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Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Zentrale, Podbielskiallee 69–71, 14195 Berlin, Tel: +49 30 187711-0

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A. J. S. SPAWFORTH

The Panhellenion Again¹

Since this writer's contribution to two papers on the Panhellenion in the mid-1980's,² there has been a continuing accretion of new evidence and interpretations relating to this Athens-based organization of subject-Greeks founded in 131/32. The limited purpose of this paper is to address three unresolved questions highlighted by recent research, on the answers to which in large measure depend any assessment of the Panhellenion's historical significance.

1. Whose idea was the Panhellenion?

The usual view of scholars going back at least as far as MOMMSEN is that the Panhellenion was a creation of the emperor Hadrian. It is as an imperial initiative that the institution assumes its place, not just in specialist work about the Roman east, but in more general histories of Rome and her emper-

¹ The research on which this paper is based was begun during a British Academy/Leverhulme Trust senior research fellowship, spent at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton. I am grateful to A. R. BIRLEY and S. WALKER for reading a draft version; the end-result remains entirely my responsibility. The following additional abbreviations are used: ANTONETTI = C. ANTONETTI, *La centralità di Eleusi nell'ideologia panellenica adrianea*, *Ostraka* 4, 1995, 149–56; BIRLEY = A. R. BIRLEY, *Hadrian. The Restless Emperor*, London 1997; BOATWRIGHT = M. T. BOATWRIGHT, *Hadrian, Athens and the Panhellenion*, *JRA* 7, 1994, 426–31; FOLLET = S. FOLLET, *Athènes au IIe et au IIIe siècle*, Paris 1976; FOLLET – PEPPAS-DELMOUSOU = S. FOLLET – D. PEPPAS-DELMOUSOU, *Le décret de Thyatire sur les bienfaits d'Hadrien et le «Panthéon» d'Hadrien à Athènes*, *BCH* 121, 1997, 291–309; JONES = C. P. JONES, *The Panhellenion*, *Chiron* 26, 1996, 29–56; MAROTTA = V. MAROTTA, *Il Senato e il Panhellenion*, *Ostraka* 4, 1995, 157–67; MITCHELL = S. MITCHELL, *Review of D. Willers, Hadrians panhellenisches Programm*, *BJ* 192, 1992, 718–722; OLIVER, *Greek Constitutions* = J. H. OLIVER, *Greek Constitutions of Early Roman Emperors*, Philadelphia 1989; OLIVER, *Marcus Aurelius* = J. H. OLIVER, *Marcus Aurelius: Aspects of Civic and Cultural Policy in the East*, Princeton 1972; PRICE = S. R. F. PRICE, *Rituals and Power*, Cambridge 1984; SPAWFORTH – WALKER I, II = A. J. SPAWFORTH – S. WALKER, *The World of the Panhellenion*, *JRS* 75, 1985, 78–104; 76, 1986, 88–105; WILLERS = D. WILLERS, *Hadrians panhellenisches Programm*, Basel 1990; WÖRRLE = M. WÖRRLE, *Neue Inschriftenfunde aus Aizanoi I*, *Chiron* 22, 1992, 337–76.

² SPAWFORTH – WALKER I, II.

ors.³ This view is based on the assumption – unquestioned until recently – that the Panhellenion was self-evidently a manifestation of Hadrian's Greek, and specifically «panhellenic», interests. For the first time, the common view is now supported by new evidence providing an unambiguous contemporary perception of the Panhellenion as Hadrian's creation.

The text in question is a badly-damaged decree of the Lydian city of Thyatira, set up in Athens to mark the city's admission to the Panhellenion; Hadrian was still alive at the time of its passage, although the decree cannot be dated more precisely between 131/32 and 138. Portions of the text have been known since the nineteenth century, but it has recently been reedited to accommodate two new fragments, and it is these which significantly alter understanding of the document at key points. The purpose of the decree was to place on record Thyatira's gratitude to Hadrian for his benefactions, both to the Greeks in general by founding the Panhellenion, and to Thyatira in particular. The former are described as follows in the resolution of the decree (lines 11–16):

. . . . τόδ[ε ψήφι]σμα ἐνχαράξει λιθ[ίνη]ι στ[τήλη]ι καὶ στ[τή-]
 σαι ἐν [Ἀκρο]πόλει, [ἵνα] ἔκδηλον [γένοιτο τοῖς Ἑλ]λησι ἅπασιν ὅσων [δὴ
 τε]τύχηκεν
 ἀπὸ τοῦ [μ]εγίστου βα[σι]λέως, ὅτι ἰδία καὶ κοινῇ πᾶν τὸ τῶν Ἑλλή[νων]
 εὐεργέτησεν
 ὁ βασιλεύς, συναγα[γῶν] ἐξ αὐ[τῶν] ἐκείνο τὸ συνέδριον, ὡς φι[λο]τεμίαν
 κοινήν,
 εἰς τῆ[ν] λαμ[π]ροτάτη[ν Ἀ]θην[αίων] πόλιν, τῆ[ν] Εὐεργέτιν, καρπ[ὸν τῶν]
 Μυστηρίων
 ὁμοῦ πᾶσι διδοῦ]σαν, τὸ [δὲ σεμνότα]τον Πανελλήνιον

«(It was decided) to engrave this decree on a stone stele and to set it up on the Acropolis, so that it might be clear to all the Greeks how much (the city) has therefore obtained from the greatest king (sc. Hadrian), seeing that both individually and in common the king has been a benefactor of all the Greeks, assembling from them that council, as a common mark of esteem, in the most brilliant city of the Athenians, the Benefactress, which gives to all at the same place the fruit of the Mysteries, that is, the most revered Panhellenion» etc.

