

# EXCAVATIONS IN THE ATHENIAN AGORA 2002–2007

## ABSTRACT

This article summarizes the results of six seasons (2002–2007) of continuing excavations in the Athenian Agora by the American School of Classical Studies at Athens. Work concentrated in the area outside the northwest corner of the square, where commercial buildings dating from the 5th century B.C. to the 5th century A.D. were explored and more of the eastern part of the Stoa Poikile was exposed. Further work was also carried out in the area of the Eleusinion, and southwest of the Tholos, in the Classical building traditionally identified as the “Strategeion.”

*Hesperia* was founded in 1932, in large part to publish the results of the newly inaugurated excavations of the Athenian Agora.<sup>1</sup> Since then, it has fulfilled that aspect of its mission admirably. Over 375 articles on Agora material have appeared in the pages of *Hesperia*, an average of five per year or more than one for every fascicle published. This close collaboration has served both the excavation and the journal well: the excavation results have been guaranteed a speedy scholarly appearance and the journal has had a reliable source of new material to present to its readers. How this symbiosis will continue in the age of advanced and almost inconceivably fast technology remains to be seen, but for many scholars, the pleasure of perusing the latest hard-copy issue of *Hesperia* still remains a satisfying experience.

Among the articles traditionally generated by the Agora excavations have been regular preliminary reports by the successive field directors. One such report is presented here in celebration of *Hesperia's* 75th year of publication.<sup>2</sup> As always, any conclusions are presented as tentative, as

1. Davis 2007; Cullen 2007, pp. 1–4.

2. It is a pleasant duty to acknowledge here the help and support of numerous individuals who have worked for the success of this project. The staff in the Stoa of Attalos has consisted of Craig Mauzy (assistant director), Jan Jordan (secretary), Sylvie Dumont

(registrar), Richard Anderson (architect), Amandina Anastassiades (head conservator), Angelique Sideris (photographer), Annie Hooton (draftsperson), Karen Loven (conservator), George Dervos (foreman), and Maria Stamatatou (housekeeper). Kevin Daly served as senior supervisor in the

field. In addition, the Packard Humanities Institute computerization program has been staffed by Bruce Hartzler, Patricia Felch, Pia Kvarnstrom, Irini Marathaki, Vasili Spanos, Frederick Ley, Wendy Porter, Claire Pickersgill, and Cherkea Howerly. At the offices of the American School, we are especially

in many instances the areas in question are still under excavation. In addition, much of the material from recent years has already been assigned to young Agora scholars and has or will appear as separate articles in the pages of *Hesperia*. The following is therefore a somewhat summary account of work in the Agora over the past several years, written for inclusion in the journal's commemorative volume.

Excavations were carried out in the Athenian Agora during the summers of 2002–2007 by the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, part of a long-term project to uncover the civic center of the ancient city. As in recent years, the main effort was concentrated at the northwest corner, in the vicinity of the building usually identified as the Stoa Poikile, or Painted Stoa. During the years covered in this article we acquired five modern buildings along Astingos and St. Phillip's Streets and have demolished four of them; the fifth is scheduled for demolition by the end of 2007. Excavation of these plots will uncover most of the remains of the Stoa Poikile.

Logistical considerations and research questions also led to supplementary excavations in areas previously excavated, the Eleusinion and the area southwest of the Tholos.

Excavation over the past six years was conducted with a combination of local labor and dozens of student volunteers from a wide range of universities. Much of this report is based on the observations of the individual trench supervisors, who are named below and whose hard work is gratefully acknowledged here. It is also a pleasure to record here my thanks to David W. Packard and the Packard Humanities Institute, for providing essential financial support and serving as a close collaborator in the Agora project for many years.

indebted to Maria Pilali, Pantelis Panos, Niamh Michalopoulou, Robert Bridges, and Dimitra Barbou. The School lawyers, John and Maria Nikolaides, have been very helpful in the acquisition of new properties, and the School doctor, Nikos Michalopoulos, has been patient and consistently helpful in keeping our students healthy.

For a full list of the many volunteers who have contributed their efforts to the excavations over the past six years, see the acknowledgments at the end of this article.

