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ARCHAEOLOGY IN GREECE 2013–2014

2013–2014 – a view from Greece

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While much of the news reported from Greece continues to focus on the harsh realities of continuing financial crisis, it is a pleasure to publicize the strength and diversity of archaeological research, and the major developments which continue to make Greece's sites and museums ever more attractive and accessible to visitors whatever their interests. This has been an exciting year, not least thanks to the Greek presidency of the Council of the European Union which has put culture in all forms under the spotlight (the exhibition *Greece's Europe. Colonies and Coinage from the Alpha Bank Collection* at the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki was but one of the commemorative events held in Greece). Further new discoveries through the summer of 2014 continue to tantalize, as we will observe presently.

Over the past year, the team at *Archaeology in Greece Online* (*AGOnline*; www.chronique.efa.gr) has completed the huge task of compiling and uploading site reports from the seven fascicules of *ADelt* 56–59 (2001–2004) plus *ADelt* 60 (2005), correlating them with existing entries drawn from the online review of the decade *2000–2010 Από το Ανασκαφικό Έργο των Εφορειών Αρχαιοτήτων* (www.yppo.gr/0/anaskafes; on which we commented last year) and also adding information from a number of conference proceedings and other collected volumes which present a wealth of primary data. In Attica, for example, an initiative by the Museum of Cycladic Art in Athens to dedicate its weekly seminar series in 2009 and 2010 to the work of the 2nd and 26th EPCA and in 2012 and 2013 to the 1st and 3rd EPCA has resulted in a state-of-the-art overview of the region, swiftly published by the Museum in 2013 in two invaluable volumes (M. Dogka-Toli and S. Oikonomou (eds), *Αρχαιολογικές συμβολές. Α: Αττική – ΚΣΤ' και Β' Εφορείες Προϊστορικών & Κλασικών Αρχαιοτήτων* and *Β: Αττική – Α' και Γ' Εφορείες Προϊστορικών & Κλασικών Αρχαιοτήτων*, Athens 2013). Robert Pitt discusses the new data from central Athens in greater detail below.

To ensure that *AGOnline* meets researchers' requirements, whether they wish to browse the latest entries or to make closely defined searches, the British School has collaborated with our colleagues from the French School to redesign the *AGOnline* interface (**Fig. 1**). Readers may now choose to search from maps or an image gallery, or to use the established system of keyword and free-text searches (for convenience, *Archaeological Reports* (*AR*) continues to reference *AGOnline* entries by their Form ID number; ID searches can be configured online using the drop-down menus on the search page). A further innovation is the facility for compilers to mark existing entries which have been substantially expanded in the light of the primary data reports noted above, in order for them to be highlighted alongside new material on the *AGOnline* front page and appear anew in RSS feeds.



1. Archaeology in Greece Online: alternative modes of search. © British School at Athens, École française d'Athènes.

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2. Ancient Corinth: Mycenaean tholos tomb in the early stages of excavation. © Ministry of Culture and Sport: 37th EPCA.

