

# TOPOSTEXT MOBILE APP:

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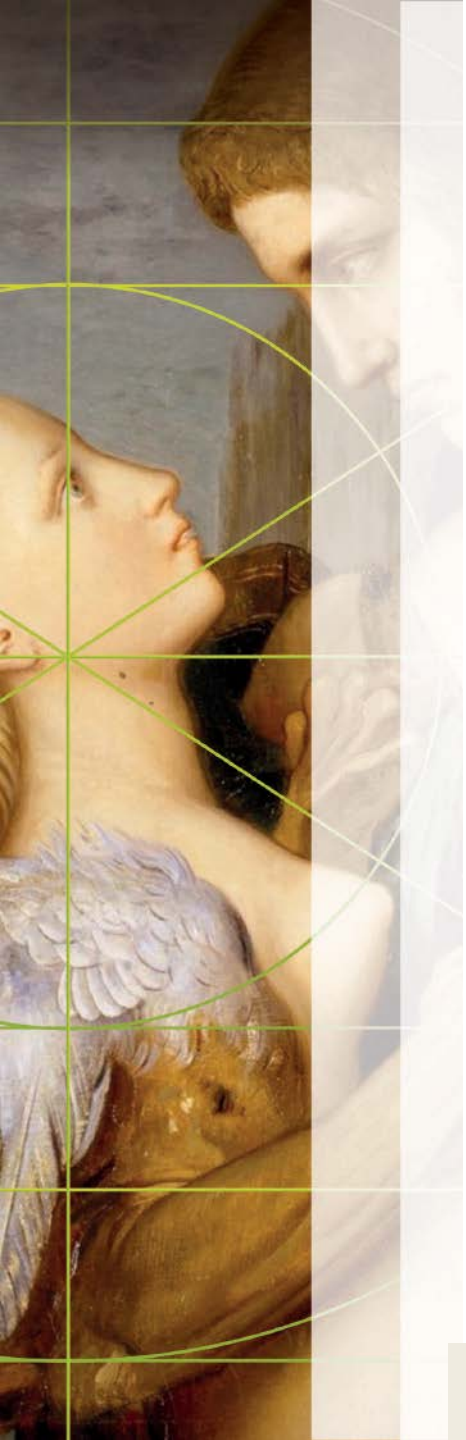
*Private  
Cultural  
Initiatives  
and  
Public  
Goods*

CD-ETA - Digitization of Monuments and  
Archaeological Sites, Ancient Olympia,  
March 15, 2018



ΠΑΥΛΟΣ Α.Ε.

Brady Kiesling [westtothesea@hotmail.com](mailto:westtothesea@hotmail.com)



