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Victorious Athena: The Cult and The Temple of Athena Nike

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by
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Dedicated to the late Ralph Waynard Lowe. Thank you for introducing me to Greece. Peculiar travel suggestions are like dancing lessons from God.
Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Chapter One: The Bronze Age 9

Chapter Two: The Archaic Age 21

Chapter Three: The Classical Age 38

Conclusion 53

Bibliography 56

Figures

Index
Introduction

The ancient Acropolis in Athens, Greece, is home to a temple (τέμενος) or temenos dedicated to Άπτερος Νική, Apteros Nike, or Athena Nike. (Figs. 1 & 2) Άπτερος Νικί, more precisely, translates to “Wingless Victory” in English and comes from Pausanias in his Description of Greece written in c. 150 AD.¹ Pausanias approaches the temple from the steep and sacred route that leads to the citadel, “On the right-hand side of the Propylaea is the temple of the Wingless Victory.” Of the four buildings on the sacred hill, the Temple of Athena Nike is the smallest. It is slight but beautiful, as if the goddess of Victory had lit upon the top of the Acropolis announcing the triumph of the goddess Athena. The Classical temple, built in Athen’s “Golden Age” and dated to c. 420 BC, sits above a Bronze Age sanctuary from c.1300 BC which had a ritual function beginning in that period. From the Bronze Age forward, Athenians reject change in favor of continuity of dedication, as reflected by the rebuilding of a cult site on the bastion.² Following a series of modern restorations, the Classical temple now stands prominently on the southwest bastion of the Acropolis. Because of the presence of this reconstruction, the fifth-century temple limits contemporary impression to a vision of Greece’s golden age, obscuring the earlier archaeological evidence.

¹ Pausanias, Pausanias Description of Greece, translated & edited by W.S. Jones, H. Ormerod, & R.E.Wycherley, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1935), 111. Pausanias originates the phrase “Wingless Victory” in his description of the Acropolis citadel. He discusses the wingless Nike and how the Athenians rid her of wings so that she could not fly away from Athens. The Athenians ensured that Nike would forever grace Athens with victory.
This project explores the evolution of the dedication, architecture, art, and, where possible, ritual on the southwestern bastion. The data here presented divides into three temporal layers, the Bronze, Archaic, and Classical Ages, corresponding to Chapters One, Two, and Three. This chronological study suggests that the site has been sanctified since the Bronze Age to a protecting deity, but not necessarily specifically Nike.

The first Chapter on the Bronze Age, describes the traces of Mycenaean ritual worship on the site and compares them to the more substantial evidence surviving at other Bronze Age citadels, Mycenae, Tiryns, and Pylos. Next, this chapter follows the same methodology for the figurines excavated on the southwest bastion. I describe the Athenian type then compare it to other contemporary examples. With the data thus defined, I speculate on the function and dedication of the Bronze Age shrine. Chapter I relies heavily on the 1948 excavation report by Nikolaos Balanos and other secondary texts by Ira S. Mark, George Oikonomos, and J.A. Bundgaard. Oikonomos and Bundgaard form their own theories based upon Balanos’ data on the origin of the cult and its relationship to the architecture uncovered on the bastion. Mark, Oikonomos, and Bundgard refer back to Balanos’ excavation conducted between 1935-1940. My analyses, especially of votive figurines, question their confidence that the cult always belonged to Nike.

Chapter II builds on the work by Ira S. Mark and his comprehensive chronology of the Archaic sanctuary to decipher the emerging definition of both the goddess Nike and her cult on

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the Acropolis. Chapter II analyzes the *Theogony* by Hesiod and incorporates secondary sources that include a wide array of articles, as there is no one text that explicitly concerns the Archaic Temple of Athena Nike alone. Contemporary to the evolution on the southwestern bastion, the Archaic period is the first period that Nike is depicted in vase painting. Due to this, the surviving vases (included in the appendix) and one sculpture also serve as primary sources supplementing Hesiod in defining the goddess. The three most pertinent articles for my work are “The Delian Nike and the Search for Chian Sculpture” by Kenneth Sheedy, “Nike and Athena Nike” by E.E. Sikes, and “Athena and the Early Acropolis” by R.J. Hopper.4

Finally, in Chapter III a wealth of primary material survives, including the temple by Kallikrates and its parapet frieze by unknown artists. Interpretation of this material to define the cult and ritual in fifth-century Athens is integrated with Ira S. Mark’s chronology and the primary text, *The Victory Poems* by Bacchylides. Chapter III additionally refers to secondary source, *Athens: A Portrait of the City in its Golden Age* by Christian Meier. Meier provides historical context missing from Mark. This chapter also explores the “wingless” nature of Athena Nike.

Throughout the project, the archeology suggests a dialogue between mythological narrative and religious ritual on the Athena Nike bastion. Therefor, it is important to understand the history of the excavation. Nikolaos Balanos (1869-1943) surveyed the site from 1935 to 1939. He published his findings in the 1948 *Archaiologike Ephemeris*, where he loosely argued that the small figurines which he discovered within the southeast repository of the Mycenaean

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layer likely indicated cult ritual.⁵ (Fig. 3) Though, Balanos does not exactly ascribe a date to the figurines, once calling the eschara or ground altar “Archaic,” which Mark suggests is a mistake, as it is not consistent with Balanos’ vague writing.⁶ Additionally, Balanos discovered bones and fragments of ancient pottery in the repository, which he ultimately failed to record or date. To a large degree, later excavations of Layer I substantiate his argument that there was Bronze Age religious activity on the site.⁷ Unfortunately, Balanos’ figurines are now lost along with several other Bronze Age artifacts that he found on the site. The idols disappeared amidst mysterious circumstances under Balanos, limiting our understanding of the site’s religious objects and lessening the validity of Balanos’ work. Despite his destructive and sloppy excavation, Balanos’ thesis, that the site was in use by the Bronze Age, remains agreed upon by the scholars discussed in the following paragraph.

The Sanctuary of Athena Nike in Athens: Architectural Stages and Chronology edited by I.S. Mark, contains a useful chronology by Mark and collects reviews of Balanos’ 1940 excavation. Mark constructs his chronology of the Nike cult’s history on the bastion by tracking the archeological remains. He divides his evidence into multiple excavation layers. I will follow this format and refer to the Mycenaean layer as “Layer I”, the Archaic as “Layer II”, and the

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⁵ Ira S. Mark, The Sanctuary of Athena Nike in Athens: Architectural stages and chronology, (Athens: The American School of Classical Studies, 1993), 160. Mark provides a thorough account of Balanos’ excavation accompanied by photographs and plans from his excavation in 1940. He includes several translations from Balanos’ report in the Archaiologike Ephemeris which will be referred to in my analysis.

⁶ Mark, 1993, 4. Mark questions Balanos’ unclear date of the figurines and disputes Oikonomos’ prehistoric date in The Sanctuary of Athena Nike in Athens: Architectural stages and chronology. Mark has questioned Balanos’ blurred descriptions and dates of the sanctuary, figurines, pottery fragments, and bones, which Iakovidis and all others now consider to be from the Bronze Age.

Classical as “Layer III”. Mark accepts that the figurines found in layer I are Mycenaean, thereby defining the site as sanctified as early as the Bronze Age. He, then, concludes that the statuettes are idols belonging to an early cult of Nike. Mark’s chronology is invaluable to the study of the Nike site and is referred extensively in my project.

Mark’s chronology, articles by George Oikonomos and J.A. Bundgard, both experts on the Nike site, summarize and study Balanos’ original report. Oikonomos enumerates the errors made by Balanos and Mark. Oikonomos suggests a prehistoric date of the figurines, giving an early date to the eschara and calling it evidence for a prehistoric conception of the cult. Balanos’ conclusions never precisely ascribed an explicit date to the figures. His published findings were brief summaries of the project, rarely discussing chronology, even naming the naiskos, “earlier structure.” My visual comparison of the figurines with other from other Bronze Age sites confirms Mark’s interpretation of them as from the Bronze Age.

Bundgard’s account significantly diverges from Oikonomos’ both in Mark and in his book. In his book, Parthenon and the Mycenaean City on the Heights, Bundgard presents a plan of the Bronze Age layer of the eastern side of the bastion which locates the Mycenaean sanctuary on the western side of the bastion and suggests it was dedicated to the goddess Nike. Unlike Oikonomos, Bundgard asserts that the cult of Nike was founded on the outcropping during the Bronze Age. His account is unique because it centers around his own restoration project, rather than the cult objects found in the repository by Balanos. My argument in Chapter

8 Mark, 1993, 4.
11 Bundgard, 1976, 43.
One accepts Bundgard’s restoration and considers it with the cult objects unearthed by Balanos but now accepted as Bronze Age.

Balanos also uncovered the Archaic remains. The Archaic Temple of Athena Nike was decimated and lost to us somewhere between the latter half of the sixth-century and the early fifth-century. During this period, the “lid” of the repository where Balanos found the figurines was removed, likely on account of the floor laid for the fifth-century amphiprostyle temple or, perhaps, during the later construction of a Turkish powder crypt. Although it is uncertain, a more valuable offering may have been removed from the site, leaving behind the figurines and bones discovered by Balanos. Like the Bronze Age, the Archaic excavations are confusing. During the Archaic period, covered in Chapter Two, the site definitively becomes associated with Nike. The personification of Nike, similarly to the southwest bastion, has undergone a series of reconfigurations over the course of Greek history. Chapter Two opens with the earliest surviving verbal and visual references to the goddess. Archaic pottery and sculpture portrays Nike with attributes including wings, a wreath, a palm branch, a Hermes staff, or a trophy. The earliest naming of the goddess occurs in Hesiod’s *Theogony*, written in c. 700 BC. After an analysis of Hesiod’s description (and a supplementary article by Daniel R. Blickman), it is clear that Nike was already associated with strength and power during the Archaic period, but she is not explicitly described as winged in Hesiod.¹²

The third chapter explores primary textural sources, such as *Description of Greece* by Pausanias, suggest that in Athens, after the Archaic period, Nike was not merely a Victory goddess, but an extension of Athena herself represented without wings, because the Athenians

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worried she might fly away and leave the city. The Classical temple, in fact, is dedicated to an aspect of Athena. (Athena Nike), as specified in an epithet which dates from an Archaic inscription found on an altar near the repository. Pausanias’ description speaks to the distinctive representation of Nike on the Acropolis compared to other portrayals of her with more generic Victory attributes. His account expresses that on the Acropolis Nike is virtually impossible to separate from her patron goddess Athena. This final chapter considers how the distinction is represented in architecture, sculpture, or ritual.

The ruins and relics from the Bronze, Archaic, and Classical Age catalog the site’s evolution as a religious space and its connection to Nike. This project explores how the three archaeological layers reflect shifts in the cult throughout the millennia and how they came to inform the site. The plans of the archaeological layers identify notable similarities and differences between the Bronze, Archaic, and Classical sanctuaries. Each layer reflects historic and ritual shifts and how they inform the architectural and artistic choices in one sanctuary which evolved over time. To the extent it is possible, I also tried to study the influence of religious procession on the design of the religious precinct.

