

Spartan Religion

Assoc. Prof. Paul McKechnie

Orthia (= Artemis)

Ivory votive in National Archaeological Museum, Athens.

Archaic period (= before 480 BC)

Image possibly reflects what the cult statue of Orthia looked like.



Apollo Karneios (= 'Horned Apollo')

Metapontium, Italy, 300-250 BC, bronze coin (11 mm, 1.59 g).



Ear of barley

(*hordeum
polystichum
pyramidatum*)

Votive relief of Dioscuri,
Archaeological Museum of Sparta

Castor and Polydeuces, twin sons of Zeus
and Leda, brothers of Helen.

575-550 BC



Leda and the swan

Albert-Ernest
Carrier-Belleuse,
c. 1870

Metropolitan
Museum, New York



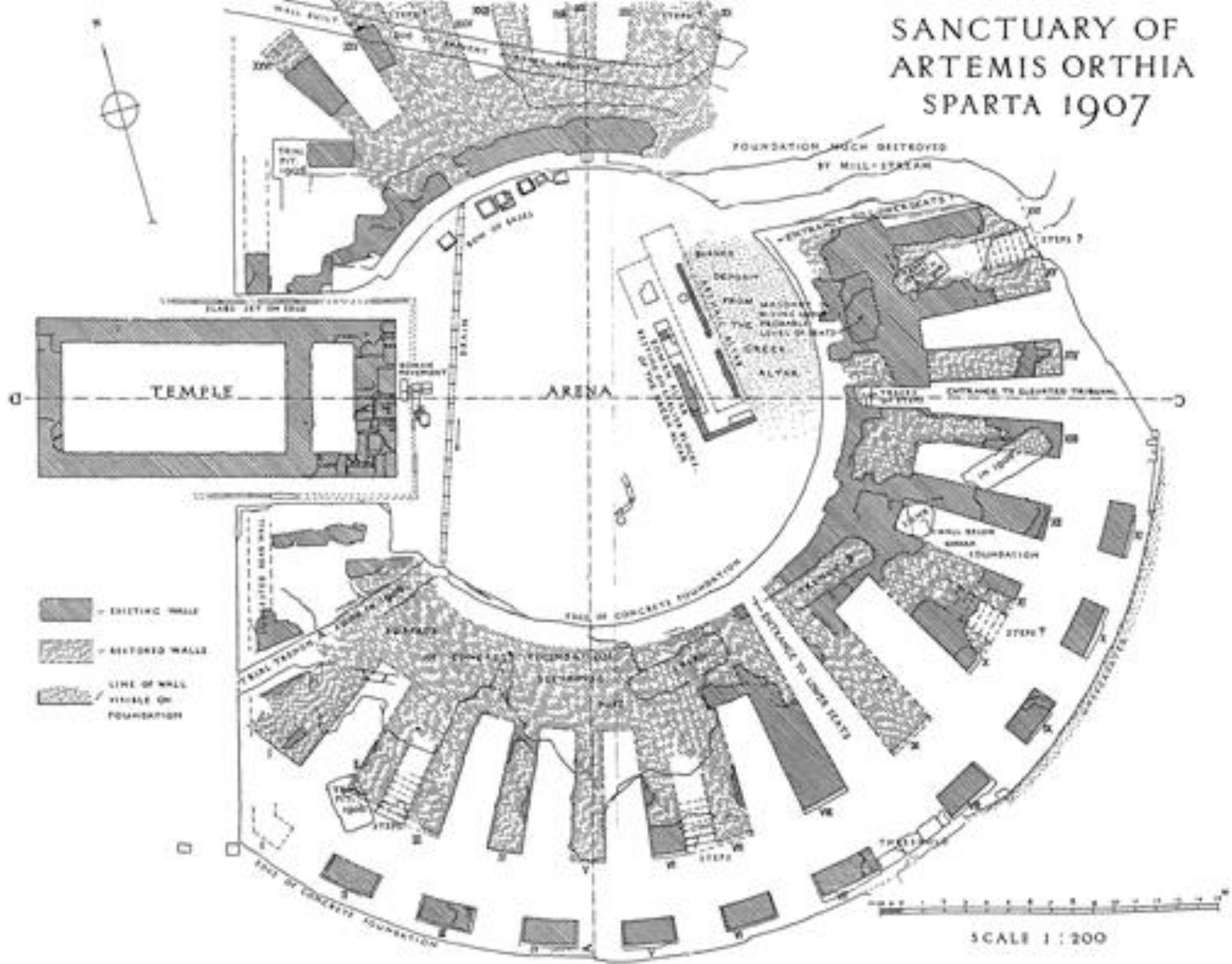
Paris and Helen on a red-figure vessel, 420-400 BC