Although the Greek is lacunose, the suggested restorations by the editors seem to convey the general sense of what is left on the stone. Particularly striking is the alleged agency of Hadrian himself in «gathering together» (συναγα[γῶν] the Greeks into a council at Athens, and the justification of the choice of Athens

³ TH. MOMMSEN, *Römische Geschichte* V, Berlin 1919, 245. Cp., e.g., W. WEBSTER, *Cambridge Ancient History* XI, Cambridge 1936, 320; L. HOMO, *Histoire romaine* III, Paris 1933, 484. Among more recent works: G. W. BOWERSOCK, *Storia di Roma. II. L'impero mediterraneo*. 2.1, Torino 1991, 413; M. SARTRE, *L'Orient romain: Provinces et sociétés provinciales en Méditerranée orientale*, Paris 1991, 210; BIRLEY 218–19.

in terms of Athenian, and specifically Eleusinian, benefits to civilization – a familiar theme in Roman and later Greek thought, but never before articulated explicitly in relation to the Panhellenion. Of course, this is not a Roman state document, nor even the witness of an ancient historian. But it articulates the view from inside the Panhellenion of who willed the institution into existence, and why (in a nutshell) Athens was chosen as host-city.

The Thyatiran document reinforces the other, more circumstantial, evidence for Hadrian's decisive rôle. His general support for a pan-Greek awareness (to put it no stronger than that) is suggested by his addition of the epithet «Panhellenius» to this official nomenclature in 132,⁴ by his gift to the Athenians of a shrine (ναός) of Zeus Panhellenius,⁵ and by the way in which his dedication of the Olympieum in 131/32 was turned, presumably with official prompting, into a ceremony attended by representatives of many eastern provincial communities (see below).

A strand of imperial thinking more directly related to the creation of the Panhellenion appears in a well-known letter from Hadrian to Delphi, dated 125. The text contains a series of imperial decisions about the Delphic Amphictyony and the Pythian games.⁶ The relevant lines (column II, lines 1–6) are as follows:

[Κα]θ' ἃ μέντοι χορῆ ποιεῖν κατὰ τοῦ[ς] νόμους, [εἰ]σ[ήνεγκαν]
 γνόμεν εἰς τὴν λαμπροτάτην σ[ύ]γκλητον εἰσηγη[σάμε]-
 νοι τὰς ψήφους ἅς πλέονας τῶ[ν] ἄλλων ἔχουσιν Θεσ[σαλ]-
 λ[οῖ] Ἀθηναίους καὶ Λακεδαιμονί[ο]ις διανεμηθῆναι καὶ ταῖ[ς]
 ἄλ[λαις] πόλεσι, ἵνα ἧ κοινὸν πάντ[ω]ν τῶν Ἑλλήνων τὸ συνέ-
 δ[ρ]ιον

«Moreover, as they had to do according to the laws, they reported to the most splendid Senate, proposing that the surplus votes of the Thessalians should be distributed among the Athenians, the Spartans and the other poleis, so that the council might be a common one of all the Greeks.»

Hadrian here alludes to a proposal, recently put before the Senate, to enlarge the Amphictyony. Its anonymous authors were named in the preceding lines, now lost. Only Roman senators could place proposals before their peers,⁷ and the reasonable suggestion has been made that this proposal originated with a senatorial commission sent by Hadrian to investigate Delphian affairs.⁸ Who-

⁴ FOLLET 59.

⁵ Pausanias 1, 18, 9.

⁶ OLIVER, Greek Constitutions no. 75.

⁷ For procedure regarding senatorial proposals in this period see R. J. A. TALBERT, *The Senate of Imperial Rome*, Princeton 1984, esp. 234–89.

⁸ A. PLASSART, *Fouilles de Delphes III*, 4, Paris 1970, 78; G. DAUX, *Recueil Plassart*, Paris 1976, 74; MAROTTA 161–62. The proposer(s), in the plural, could have been the commissioners themselves, according to the procedure whereby the appropriate officials

ever precisely these senators were, it is hard to believe that the «panhellenic» tenor of their proposals arose independently of the emperor: on the contrary, they were presumably submitted in the belief that they had caught the imperial mood. In that case, the Delphian text may be as near as we shall ever get to a contemporary echo of Hadrian's motives: a wish for a council «common to all the Greeks», and one that included Athens and Sparta. It seems that in 125 the antiquarian focus of the later Panhellenion on «old Greece» was already anticipated. Hadrian never implemented these proposals, however: in the letter he goes on to other business without giving any decision, and a generation later Athens and Sparta were no better represented on the Amphictyony than they had been in 125.⁹ The later creation of the Panhellenion suggests that Hadrian's «panhellenic» project was long meditated, and that the idea of basing it on Delphi was considered at an earlier stage but later abandoned.¹⁰

