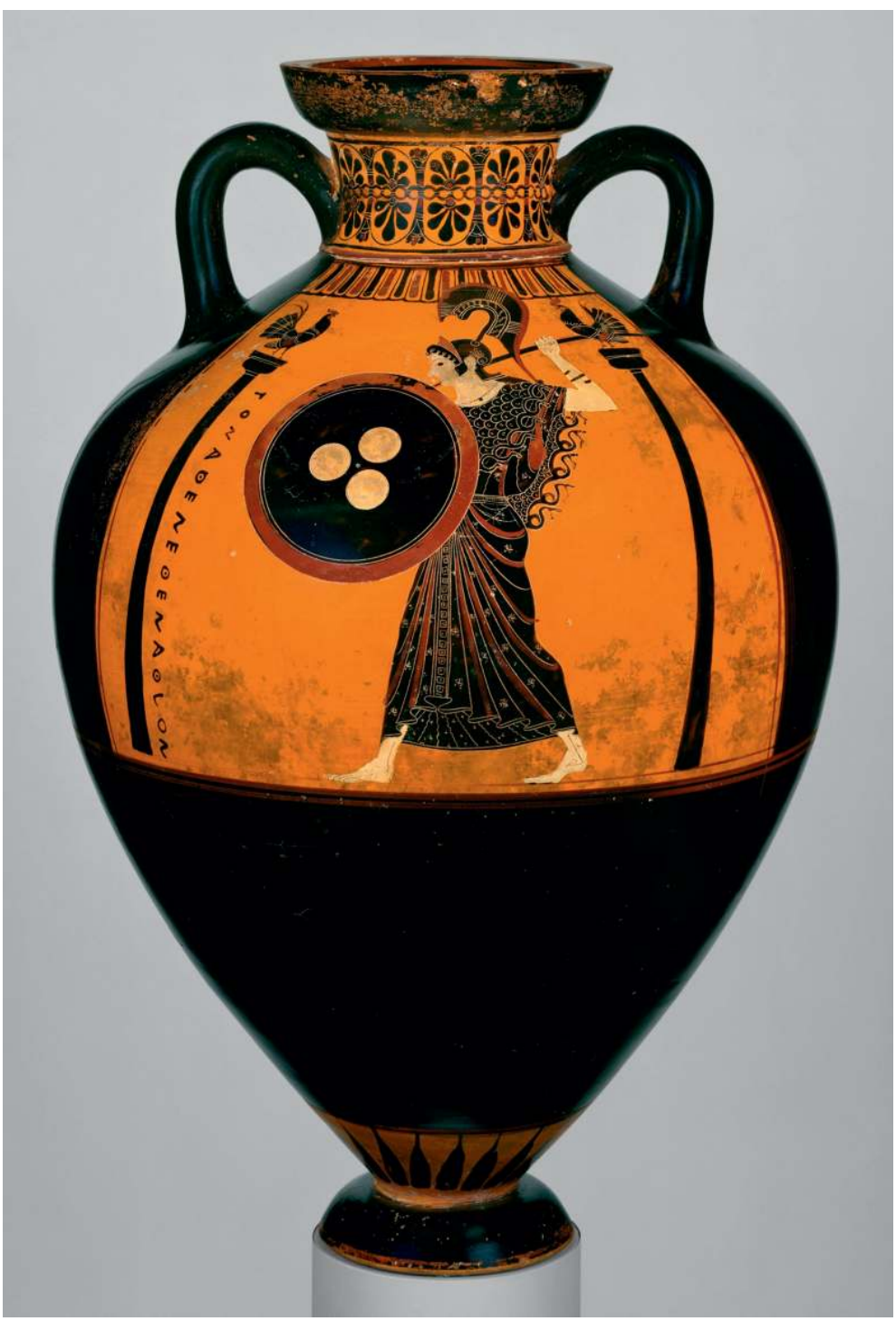

Figure 1.1 Panathenaic amphora by the Euphiletos Painter, c. 520 BC: Athena (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 14.130.12).