# Outline

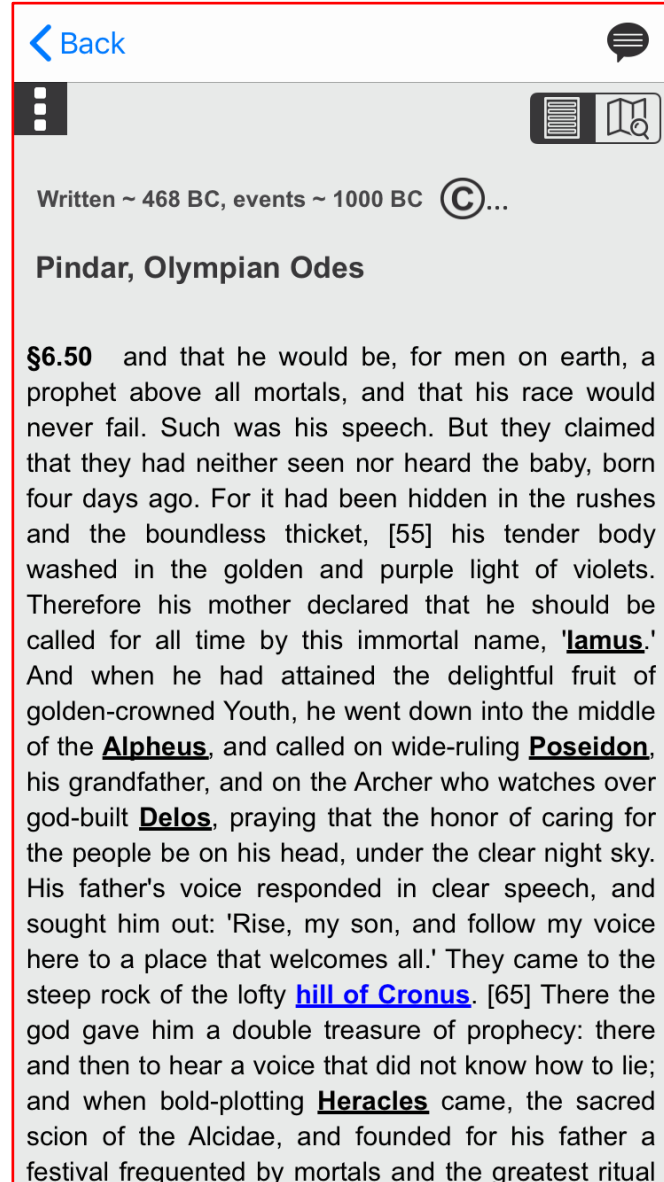
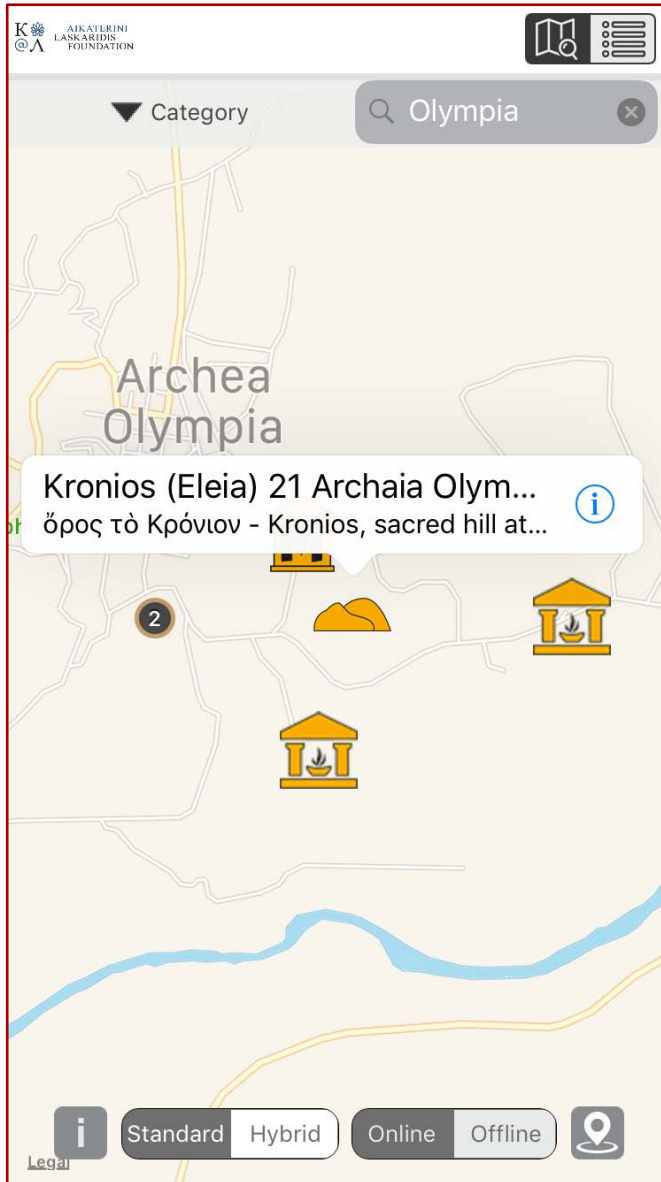
- A Tour of ToposText
- Philosophy, Sources, and Methods
- Obstacles to Progress
- Lessons Learned

# What is ToposText?

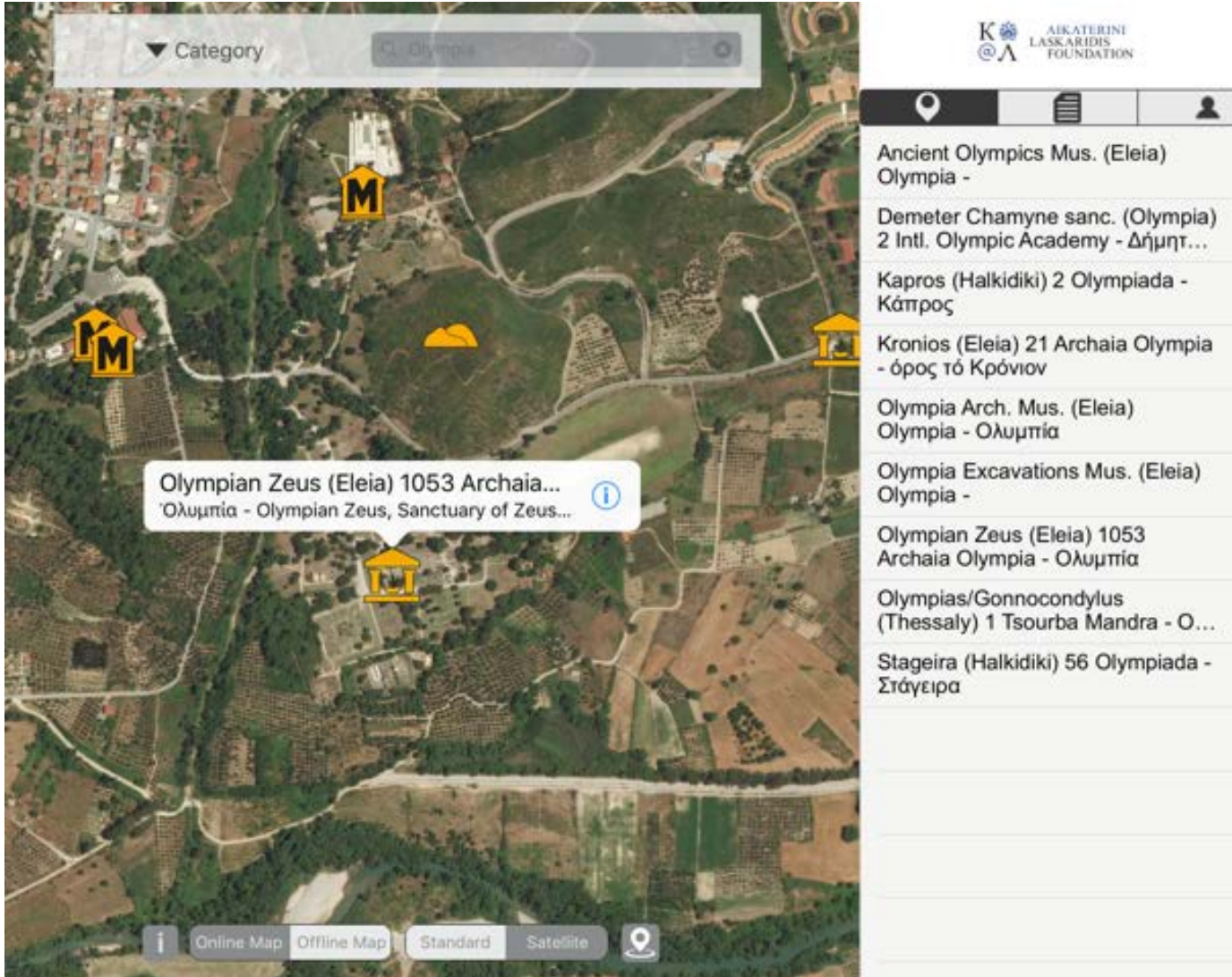
- A places gazetteer/navigator: 6500 geolocated ancient cities and archaeological sites
- A mobile text library: 700 key ancient texts in English translation, (mostly) in the public domain, with links to the original Greek and Latin (~15 million words in 85000 paragraphs)
- Key-Word-In-Context indices for places and people
- Brief descriptions of places
- Links to other resources