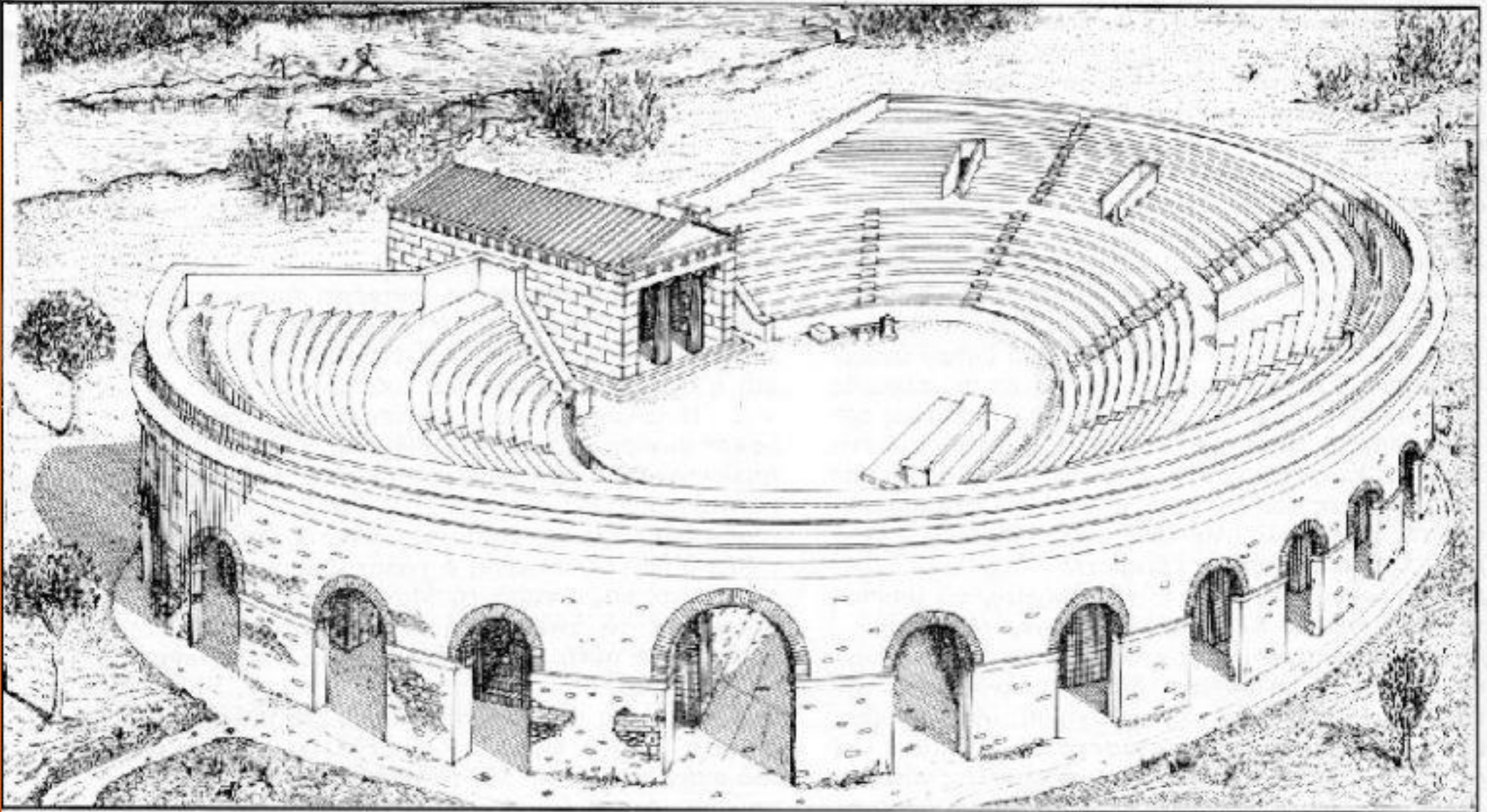
Orthia temple: what's visible



Orthia temple excavations 1907



Orthia temple plus seating for spectators, C3AD



Menelaion



Menelaion
(2)