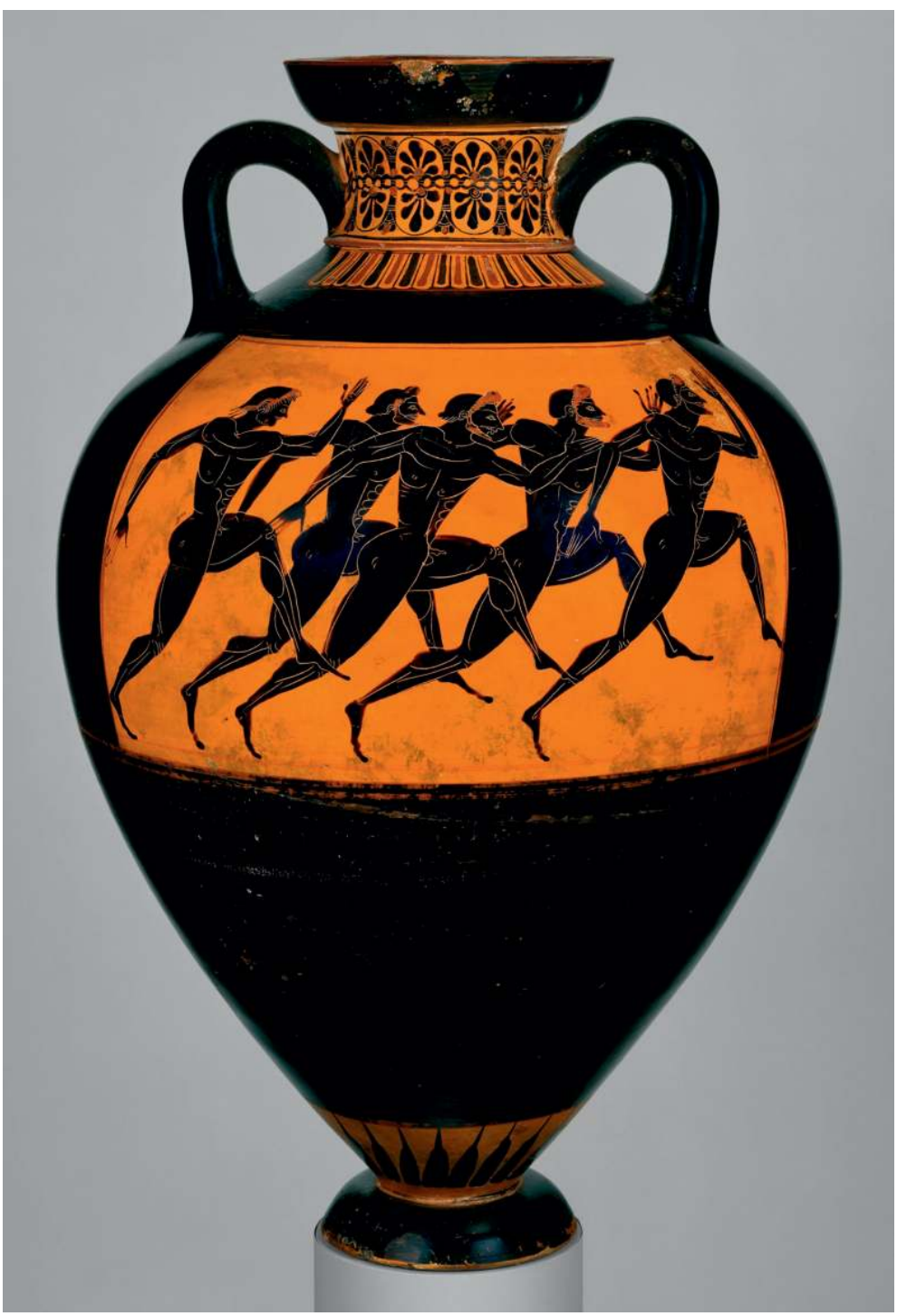

Figure 1.2 Panathenaic amphora by the Euphiletos Painter, c. 520 BC: runners in a men's sprint race (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 14.130.12).