This year, the publication of K. Kissas and W.-D. Niemeier (eds), *The Corinthia and the Northeast Peloponnese. Topography and History from Prehistoric Times until the End of Antiquity* (Munich 2013), the proceedings of the 2009 Loutraki conference, has enabled us not only to report new material from the Corinthia but to expand a number of existing short notices especially of discoveries made during the construction of the high-speed railway line across the northern Peloponnese and the widening of the Corinth-Patras motorway. These include individual discoveries of significance in their own right, such as the first Mycenaean tholos tomb to be found in the Corinthia (**ID4503**; **Fig. 2**) or the Early Byzantine cemeteries on the lower slopes of Acrocorinth (**ID2502**); discoveries which change our understanding of major sites and monuments (thus the complex of dining rooms at the Sanctuary of Demeter and Kore on Acrocorinth is substantially larger than previously thought, with over 100 buildings accommodating a minimum of 700 people: **ID3790**); and synthetic pictures of little-known communities, such as that at ancient Kromna, which must be closely linked to the operation of the Hexamilia quarries and probably also to the Sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia (**ID4506**, noting also **ID2496**). At ancient Sikyon (**ID4516**), a new understanding of the mortuary landscape of the city before and after its refoundation in 303 BC is emerging from the combination of recent discoveries made during road and railway works on the coastal plain and the study of material found during the initial construction of the motorway in the 1960s. After a hiatus caused by the financial crisis, these public infrastructure projects have now resumed. The latest discoveries include a second painted and richly-decorated Early Roman chamber tomb (**ID4497**; see **Figs 85**–**87**) from the same cemetery as that discovered in 2012 (**ID2910**), adding to the picture of the Roman and Romanized elite of the Early Imperial city gained from the American School of Classical Studies' excavations, especially in the North Cemetery (shortly to be published by Kathleen Slane as *Corinth* XXI: meanwhile, see her online lecture at www.ascsa.edu.gr/index.php/news/newsDetails/videocast-a-decent-burial-commemoration-and-community-in-roman-corinth).

As we frequently have cause to observe, rescue excavations for major infrastructure projects are now delivering the volume and quality of data required for large-scale shifts in understanding of whole periods and regions. A series of major conferences with publications in process promises a rich flow of information over the next few years. Publication of the 2012 *Archaeological Work in the Peloponnese* (*AEPEL*) conference is expected shortly. In 2013, the islands of the Aegean were the focus of two conferences, both accompanied by publications reviewing public works programmes: *Νησιωτικές Ταυτότητες/Island Identities* in April 2013 (M. Alvanou (ed.), *Νησιωτικές Ταυτότητες*, Mytilene 2013) and, in late November to early December, *Το Αρχαιολογικό Έργο στα Νησιά του Αιγαίου/Archaeological Work in the Aegean Islands* held in Rhodes under the aegis of the Archaeological Institute for Aegean Studies (P.Z. Triantaphyllidis, Ch. Palamida, E. Nikolakopoulou and A. Douma (eds), *Αρχαιολογικά Έργα στα Νησιά του Αιγαίου: Γ' ΚΠΣ, ΕΣΠΑ*, Rhodes 2013). Other regional meetings, often in series of long-standing, are more locally specific. The *15th Scientific Conference on Southeast Attica,* held in Koropi in October 2013, followed a recent trend to include a substantial archaeological component alongside the traditional focus of this series (organized by the Society for the Study of Southeast Attica in collaboration with individual demes) on social anthropology, folklore, environment, history and archival research (the proceedings of the previous meeting have recently been published as A.D. Stephanis (ed.), *Επιστημονική Συνάντηση ΝΑ Αττικής. Πρακτικά ΙΔ΄ Επιστημονικής Συνάντησης ΝΑ Αττικής, Καλύβια Θορικού Αττικής 6-9 Οκτωβρίου 2011*, Kalyvia Thorikos 2013).

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As recent input into *AGOnline* makes clear, there has been substantial new excavation in many parts of northwestern Greece and the Ionian islands (notably in Leukas and on Corfu). In 2013–2014, the extent of new work in the region was made abundantly clear at two major meetings. The *Panionian Congress*, which now rotates between the islands every four years, had its tenth meeting on Corfu: here too, there has been a steady trend in recent years to develop an archaeological component within these meetings (for the Corfu programme and for the history of the conference and its publications, see www.panioniosynedrio.gr). The *Panionian Congress* followed hard upon *Το Αρχαιολογικό Έργο στην Αιτωλοακαρνανία και τη Λευκάδα/Archaeological Research in Aetoloacarnania and Leukada*, organized by the 36th EPCA and the Cultural Society of Aetolia in Messolonghi in December 2013. The 46 programmed papers ranged over rescue and research excavations and studies of old material, with highlights including: 36th EPCA Director Olympia Vikatou's first presentation of the transitional Late Bronze to Early Iron Age burial tumuli on Meganisi; Photeini Saranti (36th EPCA) on the urban centre of ancient Makyneia (which dominates the rich small plain just west of the Rio-Antirrio bridge); Ismeni Trianti and Georgios Smyris (Ioannina) on the Archaic to Roman phases of the Temple of Apollo at Actium and its incorporation into a Roman imperial landscape of memory; and former Director General of Antiquities Lazaros Kolonas' report of the Protogeometric tumulus at Stamna with its bronze lebetes and exceptional textile remains. Among the projects already covered on *AGOnline*, I draw attention to a new report on the Hellenistic sanctuary complex in the centre of ancient Molykreio (**ID4514**; **Fig. 3**).

