

Philosophic dialogues situate Socrates around and within significant buildings in the Agora of Athens, thereby offering important clues to how the Greeks perceived and understood their civic realm.

Encounters with Socrates: architecture, dialogue, and gesture in the Athenian Agora

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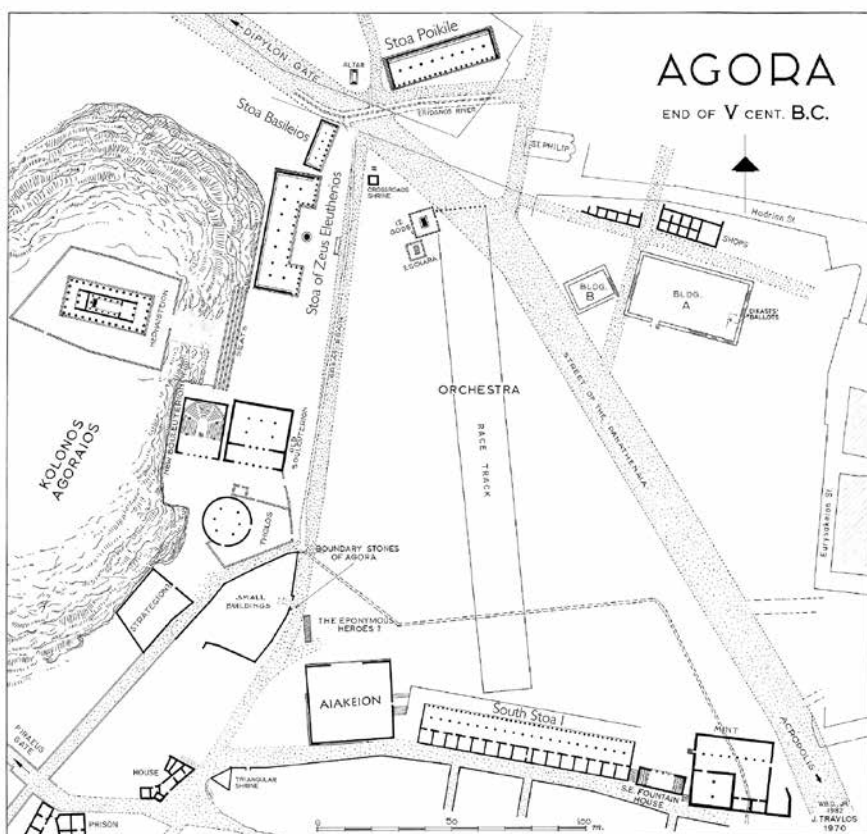
Setting the scene

*What fresh thing has happened, Socrates, that you have left your haunts in the Lyceum and are now spending your time here by the Stoa Basileus? You are not, I suppose, involved as I am in a lawsuit before the Basileus?*¹

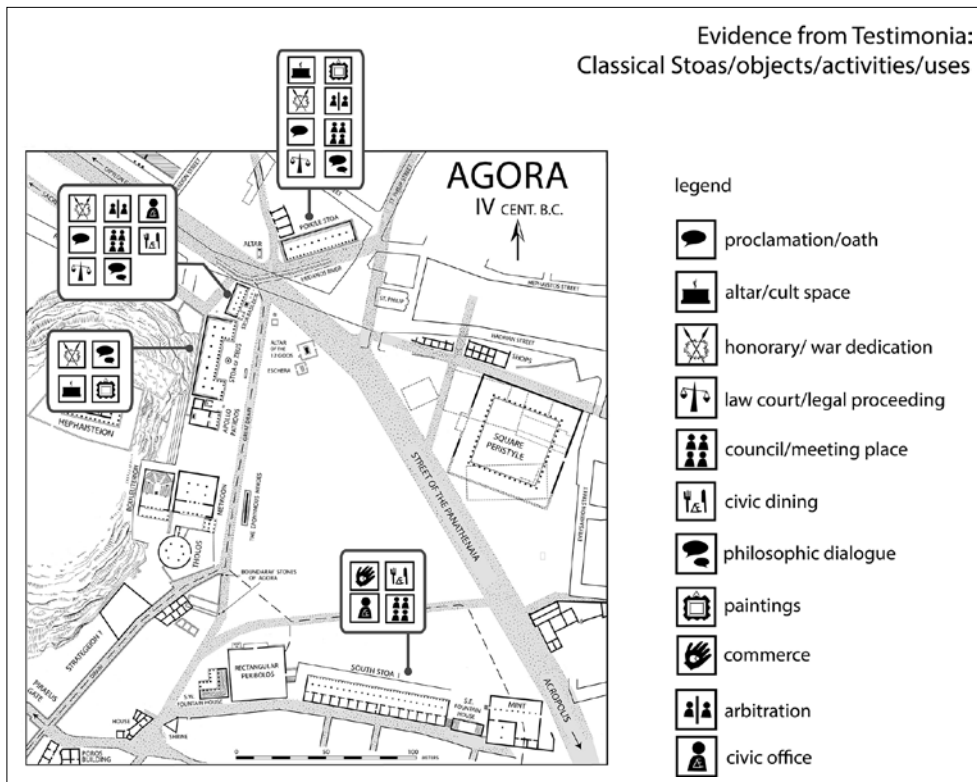
Many buildings in Athens play supporting roles in the Socratic dialogues. As dramatic settings, they often are virtually unnoticed, offering a definite sense of place yet discreetly and unobtrusively settling into the background of the conversation. Here, in the opening lines of Plato's *Euthyphro*, Socrates waits at the Stoa Basileios to receive his indictment for impiety and the corruption of Athenian youth, a charge that would ultimately

result in his death in 399 BC. This building, which stood in the Agora, the civic centre of the city, is mentioned in order to set the scene, but it is neither explicitly described nor the subject of conversation. In fact, this urban location was so familiar as a setting that an ancient audience would have understood its visual characteristics and spatial context implicitly. Yet, it is precisely this typicality – ordinariness, even – of the architecture that makes such situations ripe for further study.