ways, Athenians and non-Athenians celebrated the goddess Athena with great festivities culminating in the sacrifices on the Akropolis on 28 Hekatombaion, the first month of the official year.[3]

That the people of Priene chose to link their offerings for Athena to their ancient kinship with the Athenians immediately suggests that more was at stake in their decision than honouring the goddess. Similarly, Ptolemy V clearly thought it important to compete not in the hippic events open to all participants, but in the competitions limited to Athenian citizens, who represented their tribes; nor was he alone: the victors' lists of the second quarter and the middle of the second century BC show such participation by other members of his house and of the Attalids of Pergamon.[4] For them, the opportunity to demonstrate their Athenian citizenship was certainly not to be missed. Participation in these tribal events was also important for Athenian citizens, as our boastful (and wealthy) young man's statements in court make clear. That there was an important connection between the festival, the city and its inhabitants is further brought out by the celebration's very name: Panathenaia or 'all-Athenian'. In order to understand these dynamics, we must ask how individuals took part in the celebration, why participating in these festivities called 'all-Athenian' was so important and how doing so created identities for the individuals and groups involved.

Since the primary purpose of the Panathenaia was to honour the goddess Athena, all participants became players in a reciprocal, but unequal, relationship with the goddess. As I shall argue, Athenians' involvement further marked out their membership in the group of 'all the Athenians', while for others, both individuals such as Ptolemy V and collectives such as the people of Priene, taking part in the celebration placed them in relationship to the community of 'all the Athenians'.[5] Not all individuals, however, could take part in the same way, and the opportunities also changed over time, as we shall see. This differential participation articulated individuals' relationships both to the goddess and to the community so that the festival played an important role in negotiating what it meant to be Athenian (and non-Athenian). Since the Panathenaia commemorated the gods' martial success against the Giants in

[3] Date: Prokl. *In Ti.* 1.9a–b; schol. Pl. *Resp*. 1.327a; Mikalson 1975: 23, 34; Parker 2005: 256. Since the first new moon after the summer solstice marked the beginning of Hekatombaion, the month fell in the high summer.

[4] See further Shear 2007c: 135–40.

[5] The Athenians' association of the festival with Theseus' unification of Attica indicates that they understood the word πάντες, all, in Παν-αθήναια, 'all-Athenian'; Jacoby, *FGrHist* IIIb Suppl. II: 509; Parker 2005: 255 note 10; below Chapter 2. This interpretation is specific to the Athenian celebration and is not (necessarily) relevant to other festivities called Panathenaia in other cities, which had their own explanations; on these occasions, see Ziehen 1949: 489–93.

the Gigantomachy, it was also a victory celebration which was unified by this military theme. As I shall argue, the festival served to create identities both at the level of individuals and at the level of the worshipping community of 'all the Athenians'. Neither the celebration nor Athenian identities were static, so that changes in one sphere affected the other and *vice versa*.

When our boastful young man described his expenditures to the court, he focused on specific details, not generalities: 'in the archonship of Glaukippos (410/9), for *pyrrhichistai* at the Great Panathenaia, (I spent) eight hundred *drachmai*', 'in the archonship of Diokles (409/8), at the Little Panathenaia, (I spent) for a cyclic chorus three hundred (*drachmai*)' and 'in the archonship of Eukleides (403/2) . . ., at the Little Panathenaia, I was *choregos* for the beardless *pyrrhichistai* and I spent seven *mnai*'.[6] His specific terminology, Great Panathenaia (Παναθηναίοις τοῖς μεγάλοις) and Little Panathenaia (Παναθηναίοις τοῖς μικροῖς), reveals what the simple term Panathenaia conceals: that there were two versions of the festival. According to Harpokration, the one was held every year and the other was held every *pentaeteris* or five-year period, counting inclusively, and was known as the Great Panathenaia.[7] His explanation of the terms is somewhat misleading, because the Little Panathenaia was not, in fact, held annually, but in every three years of the *pentaeteris*, while, in the fourth year, the Athenians celebrated the great or penteteric festival. Nevertheless, ancient Athenians could occasionally refer to the Little Panathenaia as 'the Annual Panathenaia' (τὰ Παναθήναια τὰ κατ' ἐνιαυτόν).[8] Most frequently, however, they simply referred to the celebration as the Panathenaia without the addition of further terms. The distinction between the two versions of the festival ought to go back to the introduction of the Great Panathenaia in 566/5 BC.[9] After that date, the