Such conferences present an exciting prospect for researchers, and we look forward to abstracting the resulting publications for *AGOnline*. Readers sometimes enquire about apparent delays in creating reports of rescue excavations in *AGOnline*, especially when compared with the immediacy of results from the work of Greek universities, the Archaeological Society of Athens and the foreign schools. *AGOnline* is not a news site in the sense of the excellent www.archaiologia.gr, which records events in Greek archaeology (lectures, conferences, publications, press releases) as they happen. Rather, we aim to present



3. Elliniko, Velvina (ancient Molykreio). © National Archaeological Museum, Aristotle University, Thessaloniki.

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archaeological data in a form that can be independently cited in academic writing, which will guide researchers in investigating the Greek-language literature and which, for those with no Greek, will enable effective citation of Greek research. We do not, therefore, publish conference abstracts or our own notes of events, however strong the desire to communicate new findings. All bodies are required to submit reports on fieldwork to the Ministry of Culture and Sport by the end of November each year and then to make them public. While Ministry reports are published in the *Archaiologikon Deltion*, which has long suffered delays, non-Ministry bodies submit to *Archaiologikon Deltion* but also use their own channels to publicize their work, and all make their reports available to us. We also draw on official press releases published by the Ministry on its website (www.yppo.gr), which lie behind most reporting in the Greek press. From time to time, the press also reports decisions taken by the Central Archaeological Council, providing insights into public policy as well as the progress of major public works. The discovery, during motorway construction, of the largest Slavic (eighth- to ninth-century AD) cemetery yet known in Greece, at Makri in Arkadia (**ID4511**), is such a case (**Fig. 4**). The 76 cremation pyres plus Christian graves cover a crucial time of transition to Christianity. Elsewhere, at the 41km mark of the Leuktro-Sparta motorway, the discovery of a Roman funerary monument with a mosaic pavement and a marble sarcophagus (depicting an Amazonomachy), a Christian shrine and the remains of an Early Byzantine manufacturing facility, led the 5th EPCA to request the addition of a bridge to the motorway to enable the remains to be displayed *in situ* (**ID4498**).



4. The Slavic cemetery at Makri: pyres and graves. © Ministry of Culture and Sport: 25th EBA.

The past year has seen public reflection on the achievements of a number of major projects previously reported in *Archaeology in Greece*. The *Sixth International Symposium of the Acropolis Restoration Programme* in October 2013 reviewed progress over the period 2000–2013. It is worth recalling the scale of the endeavour: 1,094 staff members (including 781 architectural staff) employed between 2000 and 2010, and 530 cubic metres of new marble quarried from Penteli for 158 new members and 905 filling elements. Attention is now focused on the development of a conservation plan for the bastion walls which are suffering from age and water penetration. But discussion at the meeting ranged widely over such issues as the practicalities of planning and establishing priorities during a period of economic crisis, the extent of the intervention that should be allowed on iconic parts of key buildings (such as the west pediment of the Parthenon) and how best to communicate the work to all sectors of a rapidly changing society.