My study of ancient Greek art and architecture first began five years ago when I travelled to Greece with Ralph Lowe, professor at Dunn School. To improve our understanding of the ancient world, Mr. Lowe a small group of students around the ruins of Greece for a summer. At sixteen years old, I was unaware of the influence that Greece would later have on my academic and personal interests. Since then, I have returned to Greece twice, Spring 2017 and Fall 2018, to deepen my knowledge. This thesis took form during my second trip to Greece, Spring 2017

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13 Pausanias, 1993, 257.
when I spent a semester working with Tassos Tanoulas, the archaeologist in charge of the Preservation of the Propylaea of the Acropolis in Athens. Under the guidance of Dr. Tanoulas, I went into all five of the Classical structures on the Acropolis to examine the architectural remains. My project ultimately came to life after Dr. Tanoulas' lecture on the Temple of Athena Nike. With special permission from the Acropolis Restoration Service team, Dr. Tanoulas led us beneath the Classical Temple of Athena Nike into Layers I and II. He led an extensive two-day examination of the Bronze and Archaic layers, concluding his lesson as we sat upon the crepidoma, or the three level platform that seats the Classical Temple of Athena Nike. The opportunity to travel through the buildings and layers of the Acropolis complex is rare. With this project, I intend to build on these profound experiences. I thank Dr. Tanoulas for working with me on the Acropolis and assisting me from afar as I write my thesis. I also thank my advisor Diana DePardo-Minsky for her guidance and commitment to my success, and my other board members Rob Cioffi, Jay Elliott, and Ittai Weinryb for their time and advice.
Chapter One: The Bronze Age

“The nature of religion in mainland Bronze Age Greece remains largely obscure, although the usual view is that the Mycenaeans worshipped primarily the male-dominated pantheon traditionally associated with the idea of an Indo-European warrior culture. The names of numerous deities known from later Greek religion occur in the Linear B tablets, such as Hera, Zeus, Poseidon, and Dionysus, as well as the names of divinities unknown in later times. The name or title potnia, referring to a female divinity as “mistress” or “ruler,” is very common in the tablets, emphasizing the importance of goddesses in Bronze Age religion.”

- Thomas R. Martin

Underneath the glorious Classical Temple of Athena Nike survive earlier traditions on the Acropolis. This chapter defines the architectural and sculptural remains from the earliest Bronze Age level while contextualizing them within the more complete data from other Mycenaean citadels. No Attic inscriptions or texts survive from this time. My analysis coincides to current scholarship to suggest that the material does not provide sufficient evidence to identify the cult but does shed some light on Bronze Age ritual in Athens.

During Greece’s Bronze Age (c. 3000 BC - c. 1300 BC), over eight hundred years prior to Periclean Athens, a Mycenaean citadel occupied the Acropolis hill. The earliest known remains

16 Martin, 1996, 40. The first Mycenaean pioneers to settle on the Acropolis modeled their architecture after that in Mycenae. The precise method by which the Mycenaeans eventually travelled to Athens is unknown. Though, it may have been by ship, as transportation technology
on the site document the arrival of Mycenaean tribes around c. 1300 BC.\textsuperscript{17} This paper accepts the use of the term “Bronze Age layer” to describe the earliest known precinct on the site.\textsuperscript{18} Though fragmentary, the remains of the Mycenaean fortifications on the Acropolis wrap around the perimeter at the top of the hill. (Fig. 4) In addition to this wall, a wealth of ruins from a Mycenaean sanctuary survive on the southwest side of the mountain, outside of the Bronze Age wall and beneath the Classical Temple of Athena Nike. The southwest bastion, which supports the Temple of Athena Nike, contains the most intact Bronze Age remains. Layer I, or the Mycenaean layer, consists of a wall built of enormous, jagged blocks called Cyclopean masonry.\textsuperscript{19} The Cyclopean masonry seen on the fortification walls of Mycenaean citadels are unique to Bronze Age Greece.

Within the Bronze Age walls of Layer I of the Temple of Athena Nike survive foundations for a Mycenaean sanctuary composed of various halls and rooms, one of which contained votive figurines.\textsuperscript{20} (Fig. 5) After describing these finds and comparing them to the major Bronze Age excavations at Mycenae, Pylos, and Tiryns, this chapter analyzes this was rapidly advancing during the Bronze Age. It is thought that professional Mycenaeans warriors were also experts of seafare. The recorded Mycenaean colonies scattered throughout the coast of the Mediterranean further confirm that the culture travelled via watercraft.


\textsuperscript{18} William Biers, \textit{The Archeology of Greece}, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 63. The Mycenaean remains on the Acropolis are dated to shortly after the transition from prehistory to the first documented language in mainland Greece, referred to as Linear B which was found in Mycenae dates to c. 1200- 1500 BC.

\textsuperscript{19} Biers, 1996, 67. Later Greeks fantasized that the original walls and the fortifications found in Attica and other Mycenaean settlements are built by the Cyclops, a mythical beast strong enough to hoist the massive rocks.

architecture and art to argue that, while a cult appeared at the site as early as the Bronze Age, its dedication cannot be determined even though others have suggested devotion to Nike. 

Conclusions require supplementing the scant Athenian finds to those at better preserved Bronze Age citadels.

The overwhelming uniformity between the plans of the Bronze Age palaces in Mycenae, Pylos, and Tiryns suggests that Athens would follow suit and that there was once a megaron also on the Acropolis. (Fig. 6, 6b, 6c) Following the common traits of Mycenaean citadels, this megaron would have been far removed from the southwest bastion. In the Bronze Age, cult spaces usually stand away from royal structures and occupy their own sanctified space. In Mycenae, the cult center originally sat outside the propylaion, or entrance gate, as is the case with the so-called Nike site on the Acropolis. Both sites, Mycenae and Athens, were later included inside the city walls. The cult space of the citadel at Mycenae, as with Athens, sits strategically close to the entrance so that the deity greets any visitor approaching the site.

In Athens, under the Classical Temple of Athena Nike, the Mycenaean ruins most like define a shrine outside the walls in Mycenae. (Fig. 7) Directly beneath the marble floor of the fifth-century, Bronze Age blocks, dating to roughly c. 1200 BC, surround a hollowed out space interpreted as a Mycenaean precinct. The Cyclopean blocks suggest a walled, projecting outcrop that defined the southwest corner of the citadel with the porous stone commonly used by

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22 Biers, 1972, 69.  
23 Biers, 1972, 70.  
25 Mark, 1993, 5. Balanos discovered the Bronze Age repository while excavating the Archaic ναïσκος, meaning naiskos or small temple, which extended down into Layer I.
Mycenaean culture to create fortifications.  

(Fig. 8) Though largely destroyed, the remains of this wall resemble the corbeling used in the Lion Gate at Mycenae. (Fig. 9) It is composed of rocks up to eight meters thick and carved into ashlar blocks. Mycenaean culture specialized in megalith construction and often used both cyclopean and ashlar masonry for large-scale entrances such as the Lion Gate.  

Today, the Athenian Bronze Age remains survive only as a small section of a fortification wall that hugs the perimeter of the Acropolis complex. As noted, a hollowed out stone repository, measuring approximately 1.08 meters on the front or east side (width), and .96 meters (depth) on the perpendicular side, with a height of about .28-.41 meters.  

(Fig. 3, 3b, & 11) It is damaged on two of the four sides.  

The Mycenaeans excelled at the construction of fortifications and palaces.  

The Cyclopean fortifications remain on the Acropolis closely follows the style of the Lion Gate and Postern Gate at Mycenae.  

As a war culture, the Mycenaeans valued protection and domination. The Mycenaeans used elevated, fortified citadels to avoid attack from foreigners. The construction of their expansive fortification walls at both Mycenae and Athens, in effect, provided them with safety. The Mycenaeans intricately designed their infrastructure to ensure not only their safety, but also to provide sanctified spaces where deities could further assure their wellbeing.

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26 Mark, 1993, 12.
27 Biers, 1972, 68.
29 Mark, 1993, 22. This damage to the repository probably occurred with the construction of the Archaic naikos. (Fig. 5) Balanos restored the damage. (Fig. 10)
30 Mee, Spawforth, 2001, 10.
31 Mark, 1993, 15.
32 Biers, 1996, 70.
The image in fig. 11 captures a view of the descent into the Bronze Age layer under the Classical Temple of Nike on the modern Athenian Acropolis complex. Moving westward, massive blocks measure approximately .50-1 meters in height and define the Mycenaean fortification. Turning towards the left, the so-called Mycenaean “Throne Room,” contains a repository. (Fig. 5) This slightly rectangular room with axially symmetrical flanking corridors resembles the megarons found at Mycenae, Pylos, and Tiryns thus gaining the name “Throne Room.” (Fig. 5 & 12) However, a Bronze Age megaron is always located on the central axis of citadels, so, in light of this, the bastion on the Acropolis would not have house a throne room. Rather the site echoes Mycenae's sanctuary.

There was no Bronze Age monumental religious architecture, instead these citadels include a series of small spaces, similar to the so-called Throne Room with its repository. These small precincts survive in all four of the main Mycenaean citadels, if the southwest bastion of the Acropolis is included. All are removed from the main citadel with its central megaron. The locations of the Bronze Age sanctified spaces suggests the possibility of ritual processions, beginning in the symmetric halls of the megaron and moving downhill towards the sanctuaries or visa versa bearing the votives in supplication or thanks. The small repository and surrounding space in Layer I echoes the religious sanctuaries at the Bronze Age citadels not only at Mycenae,

33 Mark, 1993, 16.
35 Biers, 1996, 69; Mee, Spawforth, 2001, 9. Different from later Greek architecture, the megaron was built in honor of a king rather than a god. 
but also at Pylos, and Tiryns.\textsuperscript{38} The similarities to Athens in the sanctuaries at Mycenae, Pylos, and Tiryns include urban location, dimension, and design.\textsuperscript{39} All stand near city gates with western sides measuring roughly 9.7 meters in length, their perpendicular sides 16.0 meters, and 3.8 meters across the northern side, which is only partially exposed.

Within the largest corridor of the excavated walls in Layer I, the repository, housed terracotta figurines related in form to idols found at the other Bronze Age sites. Below the center of the base, which is also known as the repository, three cavities create three levels. The upper cavity, a band of stones, or the “collar,” measures .54 m in width, and .53 m front to back).\textsuperscript{40} (Fig. 10) The collar is badly damaged with a crack in the rear and missing pieces off. The width, referring to its side, measures .10 m from the right corner. The middle layer of the cavity measures .095 meters in depth, with a bottom of approximately .08 to .09 meters. Because of the later superstructures, modern archaeologists cannot reconstruct, fully excavate, or fully define the Bronze Age repository.\textsuperscript{41}

The cult centre of Mycenae sits southeast and outside of the Cyclopean Lion Gate and beyond Grave Circle A, which once held the bones of nineteen humans.\textsuperscript{42} Northeast of the cult

\textsuperscript{38} James C. Wright, 1994. “The Mycenaean Entrance System at the West End of the Akropolis of Athens,” \textit{Hesperia} 63: 323-360. This contemporary comparative material confirms that the southwest bastion is not a megaron but rather a sanctuary.


\textsuperscript{40} Mark, 1993, 20.

\textsuperscript{41} Mark, 1993, 22.

\textsuperscript{42} D.F. Easton, \textit{Heinrich Schliemann: Hero or Fraud?}: The Classical World 91, no.5, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1998), 335-343. The excavation techniques used by Schliemann in his excavations at Mycenae and Troy are heavily debated. Though his original career in business discredits his supposed understanding archeology, Schliemann did provide significant documentation of his technique and finds, most notably at the “Treasure of Priam” at Troy.
centre is the central part of the citadel which contains the palace with its court and megaron. (Fig. 6) Tiryns and Pylos, too, include a center for cult worship near grave circles but far from the throne room megaron located at the apex of the hill. The Mycenaean cult center looks out upon the Argos plain. At both Mycenae and the Acropolis, the jagged rocks that support the citadels form a natural fortification, presenting the ideal lookouts for enemies below. The hills tower over enemy land, asserting victory. In view of this, a dedication to a victory deity would be rational if evidence ever emerges to support this likelihood.

The placement of the cult site is of profound ritual importance. The cult centre at Mycenae occupies an incline that begins at and follows Grave Circle A and eventually leads up to the megaron. Therefore, located between the dead and living, it speaks to the relationship between the afterlife and cult ritual. While it sits close to the entrance gate, the cult centre is elevated on a slope that overlooks the surrounding plain. The position of the cult centre recalls that of the Nike bastion. Mycenaean architecture is consistent between sites and most often follows the plan of the citadel at Mycenae. In both Mycenae and Athens, the sanctuaries from the thirteenth-century BC have a view and are oriented to the southwest, away from the megaron. Additionally, both ritual sites appear near the entrance to the citadel, forcing all to pass them. The centre at Mycenae is now covered by a roof that encases a variety of religious shrines and

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43 Oliver T.P.K. Dickinson, *Schliemann’s contribution to Bronze Age Archeology: Was he really “the father of Mycenaean Archeology?”*, (Athens, Aegeus Society for Aegean Prehistory, 1977), 391-400. At Mycenae and Tiryns, Schliemann primarily concerned himself with the supposed royal burials sites and their treasures. As for the rest of the infrastructure, Schliemann uncovered a significant body of it but failed to make much meaning of his discoveries. Rather, he left it to other archaeologists such as Chrestos Tsountas, who began digging at Mycenae in 1880, only two years after Schliemann completed his excavation.