Hadrian is likely to have consulted others about his «panhellenic» plans. The Senate was involved in the creation of the Panhellenion, as emerges from the Thyatiran decree, stating that «the Romans of the sacred Senate were in agreement» with the initiative ([δ]μολογού[των τῶν Ῥωμαίων τῆς ἱερᾶς] συγκλήτου).¹¹ The proposal to enlarge the Amphictyony in 125 had also been put before the same body. By Hadrian's reign, imperial consultation of the Senate was a formality, but senatorial validation may have been sought for the added legitimacy which it conferred on «panhellenic» proposals altering the status quo in a public province.¹² Over the years Hadrian surely also developed his ideas for an «all-Greek» body in discussions with members of his entourage,¹³ including, perhaps, prominent mainland Greeks such as the Athenian Atticus and the Spartan Eurycles Herculanus.¹⁴ It would not be surprising if such men were sympathetic: after all, sycophancy apart, they came from cities in old Greece on which the Panhellenion conferred a new importance and, at least for Athens, concrete benefits as host-city.¹⁵ In this respect at least, it may be true that «influential Greeks in the time of Hadrian desired a union of this type.»¹⁶

were invited by the presiding consul to give an expert explanation (*verba facere*), sometimes accompanied by a proposed solution, on business put forward in the presidential *relatio*: see TALBERT, l.c. (n. 7) 236–39.

⁹ DAUX, l.c. (n. 8) 77.

¹⁰ As seen by WILLERS 99–100; ANTONETTI 149; BIRLEY 218–19; see also SPAWFORTH – WALKER II, 96.

¹¹ FOLLET – PEPPAS-DELMOUSOU 296, lines 16–17, and 302.

¹² See MAROTTA 163–67.

¹³ Note the Roman senator Mettius Modestus, his precise identity disputed, who advised Thyatira in connection with the city's entry to the Panhellenion: FOLLET – PEPPAS-DELMOUSOU 296, line 7, 302; MAROTTA 158.

¹⁴ As suggested by BIRLEY 218.

¹⁵ For Sparta, see SPAWFORTH – WALKER II, 95–96.

¹⁶ OLIVER, Marcus Aurelius, 94.

A more far-reaching claim has recently been made, however, that the Panhellenion was actually a Greek, not an imperial, initiative.¹⁷ This view was put forward before the new readings of the Thyatiran decree were available; it is based too on a passage of Dio which admits of a different interpretation (see below). But it raises a general issue of historical probability which is worth examining further. How, and why, would subject-cities from all sides of the Aegean have united of their own accord into a pan-provincial organization? As to the «how», the ambitious scope of the Panhellenion needs first to be recalled. From the outset the organization was pan-provincial, as is shown by the early recruitment of Thyatira and (by 135) Cyrene (see below), and its creation may have raised questions of Roman administrative law, which helps to explain the involvement of the Roman Senate in its foundation.¹⁸ For Greek provincials to think up a new initiative along such far-reaching lines would be completely without parallel. As the Thyatiran decree makes clear, moreover, the Panhellenion was a homage to Athens, so that participation was also a form of subordination of one city to another. Not only did Panhellenes have to journey to Athens and back, but member-cities also gave harvest-offerings to Eleusis.¹⁹ In a world of fierce inter-city rivalries, such institutionalized deference to the Athenians will not necessarily have had a wide appeal. Against the apparent enthusiasm for the Panhellenion of one overseas member-city, Aezani,²⁰ should be set the absence from the known membership of three others: Smyrna, Pergamum and Ephesus. The extreme sensitivity among these proud cities (precisely in this period) to perceived slights to their civic pretensions is well-known,²¹ so that it is not easy to see their omission as merely the serendipity of epigraphic preservation. Indeed, as C. P. JONES has pointed out, the capacity of the Panhellenion to inflame intercity squabbling is now on record following his reedition of a Cyrenaean text, revealing rivalry over membership between Cyrene and neighbouring Ptolemais-Barca.²²

As to the «why», it has been suggested that the Greeks may have wished to mark Hadrian's «great achievement in completing the Olympieion after the

¹⁷ JONES, esp. 30 and 33–34.

¹⁸ MAROTTA, esp. 159–61, 163–67.

¹⁹ K. CLINTON, ANRW II 18, 2, 1989, 1520–21.

²⁰ See the new inscription from Aezani published by WÖRRLE 337–49, and his comments, 340 n. 11, to OLIVER, Marcus Aurelius, no. 30, lines 11–12, a letter from the archon of the Panhellenion praising an ex-Panhellene from Aezani who had remained in Athens «for the entire period of the sitting» of 153–57 (παρὰ πάντα τὸν τῆς συνεδρείας χρόνον): «Daß Eurykles die vierjährige συνεδρεία-Periode zur Gänze in Athen verbrachte, scheint bemerkenswert und mithin außergewöhnlich gewesen zu sein.»

²¹ OLIVER, Greek Constitutions 135 A–B.