# Free Mobile Application for iOS and Android devices



- Huge text library and gazetteer always in your pocket
- Accurate coordinates (mostly)
- On-device storage for off-line use in places with no internet
- Reasonably intuitive navigation
- Topostext.org website



# Opening Screen

- Scrolling/searchable list of texts and places. Touching a text name loads the opening paragraphs of that work, with a map alongside.
- Touching a place name opens a link to the index page for that place

[Back](#)



**Olympian Zeus (Eleia) 1053 Archaia Olympia - Ολυμπία** Location Confidence...  
Ὀλυμπία - Olympian Zeus, Sanctuary of Zeus and home of the Olympic games, Archaia Olympia in Eleia Peloponnese

Modern Description



825  
Hits

▼ Author

▼ Category

▼ Type

▼ Language

▼ Sort By

#### Pindar, Pythian Odes

&sect;10.1 the footprints of the father, who was twice an [Olympic](#) victor in the war-enduring armor of Ares; [15] and

#### Pindar, Olympian Odes

&sect;14.1 chosen phrases, because the Minyan land is victorious at [Olympia](#) , thanks to you. Now go, Echo, to the

#### Pindar, Pythian Odes

&sect;7 song forward, and one outstanding triumph [15] at Zeus' [Olympian](#) games, and two from Cirrha- yours, Megacles, and your

#### Pindar, Isthmian Odes

&sect;6.1 pour over Aegina in honor of Zeus Soter of [Olympia](#) . [10] For if a man, rejoicing in expense

#### Bacchylides, Epinician Odes

&sect;5.1 Ode 5: For Hieron of Syracuse Single-horse victory at [Olympia](#) 476 B. C. Fortunate in your fate, commander of

#### Pindar, Olympian Odes

&sect;1.1 and let us not proclaim any contest greater than [Olympia](#) . From there glorious song enfolds the wisdom of

#### Pindar, Olympian Odes

## Index Screen

- Touching the place tab on the Map Screen brings you to the index screen.
- Each gives the key word with a dozen words before and after, allowing the reader to see at a glance what looks interesting.
- Various filters