The restoration of the drained Lake Karla (ancient Lake Boibis), which dominated the eastern Thessalian plain, began in 2000 and has necessitated 13 years of rescue excavation (with over 20 site reports in *AGOnline* and frequent mention in previous editions of *AG*). The completion of the project in 2013, and the results of the first five years of wetland regeneration, have received wide press coverage. Occupation around the lake dates from the Final Palaeolithic and Early and Middle Neolithic periods to Byzantine times. To give but three examples, an exceptionally well-preserved Final Neolithic settlement was found at Palaioskala in the foothills of Mavrovouni (**ID1035**, **ID1037**, **ID1038**, **ID4046**, **ID4047**); the Roman complex at Amygdali was preceded by a Hellenistic farmhouse and a Bronze Age building (**ID3973**); and at Gouva, on the slopes of Mavrovouni, a large Middle Byzantine (11th- to 12th-century) cemetery related to a settlement which included iron workers' shops was identified (**ID3972**). The majority of sites were found along the ancient collecting channels (2–5km long) which directed rainwater from the surrounding hills into the lake. Channels 4 and 6 in particular produced evidence of the Neolithic to Hellenistic and then Byzantine periods (**ID1039**, **ID4011-ID4018**, **ID4045**). The planned new channels for the restored lake would thus have cut through significant archaeological remains, and it was therefore decided to reroute them in order to preserve sites such as Palaioskala *in situ*. An archaeological park will

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now be established, with a museum of the history of the lake. Meanwhile, a new walkers' guide to the region (S. Dodouras, I. Lyratzaki and T. Papayannis, *Lake Karla Walking Guide*, Athens 2013) can be downloaded at www.med-ina.org/PUBLICATIONS.aspx.

One of the major rescue excavations in Greece in 2012–2013 took place in the Phaleron delta, on the site designated for the new Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Centre. With the support of the Foundation, the 26th EPCA has explored an area of *ca*. 3,000m^2, revealing a further part of the Phaleron cemetery first excavated at the beginning of the 20th century. Some 1,069 graves date from the late eighth to the early fifth century (primarily to the Archaic period) (**Fig. 5**). The fact that certain skeletons had their hands bound with iron bonds or chains has given rise to speculation about their status as slaves or captives. The damp, if not waterlogged, conditions have also aided the preservation of rare organic remains, including a wooden coffin hollowed out from a single tree trunk. While the excavation is now complete, study of the finds is still in progress: for preliminary reports, see **ID4561**; www.snfcc.org/construction/archaeological-findings; www.youtube.com/watch?v=lRhJP_V6A5c, a short film reviewing the excavation and published online in July 2014 by the 26th EPCA and the Stavros Niarchos Foundation.



5. Phaleron delta: view of the cemetery. © Ministry of Culture and Sport: 26th EBA.

The Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Centre forms part of a larger plan for the regeneration of the sea-front from Phaleron to the Piraeus, which will also include the new Piraeus Museum of Underwater Antiquities. Similar plans are now being discussed for Patras, where a study has been commissioned for the creation of an archaeological park and a long-term plan for the city centre. The transformation of our knowledge of the great Mediterranean ports as a result of rescue archaeology undertaken ahead of public works has been one of the major archaeological stories of the past decade. Istanbul is perhaps the most

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spectacular case. Excavation at Yenikapı for the city's new metro from 2004 revealed Neolithic to Ottoman remains, but it is the 37 fifth- to 11th-century AD ships, exceptionally preserved (along with other organic remains) in the waterlogged conditions, that have caught the headlines as the largest known collection of ships in perhaps the greatest Byzantine harbour in the empire. Istanbul University is a partner in the European LIMEN programme on civil harbours from the Aegean to the Black Sea, focusing in particular on cultural tourism (www.limenproject.net), with the city and its harbours a major case study (to include construction of a replica of one of the Byzantine ships).