[6] Lys. 21.1, 2, 4. A *choregos* sponsored the chorus of his tribe at a specific festival.

[7] Harp. s.v. Παναθήναια; repeated by Phot. *Lex.* s.v. Παναθήναια.

[8] Little Panathenaia is more common; see e.g. Lys. 21.2, 4; Men. fr. 384 (*PCG*), repeated by Phot. *Lex.* and *Suda* s.v. πέμπειν; *IG* II^3.1 447.5–6, 19. Annual Panathenaia: *IG* II^3.1 447.58; cf. Harp. s.v. Παναθήναια; repeated by Phot. *Lex.* s.v. Παναθήναια.

[9] The date 566/5 is given by Eusebius, while the name of the archon, but no date, is known from Marcellinus' *Life of Thucydides* in a passage attributing the information to Pherekydes and Hellanikos; Euseb. *Chron.* s.v. Olympiad 53.3 (Helm: 102b); Pherekyd. *FGrHist* 3 F2 and Hellanik. *FGrHist* 4 F22, quoted by Marcellin. *Vit. Thuc.* 3–4. A further complication is caused by the scholia on Aelius Aristeides' *Panathenaikos* which attribute the great festival to Peisistratos; schol. Aristeid. *Or.* 1.362 (Lenz and Behr) = Dindorf III: 323 = Jebb 189, 4. Since the Great Panathenaia belongs in the third year of the Olympiad, the potential years in question, 566 or 562, do not fit with Peisistratos' tyranny, and so he cannot have been involved with the foundation; cf. Jacoby, *FGrHist* IIIb Suppl. II: 508; Cadoux 1948: 104; Davison 1958: 29; below note 10. As Parker observes, 'the specific date seems less likely to be an invention than the association with the famous Pisistratus'; Parker 1996: 89; cf. R. Osborne 1993: 35–6. Our

penteteric celebration was held every fifth year counting inclusively. For nearly 700 years, until the autumn of AD 124, the Great Panathenaia fell in the first month of the Athenian official year and early in the third year of the Olympic cycle.[10] With the Athenians' reorganisation of their calendar in AD 124, the festival remained in Hekatombaion and retained its relationship to the Olympic games, but its position within the Athenian official year was altered because the year now began with Boedromion and Hekatombaion became the second-to-last month of the official year.[11] Although the festival was still held in the summer of the modern calendar year of, for example, 127 and 131, it now fell at the end of the official years of 126/7 and 130/1, rather than at the beginning of the years 127/8 and 131/2, as it had before the reign of Hadrian. These calendrical complexities particularly affect the dates of celebrations when they are presented in terms of the Athenian official year and not the modern calendar.

Athena's festival continued many years after Hadrian's reign, but it did not go on indefinitely. Our evidence for its end, however, is extremely meagre. The latest epigraphical evidence, an honorary statue base for a certain Ploutarchos, belongs to the late fourth or early fifth centuries AD.[12] It commemorates the three occasions when Ploutarchos 'sailed' the sacred ship to the temple of Athena on the Akropolis and the text in no way indicates that the festival had ceased to be held regularly when it was inscribed. This same man also seems to have set up an honorary statue for the praetorian prefect Herculius, who held office in the years AD 408–10.[13] He was, therefore, still active as late as 410, hence the statements by some scholars that the festival continued until at least this year.[14]

evidence, consequently, points to 566/5, the year of Hippokleides' archonship, and eliminates Peisistratos' involvement; cf. Cadoux 1948: 104, 122; Develin 1989: 41; Lavelle 2014: 315–20. Not all scholars have been deterred: see e.g. Ziehen 1949: 459; Corbett 1960: 57–8; Scarpi 1979: 83–4; Shapiro 1989: 19–21; Robertson 1992: 91–3; Neils 1992a: 20–1; Wohl 1996: 36–7; Larmour 1999: 164–5; Deacy 2007: 230; Canali De Rossi 2011: 30.

