Koutroubes (Asopos) lies 1km SE of Boza and just E of Agridi. Here, E. Zavvou (*Praktika Z' Synedriou* 2, 422–23) reports a stone slab bearing an inscription of the 1st Ct AD which refers to Η πόλη των Βιαντυνέων and honours the descendants of Gaius Iulius Eurykles, whose family owned estates in this area.

Tsoukalas (Asopos). E. Zavvou (*Praktika Z' Synedriou* 2, 423) reports Hel and Rom sherds at this site, which lies between Goula and mod. Asopos. Part of a grey marble door (likely from a tomb), sculpted to imitate a wooden door, was found on a neighbouring plot and handed over to Sparta Museum. Part of a similar door, in sandstone, is stored in the Demarcheion of Asopos.

Xyli peninsula (Pounta). E. Zavvou (*Praktika Z' Synedriou* 2, 424) reports Hel and Rom sherds, especially LRom combed ware, as well as EH sherds and obsidian.

Plytra. E. Zavvou (*Praktika Z' Synedriou* 2, 427–32) reports on renewed excavation and survey. One of the city's cemeteries is located on the W side of the archaeological site. Beside the mod. harbour mole lies a subterranean built tomb (columbarium) with niches, ca. 5.35m x 6.90m, oriented N–S with the entrance to the N (staircase in the NW corner). The upper surfaces of the walls of 2 further tomb monuments were located in the same area, one almost touching the E side of the first tomb and the other just to the NNW (dimensions ca. 4.7m x 5m). Their disposition and orientation suggest that a road ran between the former 2 monuments and the last mentioned. A further, similar tomb was found to the E along the line of this road (dimensions 4.17m x 5m).

Ca. 100m further E, a built subterranean columbarium with hemispherical and orthagonal niches was discovered in rescue excavation on the property of G. Venetsanaki and A. Vraimaki. Its dimensions were 1.72m x 0.64m. It was used for multiple burials from the 2nd to the 4th Ct AD. Grave goods included a large number of pottery and glass vessels, a marble ossuary with incised decoration of a bucranium and garland, and a Laconian bronze coin from the reign of Hadrian (117–118 AD). Notable finds include lamps of the Firmalampe type, one of which bears the mark of a N Italian workshop (NERI: 1st half 2nd Ct AD), and a glass bowl with a double-line incised signature (E4th Ct AD). These finds confirm that the local harbour had significant trading connections across the Mediterranean during the Rom period.

The area of the anc. city was even larger, however, taking into account published finds from within mod. Plytra, while many LRom and EByz structures are located in the NE part of the archaeological site, in the area of an anc. quarry with a relief of Herakles, and on the slope opposite it. These structures have blind apses at their sides and in many cases preserve traces of wall-painting within red painted frames – traits which identify them as tomb monuments.

An undecorated sandstone sarcophagus, with a stone headrest on the interior, contained a 4th Ct AD lekythos and a W sigillata fragment with a round, garlanded stamp (IVLI: end 1st Ct BC–E1st Ct AD). Finds from the area as a whole (architectural members, inscriptions, clay and marble vessels) have been assembled over a number of years: many have been handed over by local inhabitants to the Demarcheion of Asopos. Among these are: fragments of a sandstone door; the base of a grey marble perirrhanterion (0.55m *h.*; 0.32m upper *di.*); a sarcophagus lid (1.94m x 0.79m); and fragments of inscriptions.

MESSENIA
(38th EPCA: 26th EBA)

Messene. P. Themelis (ASA) reports (*Ergon* [2007], 42–59) on excavation in several parts of the site (**Fig. 44**).

In the theatre, a large number of EByz graves containing no offerings were uncovered in front of the E and especially the W parodoi. In the latter case, graves were lined with blocks from the superstructure of the parodos, most of which had builders' marks (Gr characters denoting course and position). Graves in the E parodos were usually built of limestone blocks, notably the geison blocks of a Doric stoa, the location of which is not yet known. The channel round the orchestra was cleaned and work undertaken to drain the orchestra and proskenion. Fragments belonging to 2 surviving stone thrones were collected, and surviving elements from the steps and stairways of the koilon put in order.