Rescue excavation in Thessaloniki, another major port in the LIMEN network, has been much more controversial. I alluded last year to the fierce debate surrounding the fate of the remains of the crossroads between the marble paved *decumanus* and the stone-paved *cardo* and surrounding buildings, found during excavation for the Venizelos Street metro station (**Fig. 6**). An initial decision to remove these remains for display elsewhere appeared to have been overturned in January 2014 by a majority vote on the Central Archaeological Council in favour of temporary lifting to allow the station to be built and then the restoration of some 80% of the finds (accompanied by a display on the first floor of the station). Without doubt this would be a costly solution, but it has also proved a very controversial one. Protests immediately followed and, at the time of writing, no solution has been agreed upon. It is reasonably argued that the station site is a palimpsest of antiquities from the fifth century BC to the ninth century AD, not merely a crossroads. Yet if construction here is to be abandoned (as may in the end prove to be the only option, if the remains are not to be removed and the metro system is to be delivered to the city in early 2018), how will the Venizelos Street site be conserved, protected and exhibited? This discussion will certainly continue. Meanwhile, work elsewhere on the metro continues to deliver new discoveries. In July 2014, the Central Archaeological Council approved the lifting and consolidation of a fourth-century BC vaulted tomb with wall paintings found at the Sintrivani station and commissioned a technical report on options for its display in the station. And at Agia Sophia station, a Late Antique monumental complex has been found in the northern part of the station. To date, the metro excavations as a whole have produced some 135,000 artefacts, with a projected bill for archaeology alone from 2006–2016 of €134 million. The whole project has exceeded even the New Acropolis Museum in scale and complexity, revealing significant aspects of the history of Thessaloniki from the fourth century BC to the present day.



6. Thessaloniki, Venizelos Street metro excavations: architectural remains beside the decumanus. © Ministry of Culture and Sport: 9th EBA.

While overshadowed by discoveries in Thessaloniki, it is worth noting that work continues on the Athens metro too, currently on the extension of the line from Haidari to the Piraeus. Extensive excavation in Agios Konstantinos Square has revealed a cluster of ten cisterns and 31 wells, and while these will be removed, an exhibition on the water supply of ancient Piraeus is planned for the Demotiko Theatro station in the Piraeus (a total of some 600 cisterns have been found in these works).

The range of imaginative solutions now being adopted for the display of antiquities and the use of historic buildings has been a matter of comment in a number of recent editions of *AG*. An interesting development this year is approval for the conservation of two mosques in Edessa (the Geni Tzami and Hunkiar Tzami), which will not only reveal their complex histories, but in the case of the 15th- or 16th-century Geni Tzami, create space for a new city museum. While this follows a growing trend for diachronic city museums, the project and the choice of building promise an important addition to an already rich collection of museums in the region (the Byzantine Museum of nearby Veroia, for example, housed in the former Markos mill, makes an outstanding presentation of public and private life as well as local church art and architecture).

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Certain forms of site present considerable challenges of presentation and access. Greece's rich underwater heritage is such a case. In October 2013, Parliament voted to establish two underwater archaeological parks to support organized diving and boat tours in the Bay of Navarino and off Methoni (near to the islet of Sapienza by Cape Spitha). The latter is the location of numerous shipwrecks, including two which contained, respectively, granite columns from the peristyle of the Temple of Herod and third-century AD relief sarcophagi. Presentation of Greece's modern heritage has also been promoted, not least as a means of enhancing the quality of, and respect for, urban environments. The former royal estate at Tatoi has long been an Athenian landmark and a much-valued refuge from the city. The city authorities now propose to create there a museum of the estate, celebrating its architecture and history as an aspect of 19th-century Athenian history. For those interested in the exceptionally rich collection of modern, post-independence sculpture on Athenian streets, a new website (www.athenssculptures.com) is a welcome documentary resource organized by www.atenistas.org. And the long-awaited opening of the National Museum of Contemporary Art is now imminent.

