Breakdown and Rebuild Athens: Hadrian’s Architectural Renovations of Hadrian’s Library, Hadrian’s Arch, and the Temple of Olympeion Zeus

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ABSTRACT

Hadrian’s Architectural Renovations in Athens: A Breakdown and Rebuild of Hadrian’s Library, Hadrian’s Arch, and the Temple of Olympeion Zeus

A thesis presented to the Graduate Program in Ancient Greek and Roman Studies
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Throughout both the Hellenistic and Imperial periods, Rome was subject to continuous influence from Greece and held Athens in high regard. Athens was a prominent place to be seen, copied, and admired because of its grand monuments of democracy, temples, civic structures, and other dedications to its glorious past. Because of its rich history, Athens held a unique position in Greek history and culture. On the other hand, Athens itself was only influenced by Roman architecture and culture sporadically and once laid claimed to by Rome became pauperized. Between the death of Augustus and the ascension of Hadrian, there are little benefactions to the city of Athens. Once emperor, Hadrian established Athens as the center of the Greco-Roman world through abundant and detailed building projects. Hadrian aimed to bring Athens to a new and lasting age of splendor and pride. The main works of Hadrian’s building project that shaped the civic structure in Athens, and which will be the main focus of this thesis, include the Library of Hadrian, Hadrian’s Arch, and the Temple of Olympeion Zeus. Not only were these structures known for their magnificent architectural elements, but also affected the function of the city itself and helped to re-envision Athens as a city of distinction.

Modern advances have allowed for more in-depth use of technology when analyzing archaeological sites. Archaeology is a destructive science but digital reconstruction, such as the
models that will be presented in this thesis, could allow for a new method of historical preservation and education. I have completed a proper digital reconstruction and extensive architectural study of Hadrian’s building projects in Athens using Google SketchUp in order to allow for the conservation of the architecture. In this paper, I will not only continue the discussion of Hadrian’s building project in an intense architectural study, but also how these buildings propelled Hadrian as emperor, and my original digital reconstructions of the building will be presented.
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Figure 41: View of temple's front entrance. Digital Reconstruction of the Temple of Olympeion Zeus in Athens, Mary Neville, 2015

Figure 42: Eye-level view of Olympeion, from southwest. Digital Reconstruction of the Temple of Olympeion Zeus in Athens, Mary Neville, 2015

Figure 43: Olympeion precinct view from northwest. Map shows ancient roads, Hadrian's Arch, and full temenos of site. Digital Reconstruction of Ancient Athens, Mary Neville, 2015

Figure 44: View of the Olympeion precinct with the propylon in detailed view. From northwest. Digital Reconstruction of the Temple of Olympeion Zeus in Athens, Mary Neville, 2015

Figure 45: View of Olympeion Zeus temple immediately from northwestern propylon entranceway. Digital Reconstruction of the Temple of Olympeion Zeus in Athens, Mary Neville, 2015
Figure 46: Fallen column at the Olympeion. Column fell during a storm in 1852. From west. Photographs of the Temple of Olympeion Zeus in Athens, Mary Neville, 2015…………..73
Introduction

For Romans, no city better symbolized the achievements of Hellas than Athens. In Horace’s *Epistles* he wrote “Greece, the captive, took her savage victor captive, and brought the arts into rustic Latium.”¹ This quote describes the lasting power that Greek culture possessed despite Roman military conquest. Throughout both the Hellenistic and Imperial periods, Rome was subject to continuous influence from Greece and held Athens in high regard. Athens was a prominent place to be seen, copied, and admired because of its grand old monuments of democracy, temples, civic structures, and other dedications to its glorious past. Because of its rich history, Athens held a unique position in Greek history and culture. On the other hand, Athens itself was only influenced by Roman architecture and culture sporadically and once laid claimed to by Rome became pauperized. Between the death of Augustus and the ascension of Hadrian, there are little benefactions to the city of Athens. Compared to the other great capitals of the eastern provinces, Athens is more or less provincial backwater. Between the death of Augustus and the rise of Hadrian, there is little evidence for any imperial benefactions to the city.² Under Roman rule Athens was not a major commercial center nor administrative city, but it did maintain a reputation and held a place of importance as an intellectual center. Athens experienced its glorious past and lived through arts, letters, and philosophy. When an emperor wanted to emphasize his philhellenism, he would donate a new monument to Athens to pay homage to the intellectual and artistic life the city had long nurtured. Emperor Hadrian goes

above and beyond with this tradition of benefactions and so the buildings he commissions
demonstrate a public declaration of his captivation of Athens. During his first visit in 124/125
BCE Emperor Hadrian begins a variety and number of building projects in Athens that are
comparable to those of Perikles in the 5th century BCE.

It is natural to name Hadrian as the most philhellenic of Roman emperors. Hadrian had a
clear personal bias and took the most interest to the city of Athens, creating a city-based vision of
the Roman world while also integrating Athens’s iconic past. Hadrian adored the city so much
that he was nicknamed “Graeculus” at an early age and reigned as archon of Athens before he
was emperor. But, the Athens of Hadrian was incredibly different from that of Augustus or Mark
Antony. The Athens of Hadrian is distanced from the glorious Classical age by nearly two
hundred years of laying in humiliating ruin. During the 1st century BCE Athens experienced a
period of political and economical upheaval that lead them to side against Rome and thus be
heavily sacked by Sulla in 86 BCE. Sulla savagely destroyed Athens to the point where the city
underwent a slow and painful recovery from the devastation. Athens was enduring a long period
of depression until Hadrian enters the scene. Once emperor, Hadrian established Athens as the
center of the Greco-Roman world through abundant and detailed building projects. Hadrian
aimed to bring Athens to a new and lasting age of splendor and pride. During and after the reign
of Hadrian, the Greeks were now “resurgent, confident, and voluble.”3

The main works of Hadrian’s building projects that shaped the civic structure in Athens,
and of which will be the main focus of this thesis, include the Library of Hadrian, Hadrian’s
Arch, and the Temple of Olympeion Zeus. Not only were these structures known for their
magnificent architectural elements, but also affected the function of the city itself and helped to

re-envision Athens as a city of distinction. According to legend, Theseus established the ancient *poleis* of Attica and centered it around the Acropolis of Athens, inaugurating the city as a place of political, social, and religious tradition. The city’s public life began with Theseus but was brought back to life by Hadrian. The three monumental structures this paper will discuss reconstruct Hadrian’s cultural hegemony while also crediting influence to Athenians themselves.

In the first two centuries of the Empire, Greek and Roman cultures can be characterized by a gradual fusion and the Library of Hadrian, Hadrian’s Arch, and the Temple of Olympeion Zeus exhibit the beginnings of a breaking down of classic regional architectural cannons and the emergence of an imperial architecture of the Roman Empire in Greece. Hellenistic traditions of architectural style as well as local designs were maintained in the plans for the buildings and some plans show influence from the imperial architecture in Rome. The hybrid nature of the architectural design may have come from a need to economize and use plans and compositions that were already in the imperial and local repertoire. Just as likely, Hadrian may have also intended a deliberate fusion of cultures. Hadrian used his building projects to legitimize his power by recalling and relating to the dawn of Athens and its beginnings as a *poleis*. He was then able to reinstate civic and public works, commerce, education, social works, and religious institutions. Hadrian is a grand reformer on a historical scale and truly loved Athens “not just because it was a quaint old city but because Athens once again was felt to be the Hellas of Hellas and the second home of civilized men, and because a new ideal for the Roman Empire had arisen of a world of two languages and one culture, wherein the Romans and the Hellenes were both raised above all others as the two models for the rest.”

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The Herulian Invasion drastically destroyed and burned the library and Olympeion in AD 267. Additionally earthquakes and more modern buildings damaged the integrity of Hadrian’s original constructions. While these later structures built on top of the original architecture do hinder the identification of the original structure, not all is lost. Modern advances have allowed for more in-depth use of technology when analyzing archaeological sites. Archaeology is a destructive science but digital reconstructions such as the ones that will be presented in this thesis could allow for a new method of historical preservation. Newer technologies allow for the possibility of re-creating these sites in their entirety, with life-like accuracy in architecture, and with the archaeological artifacts in context. Digital reconstructions of the architecture of archaeological sites will be a vital member of the future of archaeology. Studying this architecture in a digital context can create a new way to study and quantify the growth and evolution of architecture in accordance with how societies deal with change, urbanization, and use of space. Not only could artifacts be placed in digital context and be present in a museum, or even explored by students in a classroom, but reconstructions would not hinder any further archaeological excavation and in fact could even be edited. I have completed a proper digital reconstruction and extensive architectural study of Hadrian’s building projects in Athens using Google SketchUp in order to allow for the conservation of the architecture. In this paper, I will not only continue the discussion of Hadrian’s building project in an intense architectural study, but also how these buildings propelled Hadrian as emperor, and my original digital reconstructions of the building will be presented.
Figure 1: The Hadrianic buildings geographically placed in modern Athens. Digitally reconstructed by M. Neville, 2015.
Chapter 1: Hadrian’s Library

Hadrian established Athens as the center of the Greco-Roman world through abundant and detailed building projects. One of these projects in Athens is the Library of Hadrian, also known by some as the Stoa or Forum of Hadrian. Hadrian constructed his library in AD 132 north of the Acropolis. The Library of Hadrian parallels the classic Roman Forum architectural style externally, but also the layout of its interior is very resembling of traditional Greek architecture. This library reconstructs Hadrian’s cultural hegemony while also crediting influence to Athenians themselves. Pausanias credited the building as Hadrian’s most famous structure, complete with one hundred columns of Phrygian marble, ornate rooms with gilded ceilings, alabaster, paintings, statues, and magazines to store scrolls of books.