We are indebted to our colleagues in the Ministry of Culture and in the A' Ephoreia, in particular, Eleni Korka in the central office, the successive ephors Alkestis Choremi and Alexandros Mantis, and our longtime colleagues in the Stoa of Attalos, Nikolettta Saraga and Vasso Christopoulou.

The work has been funded in large part by the Packard Humanities Insti-

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I am indebted also to Tracey Cullen, editor of *Hesperia*, and two anonymous readers, who made several useful suggestions for improving an earlier version of this article.

## NORTHWEST CORNER OF THE AGORA: SECTIONS BZ AND BE

### BYZANTINE LEVELS

The area northwest of the Classical Agora square (Fig. 1, grid squares I–K/1–2) has been under excavation for several years, under the supervision of Marcie Handler, Bruce Hartzler, Michael Laughy, Anne McCabe, Matthew McCallum, David Scahill, and Floris van den Eijnde. The Classical and Roman levels are covered with an extensive settlement of the Byzantine period, much of which has been described in previous reports.<sup>3</sup> The principal feature is a street running north–south, the upper levels of a road that goes back at least to the Archaic period.<sup>4</sup> Its width in the late period varies from 2.45 to 2.80 m, and the surfaces, renewed from time to time, are generally made up of packed gravel, with occasional patches of lime mortar or broken tiles. No regular traces of wheel ruts have been noted. A stone-lined pit with a terracotta channel feeding into it from the east seems to have served as a cesspit for the adjacent building. The function of other large unlined pits, full of loose rubble, is not as clear but may be the same.

Remains of what we identify as several houses were found both east and west of this road. The buildings shared party walls and the line of division between individual houses is often not clear and may have shifted over time. The walls are of rubble, usually 0.45–0.65 m thick, with a considerable amount of reused earlier material built in, especially the larger pieces. In many cases these walls rest directly on the remains of Late Roman walls (cf. Fig. 2); elsewhere their foundations are 1.00–1.50 m deep.

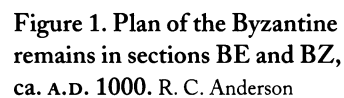
West of the road, we excavated a structure consisting of three rooms, though it may have extended farther north, beyond the limits of our excavations. Along its south wall it measures 8.40 m and along the east at least 9.40 m. It is not rectilinear and the west wall, preserved for ca. 5.50 m, diverges toward the west in its northerly course, so the north end of the building was longer than the south. Numerous installations, including built pithoi, stone-lined pits, and cisterns, were found in virtually every room.

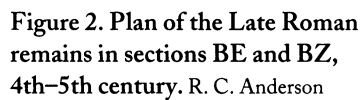
East of the road, we excavated Late Roman levels, into which the foundations of the later houses had been set. Digging beneath the Byzantine floor levels, which fall at roughly 54.45 masl, we nonetheless encountered material that sheds further light on the Byzantine houses. In one room, a coarse-ware pitcher found buried in a corner beneath the floor contained the skeletal remains of a newborn infant (J 1:4), and an area around the mouth of a reused well (J 2:18) was found to have a paved platform built around it.

In many instances the bottoms of the Byzantine foundations were found and the walls were then dismantled. They were made of rubble: fieldstones, reused pieces, and tile fragments set in clay. Several of the reused pieces, though fragmentary, clearly came from funerary monuments—columnar grave monuments, sarcophagus lids, and grave stelai—which must have been brought from the Greek and Roman cemeteries beyond

3. Shear 1997, pp. 521–546; Camp 2003, pp. 241–246.

4. For the street, which in antiquity led to the “Eriai Gate,” see now Costaki 2006, pp. 468–472, nos. V 27, V 28, with earlier bibliography.