²² JONES 42 and App. I, reediting OLIVER, Greek Constitutions no. 120.

lapse of eight centuries».²³ But it is surely questionable whether building activity in one provincial city could have prompted others in Asia or Africa spontaneously to form a «Panhellenion». The Panhellenion was more, anyway, than an organization for the worship of Hadrian, even if the imperial cult came to loom large (see below). It had a fundamental relation with the sanctuary of Eleusis, as the reedited decree of Thyatira spells out for the first time (above),²⁴ and other evidence confirms.²⁵ It also configured the Greek world in a distinctive and far from self-evident way, since colonization from the historic cities of old Greece, historical or mythical, appears to have been a condition of membership for overseas cities,²⁶ while the cities of the Hellenistic diaspora seem to have been excluded (below). Again, it is hard to avoid seeing the hand of the ruling power in all this: Hadrian's personal enthusiasm for Eleusis is well attested,²⁷ as it is for old Greece, Athens above all.²⁸ The «ideological» elevation of old Greece within the Panhellenion, moreover, was in keeping with a long-standing Roman «construction» of the Greek world reaching back to the late Republic, and reinforced by Augustus, of whom Hadrian was an explicit imitator.²⁹ In general terms it is arguably easier to understand the Panhellenion as an initiative from above, not from below.

2. *The Panhellenion and the imperial cult*

Going back to the Amphictyony, one (but not the only) reason why this body may have been deemed unsuitable for adaptation to an «all-Greek» council is that its prime religious function was the administration of the temple and cult of Apollo. Recent interpretations of the Panhellenion, however, have rightly stressed its importance as a «centre of the Imperial cult».³⁰ This emerges with particular clarity from the new finding that the Panhellenes wore crowns with imperial busts attached, just like provincial priests of the emperors.³¹ The cult

²³ JONES 34.

²⁴ FOLLET – PEPPAS-DELMOUSOU 303, commenting on lines 14–16: «Les raisons données pour expliquer l'installation du Panhellénion à Athènes prouvent que le lien avec Éleusis est fondamental dès la création de cet organisme.»

²⁵ JONES 36, emphasising the link and the evidence for it.

²⁶ JONES 41.

²⁷ CLINTON, l.c. (n. 19) 1516–25; ANTONETTI, esp. 150–51; BIRLEY 215–16.

²⁸ E.g. K. ARAFAT, *Pausanias' Greece*, Cambridge 1996, 159–88.

²⁹ See provisionally A. SPAWFORTH in: I. MALKIN ed., *Ancient Perceptions of Greek ethnicity*, Harvard forthcoming. For Hadrian's *imitatio Augusti* see ANTONETTI 150–51; BIRLEY 96, 108, 111, 176, 200–201, 215, 296–97.

³⁰ See the remarks of MITCHELL 722; JONES 43 (an institution «devoted above all to the cult of Hadrian and later emperors»).

³¹ See WÖRRLE 357 with n. 93 and plate 6.6, stressing that this evidence pertains to the Panhellenes as a whole, not their archon, as understood by JONES 35.

administered by the Panhellenes began as one of the living emperor Hadrian, under the cult-title of «Panhellenius». After Hadrian's death the Panhellenes went on to include his successor in the cult, which evidently evolved into one of the θεοὶ Σεβαστοὶ both living and dead, according to a familiar pattern in the Roman east.³² A passage in Dio is considered next, because it provides us with a seemingly unambiguous statement about the origins of this cult (69, 16, 1–2): «Hadrian completed the Olympieum at Athens, in which his own statue also stands, and dedicated there a serpent, which had been brought from India. He also presided at the Dionysia, first assuming the highest office among the Athenians, and arrayed in the local costume, carried it off brilliantly. He allowed the Greeks to build in his honour the shrine which was named the Panhellenium and instituted a series of games in connection with it (τὸν σηκὸν τὸν ἑαυτοῦ τὸ Πανελλήνιον ὀνομασμένον οἰκοδομήσασθαι τοῖς Ἑλλήσιν ἐπέτρεψε καὶ ἀγῶνα ἐπ' αὐτῷ κατεστήσατο); and he granted to the Athenians large sums of money, an annual dole of grain, and the whole of Cephallenia.» (Loeb translation, E. CARY)

In an important reevaluation of the Panhellenion, it is this text which has been taken to show that the institution, far from being Hadrian's idea, was requested from Hadrian by the «Greeks».³³ But it needs stressing that the «Panhellenion» of this passage refers to an Athenian shrine, not to the institution, of that name. The apparent initiative of these «Greeks» – whoever they were – was a more limited one: a request to build some kind of precinct for the emperor. This type of initiative belongs to a traditional pattern of petition-and-answer, whereby subjects requested permission to worship the emperor, which the ruler permitted (or, sometimes, refused).³⁴

Who then were these «Greeks»? There is no doubt that the passage refers to the cult of Hadrian Panhellenius, or that the games which it mentions were the Panhellenia, celebrated at Athens by the Panhellenes every four years.³⁵ The most economical explanation is that «Greeks» here should be taken to mean the members of the Panhellenion, whether this was Dio's intended meaning, or whether the originating rôle of the organization was no longer properly remembered by his day (the Severan age).³⁶ If Dio's epitome is to be trusted, this building was evidently named after the institution which created it.