To some degree, it is the lack of commentary about the architectural attributes of buildings mentioned in ancient dialogues that imparts insight into how these structures contributed to the life of the city. Sometimes a building, or even



1 Restored plan of the Athenian Agora at the end of the fifth century BC. Drawn by J. Travlos, revised by W. B. Dinsmoor Jr, and further annotated by Samantha L. Martin-McAuliffe.



² Diagram of the multiple functions of the Classical stoas in Athenian Agora, based on archaeological evidence and ancient literary testimonials. Compiled and designed by Samantha L. Martin-McAuliffe after the original plan by J. Travlos.

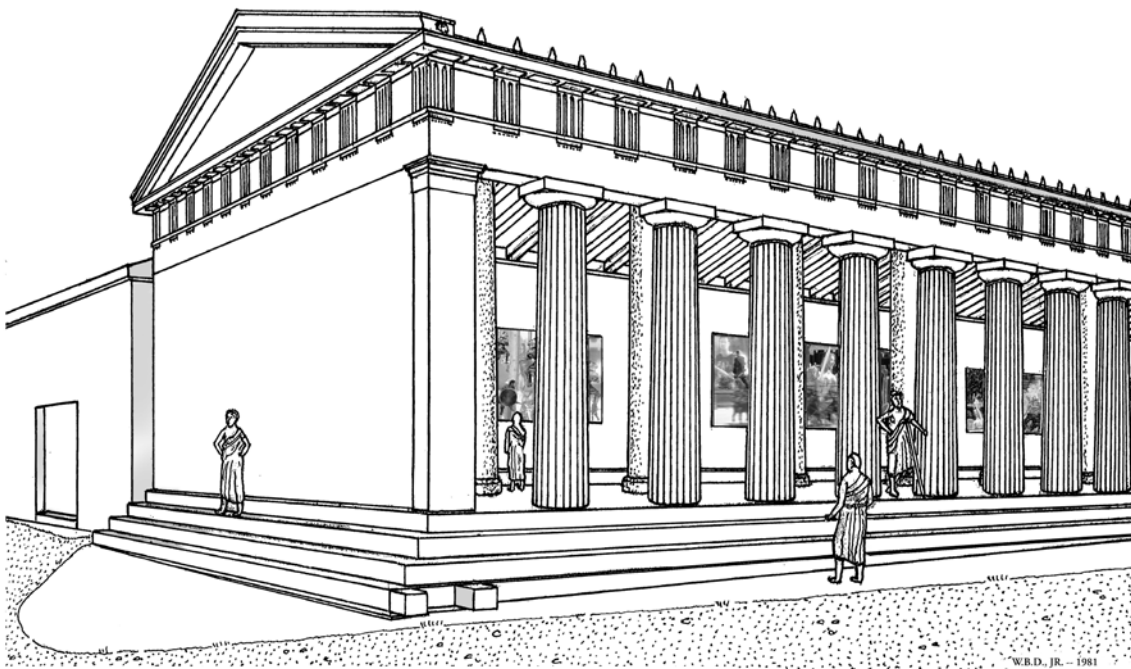
part of a building, was so ingrained in the routine of urban life that a mere reference to it allowed for a whole set of conditions and possibilities to unfold. We continue to experience architecture in this way in the present day, but the situation is much harder to grasp when we study ancient architecture, which is often either fragmented or remote in a chronological as well as cultural sense. In Classical Athens, one kind of building in particular became a favourite haunt for Socrates and his companions: the stoa.

Customarily, the Greek stoa is defined as a freestanding rectangular hall with a colonnade replacing one long side. It is an understatement to claim that these edifices were widespread in antiquity. Buildings known to be stoas, as well as many other structures that look like stoas but whose names are now lost, pervaded not only Greece but also the Roman Empire, where they served as the building blocks for several new forms of architecture.² It was undoubtedly the most common type of building in the Athenian Agora and probably also the entire Greek world.³ By the close of the Classical period (480–323 BC) there were at least four of these covered halls standing in the civic centre of Athens, and many more were added in the following centuries [1]. Up to the late Hellenistic period (323–146 BC), all the stoas were situated on the topographical limits of the Agora, and their colonnaded facades opened directly onto the civic realm.⁴

Most buildings in the Agora were designed to accommodate a specific institution or function. A prime example was the bouleuterion, which seated the *boule*, the Athenian senate. This structure embraced a form that closely corresponded to

its well-defined role in the civic life of Athens. Its restored plan – a square, and later a rectangle, with seating on three sides facing a dais – implies that it was perfectly suited for meetings where a large body of citizens would focus one upon a single, static speaker and yet simultaneously observe themselves as part of a collective.⁵ The stoas wholly diverted from this prescribed architectural convention. Their inherently flexible design allowed for changes in use and often provided room for several activities at once. However, labelling the Greek stoa as multipurpose or polyfunctional belies the complexity of its situation, specifically its role in the urban order of Athens. These buildings were calculatedly versatile, meaning that each one was not only defined by highly specific traditions but also capable of accommodating the randomness that was requisite for the city [2]. The mundane experiences, events and social transactions provided the depth and typicality that sustained more formal occasions, rituals, and celebrations. The point to take from this is that the stoa enabled monumentality to coexist with the commonplace.

