ARCHAEOLOGY IN GREECE 2007–2008

INTRODUCTION

As a simple snapshot of events in Greek archaeology drawn from both published and unpublished but authoritative sources, *Archaeological Reports* offers something for everyone. This year brings no shortage of headline-making discoveries: the cloth around a LGeo–EAr cremation burial in Argos; the identification of a BA boat at Mitrou, which continues to generate controversy; the 8th Ct BC temple and architectural models from Nikoleika, which confirm the importance of Achaia in the development of EIA religious architecture; the wealth of epigraphical evidence emerging from Messene; and the Rom horse and chariot burials from Lithochori in Macedonia. Many of these discoveries were made in the course of rescue excavation – a valuable reminder of the importance of this essentially random exercise in challenging our expectations. Other research projects reported this year are important for the periods under study – systematic excavation of the Med settlement at Corinth, for example – or for the way in which they bring new kinds of location to the fore. Research in the Achaian and Arcadian uplands is such a case, where evidence from sites such as Gremoulias provides solid confirmation of the importance of the mountain networks neglected in more traditional polis-focused narratives.

In their various introductions to *AR*, previous British School directors have rightly emphasized the importance of a long view, of building up accretional pictures of sites and regions year on year. In some cases, the time-frame involved is relatively short thanks to the availability of major funding: the speed with which our picture of both PH and Cl–Rom W Macedonia has changed is in no small measure due to funding for rescue archaeology from the construction of the Egnatia Odos, the Iliarion Dam and the Edessa bypass, and from the state electricity company (ΔΕΗ) which undertakes extensive lignite mining here. The single biggest such rescue story for the next few years will surely be the Thessaloniki metro where, despite initial pessimism from those expecting quick headlines, an exciting cumulative picture is already emerging not merely of the LRom–Byz city, but also of the Ot period, where so much remains to be studied. As excavation progresses into deep deposits, we expect much more to report in 2009. Among longer-term projects – and here I emphasize those undertaken by the Aristotelian University in Thessaloniki and reported fully every year in *AEMTh* – a more gradual accumulation of knowledge from time to time reaches a point where systematic reappraisal is required. A good example this year is the city of Pella, where a clear view of long-term changes in the form and planning of the city from the Cl period to the 4th Ct AD can now be taken. Finally, we should also emphasize the vital role of research conducted within the Greek Archaeological Service. This year, our Laconia chapter includes important bodies of information derived from long reports by Athanasios Themos and Eleni Zavvou in the *Πρακτικά του Ζ΄ Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου Πελοποννησιακών Σπουδών* on their personal fieldwork in the Helos area and around Cape Malea. Not only is this region of great interest in its own right, but it is also of vital importance as the link completing the chain from W Crete through Kythera and Antikythera, Pavlopetri and into Laconia – all the subjects of extensive *AR* reports over the years – and giving us for the first time a full view of this gateway to the Aegean. The newer Ephorias too, established in areas which have rarely received such close, focused attention until now, are starting to play a very significant role, as our reports of the work of the 35th EPCA in uncovering Rom Fiskardo and of the 33rd EPCA in reconstructing the urban plan of anc. Ambrakia demonstrate.

In addition to presenting a personal choice of the year's archaeological highlights, the introduction to *AR* generally contains some reflection on major trends, new directions and events in Greece. Two events cannot be avoided. First, the tragic forest fires of the summer of 2007 came perilously close to adding major sites – notably Olympia – to their trail of destruction. Secondly, from the perspective of Athens, a long shadow has been cast by the attempted suicide of the Secretary General of the Archaeological Service, Christos Zachopoulos, in December 2007 and the period of reorganization within the Ministry of Culture which followed. Greek press reports have dwelt on the very difficult conditions which have reigned, from a shortage of staff in the Ministry, to a shortage of museum guards which threatened the extension of opening hours for major sites and museums during the summer (a threat now happily averted), to slowness in releasing pledged funds. Some of this has reached the UK press, although in a highly selective and frequently inaccurate fashion: readers alarmed by Helena Smith's *Guardian* report of 23rd June will be relieved to know that the reported closure of Delos Museum is an error and that, while Herakleion Museum remains closed for much-needed renovation (which is proceeding according to schedule), an outstanding temporary exhibition, including many of the gems of the collection, is well worth visiting. In sum, though, this has been an exceptionally hard year for colleagues here in Greece.

There is, nonetheless, much positive to report. In recent years, the Ministry of Culture has honoured in succession the Foreign Schools in Athens for their contribution to Greek culture. A commemorative volume has been published, edited by the head of the Foreign Schools' Department, Eleni Korka, and entitled *Foreign Archaeological Schools in Greece from the 19th to the 21st Century* (Athens, Ministry of Culture, 2007). In 2007, the spotlight fell upon the archaeological work conducted in Greece by Greek universities, with a 2-day presentation of a wide variety of projects held on 6th–7th December 2007. Material not previously presented in *AR* is noted at the appropriate point.