44 Mee, Spawforth, 2011, 47, 178, 199, 238. Refer to the plans of each citadel in Figs, 4, 4b, and 4c for comparative purposes.
terracotta idols.\textsuperscript{45} Therefore, the urban location of the Bronze Age Acropolis sanctuary probably follows the placement of the cult centre at Mycenae, and, furthermore, they both house several terracotta figurines.

The figurines from the repository play an important role in suggesting a cult function for the site.\textsuperscript{46} The terracotta figurines found in Layer I closely reflect those from the cult center south of Grave Circle A at Mycenae.\textsuperscript{47} (Fig. 13). The Athenian figures measure 4-10 centimeters tall. (Fig. 3) They represent standing female figures with slightly flared skirts that taper at the waist. The artists pinched their cheeks softly inward, creating a cylindrical face that supports a headdress, a common attribute of female figures. Their outstretched arms might evoke wings, but this interpretation seems unlikely. Their floor length dress indicates their gender and possible status as a priestess or goddess. This attire may have been adopted by Mycenaeans from the Minoan culture who regularly clothed female idols in floor length dresses.\textsuperscript{48} These extended arms animate the torso making it ready to interact with space, perhaps to warn citizens of approaching danger. The openness of the idols’ torsos speak to the agency of these figures and their ability to move outside the traditional realm of women who, after the Bronze Age, were commonly

\textsuperscript{45} Mee, Spawforth, 2001, 182. 
\textsuperscript{46} Mark, 1993, 23; The figurines discovered within the altar are recognized as early idols dedicated to a Victory goddess. The placement of the statues raises questions regarding their original position. The Turkish crypt stage suggests that they may have been moved during the Greco-Persian wars in 1897. 
\textsuperscript{47} Mee, Spawforth, 2001, 183. 
\textsuperscript{48} Biers, 1996, 66; Identified by Arthur Evans as a “Minoan Snake Goddess,” she wears a floor length dress and headdress. Her arms stretch out, and she interacts with space. She recalls the form of Mycenaean idols found across the peloponnese and on the Acropolis. With the rise of Mycenaean culture, the Minoans were likely dominated by the Mycenaeans. This, in turn, would explain much of the influence that Minoan culture had on Mycenaean.
confined to the home. This type of pose reoccurs in other Bronze Age art, such as in fig. 14 and suggests a certain empowerment, indicating divinity, perhaps. These Bronze Age figurines, including those from the Acropolis, are not necessarily idols dedicated to a Victory goddess, yet, taken with the location of the shrine, their outstretched arms and their attire suggest that the spaces were sanctuaries dedicated to a protector or protectress. These female votives might imply the precursor to a cult of Nike, perhaps a guardian if not a victor.

Similar figurines from Mycenae, also of terracotta, survive from several shrines and also probably represent idols or votives. Though, the figurines from Mycenae are much larger than the ones uncovered in Athens, spanning from 29 to 60 centimeters tall, they are formally similar. The upper half of a 30 centimeter tall female idol from Mycenae shows facial features represented in black. (Fig. 13) Her arms splay in the same pose as the figures from the Acropolis. The idol’s relatively large size speaks to its date around c. 1600 BC when Mycenae assumed control over Greece and began to produce a range of votive figurines in different sizes. The head on fig. 14 curves at the top of the skull like those from the Acropolis. These symmetrical Mycenaean figurine represent iconic images that appear to look outward, perpetually engaging with the viewer of the deity. Despite their differences in scale, the Acropolis and Mycenaean figurines essentially assume the same pose, suggesting those found in Mycenae served as prototypes. (Fig 14) As is the case for the plans of their citadels, within the certain uniformity between all Mycenaean idols, each citadel has its own unique artist

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50 Biers, 1996, 89; A series of excavations of Mycenae, conducted by Lord William Taylor from 1947 to 1969; The discovery of the small terracotta figurines dates from c. 1400-1300 BC.
51 Biers, 1996, 90.
techniques. Figures found during the excavations at Pylos and Tiryns are similar to Mycenae and thus Athens, confirming this tendency to emulate.

The relationship between the figurines found in the diverse Bronze Age sanctuaries might speak to similar ritualistic activity. The Mycenaens that traveled to Athens may have felt it important to bring their votives along. The lack of greater archeological evidence or any textual source for Bronze Age religious practices makes theories of practice difficult, but repetition often indicates ritual. Though it is unclear whether the Mycenaean figurines represented deities, the continuity of representation across Bronze Age Greece indicates the importance of these figures to the Mycenaean culture. Therefore, from the Late Bronze Age forward, the Acropolis bastion served as a hub for some sort of cult activity. Even though the Bronze Age remains on the Acropolis establish a relationship between religious presence and architectural evolution, the specifics are lost because of overbuilding and questionable excavations. Nevertheless, a sufficient amount of evidence survives to suggest that ancient religious rituals spanned different citadels and probably connected shrines to these citadels during the Bronze Age. The Mycenaens, thus, appear to be the first Greeks to create religious spaces which required and directed religious processions between sanctuary to city.

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52 Wright, 2006, 13.
54 Martin, 1996, 40; The nature of religion on the Mainland during the Bronze Age is ambiguous. However, some of the inscriptions in Linear B translate to the names of deities worshipped by later Greeks. Hera, Zeus, Poseidon, and Dionysus. Additionally, the term potnia, translated to “mistress” or “ruler,” appears numerous times on the tablets. This suggests that the mainland Mycenaens worshipped some sort of goddess. The repetition of the vague title suggests that value was ascribed to this specific goddess or, perhaps, a variety of goddesses.
55 Bernard C. Dietrich, Uniformity and Change in Minoan and Mycenaean Religion (Kernos [Online], 1993), 6; The most intact Mycenaean frescoes were uncovered at Pylos and show ritual procession. These Mycenaean religious processions are depicted as ordered and travelling,
Layer I of the southwest bastion reveals meaningful architectural choices made by the Athenians during the Bronze Age. They chose to situate a sacred space, likely dedicated to a protecting goddess, atop a steep bastion. As if asking a higher power to watch over the city and protect it from intruders. This sighting announced cultural connection to Mycenae. Though the widely-known winged Nike probably emerges only in the seventh-century, the archeological finds in Layer I suggest the roots of the enduring, shared mythology of ancient Greece were planted in the Bronze Age. Representations of activated women, including those found on the Acropolis, set the stage for the goddess’ cult and image as represented by later Greeks.

The site’s indications of worship speaks to the fundamental role played by this cult in the earliest religious rituals documented in ancient Athens. As on the Acropolis, the sanctuary at Mycenae would have maintained the same dedication to a specific deity over time. In each layer of the Temple of Athena Nike, the remains suggest that the space was to be used exclusively for ritual worship and that it maintained in the Archaic and Classical periods, an identity linked to the Bronze Age past.

The repository and votives speak to the site’s religious roots in the Bronze Age. A sanctuary and cult, perhaps of Nike, emerged before the Archaic period and was, therefore, built upon by later Greeks who preserved the sanctification of the site. The Mycenaeans might have

toward the cult centre. The frescos suggest that Mycenaean ritual procession are the first organized religious processions in Greece. While their predecessors, the Minoans, often integrated their sanctified spaces into the natural world, placing them by natural formations such as caves, in contrast, the Mycenaeans designated a specific area for cult worship and travelled there as a community in an ordered procession.

56 Martin, 1996, 37.
58 Michael B. Cosmopoulos, "Cult, Continuity, and Social Memory: Mycenaean Eleusis and the Transition to the Early Iron Age," American Journal of Archaeology 118, no. 3 (2014): 424; Cosmopoulos writes that the choice to rebuild upon a previously sanctified space is common in
first used the site as a post for watching for enemies below before, as the repository suggests, they dedicated the bastion to a guardian deity to aid in the watch. The placement of the sanctuary, removed from the central citadel, follows the traditional plan of a Mycenaean cult space. Eventually, the steep outcropping would represent an ideal place to position a Victory cult to bestow victory over the expanse of land below. The position and later use have contributed to the standard interpretation that the Mycenaeans used the corner as the earliest known cult of Nike, but no Bronze age materials actually substantiate this interpretation. The Archaic Age does.  

ancient Greek architecture. Often, once a place is sanctified, it remains so for generations. A Turkish powder crypt also complicates the excavation of the repository. The crypt was built within the Bronze Age layer which, in effect, may have compromised the original position of the repository.

59 J. A. Bundgard, *Parthenon and the Mycenaean City on the Heights*, (Copenhagen: The National Museum of Denmark, 1976), 34; The figurines discovered within the repository of Layer I date to c. 1300 BC and are attributed to Mycenaean culture, the first recorded group to sanctify the bastion. I follow the dates given to the idols by Bungard. He disproved Oikonomos’ conclusions that the figures date from much earlier.
Chapter Two: The Archaic Age

“With regard to the Hesiodean Nike, there can be no doubt that she must have experienced a complete regeneration before she re-appeared in literature at the beginning of the fifth-century. We first meet with her again in Pindar and Bacchylides. And in what connexion does the goddess then present herself? She is not the giver of victory in war, but of success in gymnastic and musical contests. It is true that the Panhellenic games were regarded, in some sort, as a preparation and training for war; but the significant silence of the poets who treat of military matter- e.g. Aeschylus- makes it more than probable that Nike had little or nothing to do with battle until the Persian invasion, at the earliest.”

-E.E. Sikes

The earliest surviving reference to a goddess named Victory, or Nike, appears in Hesiod’s poem “Θεογονία”, Theogonia, or in English Theogony. Theogony translates as “the genealogy or birth of the gods.” The long poem dates to c. 700 BC, during the early Archaic period. After the Bronze Age sanctuary, discussed in Chapter One, evidence for cultic activity on the bastion does not resume until the onset of the Archaic Age. During the intervening Dark Ages, from c. 1200-800 BC, little information either textual or archeological remains. These voids make it difficult to study the cult site for a period of almost four hundred years. However, the surviving Archaic remains provide a glimpse into the revival of the cult on the bastion. This chapter argues that the revival of the cult as now dedicated to Nike was inspired by Hesiod’s Theogony. After naming the few Archaic remains from in the southwest bastion, this chapter

examines Hesiod and the Archaic rebuilding of the Acropolis, interpreting the evidence for an Archaic cult of Nike on the southwest bastion.

Found within the remains of the Bronze Age walls and the Archaic sanctuary, the statue repository in which the Mycenaean figurines were discovered, damaged from being built over, plus an inscribed altar dedicated to Nike are the sole finds that surely dates to the Archaic period. The repository was apparently destroyed in the eighth-century. All were uncovered within the Bronze Age walls and the base and altar were possibly moved around the sanctuary over the centuries. The Archaic repository seen in fig. 3b, likely, was placed beside the partly exposed, Archaic temple during the first rebuilding of the sanctuary during the seventh-century BC.  

Unfortunately, the repository sustained severe damage during the height of the Ottoman Empire in the fourteenth-century AD. At this time, a powder crypt was built within the Bronze Age layer which, in effect, compromised the original position of the repository. Today, the partly exposed repository is accepted as a repository for the Archaic cult statue of Nike. Likewise, the inscribed base is attributed to the Archaic sanctuary of Nike because of the script which is characteristic of the sixth-century.