³² PRICE 57–58. The priest continued to be «of (the god) Hadrian (Panhellenius)», but the second bust in the crown of Eurycles of Aezani, as WÖRRLE 357 points out, must represent Antoninus Pius, by then worshipped alongside Hadrian.

³³ JONES, esp. 30 and 33–34, already challenged by BIRLEY 344 n. 10.

³⁴ Generally: PRICE 65–77.

³⁵ Rather than annually, as understood by JONES 37; see WÖRRLE 341.

³⁶ JONES 37–38 rightly notes that «Inscriptions mentioning victors at the Panhellenia extend into the late third century, whereas no text referring to other functions of the Panhellenion can be dated beyond the first decade of the same century.»

The foundation of these games is usually taken to have coincided with the creation of the Panhellenion in 131/32.³⁷ A request from the membership of the Panhellenion, however, is easier to envisage coming a few years later, when recruitment was well under way, and a sufficiently representative group of «Greeks» had come into being. This view is supported by a recently-published inscription from Aezani, which shows that the first celebration of the Panhellenia, and with it the inauguration of the first of the regular five-yearly sittings (συνέδρια) of the Panhellenes, only took place in the summer of 137 – at least five years after the formal «foundation» (κτίσις) of the Panhellenion.³⁸ All that is known of the formative years of the Panhellenion is that by 135 its (first?) archon was actively addressing issues of recruitment and that Cyrene, a member-city, was already sending its entitlement of «two counsellors» to Athens.³⁹ On the view offered here, Dio's «Greeks» are better identified with this shadow-council, and the request to Hadrian assigned to 135 or 136, when the body of Panhellenes may have reached a size large enough to be thought of as speaking, in some sense, for «the Greeks».

At this point it is worth asking whether this request was spontaneous or encouraged from above. On a literal view, the passage in Dio can be taken to show that the cult of Hadrian Panhellenius at Athens was entirely a subject-Greek initiative. Generally-speaking, however, the collusion of Roman governance in promoting the imperial cult in the eastern provinces is well understood.⁴⁰ In Hadrian's case, not only is his general encouragement of the worship of Zeus well attested, but his official epithets «Olympius» and «Panhellenius» also leave in no doubt that he actively promoted his own identification with the Greek supreme god.⁴¹ The Thyatiran decree is significant in this respect, since, in a context linked to Hadrian's rôle as founder of the Panhellenion, it expressly hails the emperor (named with all his official titles) as «Zeus Olympius Panhellenius».⁴² Against this background, it perhaps is unlikely that the Panhellenion initiated its cult of Hadrian entirely unprompted by the emperor, or at least unaware of his wishes. On the other hand, even if Hadrian had envisaged his own cult from the outset as a focus for the Panhellenion, the «personal assumption of divinity by the ruler» was likely to be viewed

³⁷ JONES 33.

³⁸ WÖRRLE 343–44.

³⁹ See line 12 of the letter of Hadrian to the archon of Panhellenion, OLIVER, Greek constitutions no. 120, now reedited by JONES, 47–53: «Since therefore the Cyrenaicans are sending two counsellors, [it is my decision that the Barcaeans should send only one.]: Κυρηναίων δὴ δύο συνέδρους πεμπόντων [Βαρκαίους ἕνα μόνον πέμψαι δοκεῖ.]

⁴⁰ PRICE 65–67.

⁴¹ See MITCHELL 721; PRICE 67–69.

⁴² FOLLET – PEPPAS-DELMOUSOU 296, lines 9–10: Αὐ[τοκράτορος] Καίσαρος Τραιαν[οῦ Ἀδριανοῦ] Ὀλυμπί[ου] Πανελλ[ληνίου] Διός.

critically by élite-Greeks of this period, so that Hadrian is unlikely to have resorted to overt imposition from above.⁴³ It seems easier to envisage a more nuanced situation in which «the formal initiative, however much willed by the emperor, came from the Greeks».⁴⁴

This «Panhellenion», or shrine of Hadrian Panhellenius, has not been identified, and there is much modern disagreement over its form and location, which may even have been Eleusis, rather than the city of Athens.⁴⁵ But it is worth stressing that this undertaking is entirely in keeping with the only other attested public works funded by the Panhellenion, the two processional arches at Eleusis erected by «the Panhellenes»: flanking the paved forecourt before the entrance to the sanctuary, they too were of a religious character.⁴⁶ It now seems reasonable to assume that Hadrian foresaw the worship of the Eleusinian goddesses and the imperial cult as the core-concerns of the Panhellenion. If so, a second reason emerges for his abandonment of the Amphictyony: whereas the cult of Apollo at Delphi had long since declined in influence, in the second and third centuries the Eleusinian mysteries were the most venerated aspect of traditional Greek religion; not only that, but they had always been seen as a gift of Athens to the Greek world at large.⁴⁷ Eleusis was a potential focus for Greek religious sentiment in a way that present-day Delphi could never be.

3. *The geographical scope of the Panhellenion's membership*

The purpose of this section is to assess the geographical scope of the Panhellenion. The institution has sometimes been seen as open to the Greek-speaking communities of the Roman east in general.⁴⁸ Insofar as there is actual evidence in support of this view, it comes from the fact that in 131/32 delegations arrived in Athens from all over the east, including the provinces of Cyprus, Syria, Cilicia, and Galatia, to attend Hadrian's dedication of the Olym-

⁴³ PRICE 116.