These new initiatives complement major works recently completed at Greece's leading archaeological museums. The reopening of the Herakleion Museum this year has been widely welcomed: Matthew Haysom reviews the new displays in this edition of *AG*. Aigeai in Macedonia is the subject of a new volume by Angeliki Kottaridi in the Museums Cycle published by the Latsis Foundation (freely accessible online at www.latsis-foundation.org/megazine/publish/ebook.php?book=75&preloader=1). This celebrates not only the museum, but also the history of the site and its excavation since 1861, and the restoration of the Palace of Philip II, at a time when the public display of this exceptional, innovative public building (three times the size of the Parthenon) is the subject of study and debate by the Central Archaeological Council.

Over the past year, two long-running claims for restitution of looted antiquities have been brought to a successful conclusion. In June to December 1941, Nazi occupying forces conducted illegal excavation at 38 magoules in Thessaly (including the major Neolithic site of Magoula Visviki) under the direction of Hans Reinerth. Reinerth subsequently became Director of the Pfahlbaumuseum in Germany, to which he removed 10,600 Neolithic artefacts (sherds, stone tools and bone material) from these Thessalian sites. This material was reported as looted immediately after the war, in 1946, but no action was taken. However, thanks to collaborative detective work by Angeliki Douzougli and Eva Alram from 2009 onwards, aided by Reinerth's successor as museum Director, Gunther Schoebel, the material has now been identified and returned to Greece. The second case concerns two artefacts from Amorgos (an 0.88m-high Early Cycladic Spedos figure and a frying pan) returned from the Badisches Landesmuseum, Kahrlsruhe, after a request initiated in 2011, again with the collaboration of the museum Director, Harald Siebenmorgen.

Long-established excavations celebrated significant anniversaries in 2013–2014 with events at the Archaeological Society of Athens. Fifty years of excavation by the Belgian School at Thorikos were marked in October 2013 with a conference that examined the site *per se*, its extractive industry and wider connections in and beyond the Saronic gulf. Fifty years of work on Keros were celebrated in an evening summarizing achievements and culminating in a presentation of the latest results of the 2012–2013 survey. Finally, a third fifty-year anniversary, that of the Swiss School at Eretria, was the occasion for a two-day conference reviewing the diversity of work on this city state. The Archaeological Society itself, and the director of its excavations at Agios Vasileios in Laconia, Adamantia Vasilogamvrou, are also to be congratulated on this project's nomination as one of the top-10 field discoveries of 2013 by the Shanghai Archaeological Forum (the only European project on the list).

New discoveries have continued to flow through the summer of 2014, and I conclude with a brief taste of what will soon follow in *AGOnline*. At Psomi on Chios, an Archaic (seventh- to sixth-century) cemetery of pithos burials and sarcophagi contained the first horse burial to be discovered in the northeast Aegean, and the first Mycenaean tholos tomb to be found in Phokis (in the Amphissa area) has just been reported. Without doubt, however, the story capturing the headlines as I write is the opening of the monumental tomb at Kasta near Amphipolis under the direction of Katerina Peristeri (28th EPCA). Over the past two

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years, renewed excavation has revealed the largest tumulus yet known in Macedonia or the wider area, defined by a 3m-high marble peribolos (*ca*. 500m in circumference) with orthostats at the base and a superstructure and crowning elements of white Thasian marble (**Fig. 7**). The structure is dated by the excavator to the last quarter of the fourth century and was crowned by the Lion of Amphipolis (**Fig. 8**).