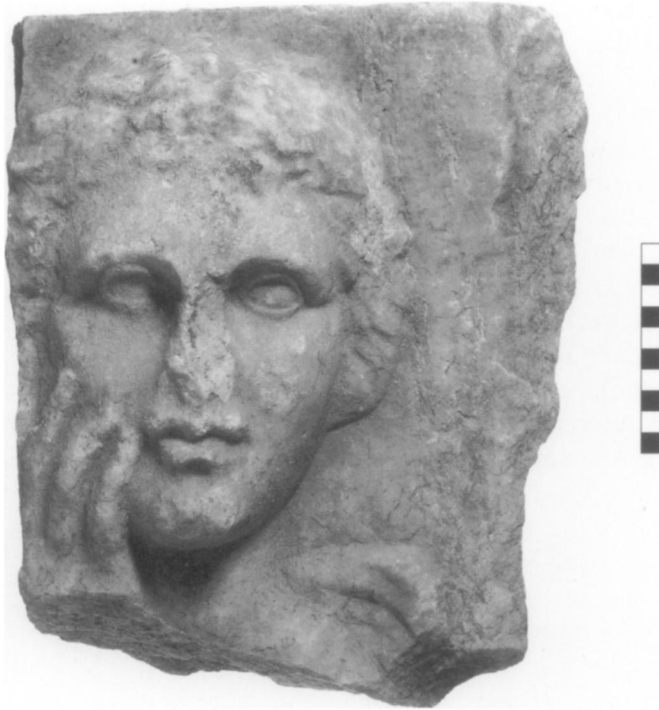


Figure 3. Fragmentary grave stele 1

the city walls. Illustrated here as an example is a fragmentary grave stele (Fig. 3), one of the more interesting to have been recovered.

1 S 3497: Fragment of funerary relief

Fig. 3

Recovered from a Byzantine wall at J/11–1/14, July 31, 2001, at 54.31 masl. P.H. 0.34, p.W. 0.275, Th. 0.115 m.

Top edge preserved, otherwise broken all around, preserving the frontal face of a woman with her right hand held to her right cheek. Her hair falls over her ears, and there are folds of drapery on her left shoulder. The nose is damaged. Pentelic marble. Other fragments of reliefs or sarcophagi: A 4984, relief fragment with rosette, and S 3496, fragment of a sarcophagus lid decorated with imbricate leaf pattern.

Also represented were several fragments of herms, which must originally have stood nearby. In antiquity, this northwestern corner of the Agora, where the Panathenaic Way enters the great square, was known as “the Herms,” and fragments of herms or their bases found in this general area now number in the dozens.<sup>5</sup>

In several instances, the Byzantine walls rested directly on earlier walls, distinguishable by their lower levels and the use of a hard, white lime mortar in their construction. This, along with the Byzantine reuse of three earlier wells and at least one pithos, suggests that the area lay largely undisturbed following its abandonment late in the Roman period. As with much of the area of the Agora excavations, this part also seems to have been largely abandoned late in the 6th century A.D., with virtually no signs of activity in the 7th, 8th, or early 9th centuries. Stumps of walls and other features were apparently still visible and available for reuse when the area was reoccupied late in the 9th century A.D., after two or more centuries of abandonment.

5. *Agora III*, pp. 102–108.

The Byzantine buildings along both sides of the road have a dense concentration of installations of various sizes and construction. The provisions for storage may well have exceeded the needs of those occupying the buildings, and it can be argued that these structures served not only as houses but perhaps also as commercial establishments. If so, they presumably dealt in agricultural goods; in any case, no material was found to suggest other obvious economic activity.

Notable is the range of these large built containers, in terms of size, shape, and material, for there are distinct variations among them, though the specific functions of most of them remain obscure. They seem to generally have served for storage, being subterranean, built with their mouths roughly at the contemporary floor level. A specific nomenclature for the different types, used on the three plans (Figs. 1, 2, and 22, below) drawn up by the Agora architect, Richard Anderson, can be proposed. A *pithos* is either a very large ceramic vessel or a roughly egg-shaped chamber built of tiles or fieldstones, usually with thick mortar on the inner face. Both types may be provided with carefully built, added rims, often in the form of a shallow gutter or lip running around the mouth. The key features are impermeability and a generally rounded bottom. The rim and impermeability suggest they were used to store liquids. Some may well have served as cisterns to store water, while others may have held wine or, less likely, oil. *Siros* is the term applied to large, lined pits that may or may not have impermeable walls. The characteristic feature is the large size and a flat floor, usually paved with tiles or brick, or plastered. These pits may well have served as granaries. A *bothros* is a stone-lined pit, usually bell-shaped, built with fieldstones and/or tiles, but with unmortared walls, and without a paved floor. Their poor construction and permeability suggests they were useful in dispersing liquid waste and we are inclined to assume they functioned as cesspits.