# Regex proximity searches (web version)

SEARCH TOOL

Term1

Olympia\b

Term2

Rom[ean]+\b

Distance

200 characters ▾

Search

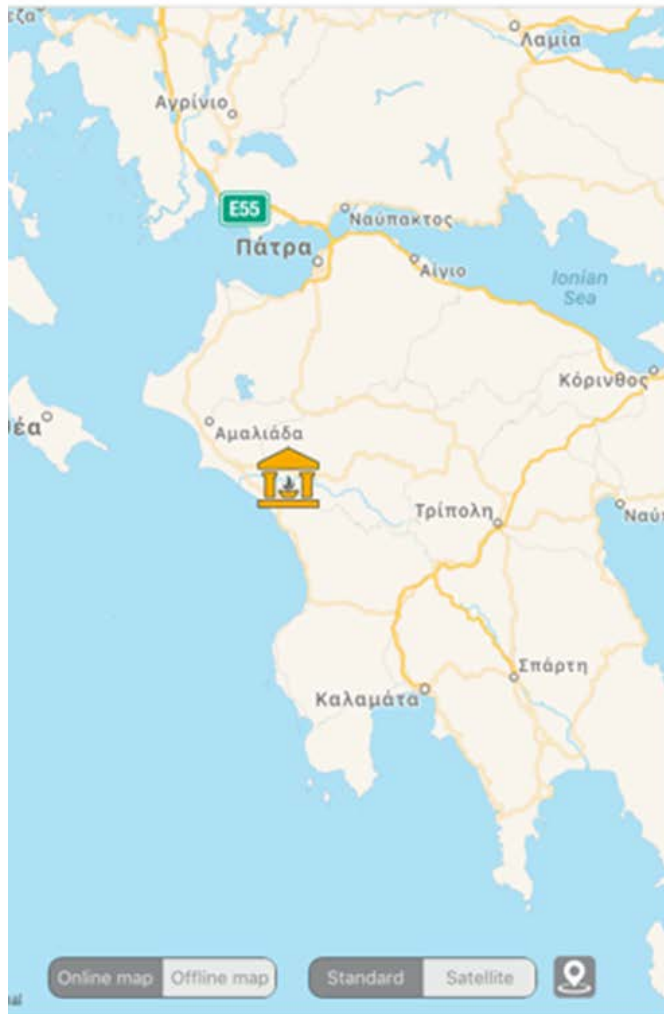
Search our 15-million-word text library for a given string of letters or a pair of words close to each other. Searches are case-insensitive; you can use simple regular expressions, for example to search for the phrase "arms and" close to "s[aiou]ng" (i.e., sing, sang, song, or sung). Be patient: results can take up to 30 seconds to pop up.

## ToposText Search Tool

12 instances found for **OLYMPIA\b** within 200 characters of **ROM[EAN]+\b** in the ToposText.org database, 2018-03-14.

- [ca. 146 BCE] 1 The Roman general, after the general assembly had left Achaea, repaired the Isthmian course and adorned the temples at Delphi and **Olympia**, and on the following days visited the different cities, honoured in each of them and receiving testimonies of the gratitude due to him ([Polybius, Histories, 39.6.1](#) - ca. 130 BCE )
- [ca. 59 BCE] § 13 [30] What? did not we decree, by the advice of Pompeius himself, in the consulship of Silanus and Murena, that a fleet should put to sea to sail round Italy? Did not we, at the very same time that Lucius Flaccus was levying sailors in Asia, exact four millions three hundred thousand sesterces for fleets to defend the Mediterranean and Adriatic? What did we do the year after? was not money exacted for the use of the fleet when Marcus Curius and Publius Sextilius were quaestors? What? were there not all this time cavalry on the sea-coast? for that is the surpassing glory of Pompeius, — first of all, that those pirates who, when the conduct of the maritime war was first entrusted to him, wandered about straggling over the whole sea, were soon reduced under our power; in the next place, that Syria is ours, that Cilicia is occupied by us, that Cyprus, through the instrumentality of king Ptolemaeus, is reduced to a state in which it can venture to do nothing; moreover, that Crete, owing to the valour of Metellus, is ours; that the pirates have now no ports from which they can set out none to which they can return; that all the bays, and promontories, and shores, and islands, and maritime cities, are now contained within the barriers of our empire. [31] But if, when Flaccus was praetor, there had been not one pirate at sea, still his diligence would not have deserved to be blamed. For I should think that the reason of there being no pirates at sea was, because he had a fleet. What will you say if I prove by the evidence of Lucius Oppius, of Lucius Agrius, of Caius Cestius, **Roman** knights, and also of this most industrious man here present, Cnaeus Domitius, who was an ambassador in Asia at the time, that at that very time in which you yourself affirm that there was no need of a fleet, numbers of men were taken prisoners by the pirates? Still, will the wisdom of Flaccus, as shown in raising crews for the fleet, be found fault with? What if a man of high rank, a citizen of Adramyttium, was even slain by the pirates, — a man whose name is known to nearly all of us,

Back



EN GR

Written ~ 174 CE, events ~ 1 BC ©

### Pausanias, Description of Greece

Messenians after their second revolt. On it is an elegiac couplet: 'Accept, king, son of Cronus, Olympian Zeus, lovely image, And have a heart propitious to the Lacedemonians.

§5.24.4 We know of no Roman, either commoner or senator who gave a votive offering to a Greek sanctuary before Mummius, and he dedicated at Olympia a bronze Zeus from the spoils of Achaia. It stands on the left of the offering of the Lacedemonians by the side of the first pillar on this side of the temple. The largest of the bronze images of Zeus in the Altis is twenty-seven feet high, and was dedicated by the Eleans themselves from the plunder of the war with the Arcadians.

§5.24.5 Beside the Pelopium is a pillar of no great height with a small image of Zeus on it; one hand is outstretched. Opposite this are other offerings in a row, and likewise images of Zeus and Ganymedes. Homer's poem tells how Ganymedes was carried off by the gods to be wine-bearer to Zeus, and how horses were given to Tros in exchange for him. This offering was dedicated by the Thessalian Gnathios and made by Aristocles, pupil and son of Cleotas.