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The location of the Library of Hadrian amplifies its historical unification of Greece and Rome. The library not only sits east of the Athenian Agora and north of the Roman Agora but
also the streets of Athens integrate the building, situating it in a sort of continuum from ‘the glory of classical Athens through the revitalization of the city under the Roman emperors.’ This library exhibits the beginnings of a breaking down of classic regional architectural cannons and the emergence of an imperial architecture of the Roman Empire. The Library of Hadrian is fully incorporated into the street work of Athens; it faces west towards the Athenian Agora and aligned with the Roman Agora, which is closely affiliated with Caesar and Augustus.

![Figure 3: Birds-eye view of area north of the Acropolis in geographic context. Digitally reconstructed by M. Neville, 2015.](image-url)

The road that separates the Roman Agora from the Library departs from one of the most famous and major roads in Athenian history, the ancient *dromos* of the Panathenaic Way, going

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8 In some cases the Roman Agora is called the ‘Market of Caesar and Augustus.’
west from the Dipylon gate in the Kerameikos and along the northern edge of the Athenian Agora. Hadrian raised the status of the Panathenaia to its highest point, and by the end of his reign Athens had a four-year cycle of sacred games unique in Greece, just as the city held in its golden age.

The Roman Agora was one of the earliest external influences to the buildings of Roman Athens, the architecture would have been unfamiliar to local Greeks, but any Roman could recognize the design. This influence comes from the natural consequence of educated Roman
interest of the culture of Classical Greece in aspects such as philosophy, literature, and the arts. Now the architects of Hadrian have reintroduced this same type of structure to Athens. The Library of Hadrian stood as the natural outgrowth of the program of urban development and physical presence of Roman imperial rule that begun with Julius Caesar in the Roman Agora. The deliberate placement of these two buildings next to each other on this major Athenian road demonstrates a way that Hadrian tried to intentionally fuse together elements of two classical cultures. The location of the Roman Agora and Hadrian’s library are clearly determined by this main east-west roads going through Athens. Passing between these two structures heading east, one enters the “New Athens” residential quarter that Athenians honored Hadrian with, Hadrianopolis, and creating the Eponymous Hero monument for Hadrianis. This complex area also accommodated the Panhellenion, which Hadrian created as a political capital of the panhellenic world that organized the Greek cities of the Eastern Roman Empire. The placement of these two buildings physically marks older and newer sections of Athens. Furthermore, the location of these two complexes crosses between a new residential area and the traditional city center of the Athenian life guaranteed that this area would be constantly walked by, used, and a peaceful reminder of the integration of Roman and Athenian life under Emperor Hadrian.

The architecture of the library works as a combination of traditional Roman library and cloister, a rectangular complex measured about 87 meters by 125 meters within its temenos wall. Artists decorated the library in typical Roman style, as one would expect as a gift from an emperor. The high walls encased the library, lined with niches, and its front wall situated parallel to the colonnade of the cloister.

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Figure 5. Bird's-eye-view of Library of Hadrian, digitally reconstructed by M. Neville, 2013.

Figure 6. Full view of the Library of Hadrian, from west entrance. Digitally reconstructed by M. Neville, 2013.
Figure 7: X-ray view of the Library of Hadrian from top, digitally reconstructed by M. Neville, 2013.

Figure 8: X-ray view of the Library of Hadrian, from the southwest. Digitally reconstructed by M. Neville, 2013.
Architects decorated the front façade with ornate Pentelic ashlar and the other three enclosing walls are made of rusticated ashlars. Most similar to other imperial Roman monumental architecture is this ornate western façade. On either side of the western facing propylon entranceway with fluted Corinthian columns of Phrygian marble stand seven Carystian marble columns rising up on pedestals, freestanding from the façade except for the engaged cornice and entablature and the Pentelic ashlar walls protrude on either side like wings. The Carystian columns on the façade stand free from the wall behind them except for the engages, entablature, and cornice. The walls of the rest of the library are made of limestone. The frontal wall had a plain attic that rose above the cornices and worked as a background for statues that stood atop each of the columns.

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Figure 9: A view of the front entrance of the Library of Hadrian’s. Photo Credit: M. Neville, 2014.
Figure 10: View of the propylon entrance at the Library of Hadrian. Photo Credit: M. Neville, 2014.
The external walls of the Library of Hadrian make it remarkably Roman, and this would have been obvious to passersby, a fitting combination with its precarious historic location. The
layout of the Library of Hadrian’s interior is more compatible with Greek architectural traditions. The courtyard dominates the layout of the building and is surrounded by a quadriporticus of one hundred Phrygian columns, as mentioned by Pausanias.\textsuperscript{13} Along the northern and southern side of the complex ran a high surrounding wall with protruding niches along the sides that most likely held statues but could maybe have also had some function as a seating area. While none of the inner columns currently exist, enough of the stylobate remains for a number of columns to be determined. Inside the courtyard rested an ornamental pool that ‘allowed an unencumbered view from the propylon to a series of eastern rooms centered around a large hall with colonnades.’\textsuperscript{14} The ornamental pool allowed for an appealing view from the propylon to the eastern library rooms centered around a large hall with colonnades. The symmetrical courtyard with a long pool running down its center emphasizes the dominating central axis of the structure.

\textsuperscript{13} Pausanias, \textit{Description of Greece}, 1.18.9.
\textsuperscript{14} Boatwright, \textit{Hadrian and the Cities}, 155.
Figure 13: Interior view of Library of Hadrian from west-center, just inside the entrance. Digitally reconstructed by M. Neville, 2013.

Figure 14: View of interior of Library of Hadrian from northwest, digitally reconstructed by M. Neville, 2013.
Auditoria adjoined the eastern library hall on either side and used as administrative spaces, reading rooms, music rooms, meeting spaces, place for rhetorical contests, and lecture spaces. This library hall stood three stories tall, which M. A. Sisson calculated as 15.2 meters with a gabled roof perpendicular to the entrance and the rooms on either side of the main library hall symmetrically arranged.\(^{15}\) It was customary for books to have been read aloud, so many different types of reading and lecture spaces were needed. The rooms adjacent to the library on either side only extended to the second floor and these rooms on either side of the second floor operated as administrative, lecture, and reading spaces. The central rooms held a series of niches that stored scrolls in wooden cases, much like the modern bookshelf. The set up allowed for a good many niches for bookshelves, about 66 bookshelves in all and possibly more.\(^{16}\) The library and cloister also might have served as a meeting place or imperial forum later in its incarnation, containing the library, a pond, and a temple of the imperial cult of Hadrian\(^ {17}\) but there is no evidence of this in the building’s original function. The Library of Hadrian functioned not only as a library but also as a cultural and social center. This library differed very much from the Hellenic library that contemporary Greeks knew of at the time, which were much smaller establishments with more articulated rooms and spaces,\(^ {18}\) and might have reminded visitors of Roman *fora*, bathhouses, or gymnasia.

\(^{18}\) Karivieri, “The So-Called Library,” 92-93.
Figure 15: Interior view of Library of Hadrian complex. Digitally reconstructed by M. Neville, 2013.

Figure 16: X-ray view of the interior of the Library. Digitally reconstructed by M. Neville, 2013.
Typically Roman libraries divided into Greek sections and Latin sections, which started with Pollio’s library in Rome in 39 BCE, the very first Roman public library. The libraries were bilingual, Greek and Latin shelved separately, so architects created duplicate library chambers set either side by side (Palantine Library) or reflected across each other on an axis (Library at the Forum of Trajan). The layout of the Roman library functioned more like a reading room compared to earlier Greek libraries which were small closet-like rooms where books were stored that opened up to a colonnade where readers read. Greek libraries functioned as storage units for mass amounts of scrolls whereas Roman libraries facilitated reading and lectures alike within its walls. This served as a model of functionality for Hadrian’s library in Athens as most of the users had a professional interest in law, philosophy, and other scholarly works.