### LATE ROMAN LEVELS

During the Late Roman period, the north-south street was the principal topographical feature, lined with buildings on both sides (Fig. 2). The plans of the buildings are fragmentary and do not provide much information as to their function, though some threshold blocks remaining in situ give a rough idea of traffic patterns and floor levels. Successive attacks on Athens in the 3rd (Herulians), 4th (Visigoths), 5th (Vandals), and 6th (Slavs) centuries provided occasions for this area—outside the post-Herulian circuit—to be extensively rebuilt more than once.

The walls are built of rubble, for the most part set in a hard, white, lime mortar, and measure about 0.60 m thick on average. Toward the bottom, large ashlar and polygonal blocks were used, presumably taken from earlier buildings in the area. The long wall running along the east side of the road was pierced by four separate drains that conducted water out of the building and into a street drain. Operating independently of one another, the drains may indicate that several of the rooms also functioned independently, perhaps as shops, each with its own direct access to the street. Within at least two of these drains, small deposits of bronze coins were found, adding weight to the probability that the rooms served



Figure 4. Threshold block from the eastern street wall

a commercial function (J 1:2, 30 coins; J 2:21, 78 coins). The coins are in a very sorry state, which precludes individual identifications, though by size and treatment our numismatist, Irini Marathaki, has been willing to venture an approximate date in the 5th century A.D. for their deposition.

A threshold block found in this wall (Fig. 4) may also support the suggestion of a commercial function. It does not have the usual raised doorstep all along the length of the block. Rather, it has a long slot, into which a series of boards could be slid, one after another, with a locking device necessary only for the final board: a sort of horizontal shutter for the doorway. Two things are noteworthy about such a door. First, it is relatively rare in Greece, with other examples coming from the Library of Pantainos, also in the Agora; many others are found in Italy, at both Ostia and Pompeii.<sup>6</sup> Second, securing and opening a doorway in this manner is appropriate for wide doors and ones intended to be left open, that is, for shops, as in the case of those in the Library of Pantainos. This threshold might therefore serve to bolster our tentative conclusion that the building along the east side of the street housed a series of shops in the Roman period. Also relevant for this identification, perhaps, is the discovery of a bronze steelyard (Fig. 5) found in Late Roman levels (5th–6th century A.D., lot BZ 1520) in the street just to the west.

2 B 2148: Bronze steelyard

Fig. 5

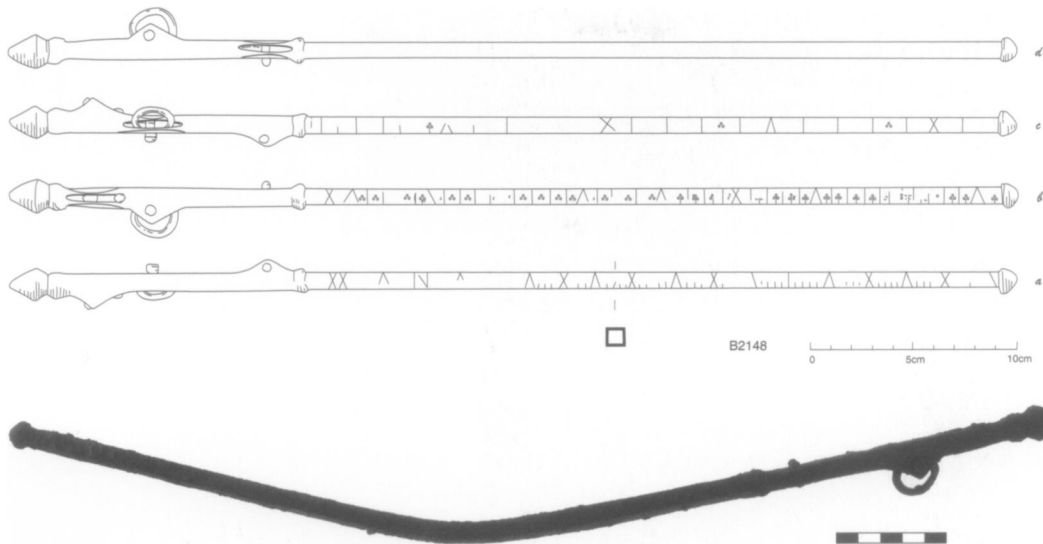
Found June 15, 2004, in the north–south road at J/9–2/11, at 53.04 masl.