Research on stoas in the Athenian Agora typically promotes these buildings as discrete civic monuments, highlighting their roles as trophy halls and settings for key political offices, such as the seat of the *Basileios*, the chief religious magistrate of the city. But what is less often considered is how, on a much more casual or daily basis, stoas were equally likely to be sites of happenstance encounters, places to wait, tarry, or pause while on route somewhere else. As such, stoas could be called tacit buildings. This is not something unfamiliar to us with architecture in the present day, but we seldom



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3 Reconstructed drawing of the west end of the Stoa Poikile (the Painted Stoa) as it would have appeared in about 400 BC. The projected view is from the Panathenaic Way. Drawn by W. B. Dinsmoor Jr with amendments by Samantha L. Martin-McAuliffe.

4 Reconstructed view from within the Stoa Basileios, looking southeast across the Agora and toward the Acropolis. The Parthenon is visible in the top right of the image.



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describe ancient buildings in this manner. Looking beyond Athens, both in place and time, can help clarify this interpretation.

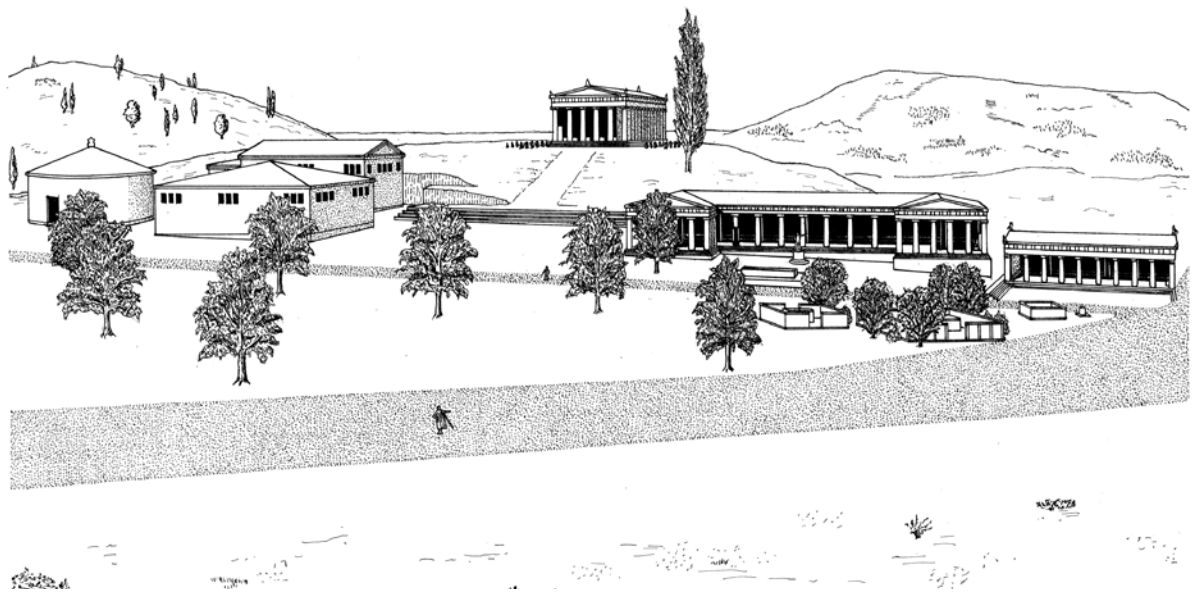
In a contemporary context, David Leatherbarrow has posited that significant buildings in cities often have the capacity to be ‘alternatively expressive and recessive, remarkably beautiful and laconic’.⁶ He widens his observation by drawing on the work of the Austrian philosopher Robert Musil, who remarked that, ‘monuments are conspicuously inconspicuous. There is nothing in the world as invisible as a monument.’⁷ Even though Musil was writing in the 1920s, his comments about the familiarity of a symbolic public edifice are worth considering here. Everything we know about stoas in Classical Athens seems to point in this direction: These were prominent, often very grand and emblematic buildings, but they were routinely taken for granted. The Stoa Poikile, for example, was a war memorial and thus it served a repository for military spoils as well as a series of exceptional paintings detailing Athenian exploits [3]. It was a form of victory monument, a highly visible landmark that celebrated the authority

and prowess of the city. Yet this status did not necessarily attract or require reverential attention every day. Leatherbarrow reasons that this is a typical urban phenomenon, and that important buildings frequently ‘sustain wonder but do not demand it, or do not do so incessantly’.⁸ We can productively extend this argument by considering how this phenomenon was a defining aspect of Greek urbanism, especially in the Classical period.

Stoas were, by and large, the only edifices that simultaneously helped constitute the edges of the Agora while remaining physically open to its centre. Each colonnaded facade was a permeable border that offered direct and immediate visual as well as aural reciprocity with both places and people across the entirety of the Agora; and to some degree even beyond to the Acropolis and Areopagus [4]. Individually, they provided constantly shifting framed views through their rows of columns.⁹ The formal limits of the Agora were never demarcated by a solid wall or continuous fence but rather boundary stones (*horoi*). The stoas, however, worked collectively to create a spatial framework that imparted a sense



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5 Montage showing the Athenian Agora from the vantage point of the southeast corner of the square.