§5.24.6 There is also another Zeus represented as a beardless youth, which is among offerings of Micythus. The history of Micythus, his family, and why he dedicated so

## Text Screen

- From the Index, touching a given entry brings you to the full text of the passage, centered on the place referred to, with a map showing the location of the place.



ToposText: a website and mobile application for scholars, students, and travelers.

Based on faith in:

- Primary sources
- Local history
- The validity of educated travel
- Sharing data

Inspired by frustration with:

- Inadequate signage
- Inaccessible ancient sources

# Simple tools, decade-old technology

- Excel (not free)
- Abbyy FineReader OCR software (costly)
- Notepad++ text processing program (free)
- Strawberry Perl (free)
- Sqlite browser for Windows, (free)
- GIMP image manipulation software (free )
- Google Earth Professional (free)
- Perl scripts (paid for in beer):
  1. Place tagging script (Bruce Hartzler)
  2. Transliteration script (Bruce)
  3. Indexing script (Bruce, modified by JBK)
  4. KML generating script (JBK)
  5. Proper name extraction tool (JBK)
  6. Point-in-polygon script for admin data (Bruce)



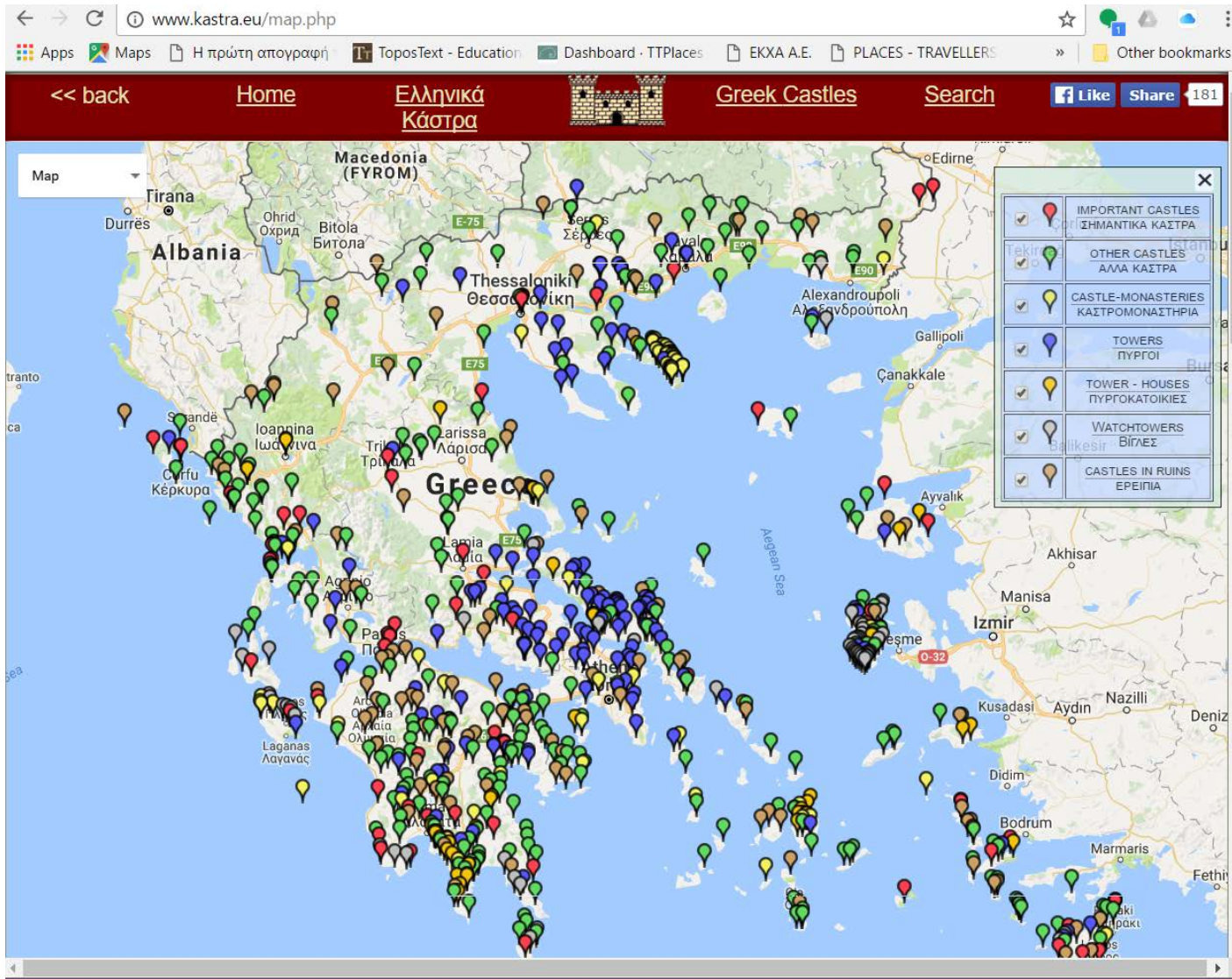
## Why did it take 4+ years?