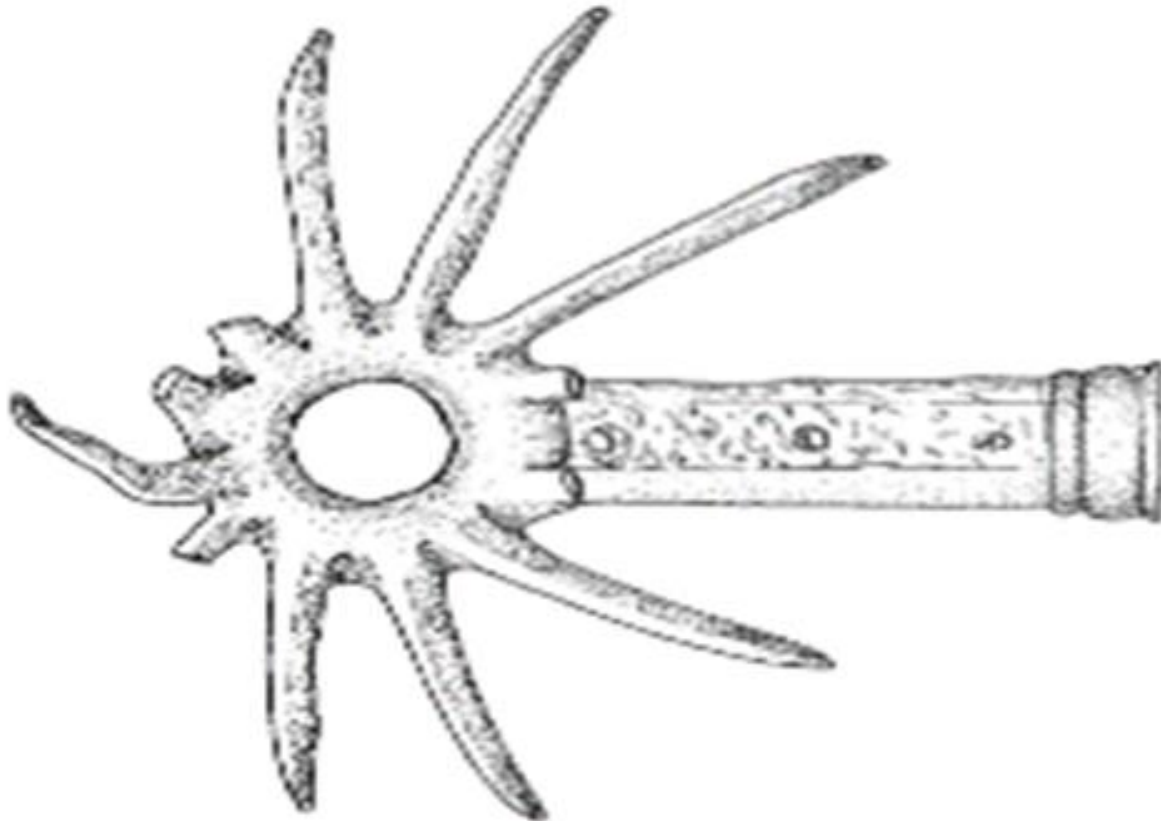


Lead votives from the Menelaion, fifth century BC



Bronze *harpax*
(‘grabber’) from
the Menelaion.

Inscription
(right to left)
ΤΑΙ ΦΕΛΕΝΑΙ
‘For Helen’.