[10] Third year of Olympiad: e.g. A. Mommsen 1898: 47–8; Deubner 1932: 23; Cadoux 1948: 104; Neils 1992a: 14–15; Shear 2012d: 159. For dated celebrations of the Great Panathenaia, see e.g. Thuc. 6.56.2 with Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 19.2, 6 (assassination of Hipparchos); Lys. 21.1 (victory with *pyrrhichistai* in 410/9 BC); *IG* II^2 3019 = *IG* II^3.4 430 (victory in torch-race in 346/5 BC); 3023 = *IG* II^3.4 431 (victory in 338/7 BC); and probably *IG* II^2 1461.18–20 with the supplements of Woodward 1940: 403 (shields from 330/29 BC).

[11] See further Shear 2012d: 159–72 with additional bibliography.

[12] *IG* II^2 3818 = 13281; date: Sironen 1994: 48.

[13] *IG* II^2 4224 = 13283; Sironen 1994: 48, 50–1; Frantz 1988: 63–4.

[14] Neils 1992a: 13; B. Nagy 1980: 110–11; Castrén 1989: 47; Wachsmann 2012: 238 note 5; cf. Sironen 1994: 46–7; Remijsen 2015a: 62.

It is unlikely, however, that the festival survived the AD 390s. In February and June of 391, Theodosius I issued two edicts banning sacrifices of all kinds, closing the temples and imposing fines on individuals who disobeyed the provisions.[15] Since these documents were specifically directed towards Rome and Alexandria, they should be responses to officials in those cities, as Alan Cameron has observed, but scholars have not hesitated to understand them as intended for the whole empire.[16] Subsequently, in November of 392, a further edict was issued to Rufinus, the praetorian prefect of the East, which banned sacrifices 'in any place at all and in any city', divination, the burning of incense and any veneration of the *lares* and *penates* and imposed penalties on anyone performing any sacrifices in public temples and other places.[17] A further edict to Rufinus in 395 removes the right of approach to any temple or shrine and forbids sacrifices in any place.[18] Since Rufinus was the praetorian prefect for the East, it is likely that copies of this legislation were sent to the provincial governors under him.[19] For many scholars, this legislation marks the decisive moment for pagan rituals and hence an end for major festivals.[20] Edicts as early as 341, however, had already banned various sorts of sacrifices and, in 356, access to temples was also proscribed.[21] Furthermore, public sacrifices already seem to have been in serious decline in the East before the reign of Julian, because of the absence of funding, both public and private, necessary to sustain them.[22] Festivals seem to have continued in many areas, but without the sacrifices which scholars normally associate with them. There was also considerable regional variation as individual cities and their festivals responded to local circumstances.[23] In Athens, too, local events seem to have been responsible for the end of Athena's festival: in 396, Alaric and the Visigoths attacked Athens and caused much destruction in the north-west part of the city, an area now outside the fortifications