Furthest from the entrance, on the far eastern side of the space, stood the rooms where nearly 20,000 books of papyrus could be kept. This was the bibliotheca (βιβλιοθηκη), Latin and Greek for library, which safely stored papyrus scrolls. According to Pausanius, the ceilings were decorated in gold and alabaster, and most likely murals of The Odyssey and The Iliad adorned the walls. Most Greek libraries housed a bust of Homer and most Roman libraries houses a bust of Virgil, so in addition to numerous statues adorning the halls and rooms of the complex those two would have most likely been present. The physical library where the scrolls of books were stored stood three stories high at about 15 meters, in the inner back face of the library wall one can still see today the three stories of niches that held bookcases. The bookshelves were placed within the niches of the walls and more might have been freestanding in those same rooms. As evidenced by scholars on the Alexandrian Library, librarians created a catalogue system for all

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19 Casson, Libraries in the Ancient World, 80.
20 Casson, Libraries in the Ancient World, 81.
21 Casson, Libraries in the Ancient World, 82.
these books to keep some sort of order. The system at the Alexandrian Library incorporated an intricate list systematically sorting scrolls by shelf and then categorized by title, number of lines, first words, and/or author.

Figure 17: Interior view of the library room. Digitally reconstructed by M. Neville, 2013.

The Library of Hadrian represented more than just a monument of imperial glorification by Hadrian himself. Hadrian wanted to create a place of intelligence and sophistication that came with a life long love of learning, but also preserve the glorious Athenian tradition of scholars, pedagogy, and historians. The Library of Hadrian was more than just simply a library, but a sophisticated arts center at a scale not yet seen in Greece. According to Ward-Perkins, the Library of Hadrian is a close architectural copy of Vespasian’s Templum Pacis in Rome, the only

difference being that the building is not a temple but a library.\textsuperscript{23} The Templum Pacis combined a
library, and art gallery, and a garden and built with a layout that must have inspired the plan of
Hadrian’s Library. The two buildings were very similar in overall dimensions and design,
including the conceptualization of an enclosed pool and garden in a courtyard surrounded by
porticoes and strictly symmetrical about a central axis. The Roman architects who came to
Athens undoubtedly used the Templum Pacis as a prototype to build Hadrian’s library. This
comparison does affect the general understanding of the Library of Hadrian and its true nature.
As Shear continues that the building has been correctly identified, but it functioned definitely
much more than a library,\textsuperscript{24} just as well Roman libraries served as more than the libraries of the
modern conception. Pausanias does not even specifically call it a library, but does describe its
function in a very precise way:

“But most splendid of all are one hundred columns: walls and colonnades alike are made
of Phrygian marble. Here, too, is a building adorned with a gilded roof and alabaster, and also
with statues and paintings: books are stored in it.”\textsuperscript{25}

Pausanias’s description places the Library of Hadrian in an architectural context.\textsuperscript{26} This
building is not like any other library in Imperial Rome but rather, based on its function and
location next to the Roman Agora, should be categorized more with the imperial \textit{fora} of the
provincial cities of the Empire. The plan is based on the basic principles of design attributed to
Roman architecture in the capital. Like the imperial \textit{fora} in Rome, the quadriporticus Library of

\textsuperscript{24} Shear, “From City-state to Provincial Town,” 375.
\textsuperscript{25} Pausanias, \textit{Description of Greece}, 1.18.9.
\textsuperscript{26} Pausanias, \textit{Description of Greece}, 1.18.9.
Hadrian provided a great public square adorned with gardens, embellished with statues and other works, and also housed libraries and lecture halls. In this respect, it doesn’t differ much at all from the Templum Pacis, and the Fora of Trajan and Caesar. The only striking difference in their comparison is that initially the Library of Hadrian did not have a temple or altar, which are dominating architectural features at fora. Instead the library and its adjacent rooms take the central place of this building in Athens, whereas in Roman fora libraries were always subsidiary. Hadrian and his architects must have mindfully and consciously made that decision to pay homage to Athens’s place as the intellectual and cultural capital of the Greek-speaking world. Based on the way the building functioned, there is no need for a temple or shrine to be located within the library. By building this library, Hadrian encouraged the perpetuation of Athenian cultural heritage.

Walking through Monastiraki Square in modern day downtown Athens, one is struck by the brilliance of the façade of Library of Hadrian, now surrounded by drab souvenir and flea market shops. Hadrian’s Library in Athens lies in ruin with multiple buildings built atop it. Little remains of the original architectural structure because of subsequent destructions and constructions after Hadrian’s reign had ended. The Herulian Invasion drastically damaged the library in AD 267 and later three churches later built atop the site. In 1885 a great fire destroyed the Roman Agora and most of the structures standing on the Library of Hadrian. A fair portion of the western front façade, north wall, and some of the eastern library building remains.
Figure 18: The section drawing of the Library of Hadrian in its current state. M. A. Sisson 1929.

Figure 19: Plan of what remains of the library of Hadrian. J. Stuart and N. Revett 1980.
The Digital Reconstruction

The Digital reconstruction of Hadrian’s Library was inspired by a visit to the archaeological site in the fall of 2012. I was enamored by how much could be revealed and what story could be told by the remaining architecture. This visit lead to a large research project where I explored urbanization, functionality and use of space, and digital reconstruction using Google SketchUp. The architectural plans for this digital reconstruction of Hadrian’s Library came from an amalgamation of Boatwright’s *Hadrian and the Cities of the Roman Empire*, Travlos’s *A Pictorial Dictionary of Athens*, and Willers’s *Hadrians panhellenisches Programm*.27

The digital library I created can be divided into several parts. First, the front façade, then the courtyard surrounded by a quadriporticus, then finally the library rooms themselves that are flanked by *auditoria* and reading rooms. The front façade is designed based on what is currently known and with no further suggestion. There could have been small statues on top of the columns, but they are lost to history and so not included in this reconstruction. If evidence arises, the digital reconstruction can easily be amended. Through the propylon to the courtyard, one could truly see the axial design of this building. The colors of the marble in the columns are based on Pausanias’s *Descriptions of Greece* 28 and the walls of the precinct were designed to look like vibrant Pentelic ashlar. The walls in both the courtyard and in the library were once covered in frescoes, but the purpose of this digital reconstruction was to foremost show the

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architectural design. The next steps would be to include frescoes and other pieces of art such as statues and portraits. In the far back of the courtyard, opposite of the propylon, stands the library building where books are stored. Flanking either side of the three storied library are two auditoria and meeting areas on the first floor, and offices and reading rooms on the second. These subsidiary rooms were built in only two stories. Based on the thorough research by Sisson in “The Stoa of Hadrian at Athens,” the dimensions of this part of the building were easy to reconstruct. The most difficult piece of the puzzle was understanding what the bookshelves were shaped like and how they worked. It was easy to infer the width and height of the bookshelves based on the presently known measurements of the niches, but how exactly the books were stored had been a mystery since the wooden bookshelves have rotted away with time. First I thought that there would be individual compartments for each scroll, but mathematically that storage method could not accommodate the over 20,000 scrolls this library apparently stored. At the Library of Alexandria, scrolls were stored in armaria, which look very similar to the modern bookshelf, in either a diagonal criss-cross design or a simple horizontal one. In the present digital reconstruction I built armaria, the bookshelves line the walls, between niches, on all three stories of the main library. It can be assumed that these main library rooms also held benches and tables as well as more bookshelves in the center of the room. These components would be a great step forward to making the digital Hadrian’s Library more interactive and realistic.

Chapter 2: Hadrian’s Arch in Athens

One of Hadrian’s most famed monuments in Athens, Hadrian’s Arch, celebrates the emperor, but likely was not commissioned by him to be built. Even though Hadrian did not build it, it is worth mentioning for the purpose of this paper as a member of Hadrian’s building projects, as it reflects the affect that Hadrian had on both the people and the civic structure of Athens. This monumental arch that bears the name of Hadrian still stands today near the Olympeion as a constant reminder of the benefactions and donations Hadrian made to the city.

The arch is incredibly well preserved and remains almost exactly as it did in antiquity. The missing pieces include the freestanding columns that decorated both the lower and upper

Figure 20: Hadrian’s Arch from the east. Photo by M. Neville, 2012.

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stories, the column bases on the eastern side, as well as a vertical marble slab in the middle of the upper story. Stuart and Revett partially restored the arch when they traveled to Athens from 1751-1753. Curiously, Pausanius does not mention Hadrian’s Arch in his travels. The most peculiar aspects of this monument are the inscriptions, position, and its architectural design, all of which will be briefly discussed in this chapter. The inscriptions on the arch emphasize the emperor Hadrian’s role as the city’s reviver and the orientation and placement of the arch play an intricate role in Hadrian’s grand plan for Athens.