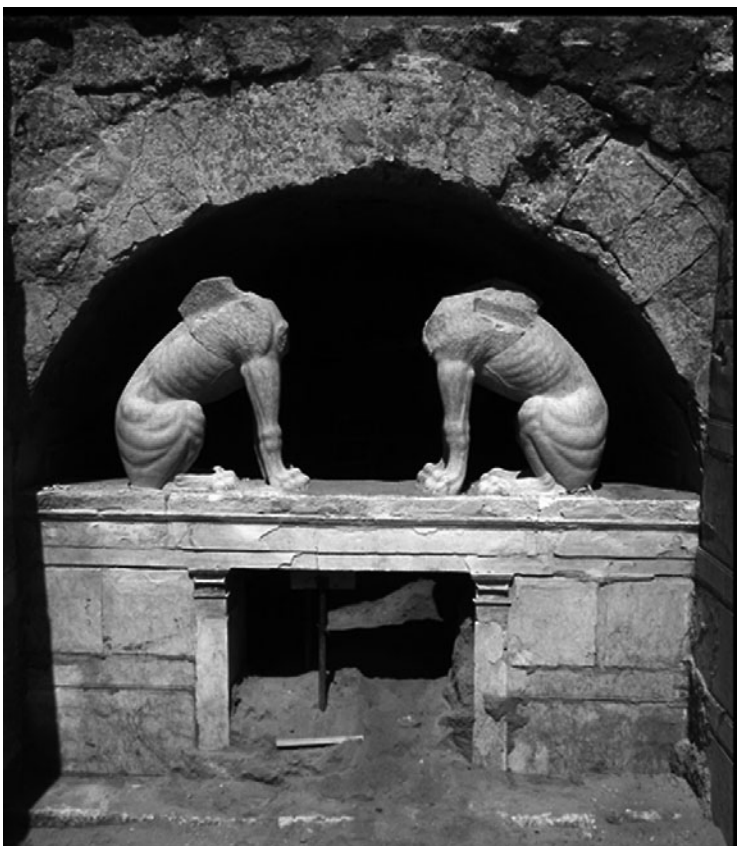


7. Amphipolis (Kasta): tumulus showing the marble peribolos. © Ministry of Culture and Sport: 28th EPCA.



8. Amphipolis (Kasta): the Lion of Amphipolis. © Ministry of Culture and Sport: 28th EPCA.

Investigation of the tomb interior has so far revealed a vaulted structure built of limestone blocks. The outer entrance, behind a blocking wall, was crowned by two sphinxes in Thasian marble (*ca*. 2m high, restoring the missing heads) likely from the same workshop as the lion (**Fig. 9**). The marble doorway beneath was frescoed (in red, blue and black) and had an Ionic epistyle with two column capitals beneath bearing traces of red and black paint: the parastades (beside a 1.67m-wide opening) and flanking walls were also frescoed in white to imitate marble. Behind it lay an antechamber with marble orthostat revetments along the length of the side walls (echoing the facing of the peribolos), a small area of black and white pebble mosaic at the entrance and a main floor of irregularly-shaped pieces of white marble set into a red background. Behind the blocking wall at the rear of the antechamber lay the entrance to a further chamber. The upper part of the entrance (from the Ionic epistyle to the vault) was walled: between the parastades were two caryatids (2.27m tall), also in Thasian marble (with traces of polychrome decoration preserved) and likely from the same workshop as the other tomb sculpture (**Fig. 10**). They stood on marble bases set 1.68m apart (the same width as the outer doorway), the faces of which preserve red colour and were decorated to continue the appearance of the marble revetment which covered the walls of all the chambers. In the second chamber, was found a 4.2m by 1m marble slab fallen from the superstructure, decorated with a painted rosette in red, blue and yellow. At the rear of this chamber was the



9. Amphipolis (Kasta): outer entrance with sphinxes. © Ministry of Culture and Sport: 28th EPCA.

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10. Amphipolis (Kasta): caryatid from the entrance to the second chamber. © Ministry of Culture and Sport: 28th EPCA.

entrance to a third (the doorway has the same marble revetment and Ionic epistyle as the previous two chambers), with before it a blocking wall decorated with polychrome Macedonian stars. All three of the chambers so far located were deliberately filled with sand when the monument was sealed (up to the level of the vault in the outer chambers, but to a lower level in the third).

At the time of writing, the floor mosaic of the the third chamber, depicting the abduction of Persephone, is the subject of intense press interest. The suggestion that the sphinx head, which was one of the first discoveries made in the fourth chamber, belongs to the east sphinx from the outer entrance, has revived speculation about earlier disturbance of the tomb. By the time that *AG* is published, the identity of the occupant(s) of the burial chamber will likely be known.

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