6 Restored perspective drawing of the west side of the Athenian Agora at the end of the fifth century BC. The Stoa of Zeus Eleutherios and Stoa Basileios are the two buildings on the right. Drawn by W.B. Dinsmoor, Jr.

of volume to the Agora as a whole [5]. It cannot be emphasised enough that these buildings were instrumental to the order of the urban realm largely because they allowed for a perception of distance and momentary separation from the liveliness of the Agora. They offered a respite from the clamour, traffic, and business of the adjacent streets and central realm, in particular the Panathenaic Way, the major thoroughfare that ran diagonally across the square.

Stoas could also be contemplative settings or places to linger expectantly. In fact, their design and placement in the Agora made them especially amenable to philosophical discourse. Their interior expanses acted as promenades that provided much-needed shelter from the sun

and weather, and they also were well suited for peripatetic strolling. It is worthwhile mentioning that Stoicism, the school of philosophy founded by Zeno of Citium around 313 BC, takes its name from one of these very buildings, the Stoa Poikile. The Stoics not only frequented the porticoes of the Athenian Agora but more specifically they used these spaces to perambulate. Of course, philosophers were not the only individuals passing time in the Agora's stoas, but the wealth of surviving primary testimonials associated with them gives us a direct and concrete glimpse into how stoas were fixtures in the daily life of the city. It is also important to underscore that the Hellenistic philosophers themselves were following a long established and expected pattern of use for these civic structures. In other words, these colonnades were commonly regarded as places for meeting and loitering in the city well before they became the haunts of Zeno and his followers. Certainly, during the fifth and early fourth centuries BC, Socrates was known to frequent at least two stoas in the Agora. In all likelihood, the philosopher was a habitué of several.

What is remarkable about the initial exchange in the *Euthyphro* is that it immediately divulges three different roles of the Stoa Basileios: On the one hand, it is clear from the word choice that the building is the site of a happenstance encounter. The meeting between Euthyphro and Socrates is coincidental, and this is possible in part because of the very public nature of the stoa. Moreover, Plato used the word *diatribe* (haunt) to emphasise the philosopher's habit of hanging around certain buildings in the city. What is interesting here, and what is not clearly stated in the English translation, is that the same term is employed twice to describe Socrates' habits: he has already 'haunted' or 'passed time' in the Lyceum, and now in the dialogue he is lingering at the Stoa Basileios. The reader of the dialogue can infer that this was going to be a typical place to find him. This same building had another, much more formal role as a location for legal prosecution. This means that for the original audience of Plato's dialogues, the mention of this stoa as the setting would have instantly brought to mind a host of typical and appropriate activities and proceedings, ranging from political meetings to the public exhibition of Athenian laws in written form.¹⁰

The philosopher's encounter with Euthyphro is coincidental, but the conversation that ensues results from their respective concerns with the magistrate who occupied the stoa as his office. In the *Euthyphro*, the dialogue concerns the nature of piety, thereby making the Stoa Basileios a germane yet immensely ironic setting. Overall, the dialogue evinces a stratification of speech in one specific locale in the city: The happenstance encounter and ensuing private conversation; more official discussions revolving around the laws and litigation of Athens; and finally, ritual speech, such as the taking of oaths, which likely transpired in front of the building.¹¹

Reading between the lines

Portions of at least three surviving ancient dialogues involving Socrates take place in the Stoa of Zeus Eleutherios in Athens: the *Theages*, *Eryxias*, and a conversation in the *Oeconomicus* of Xenophon; additionally, there are a few preserved fragments of a dialogue from Aeschines, an orator active in the fourth century BC. Each of these texts instils a nonchalant tenor toward the choice of the stoa as a setting. As its name suggests, this building was the locus of cultic activities, but it was also closely associated with philosophical debate and conversation. It stood on the western side of the civic centre, immediately south of the Stoa Basileios [6]. Like its neighbour, it directly faced the centre of the Agora. Significantly, it was perhaps the first stoa in the Greek world to demonstrate a projecting wing design whereby two shorter, prostyle colonnades at each end of the building jutted-forth to create a pi-shaped plan. In all, its scale and plan embodied a sense of grandeur and sacredness; although not a temple, it retained temple-like attributes.

In ancient testimonials, the Stoa of Zeus is not characterised as a premediated terminus of a journey. Instead, it is portrayed as a convenient and often impromptu resting point that allows for communication between the portico and the rest of the Agora. The casual occupation of the stoa is clearly evident in a passage in the *Theages* where the protagonist asks Socrates, 'Would you like to step aside into the Stoa of Zeus Eleutherios?'.¹² This passing remark suggests that Socrates and his companion Demodocus were already deep in conversation when the latter suggested that they might take a rest within the shade of the colonnade. Fittingly, the archaeological record for this building indicates that a portion of its interior was furnished with benches.¹³ A similar situation can be observed in the *Eryxias*, where Socrates nonchalantly describes how he was engaged in conversation:

*Eryxias, the son of Steirieus, happened to be walking in the Stoa of Zeus Eleutherios when Kritias and Erasistratos – the son of Phaiax, nephew of Erasistratos – came up. 'Have you any good news from Sicily to tell us?' 'Yes [...] but do allow us to first sit down, for I am tired from having walked from Megara yesterday'.*¹⁴

Socrates also has a serendipitous encounter with a character named Isomachus in Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*: 'So once seeing him sitting in the Stoa of Zeus Eleutherios apparently at leisure, I went up to him and sat beside him, asking, "Why are you sitting here, Ischomachus?"'.¹⁵ In this passage the term *scholazein* translates as 'be at leisure' or 'pass time in idleness', thus suggesting that Isomachus was not waiting for anyone or anything in particular. However, the Athenian answers Socrates by saying that he is indeed waiting (*anamenein*) in a specific sense: He had already planned in advance to meet some foreigners. The stoa is thus a place of rendezvous, and like the Stoa Basileios, its highly public nature also allows for chance encounters.