Figure 21: Full east facade of Hadrian's Arch. Photo by C. Roughan, 2012.
When traveling to the cult center of Olympeion Zeus from the city center at the agora, Athenians and visitors to the city could read the inscription on the arch when walking through it. The inscription reads: ΑΙΔ’ ΕΙΣΙΝ ΑΘΗΝΑΙ ΘΗΣΕΩΣ Η ΠΡΙΝ ΠΟΛΙΣ on the western side and ΑΙΔΕ ΑΔΡΙΑΝΟΥ ΚΟΥΧΙ ΘΗΣΕΩΣ ΠΟΛΙΣ on the eastern side. Commonly translated as, “This is Athens the Ancient City of Theseus” and “This is the city of Hadrian and not of Theseus,” people coming from the city center could read the inscription on the arch on the west side and returning to the city center from the Olympeion could read the text on the east side.\(^3\) One possible meaning of this inscription is that the arch could work as a boundary marker between the old city and the new precinct of Hadrianopolis, the city of Theseus being distinctively set off from new Athens. Adams offers a better translation for the inscription on the west side, inspired by the original research from Stuart and Revett, which reads, “This is Athens the former city of Theseus.”\(^3\) This modifies the common argument for translation and assumes that the new city, the city of Hadrian, replaced the city of Theseus and that they are not two separate precincts. This interpretation of the Greek explains that the city as a whole now gives patronage to Hadrian, not Theseus. This translation makes better sense when thinking like a visitor walking to and fro beneath the honorary arch, going between the Olympeion and Acropolis. Not only does this inscription connect Hadrian to the original founder of the city, but also shows an effort on Hadrian’s part to pay respect and homage to the cultural history of Athens.

\(^3\) Karivieri, A. “Just One of the Boys: Hadrian in the Company of Zeus, Dionysus, and Theseus,” in Greek Romans and Roman Greeks, edited by Erik Nis Ostenfeld. (Gylling: Aarhus University Press, 2002): 49.

\(^3\) Adams, Alison. “The Arch of Hadrian at Athens,” The Greek Renaissance in the Roman Empire: Papers from the Tenth British Museum Classical Colloquium (1989): 10. Stuart and Revett correctly translated the inscription, but their translation was widely ignored.
Figure 22: Detail view of inscription on the eastern facade. Photo by C. Roughan, 2012.

Figure 23: Detailed view of western inscription. Digitally reconstructed by M. Neville, 2015
The inscriptions on Hadrian’s Arch are closely connected to the legend of Theseus and the storied boundary markers that Theseus had set up between the Peloponnese and Ionia. In Athens, Hadrian’s arch imitates the function of Theseus’s boundary markers as a divider between two regions. According to Plutarch when Theseus founded the Panathenaia, he had to set up pillars as boundary markers on the isthmus between the Peloponnese and Ionia to mark the separate territories. The boundary markers read “Here is not the Peloponnese, but Ionia,” and “Here is the Peloponnese, not Ionia.” Plutarch tells the legend and so the phrasing of these boundary marks would have been familiar to the general public and other philhellenes like Emperor Hadrian. Theseus creates the ancient *polies* of Attica, establishing a common center around the Acropolis of Athens and the sanctuary of Athena Polias. The city’s public life began

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with Theseus and had a new start with Hadrian. While the syntax of Hadrian’s Arch is reminiscent of the boundary markers of Theseus, the function of these two structures could not be the same. The boundary markers of Theseus mark a territorial division, but Hadrian’s Arch is not on any preexisting or contemporary border. The eastern inscription implies that there is a Hadrianic section of Athens, but with Hadrian’s multiple building projects around the provinces it would not be surprising if larger cities, such as Carthage, had their own Hadrianopolis.\(^{34}\) None of the Roman remains, bathhouses, and villas in the Hadrianopolis quarter can be dated for certain to the time of Hadrian. Furthermore, Adams’s claim that Hadrian’s arch acts not as a boundary between two separate parts of Athens but rather tells the continuing story of the founding of both old Athens and new Athens, appears to be more correct because east of the arch no new Hadrianic city nor city quarter has been uncovered.\(^{35}\) Also, Hadrian’s benefactions to the city appear to be concentrated west of the arch and towards the city center. The archaeological evidence of an expanding suburb in that eastern area appears to be sporadic. Therefore, Hadrian’s Athens must be the same city area as the Athens that came before, just rejuvenated. The arch is intended to work as a monument for Hadrian’s enhancements to Athens, and legitimizes his importance to the city by comparing him to Theseus. They are both seen as founders and saviors of Athens and have parallel achievements in those roles. Hadrian brought about a renewal of Athens, a ‘New Athens,’\(^ {36}\) with Hadrian as the founder.

\(^{34}\) Adams, “Arch of Hadrian,” 11.
\(^{36}\) As Adams and Boatwright call it.
The commissioner deliberately placed Hadrian’s Arch on the processional route to the Olympeion Zeus precinct and thus the orientation and placement of the arch are telling of its connection to Hadrian’s building projects. Hadrian’s Arch was placed near the northwest corner of the Olympeion’s *temenos* wall on a long established road leading to the heart of the city. Some believe that this arch once functioned as a gate in the city wall as a divider between separate areas of Athens; however, in studies by Stuart and Revett\(^\text{37}\) as well as Travlos\(^\text{38}\) it was proven that the arch could not have been a part of such a city wall or gate. The arch could not even have been incorporated into a wall until at least the Herulian invasion in 267 AD, but was probably still not been actually incorporated into a wall until the Turkish reign of Tzistarakis in Greece during the eighteenth century. Neither a physical limit in the form of a city wall nor a symbolic boundary existed where the arch stands.


\(^{38}\) Travlos *Pictorial*, 253.
Hadrian’s Arch is best categorized as an honorary monument. It is composed of a single arched passageway framed by two piers that form a Roman arch, and an upper story that is reminiscent of an eastern Greek temple. Hadrian’s Arch is of a nontraditional western architectural form designed quite unlike any other Roman monumental arches, and looks back on the original foundations of the eastern half of the Roman Empire. The two levels of the arch are significantly different from one another. The lower story is a solid, traditional looking Roman arch except for the fact that it lacks any sculpture or decoration. Another striking difference between this arch and the typical Roman is that there is no Latin inscription graphed upon it, but rather a Greek inscription.

The upper story is the most different from the formulaic Roman arch. The higher level spans the area between the now-missing columns of the lower story. It consists of a colonnade with three open bays, and the central bay was once filled with a marble slab. Piers frame the upper level and engaged columns carry a simple pediment on the projection of the architrave.
Originally, freestanding columns projected upwards in front of the piers to the upper story from the ends of the second story and carried the entablature. The combination of both columns and pediments found on the upper half of the arch are naturally linked to resemble the monumental architecture of the eastern provinces’ gateways, facades, theatres, and temples. The cities of western Asia Minor maintained the traditional Hellenistic art style throughout the Roman Empire.\textsuperscript{39} The Greek background was formed by cities of the Greek east and Asia Minor, and Hadrian’s formation of the Panhellenion could have only greater influenced this connection to the east. The eastern influence hybridized the Hadrianic building program. This could have been the result of local architects or Hadrian deliberately infusing elements Roman and Greek architectural designs. This decoration would have been absolutely appropriate in a city such as Athens, where a Roman emperor is forming a Panhellenic league. The design of Hadrian’s Arch is the product of the world of imperial Greco-Roman city life: Roman in origin, eastern in form and symbolism, and Greek material and setting.

Figure 27: Full view of Hadrian's Arch, from east. Digitally reconstructed by M. Neville, 2015.
Figure 28: Full view of Hadrian’s Arch, from west. Digitally reconstructed by M. Neville, 2015.

Hadrian’s arch is set at a bizarre angle in regards to the nearby Olympeion temple enclosure, but it appears to follow the road leading up to the agora and Acropolis. The position is significant despite its awkward angling near the Olympeion, creating a close topographical connection between the arch and the sanctuary. The arch’s east inscription, the one that mentions Hadrian by name, deliberately faces the emperor’s greatest contribution to Athens, the completion of an archaic temple building project and the development of the Panhellenion that unified the eastern Roman provinces. In this way, the arch both celebrates and symbolically unifies the Roman Empire in the Greek east. To further embellish this idea of unification, the arch shapes a façade to the Olympeion when approaching from the west, and when approaching from the east frames a glorious view of the Acropolis. The tripartite colonnade and pediment above the archway composes an ornamental and decorative propylon through this double façade.
for both historic monuments. Just like the propylon at the Acropolis, the arch’s position gives way for an unencumbered three-quartered view from its position, allowing the visitor’s eyes to wander around the Olympeion to enjoy and experience the beauty of its architecture while visitors prepare to access it.

Figure 29: East facade of Hadrian's Arch, clear view of Acropolis in background. Photo by C.Roughan 2012.
It is not certain whether or not Hadrian erected or commissioned this arch, but more likely that the people of his *deme* did.\(^{40}\) Traditionally the senate in Rome, provincial cities, and sometimes individuals dedicated monumental arches to emperors. Hadrian’s Arch cannot be an imperial gift; as it is inscribed in Greek rather than Latin and is not in the acceptable architectural style of classic Roman arches. The arch’s contemporary, an aqueduct Hadrian commissioned and dedicated in Attica, is dedicated in the customary Latin. Neither the emperor nor the senate sanctified this arch, but rather it must have been the provincial city of Athens or the people who were of the same *deme* as Hadrian. It is important to note that by this time the people of Athens had made Hadrian into an eponymous hero and consecrated many altars throughout the city.\(^{41}\) Athens was a city of limited resources, and it shows through the poor quality of the marble in the arch as well as the lack of statues and other decoration; whereas the imperial budget paid for the fine marbles of the Olympeion and the Library of Hadrian. Despite the poor quality marble, the location and design were carefully executed; the arch was probably erected during Hadrian’s reign with the expectation that he would travel through it between the city and his works. Hadrian’s Arch not only provides a passage between the Acropolis and the Olympeion for visitors to observe; it also commemorates the emperor and his works in Athens permanently.