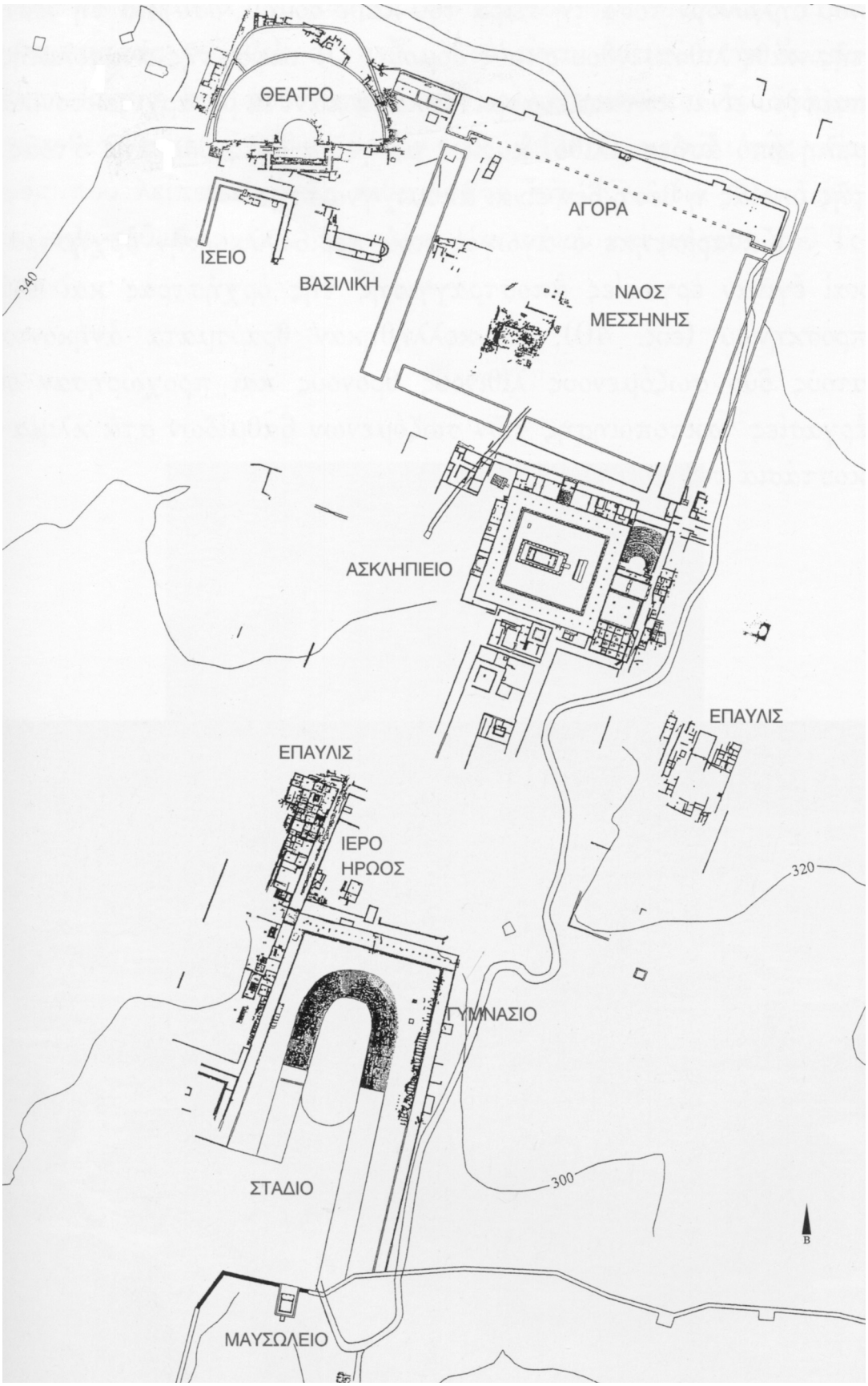
The 2 body sections of the 2nd Ct BC marble statue of large Herculaneum type, found in the E apse of the proskenion, were joined and the statue set on a stone base. The missing head probably represented Claudia Frontina, wife of Claudius Hostilius Caelianus and mother of Tiberius Claudius Sathidas Caelianus I, who was *Helladarches* of the Achaian League and chief priest of the Sebasteion during the reign of Trajan. The torso of Hermes from the proskenion was also set on a base.

The theatre basilica and surrounding area were landscaped. One of the fallen columns from the S colonnade was re-erected. One of the stylobate blocks of the S colonnade is an inscribed statue base of the M2nd Ct AD, in honour of the chief priest of the Sebasteion, Tiberius Claudius Geminianus, son of Claudius Crispianus and Aufidia Gemina. His statue was erected by Claudius Aristomenes, priest of Zeus Ithomatas, and Claudius Nikeratos, *grammateus* of the Synedrion, both members of known families in Messene. Tombs were discovered along the S side of the basilica and outside the apse. One of the cover slabs bears a 2nd Ct BC inscription on both sides setting out the boundaries of an unknown region.