⁴⁴ So JONES 30, commenting on Dio 51, 20, 7 (provincial cults of Augustus in Asia and Bithynia).

⁴⁵ Eleusis: JONES 36. For an attempt to identify the Panhellenion with the Olympeum, see WILLERS 54–67, accepted by MITCHELL 720, doubted by BOATWRIGHT 427–28. It is disputed too whether this «Panhellenion» was the same as (BOATWRIGHT 428), or different from (JONES 32–33) the ναός of Zeus Panhellenius built at Athens by Hadrian.

⁴⁶ CLINTON, l.c. (n. 19) 1533. WILLERS 96 has argued that the Arch of Hadrian in Athens was also put up by the Panhellenion. For other views see A. ADAMS in: S. WALKER – A. CAMERON eds., *The Greek Renaissance in the Roman Empire*. Papers from the tenth British Museum Colloquium, London 1989, 10–16; BOATWRIGHT 428–29.

⁴⁷ CLINTON, l.c. (n. 19) 1520–22.

⁴⁸ E.g. the works cited by JONES 34, who challenges this view; also WILLERS 54; BIRLEY 220.

pieum.⁴⁹ An Epidaurian inscription shows that these two events took place within the same twelve-month period, and it has been claimed that they were directly connected.⁵⁰ The fact that the Epidaurians spontaneously treated them as the start of a new era certainly shows that these two imperial initiatives at Athens were momentous in the eyes of a nearby community closely involved with the new institution.⁵¹ But of itself their synchronism does not prove that they were directly linked. On the contrary, some disjuncture is revealed by the complete absence of the Roman near east from the Panhellenion's known membership as this begins to emerge from 135 onwards.

It has been recognized for some time that the known list of member-cities is drawn from just five Roman provinces: three of them European (Achaia, Macedonia, and Thrace), one part-African (Crete-and-Cyrene) and just one Asian (Asia proper, the most westerly province of the continent).⁵² Admittedly, the evidence for the Panhellenion is overwhelmingly inscriptional,⁵³ but even so the recent observation has force, that «even allowing for the chance preservation of evidence, it seems clear that only a small fraction of the Greek-speaking world was included.»⁵⁴

⁴⁹ These delegations are known from the statues of Hadrian which many of them erected in the precinct of the Olympieum (cp. Pausanias 1, 18, 6): out of a possible total of 129 (MITCHELL 720), some 23 of these inscribed bases survive (WILLERS 50–51 nn. 240–43, to which add SEG 41, no. 143 [?Lydian Philadelphia]). They include Anemurium, Pompeiopolis and Coropissus in Cilicia (IG II² 3293; 3302; 3307); Pisidian Antioch (CIL III 7283); the Cypriot κοινόν (IG II² 3296); Pompeiopolis in Paphlagonia (IG II² 3298), Laodicea-ad-mare (IG II² 3299), Pontic Sebastopolis (IG II² 3294) and Cyzicus (IG II² 3303).

⁵⁰ Syll.³ 842 (IG IV² 384; OLIVER, Marcus Aurelius no. 38); JONES 33–34. On the view taken above of Dio 69, 16, 1–2, the juxtaposition of the completion of the Olympieion and the Greek request to build the Panhellenion in this passage cannot be taken as chronologically significant. But the reliability of the passage, both as to chronology and (it must be said) facts, is open to question: FOLLET 115–16; CLINTON, l.c. (n. 19) 1517–18 n. 91; JONES 33–34.

⁵¹ Plutarch's friend Cn. Cornelius Pulcher, of an old Epidaurian family, was an early archon of the Panhellenion: OLIVER, Marcus Aurelius, no. 35, ἀρχον[τα τοῦ] Πανελληνίου καὶ ἱερέα Ἀδριανοῦ Πανελληνίου. He has sometimes been claimed as the (otherwise unknown) first archon (e.g. SPAWFORTH – WALKER I, 84, 86; S. SWAIN, *Hellenism and Empire*, Oxford 1996, 176; BIRLEY 292), although, if so, we might expect πρῶτον ἀρχοντα vel sim: cp. OLIVER, Marcus Aurelius no. 24, a citizen of Megara honoured as πρῶτον Πανέλληνα.

⁵² SPAWFORTH – WALKER I, 80, from which list Synnada should for the moment be removed (JONES 40).

⁵³ Including the letter of Marcus Aurelius to the Athenians, OLIVER, Marcus Aurelius, collects a total of 46 texts referring to the Panhellenion, to which can be added IG II² 2958, a further six in FOLLET 133–34, and the text published by WÖRRLE: a total of 54.

⁵⁴ JONES 34, also challenging the geographical extent of the Panhellenion. WILLERS 54, in seeing the cities known to have erected statues of Hadrian in the Olympieum (above) as members of the Panhellenion assumes precisely what has to be proved.