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\(^{40}\) Adams *Arch of Hadrian*, 15.

The Digital Reconstruction

The digital reconstruction of Hadrian’s Arch exhibits the simplicity of the illustrious monument. The dimensions come from research done by Stuart and Revett and also Willers.\textsuperscript{42} The dimensions in these sources were incredibly accurate and this is most likely because the structure is so well preserved. The bottom half of the arch resembles a tradition Roman arch, such as the Arch of Titus in the Roman Forum, and the top half resembles the more eastern temple architectural facades, reminiscent of Pergamene temple façades. The arch was noted for its lack of decoration and poor quality marble. In this digital reconstruction the architectural elements were kept very simple and streamlined, the greatest focus being not on style and design but rather accurate and proportional elements. The marble has a chartreuse color quality to represent the low grade of marble. In the present day the marble of the arch does have a jaundiced look when observed closely. To stay true to the original dedication of the arch, the Greek inscription honoring Emperor Hadrian is placed on either side. The arch itself is less than magnificent alone, but when it is put in context with the Temple of Olympeion Zeus gains a new perspective of grandeur.

Chapter 3: The Temple of Olympeion Zeus

“Such vast dimensions would alone be sufficient to prove these columns to have belonged to that temple, which was the largest ever built in honor of the supreme pagan deity, and one of the four most magnificent ever erected by the ancients, even if Thucydides had not pointed out this side of the city as the position of the Olympium, or if Vitruvius has not left us a description of the Olympium, exactly conformable with the existing ruins.”

Figure 30: Temple of Olympeion Zeus, from northeast. Photo by M. Neville, 2012.

The Temple to Olympeion Zeus has been accounted as one of the rarest specimens of magnificence in the ancient world. Its history stretches over nearly seven centuries, yet today not
even a tenth of the original edifice survives. Excavations on the site of the Olympeion were carried out from 1883-1886 by Francis Penrose, by the Greek Archaeological Society from 1886-1907, and finally in 1922 by G. Welter. Phases of the building, started by the Peisistratids and ending with Hadrian, were noted by various authors throughout time, and remained essentially the same building with no drastic rebuilding or changes in site or basic design. This chapter works to chronologically piece together the architectural history and function of this monument, using the most recent research. Currently there is no up to date, comprehensive, and detailed study of this monument. A digital reconstruction of this temple brings to life its function and also provides more accurate architectural scholarship.

Before the Archaic period in Athens, the area around the Olympeion sanctuary was considered a sacred space dedicated to Zeus and other older deities. The sanctuary precinct lays about six hundred meters southeast of the Parthenon, near the banks of the Ilios River. The temple site is attributed to the first temple of the Deukalion. According to Pausanias, after a large flood the waters disappeared and there was a gap about a cubit wide, where, according to legend, Deukalion built the first sanctuary to Zeus.

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The tradition explains that the sacred space was founded where these ancient floodwaters drained away. The sacred space is oriented from east to west on a low ridge about 300 meters long with a width of approximately 70 meters. South of this low ridge is a corner that transforms into a steep and rocky projection heading southwest, and east of the ridge the earth slopes down to where the Ilisos River once flowed. Zeus had many cults in Athens under many different names but inhabitants of Athens most highly venerated the one at the Olympeion precinct. Archaeologists uncovered prehistoric pottery from all over the Olympeion site and the surrounding area all the way down to the bedrock. It is evident that there was once a prehistoric settlement on this outcrop that was “possibly the focal point for the development of a very early place of worship in the district south of the Acropolis.” The location of the Olympeion precinct is also special because of its connection to the legend of Aigeus and Theseus, the first founders.

47 Travlos, *Pictorial*, 402
48 Travlos, *Pictorial*, 402
of Athens. At the southwest corner of the hill, the archaic Delphinion was established at the legendary site of Aigeus’s house near the Kallirrhoe spring. Thucydides identifies the place of the Olympeion and notes that the sacred shrine of Olympeion Zeus and sanctuaries in that area were age-old and located in that exact place.\textsuperscript{49} This area clearly developed and held religious importance from even the early days of Athens. Penrose first found a pre-archaic temple on the exact site of the Olympeion.\textsuperscript{50} The date of this early temple is not clear. He uncovered the shape of a foundation running north to south across the cell of the later archaic temple. The southern end of the early temple was underneath a column of the inner colonnade of the Peisistratid-era temple. These remains are the lowest course of the foundation of a peristyle measuring approximately 30 meters by 60 meters. The rest of the early temple was removed when the Peisistratid temple was being built.

During the archaic period, around 560-540 BCE Peisistratus commissioned the building of a new temple in the place of the Olympeion. When Peisistratus passed away, his sons were left to finish his construction. It is unclear how much building his sons had completed by this point, but the plan had been laid out for a massive monumental temple. Hippias and Hipparchus continued the construction on their father’s massive temple, designed to look like the monumental and colossal temples of Asia Minor. Vitruvius records the names of the architects who worked on this Peisistratid temple: Antistates, Kallaeschros, Antimadchides, and Porinos.\textsuperscript{51} These architects designed the Peisistratid temple designed in the Doric order, with a foundation of about 40 meters by 100 meters, with eight columns in two rows on the west and east ends and


\textsuperscript{50} Wycherley, R.E. “The Olympeion at Athens,” \textit{Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies} 5 (1964): 162.

21 columns in a row along the north and south sides.\textsuperscript{52} It is known that the Peisistratid temple was of Doric order based on the remaining column pieces found in the Themistoklean wall. These columns measured 2.42 meters in diameter and their height extended to about 10 meters. The poros columns of the outer colonnade had continuous foundations whereas the inner colonnade columns each had their own individual foundations. The project was abandoned when the Athenian citizens overthrew the tyrannical government, and the monumental Peisistratid building remained incomplete.\textsuperscript{53} It is not clear exactly how much construction had been done on the Peisistratid temple when it was brought to a halt.

The Athenian citizens considered the work a monument that symbolized tyranny and with the rise of democracy the construction totally stopped. Not only was the temple most likely abandoned because it was of undesired tyrannical heritage, but also its immense size and cost would have most likely been too intimidating for Athens’s resources. As Wycherley states, “Even in the time of Perikles the construction of the Olympeion could have been seriously resumed only by curtailing work on the Acropolis, which in any case faced difficulties and restrictions enough.”\textsuperscript{54} The Athenians would have never intended to slight the highly powerful and omnipotent god Zeus, but the Olympeion project would have been beyond the city’s means and would have been heavily taxing on Athens’s assets.

The filler between the walls of the Peisistratid temple included potsherds that dated back to about 530 BCE,\textsuperscript{55} so it would be correct to date the Peisistratid temple to about 515 BCE right before the fall of tyranny at Athens. Despite the halted construction, religious and cultural

\textsuperscript{52} Travlos, \textit{Pictorial}, 402.
\textsuperscript{54} Wycherley, “Olympeion at Athens,” 166-167.
\textsuperscript{55} Travlos, \textit{Pictorial}, 402.
activities continued on the site.\footnote{Willers, D. Hadrians panhellenisches Programm: archäologische Beiträge zur Neugestaltung Athens durch Hadrian (Basel: Vereinigung der Freunde Antiker Kunst, 1990): 32.} When citizens discontinued the works of tyranny, many of the column drums and other pieces of architecture were reused as building materials for the Themistoklean circuit wall around the city and the later Hellenistic incarnation of the Olympeion. In 1886, a foundation built of Peisistratid column drums was discovered near the propylon gateway to the Olympeion Zeus precinct and later Travlos\footnote{Travlos, Pictorial, 402.} established that the foundation belonged to a gate in the city wall.

Excavations inside of the Peisistratid temple have revealed the remains of an earlier temple. These early temple remains measure 30.5 meters wide and about 60 meters in length.\footnote{Travlos, Pictorial, 402.} The foundations of this early temple are 2.5 meters wide and made of Acropolis limestone and designed as the inner colonnade of a large peripteral temple. The archaic building foundations reveal a colonnade 4.7 meters wide and made of Acropolis and Kara limestone in coursed polygonal masonry with exact jointing.\footnote{Travlos, Pictorial, 402.} The exact depths of the temple’s foundation follow the course and contours of the hill. The architectural remains indicate that the Peisistratid temple was originally supposed to be almost twice as long and had the same dimensions and plan\footnote{Double peripteral} as its Hellenistic successor.