- Finding, organizing and correcting translated texts.
- Finding archaeological sites
- Establishing accurate coordinates.
- Every week, some scholarly article or lecture pushes me to improve a given region or text.
- A lifetime's work ahead



## Links to:

- ancient texts in Greek and Latin
- Travelogues website of early traveler images
- Chroniques des Fouilles
- PHI Epigraphy search
- Digital Atlas of the Roman Empire
- Pleiades, iDAI gazetteers
- Pelagios Periplo LOD browser
- Your site: fill in the blank\_\_\_\_\_



# Cooperation

Kastrologos: several hundred medieval castles and other monuments, courtesy of Manolis Papathanasiou  
[www.kastra.eu](http://www.kastra.eu)

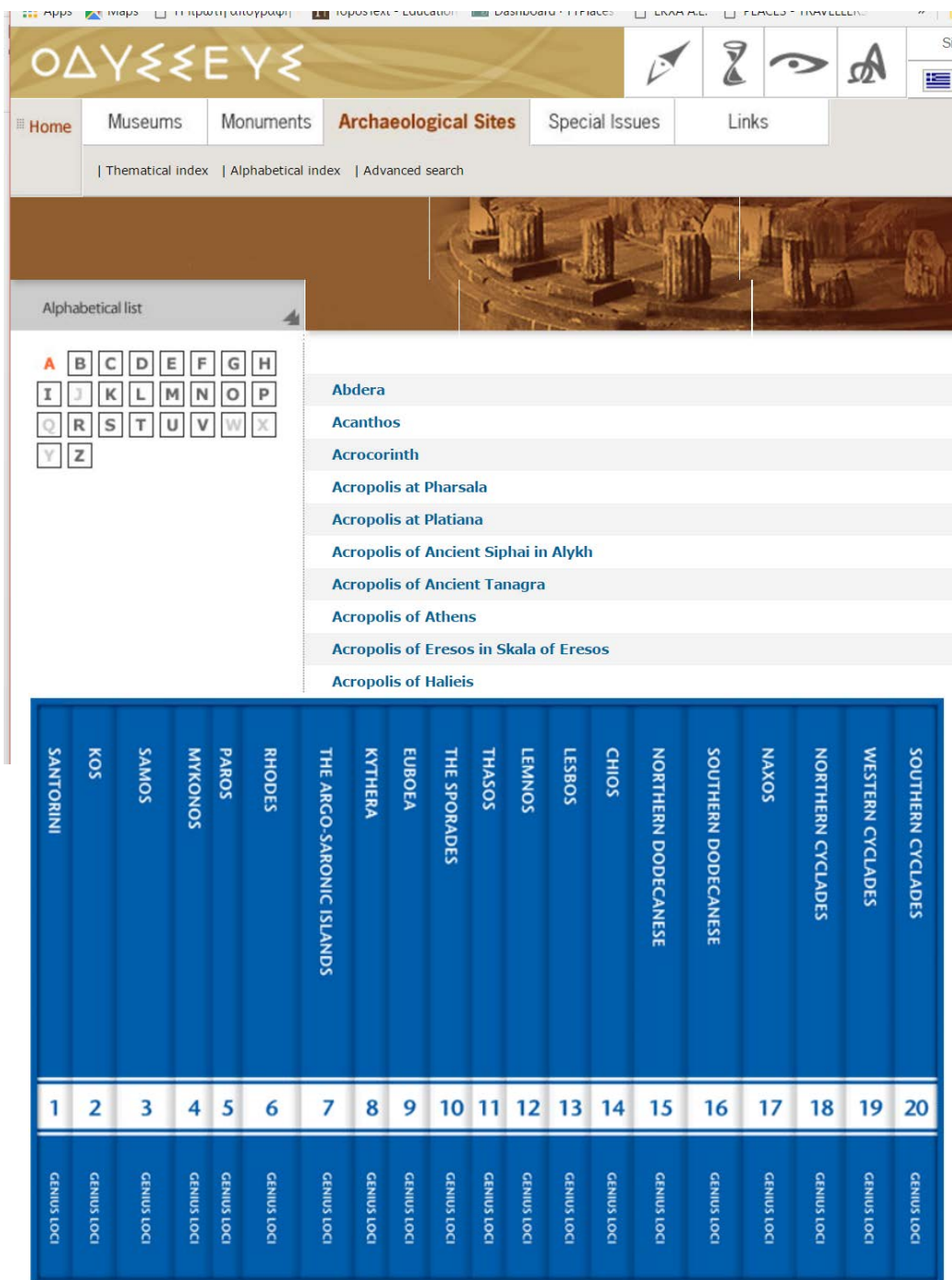
# Public Domain and Open License Texts

- Perseus Project (Tufts University)
- LacusCurtius (University of Chicago)
- Theoi.com (New Zealand)
- Gutenberg.org
- Archive.org
- Classics.MIT.edu
- Tertullian.org
- Wikisource.org
- Attalus.org
- Sacred-texts.com
- Livius.org
- SoudaOnLine
- Harpokration On Line



## New Translations/Adaptations (Kiesling)

- Athenian Tribute Lists
- Pseudo Scylax, Periplous
- Delphic Theorodochoi Inscription
- Pseudo Scymnus, Circuit of the Earth
- Ptolemaeus, Geography (partial)
- Anonymous Stadiasmus of the Great Sea
- Burdigala Itinerary
- Peutinger Table
- Stephanus of Byzantium, Ethnica
- Conon, Narrations (Photius)



# Description Sources

- Odysseus web site of the Greek Ministry of Culture
- McGilchrist's Greek Islands
- Princeton Encyclopedia of Classical Sites
- Archaeological Atlas of the Aegean (Ministry of the Aegean)
- Etc...

