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Horizontal Coin Scatter and Site Use at Nemea

The site of the sanctuary of Zeus at Nemea has produced well over 2,000 coins from the periods before late antiquity. Vertical stratigraphy at the site is virtually destroyed by late antique and Byzantine-era farming methods, which churned up the soil and confused the deposit strata. However, this farming did not in general displace coins to a great distance horizontally at the site. By carefully documenting and plotting the find sites of coins, a horizontal scatter can be discerned which describes the use areas of the site at various points of its history (e.g., the archaic and classical periods; the later fourth-early third centuries; the period of around 275 BC to AD 50). In order to test the historical validity of this scatter, other finds from the site need to be studied in conjunction with the coin finds. A study of datable material such as Hellenistic lamps and other ceramics shows that the scatter of these artifacts corresponds to the coin scatter of the same periods. Thus, non-numismatic artifact evidence from Nemea validates the use of horizontal coin scatter as a numismatic tool for site use investigation.