

Corinth Excavations Unearth Geometric Grave in Panayia Field

Last season's excavations at Corinth continued to focus on the Panayia Field, uncovering a long-suspected grave and its associated objects, described here by Corinth Excavations Director Guy D.R. Sanders.

Excavations at Corinth for the past five years have concentrated on the complex stratigraphy of successive Roman building phases in the Panayia Field. The size of the Roman houses found in this area required the builders clear an extensive, flat open area. Our repeated close examination of the sides of the deep Late Antique robbing trenches that reduced these Roman houses indicates that almost the whole area had been trimmed down to stereo. Virtually nothing of earlier phases remains intact. Exploration in two of these later disturbances, however, produced four substantially complete Geometric vessels. The finds suggested the existence of a Geometric grave in the area. Excavation in the 2002 season proved this to be the case.

Preserved *in situ* was a very large sarcophagus of sandy limestone with interior dimensions of 0.7 m. by 1.6 m. that appears to have been centrally placed within the grave cut (2.3 m. by an estimated 3.8 m.). After the sarcophagus had been positioned, the north end of the cut was back-filled with small boulders, and these were covered with a layer of marl clay up to the lip of the sarcophagus. This ramp facilitated the placement of the heavy Acrocorinth limestone cover slab (estimated at 750 kg.). When the slab was in place the filling of the grave resumed. During this process vessels used during the burial liturgy were carefully placed upright against the side of the cut. Two oenochoai, each with a cup, a skyphos, and a kyathos set upright in their mouths, were found in the northeast corner. Two decorated amphoras, one with an upright skyphos in its mouth and the other largely complete but substantially cut by the robbing trench, were found on the west side, and a hydria (or transport amphora) was placed on the east side. Two small aryballoi were tossed, not placed, into the fill on the north side. No trace of charcoal or ash, which may have suggested preparation of a funerary meal, was found. The date of the grave is transitional Early Geometric to Middle Geometric I, or ca. 825 B.C. +/- 25.

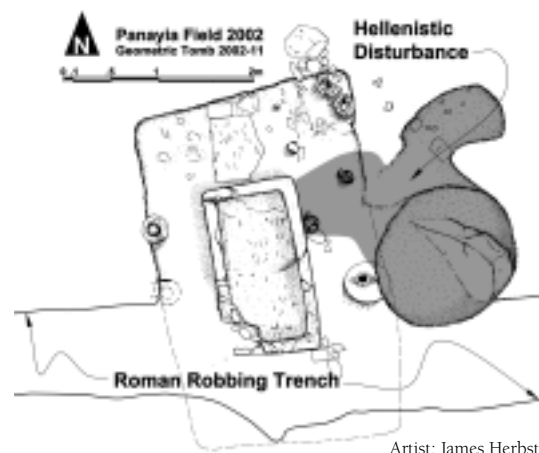
The sarcophagus is the largest Early or Middle Geometric example found to date at Corinth, and with the 10 *in situ* and 5 displaced oenochoai, plausibly associated with the grave, it is clearly a rich assemblage. The

aryballoi appear to be for chrysmation oil (perhaps scented), the hydria for water, the decorated amphoras for wine, and the oenochoai for mixing and pouring wine and water, and the cups may have been shared for drinking and/or used for libation.

The survival of the grave is remarkable when one considers that the excavation team was not the first but the fifth group to have found it. The grave was extensively damaged and partly looted by both Hellenistic and Roman disturbances. Excavation around and the filling of a well in the Hellenistic period revealed part of the east side of the grave and the sarcophagus it contained. This prompted the discoverers to break the lid and rifle the grave contents, leaving only a tiny stone bead behind. The sarcophagus lid was broken into two parts; one half was dumped into the well, and the other half was allowed to rest displaced on top of the sarcophagus. Two broken oenochoai were found in the Hellenistic disturbance. The lid was partially exposed when the foundations of a second-century

building were dug and again in the third century when the foundations of the wall were robbed out. The construction of the mid-Roman *domus* in the second half of the third century cut away the south end of the grave (ASCSA Newsletter 45, 2001). Finally, sixth-century robbing of the *domus* wall re-exposed and cut away the south end of the sarcophagus, which was partially filled with earth and fresco fragments when the trench was back-filled. Careful removal of these

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A diagram of the area of excavation, indicating sources and locations of previous disturbances.

Managing Committee Elects New Leadership

In a special October election, the School's Managing Committee chose Jane B. Carter (Tulane University) as Vice Chair of the Managing Committee, replacing Stella Miller-Collett (Bryn Mawr College), who had resigned from the position. Ms. Carter was serving on the Managing Committee's Executive Committee at the time of her election.

Ms. Carter has a Ph.D. in Classical Archaeology from Harvard University. An Associate Professor in Tulane's Department of Classical Studies, she is currently at work on a book, *The Beginning of Greek Sculpture*, to be published by Yale University Press.

Replacing Ms. Carter on the Executive Committee is Admissions and Fellowship Committee member Naomi J. Norman. Ms. Norman, an Associate Professor of Classics at the University of Georgia, has directed the University's excavations at Carthage since 1992. She holds a Ph.D. in Classical Art and Archaeology from the University of Michigan.

John G. Younger has been appointed to replace Ms. Norman on the Admissions and Fellowships Committee. He is a Professor of Classics and Humanities and Western Civilization at the University of Kansas and holds a Ph.D. in Classics from the University of Cincinnati. Mr. Younger's current research focuses on the Bronze Age Aegean and on Greek art, especially sculpture.

The Managing Committee of the ASCSA is composed of elected representatives from some 170 Cooperating Institutions. Through its network of elected subcommittees, the Managing Committee is responsible for supervising the School's admissions and fellowships, academic programs and personnel, publications, excavations and surveys, and research facilities. A full listing of Managing Committee members, as well as Cooperating Institutions and their representatives, can be found on the ASCSA web site (<http://www.ascsa.edu.gr/directory>). ❁