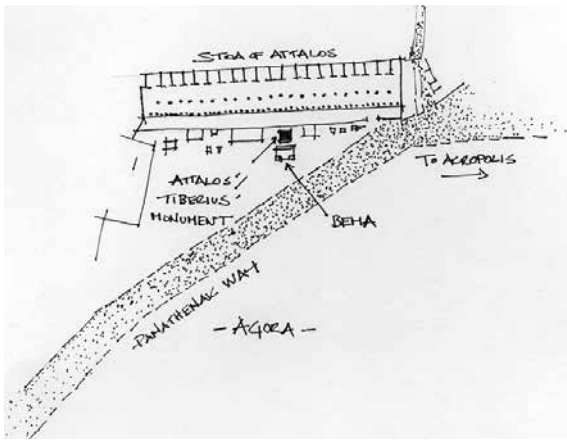
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It is worthwhile considering the term *scholazein* more closely because it provides insight into how loitering was perceived and interpreted in the Classical Greek city. Although it typically refers to idle leisure, *scholazein* can also be translated as ‘to elevate oneself to learning’. Likewise, the adjective *scholastikos*, meaning ‘inclined to ease’ or ‘enjoying leisure’, can be defined as ‘devoting one’s leisure to learning’. Therefore, a word that initially qualified non-specific activity – that is, time spent without much direction at all – eventually metamorphosed into a word that connoted philosophic pursuit. Stoas became places where one could linger in anticipation of hearing a philosopher hold forth. Much later, the Greek *scholastikos* transformed into the Latin term *scholasticus*, which is defined as ‘belonging to a school’. It is possible that the Agora stoas not only provided a principal architectural setting of this transformation, but that they also cultivated it.

Curiously, both the *Theages* and the *Eryxias* are considered spurious Platonic dialogues, but this should not undermine their portrayal of everyday life in the Agora; quite the opposite, in fact. The classical scholar Mabel Lang went as far to suggest that this condition: ‘may make the probability of their setting all the greater since imitators would take especial care to achieve verisimilitude’.¹⁶ She rightfully reminds us that Plato was not a historian, and so ‘we cannot know that Socrates held a particular conversation in a specific place, but surely the scenes in which the Dialogues are set had to be places where contemporary readers would

have expected such discussions to take place’.¹⁷ It is imperative to highlight that all the stoas in the Agora of Athens were the ground for negotiation, not just between the participants in a dialogue, but also between discussions and events transpiring outside of a stoa, that is, in the central, open realm of the civic centre. This is especially apparent when we assess how the Stoa of Zeus Eleutherios fostered visual connections between the events unfolding within the building and transactions on the roadways that crossed the Agora.

Another passage from the *Eryxias* confirms how the Stoa of Zeus was not only a location for close conversation, but also a place from within which one could survey other people or events: ‘While talking [in the stoa], a member of an embassy came by and Erasistratos said, “that man there, Socrates, is the wealthiest man in Sicily and Italy”’.¹⁸ The interior aisles of the stoa thus served as more than a meeting place or a lounge. They were observatories for people watching – in the case of *Eryxias*, harmless spying – and they served as shaded and elevated viewing platforms for the festivals that transpired on the Panathenaic Way. In fact, both the architecture and the orientation of all the stoas enabled people to engage with festal events on the municipal street while simultaneously remaining at a comfortable distance. Their location on the perimeter of the civic centre afforded an encompassing, spectacular view. This precise situation is illustrated in a fragment of a dialogue from Aeschines: ‘During the procession of the Great Panathenaia we were



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7 View of the interior of the Stoa of Attalos.

8 Plan showing the location of the bema in relation to the Stoa of Attalos.

sitting (Hagnon father of Theramenes, Euripides the poet and I) in the Stoa of Zeus Eleutherius, and Miltiades passed close by us.’¹⁹ Such exchanges show how watching, gazing, and even gawking was neither voyeuristic nor indicative of covert observation. Rather, the building was meant to be used this way. This opportunity to engage in spoken and visual communication affirmed one’s place in the diversity of the public realm.

Of course, none of the dialogues mentioned in this article are scripts. The authors make no mention of gestures, postures or glances, so the modern audience must read between the lines of the texts in order to gain some understanding of the expressive capability of the conversations. Sometimes this is very straightforward. For instance, when Socrates was asked whether he would like to ‘step aside from the street into the Stoa’, we can imagine an appropriate motion, such as a fleeting gesture directed toward the interior of the building. Similarly, other passages suggest that someone was pointing. When Erasistratos was chatting with Socrates in the Stoa of Zeus and interjected, ‘that man, there [...]’, we naturally suspect that his words would have been amplified by his hand or a steady nod of the head directing our attention outside the colonnade. This is paramount, yet it is easily overlooked because it is not literally outlined for us on the written page. Conversations and their attendant gestures not only show how Greeks interacted with each other, but they also give us clues to how they related to and connected with their physical environment; not just architecture, but also, crucially, the spaces between buildings.