As Greece emerged from the Dark Ages, artistic expression resumed. Hesiod’s *Theogony* coincides with the rebirth during the early Archaic period, a time characterized not only by literature, but also by the emergence of monumental architecture and tombs, vase painting , and

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the reconfiguration of religious festivals. However, even with the increase of artistic production during the Archaic period, Hesiod is the only known author from his time to write of Nike in detail. Because of this scarcity of evidence, Hesiod appears largely responsible for the invention of Nike, as well as the defining of other Greek gods and goddesses. Hesiod’s passage in *Theogony* that discusses the genealogy of Nike read as follows:

And Styx, daughter of Okeanos,
Lying in love with Pallas,
Bore in their halls Rivalry
And sweet-stepping Victory,
And also Power and Force,
Who are her conspicuous children,
And these have no home that is not the home
Of Zeus, no resting
Place nor road, except where that god
Has guided them,
But always they are housed by Zeus
Of the heavy thunder.
For this was the will of Styx,
That Okeanid never-perishing,
On the day when the Olympian flinger
Of the lightning
Summoned all the immortal gods
To tall Olympos
And said that any god who fought on his side
With the Titans
Should never be beaten out of his privilege,
But each should maintain
The position he had had before
Among the immortals; he said, too,
That the god who under Kronos
Had gone without position or privilege
Should under him be raised to these,
According to justice.
And Styx the imperishable was first
To come to Olympos
Bringing her children, as her own father
Had advised her.
Zeus gave her position,
And gave her great gifts further,
For he established her to be the oath
Of the immortals,
And that her children all their days
Should live in his household.
And so, as he had promised, in every way
He fulfilled it
Throughout. But he himself keeps
The great power, and is master.65

Though the passage occupies a small section of the overall text, it illustrates specific attributes of the Victory goddess. In this passage, Hesiod describes a scene set before the Titanomachy, the war between the elder Gods and the newer Greek pantheon. Styx, though a Titan goddess, brings forth her children, Victory (Nike), Rivalry (Zelos), Strength (Kratos), and Force (Bia) to serve Zeus, a deity belonging to the younger Olympian Gods and Goddesses. Hesiod begins by describing Nike’s birth, along with her three siblings:

[Styx] Bore in their halls Rivalry
And sweet-stepping Victory
And also Power and Force
Who are her conspicuous children66

Here, Hesiod distinguishes only one child with a modifying clause. He depicts Nike as “sweet-stepping,” a term that might allude to her winged body. Flight would lighten her step. This description suggests that the winged personification of Nike might have emerged by the end of the eighth-century BC. The rest of the quoted passage emphasizes that, as per the example set by her mother, Nike and her siblings will to be associated with the Olympian Gods once allied with them. Styx’s decision to fight by Zeus’ side was essential to the victory of the new Gods and Goddesses in the Titan War. The moment in which Hesiod positions Victory as an ally of Zeus is critical in understanding an emerging Archaic cult of Nike,

And Styx the imperishable was first
To come to Olympos
Bringing her children, as her own father
Had advised her.
Zeus gave her position
And gave her great gifts further
For he established her to be the oath
Of the immortals
And that her children all their days
Should live in his household\textsuperscript{67}

Though Styx was a Titan, she and her children fought on the side of Zeus who rewarded them handsomely. As a result of her mother’s decision, Victory-Nike, thereby, became closely related to the new pantheon of gods and goddesses. She acted as their ally at a time of strife and, in the future, would also help mortals achieve victory as testified by Bacchylides in \textit{The Victory Poems} written between c. 470-450 BC (discussed in more depth in their proper chronological place in Chapter Three)\textsuperscript{68}. Her ability to traverse between the heavens and the earthly realm suggests her

\textsuperscript{67} Hesiod, 1991, 146.
\textsuperscript{68} Bacchylides, 2009, 56-59.
neutral attitude towards divinities and humans, and once more could imply fight. She gravitates to those who deserve victory and neglects those who do not.\textsuperscript{69} Her intuition regarding who is worthy of her grace appears to be inherent, though she does not necessarily determine who wins or how, just as Athena, in Homer’s \textit{The Odyssey}, aids Odysseus's return to Ithaca but allows him to suffer to prove that he deserves to come home.\textsuperscript{70} Likewise, in Hesiod, Nike aids Zeus rather than promising a definite Victory. Hesiod thus suggests that she rewards those who are extraordinary.

Hesiod does not represent Nike with a chariot in \textit{Theogony}. However, contemporary vase paintings depict her as a chariotter, associating her with games.\textsuperscript{71} Though, apparently, Nike did not become affiliated with victory in war until around the early fifth-century BC.\textsuperscript{72} The most common attributes of her in Archaic vase painting, a chariot and wreath, speak to her primary role as a goddess of Victory in games. (Figs. 15 & 16) The goddess’ transformation from a goddess of Victory in games, to that in war, follows the trajectory of the political climate in Athens from peace, celebration, and games during the sixth-century, to chaos and little leisure

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{69}] Bacchylides, 2009, 175-194.
\item[\textsuperscript{71}] Martin, 1996, 59. Popularized version of a winged Nike flying through the air on a chariot emerged in vase painting. As early as the Archaic period, the sculptural representation of the Greek pantheon of divinities became essential to cultic practices. Later, I will discuss the remains uncovered at the Archaic Temple of Athena Nike and how they suggest the cultic worship of Nike on the site. Based on the remaining artifacts found on the Acropolis bastion, from the Archaic Age onward, Nike becomes a widely worshipped member of the new Pantheon. Now a divine celebrity, Nike finally began to be represented in the popular media of Attica.
\item[\textsuperscript{72}] Sikes, 1895, 281; Sikes attributes this theory that Nike does not become affiliated with war until after c. 500 BC, to P. Knapp: “Nike in der Vasenmalerei,” Tubingen, 1876. 2-98.
\end{itemize}
time during the fifth-century. Athletic games, furthermore, serve as preparation for war.\textsuperscript{73} The role of Nike as a patron goddess of victory in games had emerged around c. 776 BC in Olympia, and one of the last instances during the Archaic period in which Nike was associated with only games occurred at the c. 566 BC Panathenaia games in Athens.\textsuperscript{74}

The Acropolis citadel saw an architectural transformation. The c. 566 BC reorganization of the Greater Panathenaia, a festival held every four years in honor of Athena, spurred an architectural reorganization of the Acropolis citadel. Though, there was a smaller scale “Lesser Panathenaia” held annually in Athena’s honor, the “Greater” Panathenaia, in Greek Παναθηναία or Panathênaia, held on the Acropolis every four years represented a major cultural event. It featured a religious procession in honor of the goddess Athena and her many epithets in addition to music, gymnastic, and equestrian competition. With the sixth-century realization of the Panathenaia, Athenians began to reconsider the image of Athena which ultimately motivated major changes in public and private representation and ritual. Athens sought to reorder its own principal religious festival so that it could rival those of other Greek cities.\textsuperscript{75} As cultic renewal

\textsuperscript{73} Bacchylides, 2009, 56, 179; Bacchylides’ Ode 11 dedicated “For Alexidamos of Metapontion,” in reference to the boys wrestling competition in the Pythian Games, exemplifies the transition, during the fifth-century, of Nike’s role into a goddess of both victory in games and war. The Ode opens with the Hesiodian image of “Nike standing at the side of Zeus,” as she bestows victory onto the champion: “Goddess of Victory, whose gifts are sweet.” Bacchylides proceeds to suggest that for both gods and men, Nike decides who deserves victory, “you determine the end of excellence for immortals and men.” For Bacchylides, the term excellence, \textit{areta} in Greek, usually refers to success in games. However, McDevitt suggests that \textit{areta} also refers to a more general term such as “outcome of endeavour,” perhaps referencing the Titanomachy since the Gods do not traditionally compete in games. In this case, Bacchylides’ use of \textit{areta} suggests victory in both games and war, both overseen by Nike by the fifth-century.\textsuperscript{74}

\textsuperscript{74} Sikes, 1895, 281; McDevitt, 2009, 8.

swept through Athens, monumental architecture funded by private dedication reemerged, architecture vastly different but still rooted in Bronze Age culture.  

The floor plan of megara at Mycenae, Pylos, and Tiryns foreshadow the layout of later Greek temples beginning in the Archaic period. A shift occurred from monumental royal architecture to permanent temple architecture. In response to the ritual (festival) transitions occurring in Athens during the second-half of the sixth-century BC, the precinct of Athena Nike and her sister sites underwent a transformation sometime between c. 580-505 BC. The Archaic restoration of the bastion crown probably occurred between c. 580-560 BC. This refashioning produced a new temple, altar, base, and cult statue, but little evidence from the Archaic sanctuary on the Nike bastion remains due to the Persian sack and Classical construction.

The history of the citadel supports the rebuilding of the crown during the general period of c. 800-560 BC, but the southwestern bastion statue base is normally dated to c. 600-560 BC, and the inscribed altar even later, c. 580-530 BC. Adjacent to these finds, the remaining Bronze Age fortification walls survived into the Archaic Period and were incorporated into a remodeled gate around c. 570-560 BC. Though, the chronology of the Old Propylon (as the pre-Classical structure is called) and its relationship to the Archaic Temple of Athena Nike remains obscure. Nevertheless, the Bronze Age fortification walls, the restored Old Propylon, a ramp, and the architecture on the Nike bastion appear to have characterized the late Archaic entrance to the

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76 Boardman, 1996, 158.
77 Mee, Spawforth, 2001, 11.
78 Mark, 1993, 35; Mark provides sets of dates relating to the refashioning of the bastion and the Archaic altar and base. Supported by recent archeology his chronology suggests an Archaic sanctuary of Nike. While the bastion crown could have been remodeled any time between c. 800-560 BC, Mark’s more specific dates for the temple, altar, and base are generally accepted.
As in the Bronze Age, the juxtaposition of cult site and gate suggest a role in protective rituals and festival processions.

What contemporary archeologists have termed “A-Architecture” contributes to the acceptance of an Archaic Temple of Athena Nike being constructed on the bastion. A-Architecture are “floating remains” of, mostly isolated, poros blocks that are scattered across the Acropolis hill and have no established identification. Two fragmented structures, together known as oikemata or “small limestone structures” in Greek, remain on the Acropolis and agree with the dimensions of the bastion crown, in addition to the date and scale of the base of the cult statue which would have been placed inside the temple. It seems relatively safe that these oikemata survive from an Archaic temple.

The dimensions of the A-Architecture suggest an Archaic Temple of Athena Nike, distyle-in-antis, spanning 5 meters across. The measurements of the base suggest a roughly lifesize cult statue, reflective of the Koros and Korai statues being produced during the Archaic period. The discovery of the “Archermos Nike” or the “Nike of Delos dated to c. 550 BC supplements the prospect of an Archaic cult statue on the bastion, as it is the first known sculptural representation of the goddess Nike. (Fig. 17) Found on the Cycladic island of Delos,
the Archermos Nike is attributed to Archermos of Chios, who is thought to have been a member of the Chios workshop.\(^{83}\) The statue was uncovered near an inscribed base, suggesting that it stood on a pillar by itself as both a cult statue and an ex voto, an offering to the Gods. While the statue might have ornamented the *acroterion*, roof, of the temple, the statue closely reflects other Archaic sculptural ex votos uncovered on the Acropolis in the korai style.\(^{84}\)

The c. 600- 560 BC date of the base coincides with this first known representation of Nike in sculpture. This supports some form of votive statuary dedicated to Athena Nike. Another indication of the monumentalization of an Archaic Temple of Athena Nike is represented by the surviving, inscribed, limestone altar. (Fig. 18, 18b, 18c) The inscription is carved in Archaic Greek on the side of the altar,

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Tēς 'Aθē[ναίας]}
\text{Tēς Νίκης}
\text{Βομός}
\hline
\text{Πατροκλ<λ>ες}
\text{Εποίεσεν}
\end{align*}
\]

The inscription translates to, “Altar of Athena Nike. Dedicated by Patrokles,” and its accepted c. 580- 530 date further supports the existence of a contemporary votive statue. Archeologists have identified the forms of the inscribed letters as also belonging to the middle decades of the sixth-century.\(^{85}\) The masonry of the poros block, too, confirms, these dates in comparison to

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other Archaic remnants on the Acropolis. The altar is an example of the private dedication of monumental structures and their smaller features, a trend that emerges in the sixth-century. Patrokles, the donor, is unknown to history aside from this private dedication. This altar, would have fit within the Archaic sanctuary of Nike on the bastion, according to the dimensions of A-Architecture, along with the base and statue.