Excavation of the NE corner of the N stoa in the agora revealed 2 stone measuring tables for solid substances (**Fig. 45**), as well as orthostats on which the table tops were set. On the lower face of the table slabs, around the flow hole, were metal clamps and pegs. Among other finds from the fill between the tables and the E wall of the stoa was a cast bronze Hel head of Medusa from the fulcrum of a couch.

During cleaning and landscaping of the temple of Messene, numerous fragments of inscribed limestone were discovered, from 2 decrees. The first concerns the giving of honours to Messenian judges by the Thessalians. The 2nd, of the 1st Ct BC, records the honour paid to the Messenian Archidamos Philostratou as proxenos and benefactor by the polis of the Pylians. The stele with the decree was to stand in the Sanctuary of Athena Koryphasias at Pylos, with an exact copy in the homeland of the honorand, in accordance with the customs of the ancients, and probably in the sanctuary of the goddess Messene, where the stele was in fact found. It is the only stele so far found from the city of Pylos, which was also named Koryphasion. The Doric stoa, discovered long ago close to the W side of the temple of Messene, is the *prostoa* of a broad-fronted building, the function of which is still unknown. W of the Doric prostoa, 2 entrances, with large stone thresholds, lead to 2 chambers. Left and right of the thresholds were large limestone bases for inscribed stelae. Probably the building belonged to some city authority. A destruction level of tile from the roof covered the floor of the rooms: in certain places, especially in the SE corner of the N room, there were strong traces of fire. This occurred before the 3rd quarter of the 4th Ct AD (according to the ceramic

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44. Messene: general plan

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45. Messene: measuring tables from the N stoa

and numismatic evidence), probably due to the catastrophic earthquake of 375 AD which caused the destruction of many public and private buildings at Messene.

N of the temple of Messene, a square hypostyle hall was investigated, the N edge of which lay under deep fill; along the length of the front face was a roofed prothalamos. Inside the hall were the foundations of 2 parallel rows of bases (8 along the long sides, 4 on the short). The building is identified with the *bouleion* referred to in the inscription recording the boundary dispute between Messene and Megalopolis inscribed on the adjacent Base of the Knights.

Ch tombs with no grave goods were found in several places inside the *bouleion* and out. Digging associated with their construction was largely responsible for the destruction of the building's superstructure.

Reconstruction continued with support from the Third Community Framework: work was completed in the stadium, the gymnasium stoa and the E stoa in the gymnasium, and in the heroon-mausoleum of the Saithidai S of the stadium.

E.-A. Chlepa (*Praktika Z' Synedriou* 2, 287–304) reports on restoration and reconstruction work undertaken at the Arcadian Gate.

Anc. **Thouria**. E. Greco (Director, SAIA) reports on a further season of surface survey in the area of this site, conducted in collaboration with the 38th EPCA.

In 2007 attention focused on the area S of the city, within the wall and at the S edge of plateau B and beside plateau C. The data gathered were processed in CAD and GIS systems, enabling both quantitative and thematic analyses (of finds by category and class, or elevation models, for example). The team architects made drawings and photographs in the area N of the city known as the location of cemeteries, and of a notable stone quarry from which came a large proportion of the building stone used in the anc. city. Many tombs were visible: their co-ordinates were plotted and particular attention was paid to their relationship to the quarry face, since in many cases this permitted recognition of anc. extraction marks. The addition of these new elements to the area already surveyed and geo-referenced provides a complete general picture of the anc. city and its environs.

Kosmos tou Ependyti (19/01/08) summarizes the annual report of the 38th EPCA. Findings include the location of a retaining wall preserved for a *l*. of 13.95m and to a *h*. of 3m, slightly N of the Church of the Panagitsa, noting the large number of anc. spolia built into the church and evident nearby. Excavation of the wall revealed a Cl public building (or complex) preserved to a *h*. of 2.4m: research at the site continues.

Trypes. *Archaiologia* 104 (2007), 104; *Ta Nea* and *Eleutherotypia* (11/06/07) report the discovery by O. Vikatou (7th EPCA) of a Myc pictorial amphora in the Myc chamber tomb cemetery at Trypes. The scene depicts an ekphora, with the bier carried by 4 male bearers and followed by mourners. Four further chamber tombs from this well-known cemetery were excavated in 2007; all were undisturbed and contained rich offerings. One contained a child burial accompanied by animal figurines and a kourotrophos. Decorated finewares from the tombs included pyxides, alabastra, pilgrim flasks and 2- and 4-handled amphorae; of particular note is a flask of Cypriot shape. Other offerings included steatite seals and a rich variety of jewellery.