The issues of ending the trade in illicit antiquities and of the restitution of cultural property remained high on the agenda. In March 2008, the Ministry of Culture collaborated with UNESCO in staging a conference on the restitution of cultural property in the New Acropolis Museum – the first major event held on the premises. In the previous month, Greece itself returned to Albania 2 (Hel and Rom) statues which had been looted from Butrint and recovered by the Greek police in 1997. Returns to Greece continue: 94 objects stolen from the Theodoropoulou Collection and offered for sale in Munich were returned by the German authorities to the Greek state and temporarily exhibited in the National Museum in October 2007 before making a permanent return to Larisa Museum. And at the time of writing, Shelby White has just agreed to return to Greece part of a funerary stele and a calyx krater from her collection, upon receiving clear evidence that they had been looted from Greek sites.

Broader definitions of cultural heritage – landscapes, sites and environments – came to the fore in September 2007 with another UNESCO conference, this time on *World Heritage and Heritage Routes – New Orientations*. Greece has a very

https://doi.org/10.1017/S057060840000051X Published online by Cambridge University Press

successful history of bidding to have its major sites and monuments inscribed on the World Heritage list – in 2007, the old town of Corfu became the country's 17th world heritage site. And a Europa Nostra award for 2008 has been given to the open-air museum of the Palace of Galerian in Plateia Navarinou, Thessaloniki, where not only the structure but a large number of mosaics are conserved *in situ*. Creative thinking about the preservation and public presentation of the sites and monuments that form part of the built environment continues apace, as exemplified in the publication of V. Karageorghis and A. Giannikouri (eds), *Conservation and Presentation of the Cultural and Natural Heritage of the Large Islands of the Mediterranean: Proceedings of the International Symposium, Rhodes, 1st–3rd September, 2005* (Athens, Ministry of Culture/Archaeological Institute of Aegean Studies, 2006), which presented case studies from a swathe of islands from Melos to Crete and Rhodes in the wider context of experience, trends and practice on Cyprus, Sicily and Sardinia, and considering also the impact of national and international legal frameworks. But there is also an interesting and important move to consider sites, and especially smaller sites, within their physical environment and to create management plans which encourage visitors to experience sites in combination as part of a landscape. Caves are a case in point. A one-day colloquium on *New Research in Greek Caves*, organised in May 2008 by the Irish Institute and the EPSNE, featured not only a wealth of new archaeological material, but also innovative planning to attract and inform a wider public.

It is hard to overestimate the effect of funding from the Third Community Support Framework as a catalyst for fresh thinking about the public presentation of sites and monuments. With the deadline for the completion of work, 31st December 2008, drawing close, very many of the reports submitted for *AR* this year note contributions made by projects to new displays, information panels and the like. An impressive overview of the projects supported is presented in A. Kottariou and S. Chondrogiannis (eds), *Το παρόν και το μέλλον των μνημείων μας: Πολιτιστική κληρονομία και Γ΄ κοινοτικό πλαίσιο στήριξης. Η προσφορά της Αρχαιολογικής Υπηρεσίας στην κοινωνία των πολιτών* (Thessaloniki, Union of Greek Archaeologists, 2006) (Greek and English text). This book arose from a conference convened at the beginning of the framework period, where more than 300 projects were presented in 93 papers and 182 display stands: a follow-up, at the end of the period, is promised, with a full publication. Thanks to various combinations of European, state and private funding, a large number of museums have been refurbished and/or completed – from the Byzantine Museum of Veroia, to Thebes Museum, the Piraeus, National and Numismatic Museums in Athens, and a Museum of Marble Craft on Tenos – the list is long. As we began preparation for this edition of *AR* there were 181 state museums in Greece: by the end of 2008 we are promised 201. What should be their wider role? Certain museums, especially those with a clearly defined local role, have long served as regional arts centres – Aiane is a case in point. The educational focus of the newly redesigned displays in the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki is complemented by a lively outreach programme of events for the wider public. But there is now general recognition that not only could more be done, but that it is absolutely necessary that it should be done and as broadly as possible. The Union of Greek Archaeologists has been at the forefront of this movement for outreach, with initiatives including lobbying for the age limit for free child entry to be raised. The response is already encouraging. Fifty-eight museums of all kinds staged special events for ICOM's International Museum Day on 18th May 2008: under the overarching theme of *Museums as Factors in Social Change and Development*, presentations included subjects as diverse as games about the anc. world for primary schools and myth and history in the songs of Markos Vamvakaris.