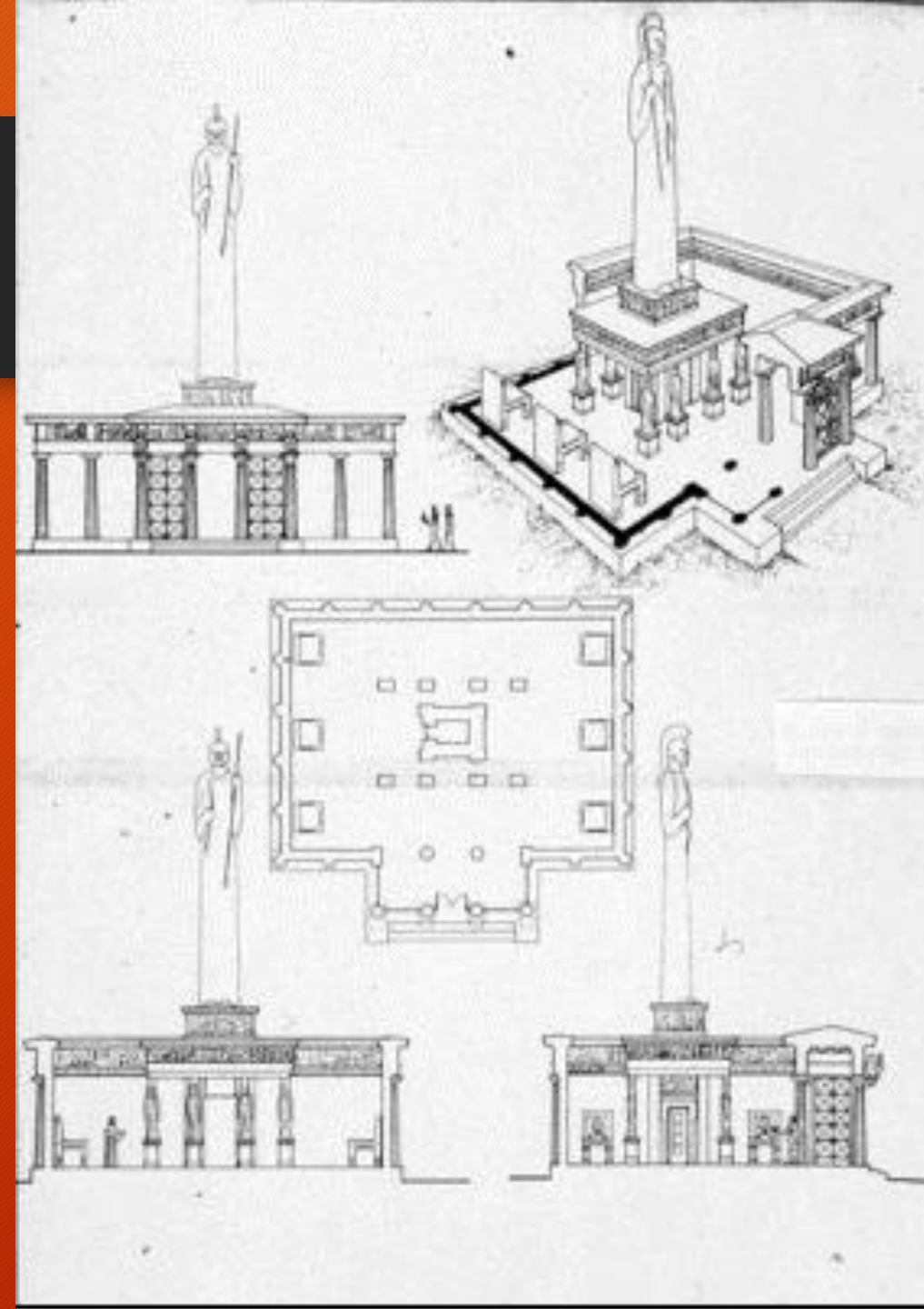
Temple of Apollo Karneios at Amyklai



What the temple at Amyklai was like

Note 14 metre high statue of Apollo,
With a colonnade round it

Architect: Bathycles. Sixth century BC



Hyacinthia (Hyacinthus was a very beautiful Spartan prince and lover of the god Apollo, who (tragically) killed him with a misdirected discus throw)

3-day festival in July: first day mourning dead Hyacinthus, second day feasting, third day mysteries were celebrated.

Gymnopaedia

Naked Boys festival, at temple of Orthia.

Karneia: 7 to 15 Metageitnion (= August). A man carrying bunches of grapes ran away and men had to follow and catch him: if they did, it was a good sign for the coming year. Then feasts, sacrifices.