Plato and his contemporaries strove to create an impression of reality in their dialogues. While these would never be mistaken as literal documentaries of conversations, we should assume that they are accurate portrayals of daily life in Athens. The classicist Alan Boegehold also reminds

us that ‘There was more ellipse and gesticulation in an actual conversation in the Agora, or in a private house, than appears in any of [Plato’s] dialogues.’²⁰ By extension, we should perceive and imagine the Agora as a place thick with diverse conversation, glances, and movement.

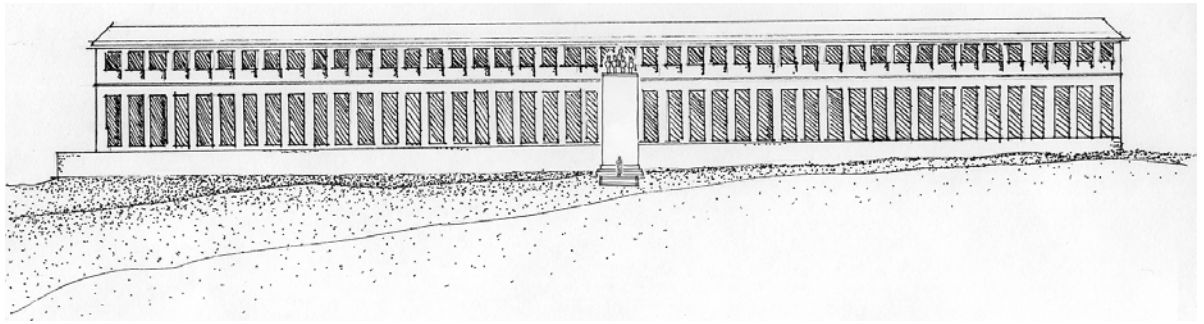
Considered collectively, these encounters with Socrates highlight a key difference between the architecture of the stoa in general and the other buildings of the Agora. Half indoor, half outdoor, the colonnades sheltered the familiar and impromptu but situated them within the wider topography of the city. While many buildings throughout Athens hosted Socratic dialogues, the stoa alone simultaneously related people and places across the Agora through voice and image. Examining this mutuality between the viewer and the viewed clarifies how the stoas created sightlines and viewpoints. They helped to orchestrate a spectrum of communication throughout the civic realm, from very close person-to-person contacts to distantly observed monuments like the Parthenon and Athena Nike Temple on the Acropolis. In short, the stoas let community be present.

Looking around

The architectural plan of the Athenian Agora was neither static nor built as a finished design. It was always subject to transformation, but during the post-Classical period the changes seemed to come much more quickly and with increasingly dramatic results. New buildings were added, some were overhauled and others disappeared. The Classical stoas endured, but to them were added new, much larger examples such as the limestone and marble Stoa of Attalos, which was built between 150 and 138 BC at the eastern side of the square [7]. This building, which was reconstructed in the twentieth century, has two storeys of colonnades and measures 116 metres in length from north to south.²¹

On a morphological level, it is easy to acknowledge these changes: They literally encroached upon, filled in, and occupied what had been the central open space of the Classical Agora.²² These transformations have been well documented by archaeologists, but a nagging question remains: By the late Hellenistic and Roman periods, had the Greek stoa become a different kind of building, a new phenomenon altogether? In strict, formal terms, the answer is largely no. As evinced by the Stoa of Attalos, Hellenistic stoas were in general much larger in scale than their Classical predecessors, yet were more or less designed and constructed in a similar fashion using the same materials. It is possible, however, to contend that from the second century BC onward the Greek stoa was understood and perceived quite differently within the context of urbanism. Put categorically, it accrued new layers of symbolism and interpretation. Once again, speech can be a vehicle for understanding this situation.²³

To the west of the Stoa of Attalos lie the remains of the foundation for another monument of sorts,



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a bema, or speaker's platform, which measured about 8.5 by 6 metres [8].²⁴ Although in a poor state of preservation, a reference to the bema survives in an ancient literary source, Athenaeus' *The Deipnosophists*. A single passage describes a speech that takes place on the bema, thereby providing a glimpse onto the role it played within a post-Classical setting. The text was written in the third century AD but in fact is referring to an event that transpired in about 88 BC, just before the Mithradatic War. In it, a known rabble-rouser, Athenion, takes to the bema in order to voice his support for Mithridates at Athens:

*The Kerameikos [e.g., the Agora] was full of citizens and foreigners, and the crowds converged spontaneously upon the place of assembly. He (Athenion) made his way forward with difficulty, with a bodyguard of men who wished to seem important in the eyes of the people; each one was eager even to touch his garments. Mounting the platform built by the Roman generals in front of the stoa of Attalos, he took his stand on it and looked at the crowd all around. Then raising his eyes he said: 'Men of Athens [...]'.*²⁵

The language, and specifically the vocabulary, used in this passage divulge important details that are easily overlooked in the English translation. The Agora, for instance, is described as *pleres* (full), which invites the reader to imagine the open ground before the Stoa of Attalos to be congested and noisy with people waiting to hear Athenion. But this term can also convey something quite particular. It is often used in late Hellenistic and Roman texts to describe the hour in the day when speakers would gather in the Agora to make public declamations. As such, there were likely to be crowds at various times of day in the civic centre, but at appointed hours people gathered to listen in a very specific and pointed fashion: to be spoken to – *lectured* – by a single individual. Athenaeus' description is especially forthcoming and he makes it easy for the modern reader to envision this spectacle. Certainly, the ancient Agora was busy – indeed, it was nearly always crowded – but this passage describes it as a tightly packed space that was humming with anticipation. Onlookers were being pushy, jostling for space, a glimpse of the speaker, and even trying to touch his garments.