It is difficult to separate Hesiod’s text from this Archaic base and altar along with their presumed temple and statue. The c. 700 BC date of Theogony directly implies to the emergence of a cult of Athena Nike during the Archaic period. Hesiod’s text precedes most artistic renderings of Nike, compelling scholars to believe that Theogony is significant to the emergence of both figured representations of Nike and the reestablishment of the cult of Nike in Athens. After Hesiod, the representation of the winged Victory became a popular motif in vase painting, (All of the Archaic vases included in the index show Nike as winged).

During the sixth-century BC, artists represented Nike with attributes specific to her cult. From c. 800-525 BC, Nike appears only in the black-figure technique as red-figure vase painting originated only in c. 530 BC, when it gradually replaced black-figure painting. Though Nike appears with a variety of different attributes in the surviving vases (discussed below), her attire, a belted peplos, remains fixed in Archaic vase painting and sculpture. Nike’s peplos is often shown blowing in the wind, rippled, and pulled back, an indication of her taking flight. (Figs. 19 & 22)

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87 Mark, 1993, 2. While a small limestone naiskos built with a larger altar was erected on the bastion sometime in the early fifth-century, the altar in discussion is agreed upon to belong to an Archaic sanctuary of Nike. Balanos simply calls it “the earlier structure.”
88 Mark, 1993, 35.
In Archaic Attic vase painting, Nike bears the following attributes: a chariot, an altar, wings, and Nike positioned in or next to a chariot or beside an altar is a common motif in Archaic black-figure painting. The image of the chariot speaks to Nike’s role in warfare and racing, an Olympic game. (Fig. 15) Additionally, Nike might act as Zeus’ chariotter in the Titanomachy myth.\(^9^9\) Her role in the Titanomachy and Olympic games characterizes her as a mediator who serves both Gods and men. Nike is a versatile figure in that she is not limited to intervening within the realm of the divine. Rather, she visits humans as well when she sees fit. However, she exclusively visits only deserving of her blessings, whether in warfare or games. Blind to bias, Nike focuses on who is divinely destined to win.\(^9^0\)

The image of Nike beside an altar exemplifies her religious associations. However, the representation of Nike with an altar is usually seen in later red-figure vase paintings. (Fig. 20) An altar, a flat block used in religious ritual, is an emblem of devotion in motion.\(^9^1\) One is expected to walk up to and around the altar in sacred prayer to the given divinity in which they are honoring. Archaic Nike, an integral goddess of the Pantheon, was worshipped around an altar as exemplified by the remaining Archaic altar on the Acropolis bastion. Her representation next to an altar on black-figure vase painting echoes the way in which she was honored in Athenian ritual and present, through vases, in daily life.

While Nike is largely known exclusively as the goddess of Victory, she also oversees speed and flight. The majority of black-figure attic vases from the Archaic period display Nike


\(^{9^0}\) Sikes, 1895, 280-283.

\(^{9^1}\) Diana DePardo-Minsky uses the term “devotion in motion” in her lectures to articulate the performative nature of ritual art.
hovering, in twisted perspective, with face in periphery and outspread wings. (Fig. 21) This representation of Nike initiates a direct confrontation with the viewer. She is usually surrounded by either hoplite soldiers or Olympic victors while assuming this position. This common personification of Nike represents her duties as the bestower of victory. The Victory goddess not only embodies speed, a quality familiar to the human race, but also flight which suggests her otherworldliness, as a human being who can fly.

Similarly, Nike is often shown in Archaic vase-painting and sculpture in the *knielauf* position, also known as the “pin-wheel” stance. (Fig. 22) The *knielauf* pose refers to a body with one knee near to the ground and bent with foot held up, while their other leg steps forward, once more at a 90 degree angle and foot held flat to the floor. The arms bend at similar angels as in the portrayal of Nike, in flight, discussed above, the *knielauf* stance presents a frontal face. The pose is evocative of action and athleticism, as if she is about to spring into fight. An example of this pose is seen on the “Archermos Nike,” already discussed as a possible format for the cult statue in the bastion temple during the Archaic period. (Fig. 17) Though the Archermos Nike is not of Attic origin, the sculpture mirrors the common portrayal of Nike in the *knielauf* pose, an emblem in Archaic black-figure vase painting. The statue, in the round, also exemplifies devotion in motion. The pose begs viewers to walk around it, causing the sculpture to evolve in time. Aesthetically, the emphatic Archaic smile, rounded facial features, and strong diagonals of the body speak to the art produced in the sixth-century BC. An actuated cult statue and altar suggest ritual procession.

During Greece’s Archaic period, items such as a wreath, palm branch, Hermes staff, trophy, *oinochoe* or bowl, *phiale* or cup, *thymiaterion* or incense burner were also recognized as
symbols of victory in war and games.\textsuperscript{92} While the lyre, too, represented victory during the Archaic period, Nike begins to be shown with a lyre at the beginning of the fifth-century, in red-figure vase painting. (Fig. 23) Nike is often shown grasping one or more of these items on Archaic Attic black-figure vase painting. The wreath, palm branch, and Hermes staff are all motifs of sacred value in Archaic Greece. Their significance remains important to the concept of victory in ancient Greece because they were commonly represented as signs of victorious soldiers or athletes. This rings true for the symbol of the trophy vase as well.

Nike with the emblem of the oinochoe, phiale, and thymiaterion are more relevant to cultic practice. (Fig. 24) The bowl, cup and incense burner refer to religious ritual. The bowl and cup are used for offering libations to the given divinity during a sacred gathering. The incense burner would have also been used in ritual as a method to attract the deity.\textsuperscript{93} Incense also creates an aromatic atmosphere, an ancient indication of divine presence.\textsuperscript{94} Nike’s portrayal with incense in vase painting suggests that her cult followers offered her incense as a means to draw her to bestow victory upon them.

Nike is generally represented with a lyre in later Attic red-figure vase painting. (Fig. 23) The lyre is an ancient musical instrument that is usually characteristic of the god Apollo. Music appears to be significant in celebration rituals for victorious soldiers or athletes.\textsuperscript{95} Nike’s association to the lyre allies her with an important god and also ties her to practices of the human

\textsuperscript{94} Jones, 2016, 156.
\textsuperscript{95} Jones, 2016, 149-177.
race. The lyre is another symbol of Nike’s ability to traverse between the godly and human realms.

In addition to her inanimate attributes just discussed, Nike keeps a specific group of company on vases. In Archaic black-figure, Nike only associates with other divinities, and victorious soldiers or athletes. When positioned next to divinities, Nike usually accompanies Zeus or Athena. When she is seen beside a soldier or athlete, the painting indicates the victory of the figure typically positioned next to Nike, on the central axis of the composition. This motif is exemplified by the Archaic black-figure vase dated to c. 600-550 and attributed to “Civico P” which shows Nike seated in between two groups of men. (Fig. 21)

These numerous vases, the one sculpture, and Hesiod’s poem in addition to the Athenian inscribed altar and base all attest to the rise of the cult of Nike during the Archaic Period. As she rose to stardom over the course of the Archaic period, artistic renderings of Nike on vases or sculpture like those discussed above would be seen throughout Athens suggesting her presence as an important cult figure and guardian. Contemporaneously, as noted, her sanctuary on the Acropolis bastion underwent a transformation in the Archaic period. At the dawn of the fifth-century BC, an age characterized by war, Nike would transform into a symbol of Athenian pride and victory. During the Athenian “Golden Age,” the fifth-century BC, the cult of Nike rapidly grew due to an overwhelming desire for Athenian victory. The poetry and images of the

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96 Calasso, 1994, 104, 373; Calasso suggests that in popular mythology, Nike is represented as carrying around woolen ties to hand out to her favorite victors. However, I chose to pay less attention to this attribute as it is not frequently represented in Archaic vase painting.
Archaic Age formed the identity of Nike, providing an inspiration for her image in the Classical period.

In that Hesiod is still credited as the father of Nike’s mythological narrative, the onset of the cult of Nike on the bastion should have occurred sometime after c. 700 BC. The sources provided in this chapter overwhelmingly support the conception of the Nike cult on the bastion after the completion of *Theogony*. However, Hesiod, the vases, and the sculpture all portray “Nike,” while the inscription on the altar reads “Athena Nike”, raising the possibility that already in the Archaic Period the bastion cult venerated a particular aspect of Nike different from that beyond the Acropolis. The cult of Athena Nike is assumed by scholars to worship a wingless embody by the fifth-century. Chapter Three explores the specific nature of this cult and its goddess.

The Archaic period, ending between c. 510 and c. 490 BC, long after the time of Hesiod, synthesized many of the influences affecting Greek culture. The more monumental stone art and architecture of ancient near Eastern cultures, such as Mesopotamia and Egypt, in effect inspired Greek large-scale stone art and architecture, setting the stage for the Classical period. The overriding themes of the Archaic period, the relationship of parts to the whole, translated into a new quest for a balance between luxury and intellectual order in the Classical period.

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97 Mark, 1993, 2. The chronology that Mark provides, too, supports the cult’s onset close to the time of *Theogony*. Mark’s later Archaic dates of the repository, naikos, and inscribed altar point to a rebuilding of the crown during this period, suggesting a resurgence of the cult dedicated to Nike on the site.

98 Sikes, 1895, 283.

99 Biers, 1996, 194; Boardman, 1996, 135; Pollitt, 1972, 64.

100 Pollitt, 1972, 68.
This quest for balance would soon come to reshape the Acropolis building program, the crowning achievement of the Classical period, which included the new Temple of Nike.
Chapter Three: The Classical Period

“In such a situation, there is a marked distinction between a city that thinks only of its own fate and one that considers that of Greece as a whole. With this act, the Athenians embarked on a path that quickly and inevitably led them away from old traditions and involved them ever more deeply in the affairs that were bound to arise from the transformed relationship between the East and West. Naturally, the Athenians always had immediate goals in mind, during those September days in 480 and in the decades that followed. What makes this period remarkable is the ingenuity with which they responded to difficult challenges.”

- Christian Meier

Athen’s second highest mountain, after Mt. Lykabettos, is the Akropolis (Acropolis), meaning “high city,” a citadel on a massive rock of porous limestone. (Fig. 1) The site, dedicated to the goddess Athena, soars 150 meters above Athens, watching over the only city of ancient Greece named after a goddess. Classical ruins, dated to around c. 448-420 BC remain visible on the rock and reflect the Periclean building program. Pericles’ commissions articulated the Athenian ideal of refinement without too much luxury. The pan-Hellenic ambitions of Pericles continue to be admired as a marble symbol of ancient Athenian ideals and, within this program, the Temple of Athena Nike and its surviving sculpture play a prominent role,

documenting both a shift in Athenian confidence in the persona of Nike. This chapter reviews the history of fifth-century Athens before exploring what the Temple of Athena Nike commemorated and what exactly defined this Victory goddess.

Victory and defeat frame the history of Classical Athens. The entire Classical Period, spanning from c. 510 to 323 BC, encompasses the Persian and Peloponnesian War. At the dawn of the Classical period, the Eastern Greeks had allied with the mainland Greeks around c. 499 BC, during the Milatous or “Ionian” revolt against Persian control. Since the sixth-century, the Persian Empire had expanded out of modern day Iran and into Asia Minor. The alliance between the Eastern and mainland Greeks ultimately triggered the Persian invasion of the mainland after the Ionian revolt. The Persian general, Darius, invaded the mainland leading to the Battle of Marathon in c. 490 BC. Though the battle was a decisive Greek victory, it spurred the Persian Wars which lasted until Greek victory in c. 449 BC. Outnumbered by the Persians, the Greeks came to believe that their triumph reflected their intellectual superiority, but also the *hubris*, excessive pride, of the Persians.\(^{104}\) Due to the Persian war, the concept of “victory” became a popular theme in Greek art and literature during the Classical period.