When the Persians sacked Athens the temple was already more or less derelict and would not have been a target for looting or burning. It was likely spared from any further destruction because the remains were crude and its stones so massive that it would have deterred any unforgiving Persian soldier. Nonetheless, the cult of Olympeion Zeus still carried on at an altar in the sanctuary site. There is no evidence that any major work occurred at this site between the
archaic and Hellenistic periods.\textsuperscript{61} Herakleides (the pseudo-Dikaiarchos) describes the building as “an Olympeion half-finished, but astonishing in its architectural design—it would have been an excellent building if it had been completed.”\textsuperscript{62} The term ‘half-finished’ originally implies that he observed the temple after its Hellenistic construction in the time of Antiochus. Based on the actual architectural remains, the Peisistratid temple was probably never close to being ‘half-finished,’ but at the same time ‘half-finished’ is an incredibly vague term\textsuperscript{63} and could have referred to the Peisistratid temple if a cult continued in that place.

\textsuperscript{61} Wycherley, “Olympeion at Athens,” 167.
\textsuperscript{63} The term ‘half-finished’ could also be considered somewhat of an epithet for the Olympeion at this time.
Figure 33: View of remaining eastern columns, from northwest. Photo by M. Neville, 2012.
In 174 BCE, the Seleucid king of Syria, Antiochus IV Epiphanes chose to continue the temple’s construction with a Roman architect, Cossutius.\textsuperscript{64} When Antiochus resumed building the Temple to Zeus only the lower parts and the foundations of the Peisistratid temple still remained. Cossutius slightly modified the initial Peisistratid plan to make it in Corinthian order, with three rows of eight columns on the west and east ends and two rows of twenty columns running along the north and south sides—totaling in 104 columns. The construction ceased when Antiochus died in 164 BCE. It is unknown how much of that Hellenistic temple had been completed, but the eastern part may have continued as far as the cornice.\textsuperscript{65} The epistyle columns that remain in the southeast corner are all of the Antiochus construction. This means that most of the temple’s presently visible remains were built in the Hellenistic period: 13 columns from that period stand in the southeast corner of the peristyle, which was dipteral on its flanks and tripteral on its ends.

\textsuperscript{64} Vitruvius, \textit{On Architecture}, VII.15.  
\textsuperscript{65} Travlos, \textit{Pictorial}, 403.
Figure 34: Extant southeast Hellenistic columns. Photo by M. Neville, 2012.
Figure 35: Temple of Olympeion Zeus, from northeast. Photo by M. Neville, 2012.
Vitruvius visited the Temple to Zeus during this architectural incarnation and enlightens the Temple of Olympeion Zeus in this stage of its life in his book *On Architecture*: 66

“In Athens, the architects Antistates, Callaeschrus, Antimachides, and Pormus laid the foundations when Peisistratus began the Temple of Olympian Jove, but after his death they abandoned the undertaking, on account of political troubles. Hence it was that when, about four hundred years later, King Antiochus promised to pay the expenses of that work, the huge cella, the surrounding columns in dipteral arrangement, and the architraves and other ornaments, adjusted according to the laws of symmetry, were nobly constructed with great skill and supreme knowledge by Cossutius, a citizen of Rome. Moreover, this work has a name for its grandeur, not only in general, but also among the select few.”

Vitruvius continues to describe the temple as hypaethral, having a view of the heavens, and then notes that temples of this type are decastyle in the front and rear, but otherwise designed like dipteral temples. In the interior, hypaethral temples have two super-imposed rows of columns, far enough away from the walls to form a walkway. 67 The central place between these rows of columns would not have a roof in a hypaethral temple and there would also be folding doors in the front and rear of the building. 68 Vitruvius also writes that for hypaethral temples the interior order consists of columns that are double in height. Vitruvius claims that there is a temple that fits his description in Athens: *templum Olympium*.

When describing the Olympeion temple, Vitruvius explains that there is only one design flaw in this hypaethral temple, that it is octastyle and not decastyle, but there are other

67 Similar to a peristyle walkway
architectural aspects of this temple that debunk Vitruvius’s explanation of this temple as hypaethral. It is hard to believe an expert such as Vitruvius could be in error about whether or not the temple was hypaethral but several issues stand out. The Olympeion temple Vitruvius examined was an octastyle, dipteral, hypaethral temple with folding doors in the front and rear and an internal colonnade of two tiers. First off, one must realize that Vitruvius did not see this building complete. Keep in mind the Hellenistic incarnation of the Olympeion would have still been unfinished at the time of his visit to Athens. It is impossible to tell if the building was hypaethral as it was incomplete. Secondly, the interior columns of the Olympeion were not of a double order that Vitruvius requires in hypaethral temple design and furthermore may or may not have been Corinthian in design. But also the final arrangement of the interior is not totally clear to the present day. The east wall of the opisthodomos does have a continuous wall, there is no evidence in the foundations for any back door to the temple. The west foundation of the cela, through the pronaos, does have a doorway that leads through the interior of the temple. If Vitruvius’s description is correct, there would be archaeological evidence in the architecture for another doorway leading out of the opisthodomos. Additionally, the propylon for this building is incredibly modest and the Olympeion had no great gateway that was axially arranged. Finally, if the building was designed to be hypaethral, then when Hadrian continued its construction this plan would have been carried on and the roof being left open would have destroyed the marvelous chryselephantine cult statue inside.

There is no decisive evidence for exactly how much of the Olympeion was built during the Hellenistic construction. Antiochus paid for the building to be constructed, but how much Cossutius’s actually completed of the temple is uncertain. Vitruvius implies that Cossutius built a

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great deal of the temple and his work was noted for its splendor, his ingenious construction, and its magnificence to the masses. The Hellenistic temple was more or less a modern take on the plan of the Peisistratid temple. The scale and proportions were essentially the same and the main difference being that Cossutius employed Pentelic marble and designed in Corinthian order. Cossutius even worked to incorporate archaic substructures with some adjustment. Cossutiuus replaced the original archaic steps with marble and some of the foundations for the marble columns had to be replaced. Cossutius made a real effort to keep the integrity and heritage of the sacred site.

In order to ensure Rome’s authority after a conflict, Sulla besieged Athens in 86 BCE. He took two columns from the unfinished Olympeion to use in the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus in Rome. It is difficult to believe that Sulla actually fully dismantled these massive columns of the temple and transported them all the way to Rome. The entire operation would have been incredibly strenuous and excessive. It is more believable that Sulla took portions of columns, such as capitols. An attempt to finish the temple took place in the Augustan age, either by Augustus himself or by those wishing to use the temple as a monument to celebrate his Genius. It appears that funds were collected and plans were made for an Augustan phase of construction, but nothing actually came of his plan.

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Figure 36: View of Olympeion's southeast columns. Photo by M. Neville, 2012.
Nearly seven centuries after its original proposal, Roman Emperor Hadrian finally completed the temple. The completion of this temple exemplifies one of the many ways that
Hadrian identifies himself and transcends local history in Athens through municipal benefactions. The rededication of this temple also marks the formal beginning of the Panhellenion and establishment of the Panhellenic games. Hadrian commissioned the work to be done when he first visited Athens in AD 124/125, carried out a preliminary dedication in AD 128/129, and finally the work was completed and dedicated in AD 131/132 during his last visit to Athens.\textsuperscript{73} It is clear in the architecture that Hadrian’s construction respected Cossutius’ original plan and even kept the columns from the Hellenistic Olympeion. The columns measure 17.25 meters high and about 2 meters in diameter.\textsuperscript{74} The \textit{aedes} measures 43.68 meters by 110.35 meters on its stylobate with a \textit{cella} measuring about 19 meters by 75 meters.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{temple_of_olympeion_zeus_view_from_top.png}
\caption{Temple of Olympeion Zeus, view from top. Digitally reconstructed by M. Neville, 2015.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{73} Travlos, \textit{Pictorial}, 403; Wycherley, “Olympeion at Athens,” 173.
\textsuperscript{74} Abramson, “Olympeion and Rome,” 4.
Figure 40: X-ray view of temple's front entrance. Digitally reconstructed by M. Neville, 2015.