## The Future:

- App alerts to nearby sites
- Georeferenced site plans as off-line map layer
- Bookmarking, sharing of text passages
- Images?
- Ancient roads, rivers, as shape files?
- Deeper tagging of monuments within cities and sanctuaries
- Updated, more complete site descriptions?



# The Future: Data analysis?

account **Aegeus** Aethra afterwards already Amazon's Antiope  
**Ariadne** asked **Athenians** **Athens** away battle born  
bring called carried children city coming Crete daughter  
dead deeds Demophon father festival fighting following found gave hand  
Helen **Heracles** **Hercules** heroes **Hippolytus** killed  
king land love man marriage Minos mother name  
Peirithous people Phaedra Prithous received returned rock sailed  
sea ship **son** taken thee **Theseus** thou thy  
look Troezen war wife wish years youths Zeus

- Word Clouds for People index pages?
- Dynamic SNA display relating target person/place to other people/places via proximity in texts?

# A User Community?

## Feedback for this place

Email \*

westtothesea@hotmail.com

### Rate the place you mentioned above

- ☐ Upgrade it. It is a great site to visit.
  - ☐ Downgrade it. There is nothing much to see.
  - ☒ It was impossible to find.
- 
- ☒ It was fenced and locked.
  - ☐ Other

Submit

What place do you want to comment about?

Helike (Achaia) / Nikoleika - Ελίκη

### A problem with ToposText?

- ☐ There are more accurate coordinates
- ☐ There is a link to something better
- ☐ The TT information is about somewhere else
- ☐ The information is useless or out of date
- ☒ I would like to contribute a picture/plan. Please contact me at the email above

- Feedback pages
- Translations, descriptions, photographs
- Modern Greek and other languages?

# Broadening the Concept

- ToposText is a way of linking places to texts to make information accessible and portable
- The same software/techniques can be used for any combination of texts and places
- Hoping to attract interest for cooperative projects, e.g. Early Travelers, pilgrimage sites.

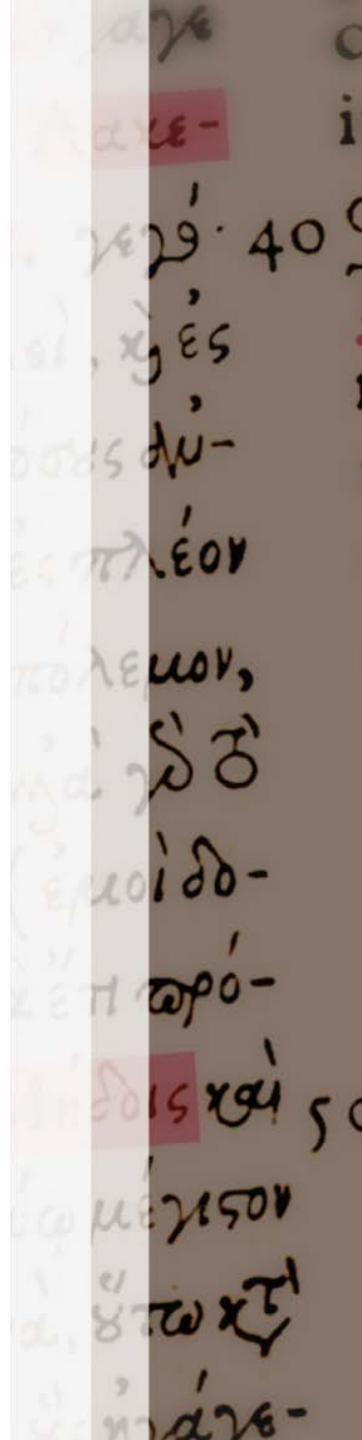


## Some Obstacles:

- Superstitious reverence for antiquity but no love.
- Availability of EU money drives project design (Sustainability is a bug, not a feature)
- Bureaucratic suspicion of private sector solutions
- Secretiveness, instinct to hoard data for a finished publication rather than reveal the intellectual processes at work in archaeology
- Incoherent intellectual property rights management
- Poor technical skills, print-based presentation of information
- Vested interests: site guards, professional archaeologists, local politicians, tourist guides
- Poorly educated public with few role models.