L. 0.488, W. 0.008, Th. 0.01 m.

Finials at either end. Shaft bent; on each of three of the sides, near one end, there is a triangular protrusion with a pin designed to hold a ring from which

6. Stevens 1949; Haddad 1995 (*non vidi*).





**Figure 5. Bronze steelyard 2.** Drawing  
A. Hooton

chains and/or hooks could be suspended; one round link/ring is preserved. Cf. *Délos XVIII*, pp. 139–141, no. 65, pl. 53, esp. no. 404; *Corinth XII*, pp. 207–208, 214–216, nos. 1661–1666, pl. 98.

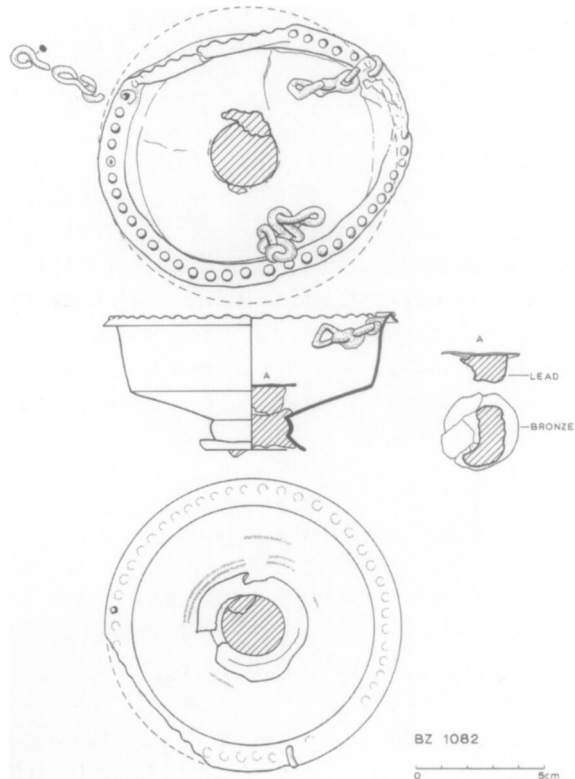
**3 B 2150: Bronze bowl or lamp**

Fig. 6

Found June 15, 2004, in the north–south road at J/9–2/10, at 53.18 masl.

Diam. ca. 0.11, H. ca. 0.05 m.

Crushed in antiquity and painstakingly restored. A thin bronze bowl standing on a raised foot, with an almost flat bottom and high, carinated sidewalls. The rim is turned out and decorated with a series of repoussé bosses. The rim is also



**Figure 6. Bronze bowl or lamp 3.**  
Drawing A. Hooton

pierced in three places, and fragments of chains for suspension survive. The inside of the foot and bottom of the bowl was filled with a plug of lead. The piece may well have served originally as a suspended lamp or an incense burner. The lead plug and the findspot close to B 2148 (2) suggests the possibility that it was used later with the steelyard, either as a balance pan or counterweight.

At the north end of this eastern area we finished clearing a deep pit or unfinished well (K 1:4) full of pottery, lamps, and figurines from the mid-4th century A.D.<sup>7</sup>

4 P 34646: African Red Slip small bowl Fig. 7

Well K 1:4, found July 16, 2003, between 49.80 and 50.60 masl.

Diam. 0.105, H. 0.038 m.

Complete, mended from several fragments. Ring foot, small deep bowl with broad rising rim. Slipped inside, reddish orange clay. Cf. P 27044 and Hayes 1972, pp. 119–120, African Red Slip form 71A, dated ca. A.D. 375–400/420.

5 T 4417: Terracotta impression from a copy of the shield Fig. 8  
of the Athena Parthenos

Well K 1:4, found July 30, 1996, at ca. 52 masl.