Figure 41: View of temple's front entrance. Digitally reconstructed by M. Neville, 2015.
The final design is dipteral, with eight by twenty Corinthian columns, 104 columns in total. In *On Architecture* Vitruvius describes the Olympeion as octastyle and dipteral, meaning it has eight columns across the front façade and equally on the back, and also two rows of columns on either side of the *cella* that are doubly proportional in number. By rule, octastyle temples should have a proper number of lateral columns that are double the number across the porticoes, plus one. So in order to keep up with the traditional architectural proportions, an octastyle temple should have seventeen columns running along the sides. From surveys run by English architects James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, the Temple of Olympeion Zeus has twenty columns along the sides and this suffers from a disproportion between width and length. This disproportional architecture created much confusion in the history of properly identifying this building, as there was either a failure to reconcile the proportions or perhaps the original architect did not follow those exact rules of architecture. In 1883, Penrose excavated the site and conclusively determined the architectural form of the temple and identified it. He proved that Stuart and Revett correctly identified the ruins as the magnificent Temple of Olympus Jupiter, and that at the same time Vitruvius was also correct in categorizing the temple as octastyle and dipteral. Penrose conceded that an extraordinary exception must exist in this temple in order for it to have two rows of twenty columns as opposed to the traditional seventeen. Despite a

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76 They visited Athens from 1751-1753.  
78 “Temple of Olympian Zeus,” *Encyclopedia Romana*. last modified January 1, 2015,  
growing number of instances where Roman architects did not always strictly follow the rules of proportionality, Penrose’s hypothesis was not totally accepted in the field.79

Pausanias describes the temple well on his visit to Athens:80

“The Emperor Hadrian not only raised the temple of the Olympian Jupiter, but placed in it the colossal chryselephantine statue of the god, admirable, not only for its magnitude, but for its excellent workmanship. Before you enter the temple, you observe four statues of Emperor Hadrian—two in Thasian, and two in Egyptian marble. Before the columns are statues of brass, erected by the colonial cities. The entire peribolus is filled with votive statues, in honor of the Emperor Hadrian. Within the same space are ancient monuments worthy of note; a bronze Jupiter, the temple of Saturn and Rhea, and an enclosed space dedicated to the Olympian region. There, too, is an opening in the ground, of about a cubits width, where they say the waters of Deucalion’s deluge drained off. Into this chasm are annually thrown cakes of wheaten flour kneaded with honey. There are, moreover, a column on which stands the statue of Isocrates, and a tripod of bronze supported by statues in Phrygian marble.”

Inside the cella of the temple, Olympeion Zeus is ensconced on a throne as a chryselephantine statue. Artists modeled the statue of ivory and gold after the original statue of Zeus at Olympia by Pheidias. According to Pausanias, this statue is “one worth seeing, which in size exceeds all other statues save the colossi at Rhodes and Rome, and is made of ivory and

80 Pausanias, Description of Greece, I.18.16
gold with an artistic skill which is remarkable when the size is taken into account.”81 The statue recalls not only the statue of Zeus at Olympia but also the statue of Athena in the Parthenon, also by Pheidias. Hadrian constructed a paved court around the temple precinct, which was entered through a propylon. Pausanias also saw statues of Hadrian in the temple and set up in the courtyard surrounding the temple and on top of the Acropolis. By recalling these two famous Pheidian statues, Hadrian saw the opportunity has the ability to make the Olympeion more celebrated. A wide wall traces the perimeter of the temple, enclosing it and its court, dozens of portraits of Hadrian—offerings from cities all over Greece.82 Pausanias comments on these portrait busts in the temple precinct, noting that the court is “full of statues; for every city has dedicated a likeness of the Emperor Hadrian, and the Athenians have surpassed them in dedicating, behind the temple, the remarkable colossus.” 83

Figure 42: Eye-level view of Olympeion, from southwest. Digitally reconstructed by M.Neville, 2015.

81 Pausanias, Description of Greece, I.18.16.
82 Travlos, Pictorial, 403.
83 Pausanias, Description of Greece, I.18.16.
Perched atop the colossal columns, the architrave of the temple rose just over 60 feet above the ground. It is unclear how much of the Hellenistic building was completed, but the eastern part may have continued as far as the cornice.\textsuperscript{84} The epistyle columns of the Hellenistic temple in the southeast corner are still in place to the present day. Thirteen columns from that period stand in the southeast corner, which is dipteral on its flanks and tripteral on its ends. The columns rise up to 17.25 meters high and rest on attic bases and plinths. The columns do not incline but do have entasis. No part of any Olympeion frieze has yet been recovered. The interior of the temple is represented by a foundation wall running east to west and by a fragment of marble column fluting found within the area of the \textit{cella}.\textsuperscript{85} The column capitols are not all identical; it is noticeable in the existing columns that groups of them have differences in form, technique, and carving. Attempts have been made to piece together the different styles of Corinthian columns and their building stages, but these attempts have only lead to more confusion.\textsuperscript{86} It is widely accepted that the extant columns in the southeast corner are not Hadrianic as they are also not contemporaneous with the design of the columns at the Library of Hadrian. It appears that the western end of the temple was built by Hadrian and the eastern end by Cossutius, but even this theory is not so clean-cut. There is nothing to disprove that this temple is largely Hellenistic.

\textsuperscript{84} Travlos, \textit{Pictorial}, 403.
\textsuperscript{85} Abramson, “Olympeion and Rome,” 4.
\textsuperscript{86} Wycherley, “Olympeion at Athens,” 171.
When discussing Hadrian’s actual contributions to the Olympeion’s architectural history, Pausanias only mentions the dedication of the chryselephantine statue of Zeus, not necessarily the entire building. It is unclear how far the Hellenistic construction went, and thus unclear what exactly Hadrian’s constructions and contributions to the temple were. Hadrian probably completed important work on the main interior building of the sanctuary, but there is not much actual evidence for what construction Hadrian put into the building itself. The temple recalls something of a simplistic, early-Greek taste in contrast to the later more ornamental Hellenistic taste. The temple’s superiority and technical excellence might be due to this simplicity and beauty in design while still upholding this massive wonderment—and this could be due to the conscious imitation on Hadrian’s part of earlier architectural models.
Figure 44: View of the Olympeion and propylon. From northwest. Digitally reconstructed by M. Neville, 2015.

Figure 45: View of Olympeion temple from northwestern propylon entranceway. Digitally reconstructed by M. Neville, 2015.
The temple quarter was a part of a new deme that the Athenians dedicated to Hadrian for bringing their city back to its former glory. The deme is named Hadrianopolis and is further highlighted in the proclamation on the Arch of Hadrian. Additionally, Hadrian was made an Eponymous Hero, initiated into the Mysteries at Eleusis, and about 94 altars were set up to honor the divine emperor throughout the city. Hadrian had a deep love for Athens and the Athenians responded to him with dedications and honors. A part of this divine honor also included granting Hadrian the epithet Olympios, previously only given to Zeus. In this way, Hadrian’s granting the Greeks with a Panhellenic program is returned by the people comparing him to a truly Panhellenic god, Zeus. Athenians must have felt truly grateful for him and also a pious pride and pleasure in seeing their debt to Zeus so handsomely and gloriously paid.

The Emperor may have had conscious and deliberate intentions in identifying himself with Zeus Olympios. Hadrian liked to associate himself with both Greek gods and heroes alike, using epithets like Olympios, Eleutherios, and Panhellenios in inscriptions and was even called Hadrianos Zeus Olympios and “the son of Zeus Eleutherios” in an inscription on the Acropolis. Hadrian associated himself with both Theseus and the Peisistratids (as founders of Athens) with his building projects and local programs. Plutarch prized Perikles for his great plan to establish Athens as a united league of poleis working towards the common good under the Delian League. By establishing the Panhellenion, Hadrian looks back on Athens’s epic past and reimagines the Delian League. With the Panhellenic Program, he inducted a revival of the Panhellenic Games as well. This both revived religious functions and reinvented the

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87 Athens treated Hadrian like a second founder by creating this thirteenth tribe, Hadrianis, in his honor.
88 He was initiated into the Mysteries before he was even an Emperor and continued to attend the Eleusinian Mysteries every time he visited Greece.
89 Benjamin, “Altars,” 58.
90 Karivieri, “Just One of the Boys,” 42.
91 Oliver, “The Athens of Hadrian,” 125
Panathenaic games in the city—placing Athens on par with great athletic centers. Moreover, the Panathenaia was originally founded by Theseus, instituted and perfected by Peisistratus, and then resurrected with Hadrian. He was able to utilize this association for his popularity and self-promotion, thus inheriting the legacy of ancient, classical and long established local Greeks. With the Panhellenion, Hadrian could do the same for religious centers across the Greek world and raised Athens’s status in the Greek-speaking world and created a cultural capital in the Roman Empire.

The foundation of the Panhellenion is a member of a series of interventions by Hadrian in the Greek world and his reign marked a pivotal moment in Greece’s relationship with Rome. The Panhellenion works as an overlap between cultural and political entity and ushers in a Greek renaissance in the Roman Empire. The presence of Panhellenic delegates enhanced Athens’s cosmopolitan nature and renovated the city to a showcase of Greek culture. Educated Greeks and Romans shared a new cultural environment as Athens grew to become a second capitol of the empire. Roman careers became more available to determined Greeks and Roman attitudes towards Greeks could be characterized by an admiration for Greek heritage and ancestry. Most of all, the Panhellenic League unifies the Roman Empire and allows for the eastern provinces to create a union with Roman administration. The delegates of the Panhellenic league provided communication between the many Greek poleis and Rome and allowed for individual voices to represent the many.