[15] *Cod. Theod.* 16.10.10–11.
[16] Specific response: Cameron 2011: 60–3; whole empire: King 1961: 77–82; Williams and Friell 1994: 121–3; Fowden 1998: 553; Price 1999: 164–5.
[17] *Cod. Theod.* 16.10.12. [18] *Cod. Theod.* 16.10.13. [19] Cameron 2011: 61.
[20] E.g. King 1961: 84–6; Harl 1990: 7–8, 13–14, 17, 19; Williams and Friell 1994: 123–5; Fowden 1998: 533; Price 1999: 164–5; Belayche 2005: 358; Cameron 2011: 61 with note 121; cf. Salzman 2011: 176–7; Remijsen 2015a: 47, 173.
[21] Sacrifices: *Cod. Theod.* 16.10.2, 4–7, 9; temples: *Cod. Theod.* 16.10.4; on the date, see Cameron 2011: 61 with note 123.
[22] Bradbury 1995: 341–56; Cameron 2011: 65–7; Maxwell 2012: 854, 856; cf. Fowden 1998: 550; Remijsen 2015a: 184–7. For the situation in Rome and Italy at the end of the fourth century, see Salzman 2011: 167–77.
[23] E.g. Harl 1990: 14–15, 19–20; Bradbury 1995: 343–5, 355; Price 1999: 165–8; Cameron 2011: 783–7; Maxwell 2012: 853–4.

which had been built in the late third century AD.[24] When rebuilding commenced in the Agora in about 410, the new construction was a large villa, the so-called Villa of the Giants, not civic structures (Fig. 1.3); like all such villa buildings, it looked inward and, unlike its predecessors in the square, it provided no vantage points for watching the procession as it proceeded along the Panathenaic Way (Figs. 1.4–5).[25] This project, therefore, represents a radical change in the use of this space and it should indicate that the Panathenaia and its elaborate procession were no longer being held.

The festival was certainly not part of living memory when Proklos arrived in Athens late in AD 430 or early in 431, as we can see from his *Commentary on Plato's Timaios*.[26] Proklos explains that the *Republic* and the *Timaios* were set on successive days, on 19 Thargelion, the day of the Bendideia, and on 20 Thargelion, which Proklos clearly and wrongly identifies as the occasion of the Little Panathenaia![27] In about 439, when he was writing (the first draft of) his commentary, Proklos plainly had no personal experience of these festivities and they were no longer in the living memory of his contemporaries;[28] instead, he relied on earlier writers, whom he mentions, and thus he also uses the past tense to describe the date of the Great Panathenaia in his text.[29] Proklos' confusion would suit a date for the final celebration of the festival in the 390s and it clearly demonstrates that both the procession and also the Panathenaia itself had ended well before his arrival in Athens.

Goddess, *Polis*, Identities and Scholarship

The Panathenaia, accordingly, is positively attested for almost 1,000 years, from 566/5 BC until the AD 390s. A version will have existed before the

[24] Frantz 1988: 6–7, 25, 48–9, 53–6; Castrén 1994a: 9. These fortifications are frequently known as the 'post-Herulian walls'.

[25] Villa: Thompson 1988: 95–116, pls. 6, 54, 55a; Frantz 1988: 65 with note 65. The entire building south of the first and north court was surrounded by a wall and so further cut off from the area of the Agora and the Panathenaic Way. Consequently, no part of the building can have been 'designed expressly for watching the [Panathenaic] procession', as Thompson claims; Thompson 1988: 111.

[26] Date: Saffrey and Westerink 1968: xii–xiii. Note also Baltzly and Tarrant's emphasis on the closeted nature of 'Athenian pagans' at this time; Baltzly and Tarrant 2007: 4–5.

[27] Prokl. *In Ti.* 1.9a–b, 1.26e, 1.27a; cf. Prokl. *In Prm.* 1.643, where the information about the *Timaios* is repeated.

[28] Date of *Commentary*: Marin. *Procl.* 13.10–17; Luna and Segonds 2007: xv–xvii.

[29] Earlier writers: Prokl. *In Ti.* 1.9b, 1.27a; Great Panathenaia: Prokl. *In Ti.* 1.9b. Dam. *Isid.* fr. 273 (Zintzen) quoted by *Suda* s.v. Ἀρχιάδας does not indicate that the festivities continued in the middle of fifth century; contra: Puech 2002: 393 note 1; Trombley 1993: 322–3.