Kephalovryso (Chalratsos). G. Chatzi-Spiliopoulou (Director, 7th EPCA) presents a preliminary publication (*Praktika Z' Synedriou* 2, 337–66) of an almost intact small tholos tomb, previously noted (*AR* [2004–2005], 31–32). The chamber was almost round (3.2m x 3.25m) and preserved to a *h*. of 2.52m. The entrance, ca. 1m^2, faces S; the stomion is built of limestone slabs. The walls incline inwards and widen outwards. There is no dromos as such, probably because there was no need for such a retaining function since the tomb was built against the lower slopes of the hill. The doorway was 1.26m *h*. and was blocked by smaller slabs; there was a monolithic lintel. The chamber construction followed the usual manner of tholoi; walls were made of irregularly-sized, minimally-worked stone slabs. Almost the entire structure, apart from the very top, is preserved. An unusual feature is a wall erected over the lintel, also of stone slabs, preserved to 1m *h*. While it may originally have been straight, pressure from the earth behind it has forced it into a trapezoidal shape. This wall has no connection with the tholos superstructure and cannot be considered analogous to the retaining triangles of larger tholoi.

Within the chamber, ca. 1m of fill contained mostly finds of later periods, as well as displaced stones and human bone. Remains of 3 funerary deposits, likely previous burials pushed aside, were identified close to the chamber wall. Human bone, notably cranial remains, were placed in the N, E and W curves of the wall. There were no burial pits, nor evidence of burial in the centre of the chamber. Myc pottery consisted of a little decorated ware (5 LH I/IIA vessels are catalogued), more plainware and some handmade wares; other finds were very few. Handmade wares mostly come from a distinct location in the NW quadrant of the chamber and cannot be associated with any particular burial deposit; the deep cup is a characteristic shape. This ware is consistent with an LH I/IIA date, but is also known in MH II and III. It is likely that the tholos was built in the MH III/LH I and reused in LH II. Non ceramic finds include a bone pin and ring, 4 clay whorls, a stone tool, bronze beads and single beads of rock crystal and glass paste. Parts of the shoulders and lips of large pithoi were found in the vicinity of the tomb, together with a quantity of post-Myc sherds and tile. E of the tholos, on the land of A. Machaira, sherds of a pithos with finger-impressed decoration were found.

2.60m from the tomb entrance, a curved retaining wall extends for 3.51m; this includes one very large block (2.04m x 0.85m x 0.35m) within a lighter structure. It is founded at a higher level than the tomb and is a later peribolos probably designed to divide contemporary constructions from the ancestral funerary monument. Much Rom and later pottery was noted in the area.

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Post-Myc finds, especially much pottery, come from the area of the tholos, as well as the fill inside it: they indicate that the monument was reused during the LRom period (3rd–4th Ct AD) and perhaps later. A preliminary indication of the forms represented is given: many glass vessels are also present. Three catalogued items (a lamp, a bronze coin and *tegula mammata*) are indicative of the date proposed. It is likely that a Rom farmstead with a bath was situated close to the tholos: local reports of destroyed cist tombs may indicate burials of this period also. It is unclear whether the tholos was reused during this period, and, if so, for what purpose: there is no indication of later cult. The presence of a LRom lamp in the tomb may indicate that it was looted at that time.

Pylos, Palace of Nestor. J. Davis (Director, ASCSA) reports on the continuing study of finds from Blegen's excavations.

All post-BA pottery has been reviewed for the first time by J. Davis and K. Lynch. Activity continued only in certain restricted areas. There is no evidence of continuity in the socio-political institutions of the BA palace into the EIA. Activity almost ceased late in the EIA. The little Ar and later pottery has no connection with ritual or even informal veneration. There is no reason to consider the palace ruins a sacred site.

J. Murphy examined grave goods from Pylos in the National Museum; in the Chora Museum, she restudied with K. Lynch the post-BA pottery from the Kokkevis tholos which dates to the E–MPGeo, with most pottery dating to the MPGeo. L. Schepartz and S. Miller-Antonio analysed the human remains from tholos III in the National Museum.

S. Lafayette determined that much floor plaster retained by Blegen and Rawson had fallen from an upper storey of the palace. X-ray diffraction was employed at IGME to determine the composition of the plaster samples. H. Brekoulaki fully documented the nautilus frieze from hall 64, mentioned by Lang but not illustrated. New joins were made to the 'Two Men at Table' fragment from the throne room, and many to the procession scene illustrated in Lang's pl. Q. The ship fresco from hall 64 has been more accurately reconstructed, but the iconography of a large group of joining fragments with purple decoration from the same room remains a mystery. E. Kottoula completed experiments on the effects of burning on mod. samples of pigments used in the wall-paintings at Pylos.