After this monumental conflict with the east (the Persians), the Greeks cast themselves as the force of intellect and order. Increasingly, the Greeks portrayed eastern forces with traits such as passion, decadence, and disorder.\(^{105}\) The cooperation between the Athenians and other Greeks through the Delian League signified desperation, as the Greek traditionally rejected working together unless fighting an external force. The Persian War culminated with the destruction of the Acropolis in c. 480 BC by the General Xerxes, the son of Darius. He invade

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\(^{104}\) Meier, 2000, 135; Pollitt, 1972, 3.

\(^{105}\) Pollitt, 1972, 81.
Greece from the north, successfully reaching Athens burning their sanctified sites. The most important Athenian victory following the decimation of the Acropolis is their win at Platea in c. 479 BC. The Greek rebound at Platea was seen as a sign of their superior morality. Overcoming defeat, the Greeks kept their head high and kept fighting. After this significant win, an oath was taken by the Greeks to refrain from rebuilding anything destroyed by the Persians so that the ruins would remain as memorials to what happened and to the deceased. The “Oath of Platea,” however, would later be evaded by the Periclean building program, to articulate Greek triumph over adversity.\footnote{Pollitt, 1972, 80.}

The formation of the “Delian League” in c. 477 BC exemplifies the coming together of all Greek speaking and Greek God worshipping people. The league agreed to pay tribute, rather taxes, to the Athenian government in order to fund a unified navy. Despite the Oath of Platea, the rebuilding of monuments that the Persians destroyed began in c. 460 BC with the restoration of Milatous.\footnote{Cawkwell, 1975, 263-65.} The floorplan of Milatous, influenced by Pythagoras, was a grid with right angles. Through its linearity, the floorplan of Milatous applied order on nature while also harmonizing with it. With its multiple grids and scales, the restoration of Miletus became an emblem of the Greek assertion of their intellectual superiority. The idea of Greek superiority would come to characterize and inspire the art and architecture of the Classical period.\footnote{Biers, 1996, 219.}

The division of Classical Greek art into early, high, and late is artificial. All Classical Greek art incorporates an interest in balance of the ideal and real, expressing continuity rather than division. In Classical Greek art, a vocabulary of gestures expands in order to express
controlled emotions. Greek artists emphasized what it meant to suffer loss, pain, and death but to triumph through intellect. Contemporary tragedy also treated the theme of suffering endured then contained.

The funds collected by the Delian League would be embezzled by Pericles and the Athenian people in order to fund his monumental building project. The chronology of the Classical buildings on the Acropolis complex begins with the initiation of the Parthenon in c. 447 BC by Ictinus and Kallikrates. It was finished in c. 438 BC, the year which Phidias completed his chryselephantine statue of Athena. Next, the Propylaea, or entrance gates, was conceived by Mnesicles and begun in c. 437 BC. Finally, the third building, the Erechtheum, an Ionic Temple of Athena which is close chronologically to the Temple of Athena Nike, was built from c. 421 to 405 BC. Next door, the Temple of Athena Nike rose between c. 420 and c. 405 BC. The Temple of Athena Nike and the Erechtheion are contextually connected because both sit on previously sanctified sites, marrying them to the cultic roots of Athens and departing from the Oath sworn at Plataea not to rebuild temples destroyed by Persians. Akin to the religious past on the bastion, the site of the Erechtheion looks back to its Bronze Age roots. While the first two buildings,

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109 Pollitt, 1972, 99.
112 Meier, 2000, 391-392. The Classical Erechtheion was built on what is thought to be a Bronze Age royal palace and/or burial ground. The site remained sanctified through the ages, incorporating the foundation myth of Athens into its religious history. The foundation myth describes Athena and Poseidon battling for possession over Athens. Athena planted an olive tree, while Poseidon struck the earth with his trident, opening up a salt water spring. After the Persian sack of the Acropolis, Athena’s olive tree is said to have re-grown to its original size, despite being burned down. Meier, too, illuminates the other dedications on the site, of which there are several. He describes the myth of King Erichthonius, who was re-embodied on the site as a snake and appointed the protector of the city. The snake’s disappearance in c. 480 BC was held
the Parthenon and Propylaea evoke the harmony between Dorian and Ionian peoples, the latter two speak to their break down.  

The unity between Greeks during the Persian Wars, c. 499-449 BC weakened shortly after their victory, foreshadowing the Peloponnesian War (431-404 BC). The Athenian surrender to Sparta at the end of the Peloponnesian Wars began the diminuendo of the Athenian Empire. In some respects, the Peloponnesian war, a civil war between the Peloponnesian League headed by Sparta and the Delian League, under Athens, recalls a return to the origins of Greek culture with the warring states of Bronze Age Greece, such as Mycenae. Similarly, the latter half of Pericles’ building program, completed upon his death in c. 429 BC, suggests the cultic beginnings of Greece. Specifically, the Temple of Athena Nike and the Erechtheion, rose on Mycenaean sanctified ground. Late fifth-century Athenians seem to have reverted to more primal values, departing from the ideals expressed during the short time of peace following the Persian Wars. The Athenian desire for victory at any cost in the Peloponnesian War caused the Athenians to neglect the intellectual order and balance that had graced their city in its “Golden Age.” The Parthenon, a manifestation of order, proportion, and victory through the unification of the Greeks, expresses Periclean ideals while Athena Nike stands as a desperate assertion of another victory, one never accomplished.

The Temple of Athena Nike is an architectural and sculptural response to the tumultuous times of the Late Classical Period. The temple was only fully realized after the cultural optimism

accountable for the arrival of the Persians on the mainland. Another king, Erectheus, was also venerated here and inspired the name for the Classical temple on the site.

113 Pollitt, 1972, 65.
114 Meier, 2000, 196.
115 I accept the thesis of reversion presented by Meier, 2000, 507.
of Periclean Athens had already faded. Prior to his death by plague in c. 429 BC, Pericles saw his building program as a symbol of the victory and unity of the Greek people following the Persian defeat. When this vision was cut short by the rise of Sparta, Greece was once more hurled into another bloody war, this time between its own people. Athens and Sparta, allies in the earlier defeat of the Persian forces, became enemies. Now, victory would mean the demise of one group of Greeks. By the time that the Temple of Athena Nike was completed around c. 420 BC, the civil unrest between the Greek city-states had been waged for eleven years. The temple, one of the last to be built in the Periclean program, spoke to the waning hope of the Athenians, instead of the glory that Pericles imagined the completion of his project might evoke. A product of wartime, the fifth-century Temple of Athena Nike, in essence, became a prayer for divine intervention in favor of the Athenians.

After the Peloponnesian War began and began to go badly, the Athenians started to doubt themselves and their country. Despite their desperation and attention to securing a victory at all costs, their architectural rebuilding (the Erechtheion and the Temple of Athena Nike) speak to their return to mystic religions as a last hope rather than the balanced intellectual ideals of the Periclean moment. The Temple of Athena Nike, especially, expresses an escapism from the fear of impending downfall. This rejection of Periclean ideals is the antithesis of what the Parthenon, the embodiment of the Periclean moment, represented. The ideal of order, intellect, and refinement conquering chaos had lost value by the Classical Temple of Athena Nike rose over the Bronze Age and Archaic site.

116 Meier, 2000, 391.
The Classical restoration of the Temple of Nike in c. 420 BC exemplifies the shift in the Periclean building project from confident rationality to insecure religiosity. Though Phidias is generally considered to be the artistic and architectural mastermind of the Periclean building project, the tetrastyle-amphiprostyle temple (it has four columns on front and back but none on the sides) is attributed to Kallikrates, an Ionic artist.\footnote{117} The Ionic columns that adorn the temple reflect Kallikrates’ style, and, unlike the Parthenon, it is solely in the Ionic order, the first such on the Acropolis. (Fig. 25) Similarly to the fifth-century Erechtheion, the choice to rebuild the temple on the bastion signified a resurgence of a cult from the Bronze Age. The revisiting of Athens cultic roots perhaps speaks to a sense of lingering confidence in the city of Athena. The fifth-century version of the temple is small and beautiful, as if the Victory of Athena had lit on the parapet of the Acropolis. While the third rebuilding on the site symbolizes triumph, it also stands as a swan song to the Golden Age of the Athenian empire. Built in response to the civil war, the temple announces a victory of Athena that never came, thereby marking the twilight of the empire.\footnote{118}

The outer columns on each side have “angle capitals.” The proportions of the columns are 7:1, smaller than the traditional 1:9 proportions of an Ionic column.\footnote{119} The temple stands twenty-four feet long by eighteen and a half feet wide, with a height of twenty-three feet. It is constructed out of white parian marble. Its petit scale and curling Ionic volutes underline the feminine associations of the eastern order and suit the character of the flying bearer of triumph.\footnote{120}

\footnote{117} Hurwitt, 2004, 183.  
\footnote{118} Boardman, 1996, 145.  
\footnote{119} Hurwitt, 2004, 183.  
\footnote{120} Hurwitt, 2004, 187; Pollitt, 1972, 79.
While the Temple of Athena Nike is generally attributed to Kallikrates, its parapet frieze could have been worked on by others because the various styles found of the surviving fragments suggest multiple hands.  The primary sculpture of the program dates to around c. 410 BC and is attributed to multiple artists who identities are debated.  Kallikrates’ homeland of Ionia likely influences his stylistic directions to the sculptors of the parapet frieze. The Athena Nike parapet, the protective wall surrounding the edge of the bastion, visualizes the goddess with her feminine attributes. The frieze that adorns the parapet is continuous and run approximately thirty-four meters long. The carvers style the figures on the parapet to express the light and dainty attributes of the winged goddess. The frieze rejects monumental “Periclean proportions” and is slight in order to fit the small scale of the temple. Surrounding the temple on three sides, the north, south, and west, the frieze once included around fifty figures. The northern side depicts a personification of Athena Nike, seated and holding a helmet, accompanied by flocks of Nikai. (Fig. 26) The western side of the frieze also shows Athena Nike and her Nikai. Looking from the northwest, two of the seated Athena Nikes are visible, accompanied by a swirl of Nikai, softly landing and erecting trophies or tying their sandals. The north and west sides depict winged Victories softly landing and erecting trophies. The goddesses fly in various directions, then land, causing their drapery to cling to their body, revealing their legs and arms. The drapery, called “flying drapery,” often appears to defy gravity, a visually rhetoric flourish. Pleasing to

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123 Brunilde S. Ridgway, "Notes on the Development of the Greek Frieze," Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens 35, no. 2 (1966): 199. Ridgway argues that the due to the smaller scale of the temple, the frieze demands wide spacing between the figures for clarity. She suggests that though the limited space forms “individual episodes,” the frieze is not abrupt, but rather fluid, and serves to emphasize a division between divinities and mortals.
look at, it does not obey natural laws which differentiates it from the rational figures on the earlier Parthenon frieze. This speaks to the theme of escapism that this frieze embodies. The frieze represents a shift from the emphasis on the male body on the Parthenon to represent a temple of predominantly female forms.  

The south side of the parapet illustrates the Battle of Marathon, mirroring the south frieze of the temple, also a battle scene.  

(Fig. 27, 27b, 27c, 27d, 27e) These historical narratives contextualize the Nikai fantasy frieze as a prayer for equal glory in the current conflict.

As just described, the sculptural work on the frieze follows Hesiod’s “sweep-stepping” characterization of the goddess. As in Hesiod, the images of the goddess appear feminine with her curvaceous poses and nimble balance, as her wings help her retain her postures. On the frieze, artists capture her winged personification through a representation of numerous Nikai and their fluttering drapery that presses to their bodies, exposing the beauty of the female form and underling the feminine association of Ionic architecture. The drapery flying back, clings to their bodies, too, foreshadowing the emergence of the female nude. The Nikai are not crowded in overlapping. The sculptors give the figures space to move and for their flying drapery to flutter around them. The Nikai appear almost nude, as their thin dresses press to their bodies, an articulation of their recent landing. The Greek idea that moral misstep will produce lasting suffering is represented on the Nike frieze by the scene that memorializes the earlier Greek victory over the Persians at the Battle of Marathon. The scene evokes the bloody fight won by the Athenian army that resulted in the Greek’s assertion of their superior morality over the

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124 Boardman, 1996, 159.
125 Hurwitt, 2004, 186.
127 Boardman, 1996, 155.
Persians. It, therefore, manifests a contemplation on the violence of the Peloponnesian War. The repeated Victories show Athenians yearned to restore their peace and prosperity as they had following the Persian defeat.