Certain major conferences held in Greece over the past year will be of interest to readers of *AR*, not least because the resulting publications promise to be landmarks in the field. Major review conferences have focused on periods (*The Dark Ages Revisited*, University of Thessaly, Volos, 14th–17th June 2007, programme at http://extras.ha.uth.gr/coulson/en/index.asp; *The Aegean Early Bronze Age: New Data*, Athens, 11th–14th April 2008); on regions (*Half a Century on the Isthmus: A Conference to Celebrate over Fifty Years of Excavation and Survey on the Isthmus of Corinth*, Athens, 15th–17th June 2007; *The Byzantine Mani*, 5th EBA and Demos Oitylos, 21st–22nd June 2008); and on single sites (*Λύκτος ἐΰκτιμένη*, Demos Kastelliou and 23rd EPCA, November 2007; *Mallia*, EFA 2nd–3rd November 2007; *Akrotiri on Thera: 40 Years of Excavation 1967–2007*, ASA, 16th–17th December 2007). Conferences otherwise directly connected with archaeology included: *Numismatics and Economic History in Epirus in Antiquity* (University of Ioannina, 3rd–7th October 2007); *Neue Funde archaischer Plastik aus griechischen Heiligtumern und Nekropolen* (DAI and Athens University, 2nd–3rd November 2007); *Greek Geometric Pottery Forty Years On* (BSA, 29th March 2008, programme and abstracts at www.bsa.ac.uk).

Finally, 2007–2008 has seen a number of significant anniversaries. The Archaeological Society at Athens celebrated the 170th anniversary of its foundation and the Austrian Archaeological Institute in Athens its 110th (the latter celebrated with a colloquium on *New Research into Temple Architecture in the NW Peloponnese*, with presentations on Nikoleika, Graika Aigialeias, Trapeza Aigiou, Gremoulias and Lousoi). In May 2008, the Swedish Institute celebrated its 60th anniversary with a 2-day presentation on the work of the School. On behalf of the BSA and the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies, we convey warmest congratulations.

In conclusion, a brief note is due on the production of this edition of *AR*. An important casualty of events in the Ministry of Culture was the *Archaiologikon Deltion*, which has not been published this year. Although there is currently no indication of a publication date, it is hoped that it will appear in time for inclusion in *AR* 2008–2009. The most up-to-date published sources remain the *Ergon* of the Archaeological Society, and the press reports which we cite only when they can be traced backed to an authoritative source within the Ministry of Culture. I am especially grateful to colleagues in various Ephorias who have clarified details of their work as reported in the press. *AEMTh* 2006, while dating back rather further, is one of the largest volumes in the series and *DeltChAE* 2007 also appeared this year. Individual collections pertaining to regions are noted with abbreviation at the start of the relevant chapter. Of wider relevance is the 4-volume *Πρακτικά του Ζ΄ Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου Πελοποννησιακών Σπουδών: Πύργος, Γαστούνη, Αμαλιάδα 11–17 Σεπτεμβρίου 2005* (*Πελοποννησιακά*, *Παράρτημα* 27) (Athens, Society for Peloponnesian Studies, 2006), which is abbreviated *Praktika Z' Synedriou* with volume number. As ever, we have devoted most space to unpublished site reports and work originally published in Greek (especially in Greek sources available in few UK libraries): published sources in other languages are noted only if they are primary publications of new material or major regional collections. We are grateful to all our contributors for the time and trouble taken in preparing reports for *AR*.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S057060840000051X Published online by Cambridge University Press

Readers' attention is also drawn to the revised note on transliteration inside the back cover. We have sought to make a clearer distinction between anc. names, where British Library conventions are more appropriate (although exceptions are made for common usage), and mod. Greek, where current conventions for the transliteration of demotic produce results of greater use to the reader in cross-referencing maps and primary literature. Throughout, we have made exceptions for personal names where an author has expressed a strong preference. The result is perhaps less consistent, but certainly more natural and of greater practical use in research.

This year, *AR* has been written by 3 officers of the BSA, the Director, the Knossos Curator, Don Evely, and the Assistant Director, Robert Pitt. We are, as ever, grateful to Heinrich Hall for German translation and the exercise of a sharp editorial eye, to John Hayes, for final proof-reading, and to Jessica Piccinini for emergency translation of an Italian contribution. All remaining translations are our own. The staff of the BSA offered invaluable support: the librarian, Penny Wilson Zarganis, compiled lists of publications, Tania Gerousi collated press cuttings, George Bruseker (IT Officer) prepared illustrations, Vicki Tzavara liaised with contributors and Helen Clark, the School Secretary, provided administrative support to the compilers and proof-read the entire text with a critical eye. This has been a true team effort, and we are very grateful to all for their hard work. Last but not least, the authors warmly thank the production editor, Gina Coulthard, for her tolerance and humour.