P.W. 0.057, p.H. 0.044, Th. 0.01 m.

Broken all around except at upper right where there seems to have been a circular cutout. Back relatively smooth and curved. Mold/impression preserves eyebrow, forehead, and top of head of the central Gorgoneion on the shield of the Athena Parthenos. Centrally parted hair with two indistinct spirals (snakey knots) above. Above head, the extended (proper) right leg and bent left leg of a skirted figure moving left. Traces of a second figure to the left of Medusa's head. For a reconstruction from numerous copies of the Amazonomachy on the shield: Leipen 1971, pp. 41–46; Harrison 1966, 1981; and Nick 2002. Dark reddish buff clay, with a layer of finer buff clay on interior.

Context: second half of the 4th century A.D. If the date of the piece is close to the date of the context, then the impression most likely was taken from an existing copy of the Parthenos, rather than a mold for new manufacture. The curved cutout, presumably part of the impression of adjacent figure(s), suggests the same. Judging from the width of Medusa's brow (0.03 m), the original should have been larger than the Lenormant copy and smaller than the Varvakeion.<sup>8</sup>

6 L 6101: Lamp with bull's head Fig. 9

Well K 1:4, found June 25, 2003, at 50.44 masl.

P.L. 0.10, W. 0.072, H. 0.028 m.

Disk: frontal bull's head, very worn. Rim decorated with incised branches, base incised with heart-shaped ivy leaf. Intact except for tip of nozzle; burning all around nozzle end. Dull brownish wash. Cf. *Agora* VII, p. 133, nos. 1046 and 1054, dated mid-4th century A.D.

7 L 6103: Lamp with bust Fig. 10

Well K 1:4, found June 25, 2003, at 50.44 masl.

L. 0.117, W. 0.072, H. 0.03 m.

Disk: frontal bust with the head turned to the viewer's right, short hair, parted in middle, face worn but apparently bearded; incisions in triangle at neck, long incisions for sleeves. Rim: an incised herringbone pattern; base: three incised radiating lines that look like an arrowhead and can be read as epsilon. Mended from several pieces, traces of burning around nozzle. Reddish/orange clay (imported?). Context: late 4th/early 5th century A.D.

7. For the upper part of this pit, excavated by Tom Milbank in 1996, see Camp 1999, pp. 280–281.

8. For the copies of the Parthenos, including the Lenormant and Varvakeion versions, see Leipen 1971. For other representations of the Parthenos from this general area: Camp 1996, pp. 241–242 (stamped clay token); 2003, p. 247 (carved gemstone bezel).



Figure 7. African Red Slip bowl 4

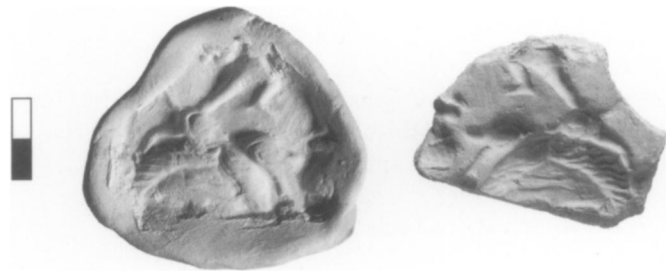


Figure 8. Terracotta impression from a copy of the shield of the Athena Parthenos (5), with cast



Figure 9. Roman lamp (6) with a bull's head, top and bottom views



Figure 10. Roman lamp (7) with a bust, top and bottom views



Figure 11. *Tegulae mammatae* reused behind the lining of well J 2:18 in section BZ

West of the street may be an area just outside a bath partially explored in earlier seasons. The bath was extensively repaired in the early 3rd century A.D. and seems to have been in use until it was destroyed by Alaric in the late 4th century. In both phases it had marble revetment and used *tegulae mammatae* in the heating system, typical of many baths (Plin. *HN* 35.159 and Vitruvius 7.4.2). Dozens of examples were found (Fig. 11), some in fills dating from the 3rd-century repair, others in fills of the early 5th century A.D. In most cases, just the characteristic conical projections from the corners were found, suggesting that they had been deliberately removed so the rest of the flat tile could be reused elsewhere.