While we see Nikai or Nicae, Nike in the plural, on a few Archaic pieces, one of the first literary references to a host of victories dates to c. 434 BC, after the c. 439 BC Athenian victory at Samos during the Peloponnesian War. Uncommon but not obsolete in the sixth-century, Nikai signify a type of victory equivalent to representations of Nike by herself. Nikai are most famously suggested to have embellished the Athena Parthenos, a cult statue by Phidias referring to one of her many epithets meaning Ἀθηνᾶ Παρθένος; literally, “Athena the Virgin.” Such Nikai, as just described, adorn the parapet frieze on the Temple of Athena Nike. The Nikai on the Classical statue and frieze are another indication of Nike’s shift in roles after the sixth-century from overseer of just games to overseer of games and war. War, which could be seen as a game itself, being another epithet of Athena called “Athena Promachos.” The few Archaic representations of Nikai are mostly evocative of victory in games. After the transition into the Classical period, Nikai become more commonly recognized as the “golden victories” specific to Athena.

With the Temple of Athena Nike, and the Erechtheion too, Kallikrates began to normalize the Ionic order on mainland Greece. The rise of the Ionic order, in the latter part of the fifth-century speaks to the shift in the political allegiance of Athena during the Peloponnesian

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130 Thompson, 1944, 173; Calasso, 1994, 170. Despite the popular association of Nike with Athena during the Classical period, the four feet of Zeus’ throne on Phidias’ chryselephantine statue of Zeus, too, were adorned with golden Nikai and he also held a Nike in his hand.
War. Because the Athenians had rescued the Ionian people's after their revolt against Persia, they remained allies during the Peloponnesian War. The Temple of Athena Nike, an entirely Ionic structure, articulates this allegiance and the Athenian belief that their Ionian roots separated from one hundred percent from Dorian Sparta.

Simultaneously, the little temple evoked the irrationality of the war by the motif of escapism, best represented on the parapet frieze that depicts Nikai fluttering about and erecting trophies, in every direction, without much effort or pain. The frieze depicted the unlikely potential Athenian victory in the Peloponnesian War. Kallikrates creates a sense of fluidity between figures through their flying drapery, irrationally they peacefully harmonize.

All of the Nikai on the parapet, the only surviving figuration from the temple, show the goddess with wings. As such, they are in keeping with all other visual representations of Nike. A review of the vase paintings and sculptures representing Nike during the Archaic and also the Classical period, produce no example of a “Wingless Victory.” Classical period red-figure vases show Nike with the same attributes as the Archaic but with more naturalistic and fluid proportions and gestures in keeping with the period. In light of this, attempting to separate Nike from her wings seems a fruitless endeavor. The wealth of visual material illustrating the winged nature of Nike overwhelms the two textural interpretations of Nike as without wings.

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133 James George Frazer, *Pausanias’ Description of Greece*, Volume 2, Commentary on Book I, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1898), 170. Though Nike is solely represented as winged in Greek art, Frazer suggests that the bastion’s dedication to Athena Nike is exempt from these limitations as she represents not just Nike but Athena herself. Since Athena is always wingless, Frazer argues that the only known wingless personification of Nike is natural due to the nature of the dedication.
134 There are too many red-figure vases to create an appendix.
discussed below. In fact, “Athena Nike” might be an entity separate from a Winged Victory.
Athena Nike may represent the victorious aspect of Athena who is never represented with wings. Thus, the parapet Nikai might be the ladies-in-waiting to the seated Victorious Athena with pomegranate, a reflection perhaps of the cult statue in the temple.\(^{135}\)

As discussed in Chapter Two, the first reference to Athena Nike is the inscribed Archaic base. Next, Heliodorus of Athens, refers to her an author from the second-century BC, is the oldest surviving source to reference “Wingless Victory” when describing her worship on the Acropolis, as Athena Nike.\(^{136}\) In the surviving fragment, referencing Heliodorus of Athens, Harpocration refers to her as “a wingless wooden idol, holding a pomegranate in her right hand, and a helmet in her left,” in Greek, “ο περιηγητης περι ακροπολεως,” with the translation of Wingless Victory pronounced as Apter(ou) Nike, instead of Apter(os) Nike.\(^{137}\) His description might reference the lost cult statue. Much later, Pausanias, in the second-century AD famously states that the Acropolis temple is dedicated to “Apteros Nike,” the most widely-known reference to a Wingless Victory. Both Heliodorus’ and Pausanias’ descriptions of the Wingless Athena Nike might have been influenced by the inscription on the Archaic base and its possible cult statue. It, of course, remains unknown both whether the cult statue had wings and if it was preserved through the Persian Wars.\(^{138}\) Heliodorus’ description presents a strong case for a

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\(^{135}\) I.S Mark, 1993, 94. Texts from the fifth-century, the explicit dedication to Athena Nike on the Archaic altar, Athena Nike was now generally shortened to just Nike for colloquial conversion.


\(^{137}\) Meier, 2000, 93; Harpocration referencing Heliodorus, cited by Farndell, 1896, 31. Heliodorus wrote fifteen books concerning the Acropolis around c. 150 BC. Only a few remaining fragments survive, including one describing the Athena Nike cult statue. The fragment is thought to have been removed from the Acropolis by the Roman General Sulla in c. 84 BC.

\(^{138}\) Mark, 1996, 123.
Wingless Athena (not Victory) as the cult statue. Pausanias’ suggestion that the Athenians named the temple as such because of their fear that Nike might fly away from them may might be romantic but it speaks to his writing’s resonance in the popular mythology of the Acropolis and echoes the enduring personification of Nike by Hesiod.

During the Classical period, the cult of Athena Nike was only one of at least five different cults practicing on the Acropolis. The cults dedicated to Athena received the greatest reverence, including the little Temple of Nike. These cults, dealing with natural elements of the earth, water, and sky represented the foundation cults of the city. Among the group, the cults included Athena with her heavenly intelligence and power, Poseidon with the salt of his ocean, and Zeus with his fire. These rites represent themes related to the elementary aspects of cult religion further suggesting that the bastion temple, with its Bronze Age roots, should be viewed more as an aspect of Athena than a shrine to an independent Victory goddess.

The important role of the architect in both design and ritual is suggested in a Classical era inscription about the temple. An inscription concerning the architect and the Priestess of Athena Nike occurs in a decree of c. 424 BC. A fragment, dedicated to the first priestess, “Myrrhine,” daughter of Kallimachos, states she was appointed sometime around c. 410 BC. Another describes the selection and salary of the priestess. It mentions “Callicrates” (the architect, Kallikrates) twice, suggesting her presence during the Periclean building program. The text

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139 Biers, 1996, 204.
141 Gill, 2001, 265.
read, “...a priestess to Athena Nike... who is to be appointed from all Athenian women, and the temple precinct is to be provided with doors as Callicrates (Kallikrates) shall prescribe. The Sellers shall let out the contract during the prytany [executives of ancient Athens] of the Leontis tribe. The priestess is to receive 50 drachmas [per year] and the legs and hides from public [sacrificial victims]. The temple and a stone altar are to be built as Callicrates (Kallikrates) prescribes...” Ritual and architecture intertwine. The integration of details about the priestess and the design of the architecture in the above quote, indicate the close connection between ritual and design. The parapet also plays into this link. The parapet allowed for safe ritual procession around the temple to Athena the Victorious either before or after the route to the Parthenon and the cult of Athena Polias. The friezes of battles and victories underscored the nature of this Victory goddess: triumph in war.

At the time of the above inscription and the completion of the Temple of Athena Nike, Athens faced defeat. The sanctuary could be viewed as an emblem of the Athenian’s undying perseverance, faith in eventual victory, and a need to preserve the glorious legacy of the earlier Periclean buildings. Athenians’ hope was ultimately dashed with their surrender to Sparta in c. 404 BC, but, the architectural and sculptural beauty of the Temple of Athena Nike can not be dimmed. It continues to stand on the bastion as a reminder of the Athenian’s talent for finding order in chaos and triumph in tragedy. It articulates their continued faith in their Ionian Bronze Age roots and ability to endure. Built on a continuously venerated site, the Temple of Athena Nike recalls the citadel’s ritual and religious past. The Classical Temple of Athena Nike

declares the bastion’s historical roots. The parapet allowed for safe ritual procession around the
venerated site, while its relief sculpture recalled the past and prayed for the future. The Battle of
Marathon carving on one side of the frieze relates to the spaces’ historical past, while the scene
of Nikai on the other, speaks to the mythical and religious Bronze Age origins of the site. The
temple conjoins Athenian history with religion, asking the gods to once more join men in
triumphant battle as in the Bronze Age.
Conclusion

This project has tried to integrate the archeological evidence from the southwest bastion on the Athenian Acropolis with contemporary sculptural, painted, and textual evidence from the Bronze, Archaic, and Classical Ages. Chapter One on the Bronze Age has explained the evidence and concluded that, while there was definitely some sort of foundation cult, there is no evidence of a shrine to Nike. The cult could have been to a guardian deity. Chapter Two situates the Archaic Period remains into an emerging idea and cult of Nike as a winged Victory deity. All evidence points to her presence on the southwest bastion, but this chapter also raises questions about whether Nike proper, even on the Acropolis, could be wingless as is generally supposed. Chapter Three defines the fifth-century Classical Temple of Athena Nike and cult activities centered around. This chapter provides more substantial material regarding the cult of Athena Nike on the bastion due to the amount of art and architecture that survives. Conclusively, by the fifth-century, there was a cult following of Athena Nike actively practising on the bastion, but the chapter emphasizes that “Athena Nike” is not equal to “Nike.”

While it is still unclear exactly when the Temple of Athena Nike adopted an association with a “Wingless Victory,” the evidence suggests that over time, the epithet solidified and was accepted in the collective Greek consciousness. The most prominent ancient figures to reference a Wingless Victory, associated with an aspect of the cult of Athena on the Acropolis, are Heliodorus and Pausanias. However, reviewing the vase paintings and sculpture depicting Nike from the Archaic period, Nike is always represented as winged. The epithet “Athena Nike” is strictly reserved for the Victorious Athena who oversees the Acropolis bastion, it seems likely
that this entity is more an aspect of Athena than a reimagining of Nike. Accordingly, Heliodorus and Pausanias were probably correct in specifying that the bastion dedication was to an “Apteros Nike.” Regardless, confusion regarding the temple’s dedication remains, due to the winged personification in the visual arts (including the parapet of the temple) and her wingless designation in texts. To address the important distinction between Nike and Athena Nike, I here refer to Leo Steinberg’s *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and in Modern Oblivion*. Steinberg emphasizes that visual evidence must be given equal, if not greater weight, than textual evidence when analyzing art. His scholarship is valuable to this project and helps to emphasize the differences between the visual and textual evidence concerning the goddesses and the need to reference both.

The visual evidence of Winged Victories suggests that Nike is entirely separate from Athena Nike, whose physical representations are completely lost to us. All of the images provided in Chapter One, Two, and Three personify the goddess known as Nike as winged. Additionally, the overwhelming amount of Classical text always describes the goddess as winged, at the very least “sweet-stepping” (Hesiod). In comparison, the limited textual evidence and no visual proof of a “Wingless Victory,” further suggests that “Nike” should be accepted as separate from “Athena Nike.” Prioritizing the textual references to “Wingless” exemplifies what, Steinberg defines as “textism,” which he deems perilous for interpreting art.