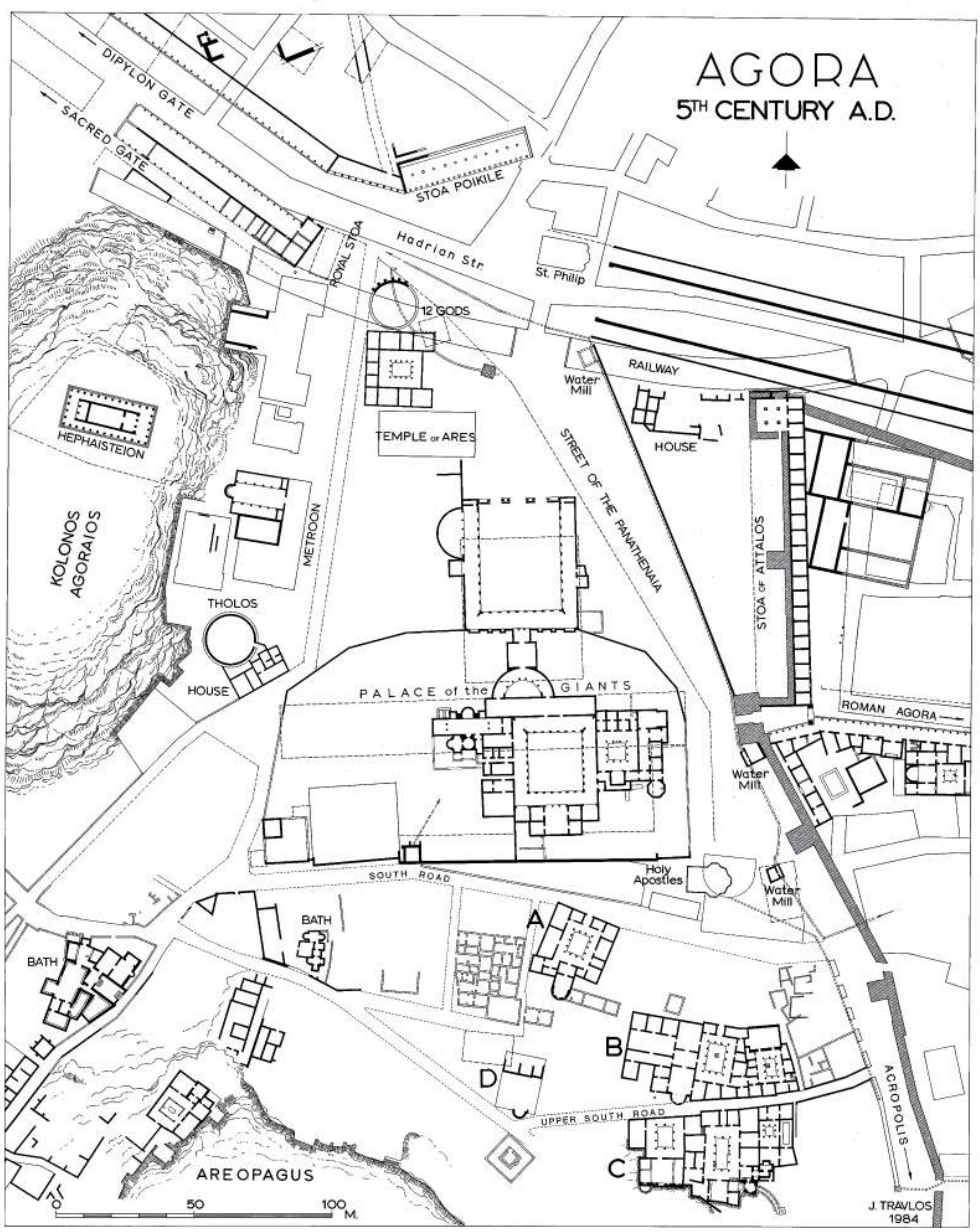

Figure 1.3 Restored plan of the Agora in the fifth century AD. The so-called Villa or Palace of the Giants occupies the centre of the marketplace. There are no longer obvious places from which to watch activities on the Panathenaic Way.