# Obstacles: Intellectual Property Rights

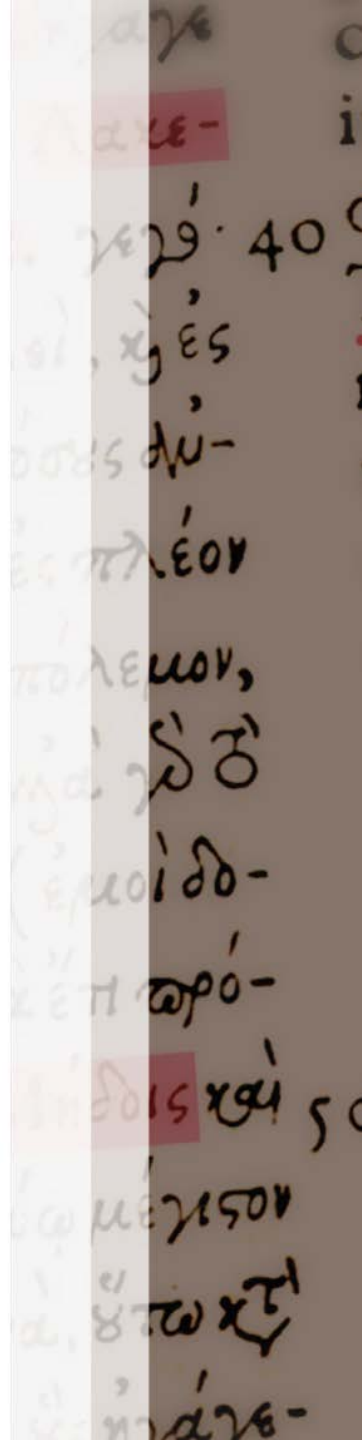
- Over-protective/exclusive attitudes toward ancient Greek culture
- Fetish over intellectual property rights with no clear policy for exploiting those rights
- Secrecy



## Obstacles: Archaeological Attitudes

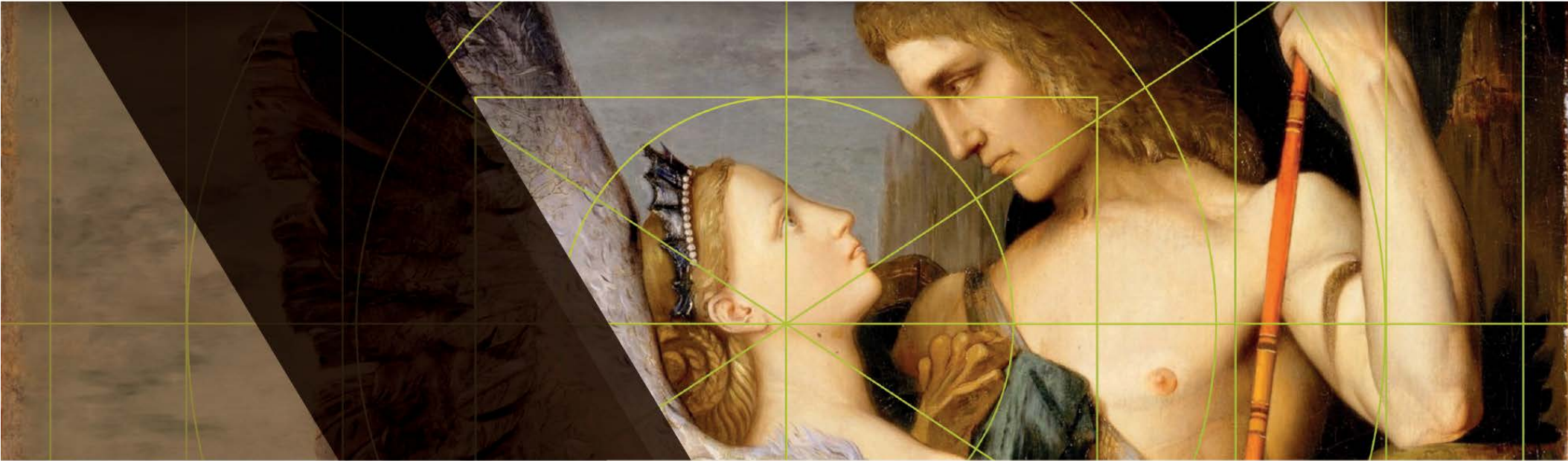


# Obstacles: Information not a public good



# Lessons Learned

- Stay ignorant. If you understood how hard a serious cultural app is to make, you would never begin.
- We are creating tools to be used, not artwork to be admired.
- Other users will have different needs than you: make it a Swiss Army knife, not a dental pick.
- You need a critical mass of data around which your project will coalesce. Amateurs are the most diligent collectors of cultural information. Respect them.
- Keep your data format simple.
- Your users will engage more with your mistakes, and thus learn more, than they will from elegant ontologies over which you slaved to achieve the illusion of theoretical rigor.
- Multiple layers of technical jargon are a barrier to successful communication with the enthusiasts who will keep your project alive.
- Do not let the need to be seductive in grant applications lead you to hide the core usefulness of your app under dazzling, illegible data displays.
- Taking advice from people who will never use your app will waste huge amounts of your time.



## Questions and criticism ...?

Esprit d'escalier, second thoughts, factual corrections:  
email me at [topostext@gmail.com](mailto:topostext@gmail.com)