Catherine Morgan
The British School at Athens

MUSEUMS

National Museum, Athens
The temporary exhibition on *Praxiteles*, transferred from the Louvre, was shown from 25th July–31st October, with a new catalogue edited by N. Kaltsas and G. Despinis (Athens, Ministry of Culture/National Archaeological Museum, 2007).

Two new permanent exhibitions, of the Egyptian and Stathatos collections, were opened on 14th May 2008. The Egyptian collection was one of the first to be held by the National Museum, and is the only one of its scope and quality in Greece. It was substantially enhanced by large gifts from Ioannis Dimitriou (1880) and Alexandros Rostović (1904), and is now regarded as one of the finest in the world. Around one fifth of the 6,000 artefacts in the collection are now on display in 2 rooms. The Stathatos Collection, which spans the PH to post-Byz periods, but consists primarily of jewellery and metal objects (especially Hel jewellery from Karpenissi and Thessaly), is now more fully displayed in entirely refurbished galleries.

New Acropolis Museum
With the new building complete, the transfer of antiquities from the old museum on the Acropolis began in October 2007, amidst huge public interest. The spectacle of a chain of 3 cranes moving some 246 large items (113 tons) and 4,200 smaller marble items alone (124 tons) and the gradual opening of museum space to the public has engaged wide interest in the process of creating a new museum. The building itself continues to cause controversy both for its design and its location (see e.g. *Ergon* [2007], 113–24), and was strongly defended by its architect, Bernard Tschumi, in a lecture given at the Megaron Mousikis in October 2007 (*Ta Nea* [09/10/07]).

The Foundation of the Greek Parliament in collaboration with the **Epigraphical Museum** staged an exhibition *Ἔδοξεν τῇ Βουλῇ καὶ τῷ δήμῳ* (*Athenian Democracy Voiced Through its Inscriptions*), with complementary collections of material displayed in the new gallery of the Foundation (Mitseon 1) and in the museum. The catalogue (M. Lagogianni-Georgakarakos' and K. Bouraselis [eds], *Ἔδοξεν τῇ Βουλῇ καὶ τῷ δήμῳ* [Athens, Epigraphical Museum/Athens University, 2007]) includes a complete set of photographs and transcriptions.

Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki
The designs of the new thematic exhibitions reported in *AR* 53 ([2006–2007], 61–62) are discussed in detail by a number of contributors to *AEMTh* 20 (2006).

ATHENS
by Robert K. Pitt

Central Athens
(1st EPCA: 1st EBA)

Acropolis. A translation of the 1962 Gr edition has been published of S.E. Iakovidis, *The Mycenaean Acropolis of Athens* (Athens, ASA, 2006).

A report on the **Propylaia** restoration project is now available: M. Ioannidou, *The Restoration of the Propylaia of the Athenian Acropolis* (Athens, Ergon IV, 2007).

Anc. Agora. J.M. Camp (ASCSA) reports on the 2007 season of excavation.

In section BZ south (**Fig. 1**) 2 primary areas were investigated: the N–S road and the areas W of the road. In the road, we continued to take down the very hard-packed gravel surfaces, mostly of the 4th Ct AD. In doing so, we fully exposed the later water supply lines found in earlier seasons, one of terracotta and 2 of lead. These will all have been for fresh water and were probably pressure lines. Lower down, we cleared more of the deep street drain and, at the extreme N, another subsidiary channel entering it from the W. All these channels, both supply and drainage, were in use in the 4th or 5th Ct AD.

To the W, we explored deeper fills under the Rom levels. In one area we exposed a fairly well-preserved pyre, of the type known from across the anc. street and in other areas of the Agora. They are usually deliberately buried under the floors of private houses or commercial buildings and the example found this year seems to date to the L4th or E3rd Ct BC. It contained a lamp, a drinking cup, a pyxis and several of the characteristic unglazed plates, cooking pots and small saucers.

In section BZ north we excavated mostly Cl and Hel levels in and behind the Cl commercial building. One of the major gains of the season was to establish beyond doubt that the commercial building extended this far N. More of its E back wall was exposed, along with several cross-walls and we can now speak with some confidence of at least 6 rooms/shops set side-by-side along the E side of the street. An intermediate phase of the building was uncovered in the form of a draw-shaft and part of the tunnel of a Hel cistern complex found outside the building to the E. It was of standard form, a vertical shaft waterproofed with a good hard white mortar. The shaft itself was ca. 0.75–0.9m *di*., preserved to a *d*. of ca. 2.5m. The tunnel runs off to the NW and may be heading to a collapsed cistern located within the building itself. The tunnel showed signs of collapse about 1m from the draw-shaft and will have to be explored in future seasons. Fill within the shaft suggests that it went out of use in the 2nd half of

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