Certain gestural expressions are also suppressed in translation, such as the point where Athenaeus uses the verb *periblepo*, which translates as 'to look

9 Reconstructed elevation showing the bema, Donor's Monument, and the Stoa of Attalos.

around at', or 'to gaze about'. Added to this is another word, *kuklydon*, meaning 'in a circle'. Finally, he uses the verb *anablepo* (to look up). By stringing these terms together in the passage, an entire sequence of gesture and movement emerges. Over and over again, Athenion hones his point before the crowd. All attention, all eyes and ears in the Agora at that specific hour, converged sharply upon a single individual standing atop the bema, and who, in turn, reciprocated this attention by acknowledging his audience with gestures. It deserves to be noted that *periblepo* – the act of 'looking around' in a speech – is an oratorical device that was commonly employed in the Roman period. In other words, it was a learned technique that mixed oratory with theatricality and crowd control. This kind of language and its attendant gestures – the scanning of the head and the explicit lifting of the eyes – contrasts sharply with the conversations that make up the Socratic dialogues, which rely heavily on ellipsis and subtle gesticulation.

The speech outlined in Athenaeus' text uses the Athenian Agora in a vastly different way than Plato and his contemporaries. This passage describing Athenion's oration, although brief, vividly illustrates how political speeches in Roman Athens were carefully orchestrated to maximise the dramatic impact of their physical setting. Athenion has elevated himself above a throng of spectators who gathered before the Stoa of Attalos, as well as on the Panathenaic Way. He paused before he began his speech and slowly scanned his audience, as if to signify that he was making a connection with everyone standing below and before him.

The Classical Agora had been the locus of both formal and informal dialectic, but the bema represented a different architectural context for the human voice, at least in terms of dialogue.²⁶ Rather than being a platform for spontaneous discussion, it was instead a monumental pedestal that served to exhibit and project the spoken word as an element of persuasion. This situation seems quite distinct from the Classical origins of rhetoric, where sophists gathered in dispersed, informal groups for reflective and mutual exchanges of dialogue. Ultimately, the speech by Athenion

was fleeting and ephemeral, but its dynamism suggested a sense of permanence. The setting of the bema allowed for a pattern to emerge, the practice of concentrating the human voice in a specific place on repeated occasions. Henri Lefebvre contends that this phenomenon is instrumental to understanding the contemporary city: 'The form of social space is encounter, assembly, simultaneity.'²⁷ The details and characteristics of the ancient audiences that assembled before the bema are now mostly lost to us, but to an extent the space they created remains.

The setting of the bema was impressive. The Stoa of Attalos quite literally occupied the entire background, recalling the scaenae frons of a Roman stage with a two-storey curtain of columns [9]. Between the bema and the stoa rose an immense honorific tower that was crowned with a sculpture of a four-horse chariot. Now referred to as the Donor's Monument, this structure was built in the Hellenistic period. It likely honoured King Attalos II of Pergamon, the individual who bequeathed the stoa. Well over one hundred years after its completion, the Athenians rededicated this monument to the Roman Emperor Tiberius. The speaker's platform was eventually installed at the foot of this landmark. In this way, Roman oration superimposed itself onto Greek civilisation and, in particular, onto the legacy of philosophic thought and discourse.²⁸ For centuries, the various stoas in the Athenian Agora had been deeply

attached to a form of civic dialogue that involved the participation of many in loose and improvised assemblages. Roman oratory grew out of these contexts, but absolved itself of the participatory nature of Greek philosophy. The speeches promulgated from the bema stressed prescriptive formulae and regulated gestures instead of spontaneous or reflective conversation.

At the time of its original completion in antiquity, the Stoa of Attalos outsized the architectural fabric of the Agora; it still does. Its power, however, was ultimately undermined when the Romans enlisted the colonnaded facade as a theatrical backdrop.²⁹ This arguably was the point in the history of Greek architecture when the stoa was transforming into a symbol, something reified that could then be deployed by the Romans for their own means. In conclusion, the Stoa of Attalos, and by extension the Greek stoa as a whole, was abstracted. It transformed from being primarily a civic monument that engaged pedestrians in a non-hierarchical manner, to being a stage-set against which a new culture – Rome – was displayed externally. This, along with the bema and a collection of Roman sculptural dedications displayed on either side of the speaker's platform, conveyed *imperium*. Greece was now, in this one particular place and time, the physical and metaphorical backdrop of the inhabited world that was Rome.