institution of the penteteric festival in 566, but the changes which took place at that time have obscured the celebration's earlier history. As the city's most important festival, the Panathenaia regularly features in

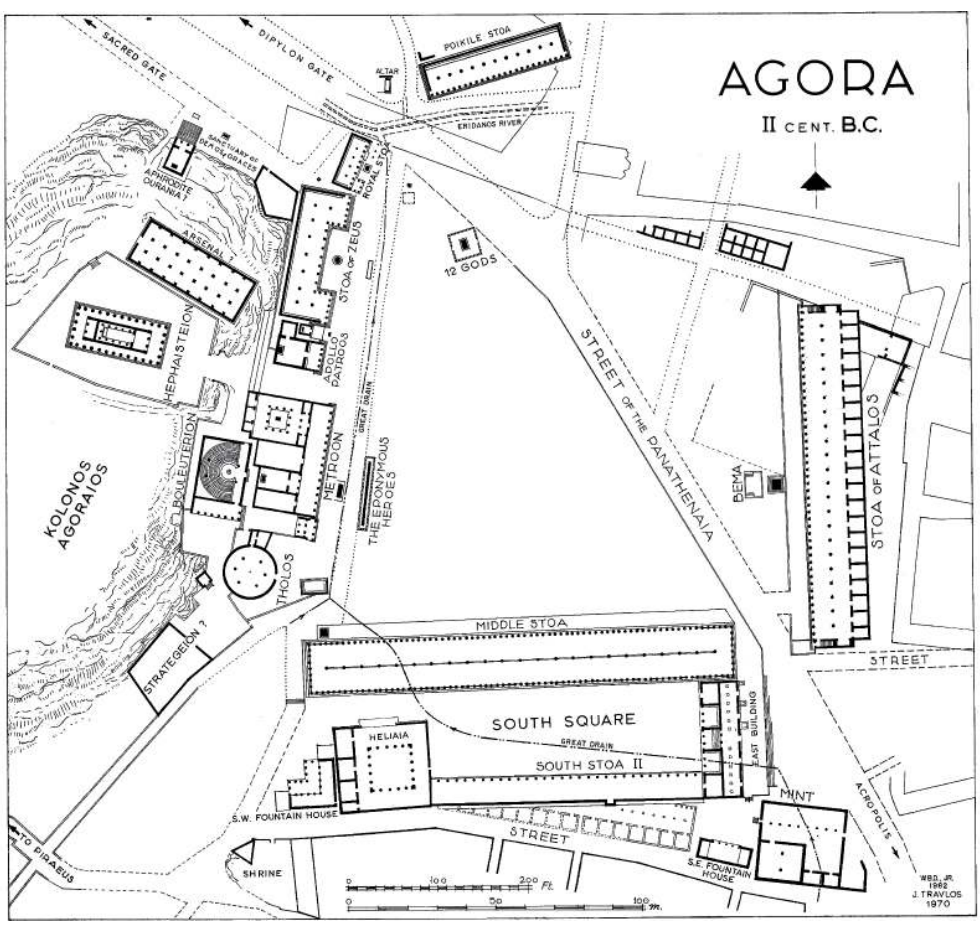

Figure 1.4 Restored plan of the Agora in the second century BC. The stoas and other buildings provide vantage points for watching the procession.

scholarly studies of both Athenian and Greek religion, but always as part of a larger whole rather than the focus in its own right. Early scholars of the festival collected the evidence available to them and clearly sought to be comprehensive, but their discussions tend to be static and synchronic.[30] They also worked before the extensive epigraphical discoveries of the Agora Excavations and other sites elsewhere in Greece and Turkey. Nevertheless, these studies remain important for their efforts to synthesise a large body of disparate material. More recent examinations generally focus on the archaic and classical periods, rather than the whole spectrum

[30] A. Mommsen 1898: 41–159; Deubner 1932: 22–35; Ziehen 1949: 457–89.