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In regard to Nike and Athena Nike, the visual evidence is more compelling than the textual evidence. The consistently winged representation of Nike, a common image in vase painting and sculpture by the end of the Classical period, automatically defines Athena Nike as independent of Nike. The swirling Nikai depicted on the parapet frieze, especially, speaks to the difference between the goddesses. Instead of representing Athena Nike herself, the parapet Nikai more closely resemble ladies in waiting who serve the Victorious Athena. Furthermore, from the Archaic period on, the depiction of the goddess Athena on visual media, never shows the goddess as winged, no matter the epithet she takes on.\(^{49}\)

In conclusion, there is no textual or visual evidence that references a Winged Athena Nike. Athena Nike, a local Athenian goddess, thus, stands distinct from the more general Greek goddess Nike. Nike, the goddess of victory in games at first, and then later victory in games and war, is independent of Athena Nike who seems to represent the goddess of Athenian victory in war. Consistent with her strictly wingless representation in other personifications of her, Athena’s epithet as Athena Nike speaks to her role as a goddess concerned with war. The proposal for an Athena Nike cult statue, as wingless, seated, and with a pomegranate in one hand and a helmet in another, further associates this Victorious Athena with war rather than games.\(^{50}\) The “sweep-stepping” feminine Nike of Hesiod is lost in this image of Athena Nike, a more masculine denizen of the realm of war and victory. Corresponding to the visual and textual evidence, Nike is revealed to be independent of Athena Nike.

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\(^{50}\) E. E Sikes, ”Nike and Athena Nike,” *The Classical Review* 9, no. 5 (1895): 280-83.
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Figure 1
Classical Ruins on the Acropolis, Southwest perspective, c. 440 BC. Thomas R. Martin, Ancient Greece from Prehistoric to Hellenistic Times, 2013, 152.
Figure 2
Kallikrates, The Temple of Athena Nike, marble, c. 420 BC.
Figure 3

View of the repository from the southeast with the figurines, c. 1200 BC.
Figure 3b
Figure 4
Figure 5
Figure 6
Figure 6b
Figure 6c
Figure 7
Figure 8
Boulders from Layer I, c. 1200 BC.
Figure 9
The Lion Gate, c. 1200 BC.
Figure 10
Figure 11
Descent into layer I of the Temple of Athena Nike, c. 1200 BC.
Figure 12
View of a side room within layer I, c. 1200 BC.
Figure 13
Figure 14
Figure 15
Phrynos by unknown, Athenian Black-Figure Amphora, Winged Victory running beside a victor in a chariot, c. 575-525, Beazley Archives.

Figure 16
Sakonides & Kaulos Potter, Black-Figure Cup, Winged Victory presenting a wreath to a seated man, c. 575-525, Beazley Archives.
Figure 17
Archermos of Chios, “Archermos Nike,” or “Nike of Delos,” c. 570-560,
Museum of Classical Archeology Databases.
Figure 18, 18b, 18c
Unknown, inscribed Archaic altar, c. sixth-century BC, Balanos Archives (top), Brynlie Sage Johnston (bottom).
Figure 19
Civico P by Beazley, Black-Figure Cup, Winged Victory between youth, men, and horsemen, c. 575-525, Beazley Archives.

Figure 20
Nikias P by Beazley, Red-Figure Bell Krater, Nike and elderly man at an altar, c. 425-375 BC, Beazley Archives.
Figure 21
Civico P by Beazley, Black-Figure Cup, Nike surrounded by men in twisted perspective with outspread wings, c. 600-550, Beazley Archives.

Figure 22 Pharos P by Haspels, Black-Figure Lekythos, Nike assuming the *knielauf* pose to represent running, c. 575-525 BC, Beazley Archives.
Figure 23
Polygnotos by Beazley, Red-Figure Stamnos, Nike at an Altar with Apollo who holds a lyre, c. 475-425, Beazley Archives.
Figure 24
Civico P by Beazley, Black-Figure Cup, Winged Nike in the running position, Men holding drinking horns and phialai, c. 575-525, Beazley Archives.
Figure 25
Kallikrates, The Temple of Athena Nike, marble, c. 420 BC.
Figure 26
Unknown, Northern side of The Temple of Athena Nike Parapet Frieze depicting two Nikai leading a bull to sacrifice, (below) seated Athena Nike from the southwest corner, marble, Acropolis Museum, c. 410 BC.
Figure 27
Unknown, Southern side of The Temple of Athena Nike Parapet Frieze depicting the Battle of Marathon, marble, c. 410 BC.
Figure 27b
Figure 27d
Archaic Vases Depicting Nike: c. 800-550 BC

1.

| Vase Number | 6999 |
| Fabric      | ATHENIAN |
| Technique   | BLACK-FIGURE |
| Shape Record| CUP-SHAPED |
| Date Range  | 600-550 |
| Attributed To| CIVICO P by UNKNOWN |
| Decoration  | UH: IVY LEAF |
| Decoration  | A: NIKE, BETWEEN SEATED MEN, BETWEEN MEN |
| Collection  | Sz: Zurich, market, Arete |

Publication Record: Arete, Galerie fur Antike Kunst, Zurich: LISTE 8, 5 (I, A, HANDLE)

Last updated: 08/31/2017 1:15:00 by Parker, Greg. Created: 08/31/2017 1:15:00 by Mannack, Thomas. Approved: 08/31/2017 1:15:00 by Mannack, Thomas.

Link to record: www.bseonline.co.uk/index/87046E06-99EC-4792-8FBA-65AF965B019D

A.

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<td>WARRIORS AND HORSEMEN</td>
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**Publication Record:**
Brügger, H., Siana Cups I and Komast Cups (Amsterdam, 1983): PLS.42C-D, 46C (I, A, B)


Link to this record using the address www.basleley.ox.ac.uk/record/ICA05587-6336-44F7-BF79-70EB86C15A47
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<td>306492</td>
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<td>BLACK-FIGURE</td>
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<td>Attributed To: SOPHILOS by BEAZLEY, Attributed To: EARLY OLPAI, CLASS OF THE by BEAZLEY, Decoration: WINGED GODDESS (NIKE ?)</td>
<td>1: Florence, Museo Archeologico Etrusco</td>
<td>Beazley, J.D., Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painters (Oxford, 1956): 679</td>
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<td>1: Hannover, Kestner Museum: 1954-41</td>
<td>Beazley, J.D., Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painters (Oxford, 1956): 682</td>
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Last updated 08/10/2003 10:10 by Parker, Greg. Created 19/10/2003 17:11:00 by Mannack, Thomas. Approved. Copyright © 2003-2018 Classical Art Research Centre, University of Oxford. Link to this record using the address www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/record/4183ABAE-6216-4967-891B-80902C9233

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Add to photo album
6.

Add to photo album

| Vase Number | 350195 |
| Fabric      | ATHENIAN |
| Technique   | BLACK-Figure |
| Shape Record| LERYTHOS |
| Provenance  | BULGARIA, APOLLONIA PONTICA |
| Date Range  | 600-550 |
| Attributed To| SANDAL P by BEAZLEY |
| Decoration  | SH: SWAN BETWEEN YOUTHS |
| BD: NIKE RUNNING BETWEEN DRAPED YOUTHS |
| Collection  | 1: Sofia, National Museum: 6285 |

Publication Record: Beazley, J.D., Paralipomena (Oxford, 1971): 28


Link to this record using the address www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/record/E2952CE4-1135-44DE-90D6-54108C504399

A.

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7.

Vase Number: 394
Fabric: ATHENIAN
Technique: BLACK-FIGURE
Shape Record: CUP
Date Range: 575-525
Decoration: A: NIKE BETWEEN MAN AND YOUTH WITH SPEARS
Collection: 1: Basel, market, Munzen und Medaillen A.G.

Publication Record:
Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologicae Classicae: VI, PL.564, NIKE 76

8.

Vase Number: 6755
Fabric: ATHENIAN
Technique: BLACK-FIGURE
Shape Record: AMPHORA, NECK FRAGMENTS
Provenance: ITALY, MATERA
Date Range: 575-525
Attributed To: LYDOS by LO PORTO
Decoration: B: NIKE (?) (WINGED WOMAN WITH WREATH), FRONTAL HORSEMEN
Decoration: A: PROCESSION OF MEN
Collection: 1: Matera, Museo Nazionale Domenico Ridola: 12308

Publication Record:
Bollettino d’Arte: 53 (1968), 2-3, OPPOSITE P.112, FIG.6.24-25 (A,B)
Monumenti antichi pubblicati per cura della Reale Accademia deiLincei: 48 (1973), PL.47.1-2 (A,B)

9.

Vase Number: 7324
Fabric: ATHENIAN
Technique: BLACK-FIGURE
Shape Record: AMPHORA, NECK
Date Range: 599-510
Attributed To: Manner of: PRAXIOS BY UNKNOWN
Attributed To: BOTIKIN CLASS BY UNKNOWN
Decoration: UNK: YOUTH
Decoration: A:B: WINGED WOMAN (NIKE) (?) RUNNING BESEIDE MAN IN CHARIOT WEARING NIKE
Decoration: UNK: NIKE

Collection: 1: London, market, Sotheby’s

Publication Record:
Archaeological Analesia on Athens: 1981-82, 310 (COLOUR OF A)

Publication Record:
PHOTOGRAPH(S) IN THE BEASLEY ARCHIVE: 3 (A, B, N)

Publication Record:
Sotheby, sothey catalogue: 5.2.1983, 114-115, NO.317 [A, B, PARTS]

Publication Record:
Tangarle, A. (ed.), Shapes and uses of Greek Vases (7th–4th centuries B.C.), Proceedings of the Symposium held at the Universite Libre de Bruxelles, 27-29 April 2001 (Brussels, 2003): 45, PL.1.3 (A OR B)
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<td>AMPHORA B</td>
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<td>BD: PELEUS AND ATALANTE BETWEEN ONLOOKERS</td>
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Last updated: 15/01/2018 04:32:00 by Parker, Greg. Created: 18/10/2003 15:00:00 by Mannack, Thomas. Approved: Copyright © 2003-2018 Classical Art Research Centre, University of Oxford.

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19.

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Publication Record: Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum: THESSALONIKI, ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM 1, 39, FIG.13, PL.(266) 54.3-5 View Whole CVA Plates

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**Publication Records**

1. Heidelberg, Iluprecht-Karlsruhe-Universitats: S1
2. Beazley, J.D., artists Black-Figure Vase Painters (Oxford, 1988): 11.1
3. Beazley, J.D., The Development of Attic Black-Figure, ed. 2 (California, 1988): PL.5, 17-4, 18.1 (I, A)
4. Beazley, J.D., The Development of Attic Black-Figure, ed. 2 (California, 1988): PL.116 (PART)
6. Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum: HEIDELBERG, UNIVERSITAT 4, 27, P.54 (1485-5992) 152.1-3, 353.1
7. Vas Images (Cath.Frey)

**Publication Records**


A.

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A.
23. A.

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24. A.

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Fabric ATHENIAN
Technique BLACK-Figure
Shape Record CUP SIANA
Date Range 575-525
Attributed To CIVICO P by BEAZLEY
Decoration A,B: WINGED GODDESS (NIKE ?), YOUTH AND MEN, ALL DRAPE, HORSEMAN
Decoration I: SIKEN
Collection 1: Rome, Private
Publication Record BEAZLEY, J.D., Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painters (Oxford, 1956): 71.2

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33.
### Vase Number: 381103
#### Vase Description:
**Athenian**
**Technique:** Black-Figure
**Shape Record:** CUP LITTLE MASTER BAND
**Provenance:** ITALY, SISYRINOS
**Date Range:** 575-525

#### Inscriptions:
- **2:** SAKONIDES EKAPFION
- **Signature:** KAYLON EPIKIONE
- **Attributed To:** SAKONIDES BYSignature

#### Decoration:
A, B: DRAPED MAN WITH SCYPHTRE SEATED ON STOBOS (KING), NIKE WITH WREATH, YOUTHS, SOME DRAPE, SOME WITH SPEARS, HORSES, WOMEN, NONSENSE INSCRIPTIONS

#### Collection:
1: Taranto, Museo Archeologico Nazionale: 6231

#### Publication Records:
- **Roeley, J.D., Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painters (Oxford, 1956): 171.**

#### Publication Records:
- **Corpus Vaseon Antiquorum: TARANTO, MUSEO NAZIONALE 3, III.C.8, FIGS.6-7, PL.15(766):33.1-4.**

#### Add Bibliography:

#### Add ID:
- **7873**

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