Notes

1. Plato, *Euthphro* 2a, trans. by R. E. Wycherley, in *Literary and Epigraphical Testimonia: The Athenian Agora* 3, No. 19 (Princeton: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1957), p. 24.
2. For example, the colonnaded or porticoed street would become a hallmark of Roman architecture, especially under the Empire. In his *Oration in Praise of Antioch* (*Oration XI*), Libanius (b. AD 314) described Antioch as a city of stoas, even going so far as to liken the colonnaded streets to rivers running through the urban fabric.
3. Although it has not been updated, the extensive catalogue of Greek stoas provided in J. J. Coulton's *The Architectural Development of the Greek Stoa* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1976), pp. 211–94, remains authoritative.
4. A notable exception to this convention was the so-called Middle Stoa, which remains a conundrum. Built in the mid-second century BC, this colonnade extended nearly 150 m from east to west. By essentially cutting off the southern third of the Agora, it helped create a second, smaller square, the 'South Square'. However, the Middle Stoa had a highly unusual design: There was no solid rear wall, but rather a peripteral colonnade, thus producing a 'Janus-faced' plan that looked both north and south. This design would have assuaged the sense of blunt discontinuity normally provided by a rear wall, and beyond this it suggests that ancient architects were uncomfortable placing a solid back wall of a stoa directly onto civic space. See S. L. Martin, 'The Role of the Stoa in the Topography of the Ancient Athenian Agora' (PhD dissertation, University of Cambridge, 2007), pp. 19–20. For an overview of the Middle Stoa, see: J. Camp, *The Athenian Agora: A Short Guide to the Excavations* (Princeton: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 2003), pp. 27–8.
5. To clarify, there were two bouleuteria constructed in the Agora: The first or 'Old Bouleuterion' has been dated to approximately 500 BC and it was subsequently replaced by the 'New Bouleuterion', which was constructed immediately to the west of the original building in the last quarter of the fifth century BC. The Old Bouleuterion was almost square in plan while its replacement was rectangular. A detailed analysis is provided in T. L. Shear Jr, 'Isonomous tAthēnas epoiēsātēn: The Agora and the Democracy', in *Archaeology of Athens and Attica under the Democracy*, ed. by W. Coulson and others, Oxbow Monograph 37 (Oxford: Oxbow, 1994) pp. 231–236.
6. D. Leatherbarrow, 'Skylines', in *Architecture Oriented Otherwise* (Princeton: Architectural Press, 2008), p. 206.
7. R. Musil, 'Monuments', in *Posthumous Papers of a Living Author* (Hygiene, Colorado: Eridanos Library, 1987), p. 61. Quoted in Leatherbarrow, 'Skylines', p. 207.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 206.
9. Samantha L. Martin-McAuliffe and John K. Papadopoulos, 'Framing Victory: Salamis, the Athenian Acropolis, and the Agora', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 71 (2012), 349.

10. There were almost certainly two sets of law codes displayed within the Stoa Basileios: the *axones* and *kyrbeis*. These were positioned within two new annexes or wings that were added to the facade of the stoa in the late fifth century. For a discussion of the law codes, see R. Stroud, 'The Axones and Kyrbeis of Drakon and Solon', in *University of California Publications: Classical Studies*, Vol. 19 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979).
11. A large rectangular limestone block, the so-called *Lithos*, lies preserved in front of the Stoa Basileios. It is believed that this served as an oath stone for city officials.
12. [Plato], *Theages* 121a, trans. by Wycherley, No. 34, p. 28.
13. Homer Thompson, 'Buildings on the West Side of the Agora', *Hesperia* 6 (1937), 75.
14. [Plato], *Eryxias* 392a, trans. by author.
15. Xenophon, *Oeconomicus* 7.1, trans. by Wycherley, No. 36, p. 28.
16. M. L. Lang, *Socrates in the Agora* (Princeton: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1978), p. 13.
17. *Ibid.*
18. [Plato] *Eryxias* 392d, trans. by author.
19. Aeschines, *Miltiades*, quoted in Lang, *Socrates in the Agora*, p. 14.
20. A. Boegehold, *When a Gesture was Expected: A Selection of Examples from Archaic and Classical Greek Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), p. 110.
21. The Stoa of Attalos is the subject of renewed interest within the specific context of monument restoration and conservation. See N. Sakka, "A Debt to Ancient Wisdom and Beauty": The Reconstruction of the Stoa of Attalos in the Ancient Agora of Athens', *Hesperia* 82 (2013), 203–27.
22. See especially T. L. Shear Jr, 'Athens: From City-State to Provincial Town', *Hesperia* 50 (1981), 356–77 and Susan Alcock, *Archaeologies of the Greek Past: Landscape, Monuments and Memories* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
23. The research and ideas underpinning this section of the article originate in S. L. Martin, 'The Romanization of the Southeast Corner of the Athenian Agora' (MPhil Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 2002), pp. 39–42, 48–9.
24. T. L. Shear, 'The Campaign of 1937', *Hesperia* 7 (1939), 324.
25. *Athenaeus* 5, 212e., trans. by Wycherley, No. 99, p. 46.
26. Podia were often used for musical performances in the Classical period. For example, fragments from a fifth-century BC red-figure amphora illustrating a singer playing a harp were excavated in the Athenian Agora. Agora Museum inventory number P27349.
27. Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. D. Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), p. 101.
28. For a wider discussion of the bema in this context, see: S. L. Martin-McAuliffe, 'Architecture as Palimpsest in the Athenian Agora', *Scroope: Cambridge Architecture Journal* 19 (2009), 88–93.
29. It may be possible to extend this argument by considering how the relationship between the bema in the Agora of Athens paralleled the situation of the rostra in the Roman Forum. The latter monument was not only positioned before the pronaos of the Temple of Concord, but it also carried a number of honorific columns.

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American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Agora Excavations, 1–3, 6

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