J. H. OLIVER long ago noted the absence of any member-cities from the western Greeks.⁵⁵ In the east the membership was limited to the Aegean Greek littoral and its hinterland, and only one of the five provinces involved was Asiatic. Since cities from a much larger swathe of Roman Asia sent representatives to the dedication of the Olympieum, it seems unlikely that the Roman near east, if asked, would have ignored a call to apply for admission to the Panhellenion. The most economical explanation is that it was never asked. What might be called an «anti-Hellenistic bias» in the system of ideas informing the creation of the Panhellenion emerges in other ways. For a start there is the antiquarian focus on old Greece: particularly striking is the singling out of Sparta in Hadrian's letter to the Delphians, precisely because the contemporary, Roman, city was of no importance, even in cultural terms, except as a museum of the «Lycurgan» customs, so that a wish to include it in a «council of all the Greeks» can only have been a gesture to the Classical past.⁵⁶ Then there is the importance placed on colonisation from old Greece as a condition of admission for non-mainland cities: the specific evidence concerns Magnesia-on-the-Macander, «colonists of the Magnes in Thessaly», who «?zealously fought often with the Ionians, Dorians, and the Aeolians in Asia of the same race (as themselves)»; Cibyra, a «colony of the Lacedaemonians and related to the Athenians», and Cyrene, «whose ancestry is Achaean and perfectly Dorian».⁵⁷ The «system» informing this privileging of mainland Greece is suggested by Hadrian's letter to the archon of the Panhellenion concerning the membership of Ptolemais Barca. Albeit fragmentary, this text provides the only direct evidence for the criteria for judging «Greekness» within the Panhellenion. C. P. JONES's persuasive restoration and translation of the relevant lines (8–12) are as follows:

... τοὺς Πτολεμαίας Βαρκαίους εἰς τὸ Πανελλήνιον]
 δέχεσθαι δεῖ· οὐ μέντοι δίκαια ἀξιούσιν τῶν αὐτῶ[ν ἐφιέμενοι ὄνπερ οἱ Κυρηναῖοι,
 οἷς ἔστι τὸ] γέ-
 νος Ἀχαιὸν καὶ ἀκριβῶς Δώριον. αὐτοὶ δὲ ἰθαγενε[ῖς Ἑλληνές εἰσιν, Πτολε-
 μαέ]ων δὲ
 προσεκτίσαντο τὴν προσηγορίαν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐπικρα[τοῦντας (τῆς γῆς?) τοὺς Μακε-
 δόνας μετονομάσαι τῆ]ν πό-
 λιν· Κυρηναίων δὲ δύο συνέδρους πεμπόντων [Βαρκαίους ἓνα μόνον πέμψαι
 δοκεῖ.]

⁵⁵ Marcus Aurelius 136.

⁵⁶ P. A. CARTLEDGE – A. SPAWFORTH, *Hellenistic and Roman Sparta. A Tale of Two Cities*, London 1989, ch. 14; N. KENNELL, *The Gymnasium of Virtue*, Chapel Hill 1995, ch. 4.

⁵⁷ Respectively OLIVER, Marcus Aurelius nos. 5 and 6 (but with the better restoration of lines 1–2 in OGIS 497), and lines 9–10 of the reedited Cyrenaean text (below).

[«The people of Ptolemais-Barca] must be admitted [to the Panhellenion:] however, they make an unjustified request [in desiring the same (privileges) as the people of Cyrene, whose] ancestry is Achaeian and perfectly Dorian. They themselves, though, are true-born [Greeks,] but got the additional name of ‘[Ptolemae]ans’ from the fact that [the Macedonians (?),] when they were masters [(of the land?), renamed (resettled, restored?)] the city. Since therefore the Cyrenaeans are sending two delegates, [it is my decision that the Barcaeans should send only one.]»

Apparently the eligibility of Ptolemais-Barca for admission to the Panhellenion had been questioned on the grounds of the name «Ptolemais». The implication is that, as a Hellenistic royal foundation, the city was not deemed as authentically «Greek» as Cyrene, founded by Dorian Greeks from Thera in the Archaic age. Hadrian ruled that the city should be admitted even so, albeit on an inferior basis, explaining that «Ptolemais» was in fact a later change of name in a pre-existing city of «true» Greeks, the original Barca (as we know from Herodotus) being an Archaic colony of Cyrene itself.⁵⁸ Accepting these restorations as conveying the sense of Hadrian’s letter, the argument from silence (above) based on the known membership of the Panhellenion takes on a new force. In the world of the Panhellenion, it seems that «true-born» (ἰθαγενεῖς) Greeks came either from the Greek mainland or from its long-established overseas colonies, to the exclusion of the Alexandrias, Antiochs, and all the other more recent Greek-style cities created by the Hellenistic age. Again, (to repeat) this looks like a limitation imposed from above by Rome.

Recent work on the Panhellenion has argued that its impact in its day was less than has sometimes been claimed,⁵⁹ a view which the author has – by and large – come to share, although by a different line of reasoning. The Panhellenion was imposed by Rome; it was not a subject-Greek initiative, and this may help to explain a certain air of half-heartedness which hangs over it.⁶⁰ Two of the most eligible cities, Ephesus and Smyrna, do not appear even as members, let alone leading lights; the enthusiasm of Aezani at present looks exceptional. No contemporary Greek writer directly mentions the Panhellenion. Already under Pius there is the suggestion that not all Panhellenes troubled to sit out their whole term in Athens.⁶¹ Under Marcus Aurelius the rules laid down by Hadrian for the eligibility of Panhellenes were being flouted;⁶² in the 170’s the institution was in (perhaps temporary) financial straits, to judge from its inabil-

⁵⁸ JONES 50, citing Herodotus 4, 160, 1.