J. Davis, S. Stocker and G. Cadogan identified Cretan and M ceramics from MH levels, some at least as early as the Old Palace period.

A new Gr edition of C. Blegen and M. Rawson, *Guide to the Palace of Nestor* has been published (Athens, Papademas, 2007) with revisions and updates by J. Davis and C. Shelmerdine.

Romanou. *Kosmos tou Ependyti* (19/01/08) summarizes the annual report of the 38th EPCA. Traces of PH settlement (2700–2250 BC) have been located (and are illustrated), contemporary with the settlements at Akovitika and Voidokoilia. Investigation in the E part of the settlement recovered large quantities of obsidian and bronze, probably from workshops (unique in Messenia). A few metres from this area, a deep well produced large quantities of pottery (ca. 200 vessels, mostly undecorated).

A 2nd discovery in this general area is a large pithos used for a burial. This contained PGeo vessels as funerary offerings.

ELEIA
(7th EPCA: 6th EBA)

Acropoleis of the anc. cities of Eleia. X. Arapogianni (Director, 38th EPCA) (*Praktika Z' Synedriou* 2, 5–32) describes work undertaken to clean and present to the public the monuments on the acropoleis of the major anc. cities of the region (Epitalio, Skillos, Prasidaki, Lepreon, Kato Samikon, Platiana, Alipheira, anc. Phigaleia and Koryphe).

Triphylia. J. Heiden (DAI) and C. Rohn (Cottbus) report that the 2007 survey season investigating the settlement and topography of Triphylia was abandoned due to devastating forest fires in the research area: the project will continue in 2008.

Olympia. *Eleutherotypia* (07/03/08) reports geophysical prospection aimed at locating the hippodrome, as part of a 5-year research programme undertaken by R. Senff (DAI) and G. Chatzi-Spiliopoulou (7th EPCA). The topographical significance of a building complex found by the 7th EPCA S of the entrance to the Olympic Academy in the winter of 2006–2007 and identified with the Sanctuary of Demeter Chamynes is emphasized. Pausanias placed this sanctuary SE of the stadium: built on a height, it was a vantage point from which spectators could watch chariot races. Current prospection thus focuses S and E of the stadium.

Publications: H. Kyrieleis (with contributions by B. Eder and N. Benecke), *Olympische Forschungen* 31. *Anfänge und Frühzeit des Heiligtums von Olympia: die Ausgrabungen am Pelopion 1987–1996* (Berlin, De Gruyter, 2006); H. Baitinger and T. Völling, *Olympische Forschungen* 32. *Werkzeug und Gerät aus Olympia* (Berlin, De Gruyter, 2007).

Linaria (Lagoumia). O. Vikatou (7th EPCA) reports (*Praktika Z' Synedriou* 1, 385–86) the discovery of 4 tombs in the course of work to divert the main road beside anc. Olympia. The remains of 4 human skeletons were found. Pottery – comprising 3 prochoiskoi, a fragmentary Minyan kylix, 2 further fragmentary vessels and part of a handle – indicates a date at the end of the MH. Also found were a lead weight, 3 stone tools, 2 clay weights and a clay bead.

Linaria (Spilies). O. Vikatou (7th EPCA) reports (*Praktika Z' Synedriou* 1, 386–87) the discovery of part of a PH settlement. Poorly preserved architectural remains were uncovered at a *d.* of 0.2–0.3m. In one trench lay part of a curved foundation oriented N–S, 6m. *l* and 0.9m *w.*: adjacent to this was a round construction (*di.* 2.7m). To the E lay a 2nd N–S wall 3.3m *l.* which at its S end starts to curve to the E. Another trench produced just sherds, while a 3rd also produced remains of a building. The excavation produced a quantity of EH and MH sherds and stone tools, many of which had traces of burning. The PH finds were generally in poor condition because of ploughing and slope erosion. The site lies on a low hill ca. 3km from Olympia, with a direct view over the Alpheios valley: rescue excavation covered only the area threatened by road construction (part of the project to divert the main road by anc. Olympia) and the site is undoubtedly more extensive.

Miraka (Velmacheika). O. Vikatou (7th EPCA) reports (*Praktika Z' Synedriou* 1, 387–96) the discovery of part of a Rom settlement and cemetery. Between them, a wall (preserved for 4m) and a round hearth probably belong to a PH settlement badly damaged by cultivation. A few EH sherds and stone tools were found.

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