Hadrian’s deme also included the Panhellenion, where the delegates of the eastern half of the Roman Empire could gather to make administrative decisions. In establishing the Panhellenic League, Hadrian brought honor back to Athens. The seat of the Panhellenion was the center of a revived Greek world and Hadrian made Athens once again a leading Greek city. This league was

[92 Spawforth and Walker “Panhellenion,” 78]

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also intrinsically connected to the Olympeion, being founded on the same day. In respect for the
cult of Olympeion Zeus, Hadrian had another sanctuary built, a Pantheon in Athens, to serve as
the center of the Panhellenion and its associated cult activities. Not only does this show respect
for the old traditions of the Olympeion sanctuary but also that he likely hesitated to establish his
own imperial cult within the Olympeion’s temenos. Still, cities from all over the Greek world
placed statues of Hadrian Olympios within the temenos of the Olympeion sanctuary.
Additionally, there are no physical references, such as inscriptions or epigraphs, to a Hadrian
Panhellenios yet the epithet Olympios is so famed. It could be possible that the Pantheon for the
Panhellenic League was not completed until some years later and the Olympeion precinct served
as a temporary place for the League. Pausanias mentions in his Descriptions that Hadrian
constructed a sanctuary common to all gods.93 This could vaguely refer to the institution of the
Panhellenic League that Hadrian established, or that by that time a physical building did exist to
serve the functions of the Panhellenion. Zeus Olympios acted as the deity for the Panhellenic
League, so it would have made sense for the Olympeion to serve as a place until the Pantheon or
a Panhellenic Sanctuary was established. The detail and organization in the Panhellenic League’s
early years are not very well known. The foundation of the Panhellenion coincided with the
dedication of the Olympeion, so the spectacular commencement these two events at the same
time indicates that they are interrelated or have some connection.

Hadrian’s personal involvement with the cities of the Roman Empire reflects how
intrinsic it was for Hadrian to perpetuate and hold together the Roman Empire itself. The
Panhellenic League of Hadrian focused the attention of the Greek and Roman world on the cults

93 Pausanias, Description of Greece, I.18.9.
of the east, especially at Eleusis, and this allowed Athens to exploit its ties to sanctuaries. Emperor Hadrian showed a great regard for the city of Athens and its associated cults beyond just his personal association as an initiated. After creating the Panhellenion his relationship with the sanctuary at Eleusis grew to be just as elaborate and idealistic as his reign is characterized. The Panhellenion was founded in cooperation between the Emperor and Greeks, founded during Hadrian’s third visit to the city, and essentially took over aspects of finance and administration in the eastern Mediterranean—including cult and sanctuary finances. The Panhellenic league consisted of Greek poleis that sent delegates to Athens. Membership was based on Greek ancestry, a good history of relations with Rome, and benefactions from Hadrian. Evidence has been identified for about twenty-eight member cities in Achaia, Asia, Cyrene, and Crete. Hadrian’s embellishment of Athens was the cornerstone of his intentions for the provinces and his involvement, which in a way had a deliberate impact on the religious life of the provinces. Hadrian utilized architecture in Athens for his own imperial purposes and to strengthen his own imperial policy. The Temple of Olympeion Zeus served in a part as a center for the Panhellenion and the League itself established to promote loyalty to Rome in the Greek east, as well as serve the imperial cult of Hadrian.

The Temple of Olympeion Zeus at Athens had many different incarnations, renovations, and transformations in its future. After the Herulian invasion in AD 267 the Olympeion suffered serious damage and was deserted. Originally there stood 104 Corinthian columns, arranged in two rows of twenty each on the long sides and triple rows of eight on the shorter ends. During the reign of Emperor Valerian (AD 253-260) the destruction of the Olympeion began to supply

95 Kelly, “Identity and Cult,” 125.
97 Karivieri, “Just One of the Boys,” 41.
stone for a new city wall. The stone was taken from the precinct wall but the temple itself survived fully for another two or three centuries. A chapel to St. John was installed in the Olympeion\textsuperscript{98} and then an early Christian basilica was built near the propylon of the Olympeion in the 5\textsuperscript{th} or 6\textsuperscript{th} century with architectural features from the temple, such as ceiling coffers built into its walls. The temple was then used to quarry marble for the manufacture of lime. In Turkish times it was transformed into a simple open-air mosque. By 1436 only twenty-one of its original columns remained from the 104, as reported by Cyiacus of Ancona.\textsuperscript{99} In April 1759, the Turkish Governor of Athens Tzisdarakis blew up one column to provide lime for the construction of a mosque.\textsuperscript{100} One more fell during a fierce storm in 1852, and its column drums are still stacked on the ground where it fell. The Olympeion’s identity wasn’t fully revealed until the work of Stuart and Revett and Penrose in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century. Today only 15 of the original peristyle columns still stand and yet the Temple to Olympeion Zeus still amazes visitors, casting a shadow of the temple’s long-standing magnificence.

\textsuperscript{98} Wycherley, “Olympeion at Athens,” 173.
\textsuperscript{99} Wycherley, “Olympeion at Athens,” 174. Cyiacus calls it the Palace of Hadrian. Calling the temple the Palace of Hadrian is somewhat ironic and not entirely a misnomer considering the temple was in a sense a residence for a divinized emperor just as much as it was Zeus.
\textsuperscript{100} Tzisdarakis Mosque in Monastiraki Square
Figure 46: Fallen column at the Olympeion. From west. Photo by M. Neville, 2015.
The Digital Reconstruction

The digital reconstruction of the Temple of Olympeion Zeus was both simple and challenging. It was simple in design and the architecture and dimensions were capable of understanding. Detailed research and measuring had also already been studied by previous scholars. It was challenging because the gigantic size and the incredible number of Corinthian columns. Even with making the columns into a component that could essentially be copied and pasted as many times as needed, the detail of the Corinthian columns and the number of columns slowed my computer to a frustrating pace. Every moment that the computer program was not freezing was a golden opportunity to keep working forward as accurately as possible. Making the columns into a component meant that the computer didn’t have to think of every intricate detail in the fluting, capitol, and other details but rather could imagine them as one single, non-complex object. In order to preserve computer-processing power, I divided the temple into separate components that aligned and matched when put together properly. The first component included the foundations, steps and stylobate and also all 104 columns. This component was the most difficult because of not only the number of columns but also the importance of correct alignment throughout the structure. The next component included the architrave, interior of the temple, Zeus’s throne, and surrounding temenos circuit wall. Zeus is not present in this digital reconstruction because the focus of this project was to further understand architecture and use of space, but a large golden throne is present for the god to seat himself. The final component included the propylon, roof, and some minor decoration. The next steps in this project would be
to include more columns along the inside perimeter of the *temenos* and decorate the surrounding courtyard with sculptures and portraits.
Conclusion

The great days of Roman Athens began with Hadrian. The Emperor Hadrian had a real desire to sponsor things that complemented the needs of a city’s cultural traditions. His interactions with cities show respect for the renewal, preservation, and promotion of a city’s glorious and unique history. Genuine piety in the worship of the older gods still existed in Athens and throughout Hellas. Hadrian worked to foster and establish old religious cults and create a lasting atmosphere of prosperity and community.\textsuperscript{101} Even though the evidence only supports the positive and successful actions, the many sources as a whole proves “Hadrian’s municipal activity was predominantly positive. His benefactions, and their fame, decidedly helped to persuade Rome’s provincials to cooperate with ruling power.”\textsuperscript{102} Hadrian completed the Temple of Olympeion Zeus in connection with the founding of the Panhellenic League. The dedication ceremony was grandiose and inspiring: the sophist Polemo delivered an address at the dedication, at Hadrian’s request, and Hadrian also provided the temple with the colossal statue of Zeus and a snake from India.\textsuperscript{103} Hadrian wished to centralize Greece and the eastern Mediterranean at Athens and unite those poleis under Rome. Hadrian hoped to foster a Roman vision of ‘old-Greece’ but also make an effort to gain control and legitimize authority in that region of the Roman Empire. In this way, the Panhellenion and Olympeion are both a cultural and political entity. In order for the Panhellenic League to function properly, its foundation and operation had to be a joint effort between both Rome and the people of Hellas. This way, the League could not take away any cultural agency from the associated poleis.

\textsuperscript{102} Boatwright, \textit{Hadrian and the Cities}, 6.
\textsuperscript{103} Kelly, “Identity and Cult,” 126.
In the same year, the Library of Hadrian also had been completed and the building functioned as more than just a library where books would be held but also as a social and cultural center. As a great public square, the structure pays homage to Athens’s place as the intellectual and cultural capitol of the Greek-speaking world. The library pairs well with the monumental arch erected by the people of Athens in Emperor Hadrian’s honor. Hadrian established Athens as the center of the Greco-Roman world through abundant and detailed building projects, aiming to bring Athens to a new and lasting age of splendor and pride. The Library of Hadrian, Hadrian’s Arch, and the Temple of Olympeion Zeus are all three monuments that commemorate Emperor Hadrian and his works renovating Athens permanently preserving the city’s cultural heritage.
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