⁵⁹ A. R. R. SHEPPARD, *AncSoc* 15–17, 1984–1986, 238–39; JONES 29–47.

⁶⁰ For a similar view see SWAIN, *l.c.* (n. 51) 76.

⁶¹ Above n. 20.

⁶² OLIVER, *Greek Constitutions* no. 184, lines 15–20.

ity to make a customary distribution to the Athenian ephebes;⁶³ and by the later second century the Panhellenia were having repeated difficulty attracting professional contestants.⁶⁴ Imperial support for the Panhellenion was probably always strongest under Hadrian himself. Its largely ceremonial character need not in itself have been a weakness; more damaging, perhaps, was its implicit subordination of member-cities to host-city, and its restrictive definition of «the Greek race» (τὸ γένος Ἑλληνικόν).⁶⁵ It has to be said that even in Greece itself, its appeal may have been somewhat limited: no archon is attested yet from Sparta, nor, surprisingly perhaps, from Athens itself before the third century.⁶⁶

The purpose of this paper has been to restate the evidence for understanding the Panhellenion as a Roman, and specifically Hadrianic, creation: the Thyatiran text makes any other interpretation scarcely possible, and it is one supported by the circumstantial evidence for Hadrian's «panhellenic» interests, as by the difficulty of seeing how or why subject-Greek communities from round the Aegean should have volunteered to come together in Athens in this way. The interest of the Panhellenion now seems to lie less in its impact on the Greek-speaking provinces, which may have been relatively restrained, especially beyond the mid-second century, than in what it reveals about the thinking of its founder. The available evidence does little to disclose the specific aims of Hadrian, beyond making reasonably clear that he intended the Eleusinian mysteries, and perhaps worship of himself, as unifying symbols for the Panhellenes,⁶⁷ and that he sought, through the criteria of admission, to construct a particular brand of ethnic Greekness. The centre of this configuration was old Greece, Athens and Sparta in particular, and its periphery the mainland's overseas colonies, provided that they belonged to one of the three *gentes* (Doric, Ionian and Aeolic) which, in the elder Pliny's words, «can rightly be designated Greek».⁶⁸ As mapped by the Panhellenion, this version of Greekness appears

⁶³ FOLLET 345 and 395–401 no. 6 lines 34–35: καὶ ἐκ Πανε[λ]ληνίου οὐθέν.

⁶⁴ OLIVER, Greek Constitutions nos. 188, conceivably as early as 161–69, and 245, referring to the games of 200 (WÖRRLE 341 for the date). Note too FOLLET 345: «des quatre grands concours d'Athènes, les Panhellénies sont celui qui est le moins souvent cité dans les palmarès de vainqueurs.»

⁶⁵ See OLIVER, Marcus Aurelius no. 6, line 6.

⁶⁶ OLIVER, Marcus Aurelius no. 19 (Casianus Antiochus *qui et Synesius*). For speculation that Herodes Atticus was the second archon see WÖRRLE 344 n. 28; BIRLEY 292, 355 n. 28. The two unknown archons under Marcus of OLIVER, Greek Constitutions no. 184, lines 16, 20 and 23, Papius Rufus and Julius Damostratus, do not look like Athenians (for wealthy Papii at Corinth see A. B. WEST, Corinth VIII, 2. Latin Inscriptions 1896–1926, Cambridge, Mass. 1931, no. 105).

⁶⁷ The religious character of the Panhellenion is stressed by MITCHELL 722; also (from a different viewpoint) JONES 47.

⁶⁸ Plin. NH 6, 2, 7 (*Graecae jure dici*).

to have distanced itself from the urban legacy of Alexander and the Hellenistic kings, and also, perhaps, from Western Greece; although the issues cannot be explored here, it is not unlikely that negative Roman judgments about the Greekness of both these areas played a part here.⁶⁹ Were this construction of the Greeks idiosyncratically Hadrian's own, it would still be possible, perhaps, to play down its historical importance. But in fact it draws on a «mythical image» of Athens, and old Greece generally, which for elite-Romans like Hadrian had constituted since Cicero's day a powerful paradigm of the best-possible of Greek worlds.⁷⁰ In sum, the Panhellenion deserves its place in the history of Roman imperial governance, and in the modern debate about Romanization in the east,⁷¹ because it was created by a Roman emperor, because it «institutionalized» a particular (Roman) construction of Greekness, and – not least – because it arguably failed to make a great or lasting impact on the subjects of this construction.⁷²

*Department of Classics
University of Newcastle
Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU
England*

⁶⁹ E.g. Livy 38, 17; Strabo 6, 1, 253, with G. W. BOWERSOCK, HSCP 97, 1995, 3–14.

⁷⁰ See A. HENRICHS, HSCP 97, 1995, 258–61 on the emergence of this vision of Greece.

⁷¹ See G. WOOLF, PCPS 40, 1994, 116–43.

⁷² I explore this topic more fully in a book in preparation on Greek identities under Roman rule.