Two stray finds from east of the road may have been associated with this bath, one as part of its decoration, the other serving a more utilitarian purpose.

8 S 3510: Marble head

Fig. 12

Found July 31, 2002, in a destruction layer at J/15–1/14, at 52.58 masl.

P.H. 0.33, W. 0.18, Th. 0.18 m.

Broken off at neck. A heavily bearded male head with a full mustache and long flowing hair. The hair is rendered in a series of wavy parallel grooves or ridges, with occasional drill work. The head is tilted noticeably to the viewer's right, and the hair on the figure's right side is done with more care and drill work. He wears a diadem of rolled cloth with a roughed-out central medallion. The eyelids are prominently carved and the irises are defined by incised lines with drilled pupils. Pentelic marble. The piece will be the subject of a special study by Lee Ann Riccardi.

9 A 5057: Latrine seat block

Fig. 13

Found July 18, 2003, at J/14–1/15, at 54.34 masl.

Two joining fragments: L. 0.75, W. 0.50, Th. 0.092 m. Diam. of opening: 0.175 m.

A broad slab of Pentelic marble, preserving the right half of the characteristic keyhole-shaped opening of a communal latrine seat block. Slight bevel cut around hole. Left side of block cut at right angles to front, with anathyrosis, right side



Figure 12. Marble head 8



Figure 13. Latrine seat block 9

cut at a somewhat oblique angle. The back surface is slightly rough, presumably where it was set into a wall. Perhaps to be associated with the latrine recognized many years ago some 27 m to the south-southwest, along the west side of the Temple of Aphrodite.

A prominent feature in the western area was a rectangular, plaster-lined pit or cistern measuring 2.35 m east–west and 1.30 m north–south; the top was broken away by the Byzantine pithoi set into or on it, and the preserved depth reaches 1.74 m (bottom at 51.32, highest preserved top at 53.06 masl). The plaster lining suggests waterproofing and we are presumably dealing with a tank of some sort. The fill within produced pottery (S 1360 and S 1361) indicating that the pit went out of use in the 5th or perhaps 6th century A.D.

Further south on the west side, a layer of rubble and debris was cleared and in its midst was recovered a gold solidus of Leo I (A.D. 457–474). This coin (Fig. 14), the debris itself, and a hoard of some 431 bronze coins of the same date found in a channel of the bath less than 10 m away should perhaps be associated with a possible attack on Athens by the Vandals in the 460s–470s.<sup>9</sup>

10 N73064 (BZ-1628): Gold solidus of Leo I

Fig. 14

Found July 8, 2004, at J/8–2/2, at 52.96 masl.

Diam. 0.02, Th. 0.0014 m; Wt. 4.51 g.

Obverse: portrait of the emperor with inscription DNLEOPE RPETAUC.  
Reverse: winged Victory standing, holding a tall cross, with inscription VICTORI  
AAUCCCB, with CONOB in exergue (= Constantinople mint).<sup>10</sup>



Figure 14. Gold solidus (10) of Leo I (A.D. 457–474): obverse (left) with portrait of emperor; reverse (right) with winged Victory. Scale 2:1

In the street itself we encountered a wide array of hydraulic installations, for both fresh water and drainage (Fig. 15). These included a closed round terracotta pipeline and two stretches of lead pipe, all presumably designed to carry fresh water. The stratigraphy suggests that the upper lead pipe and terracotta line were laid and in use in the 5th century A.D.; the lower lead pipe is presumably somewhat earlier. Along the east side of the street we exposed more of the late, large, deep drain known from excavations further south. In use for centuries, it was repaired repeatedly and was covered with a bewildering array of disparate material: amphoras, large wall or floor tiles, and canonical, curved, drain cover tiles.

Intact lamps were found in the silt that eventually clogged the drain late in the 6th century or early in the 7th.<sup>11</sup> One rare find came from the fill over the southern part of the drain: a small figurine of Aphrodite

9. For the Vandals at Athens, see *Agora* XXIV, pp. 78–79. For the hoard of bronze coins, see Shear 1997, pp. 511–512.

10. Grierson and Mays 1992, pp. 161–165, and pl. 20.

11. For the similar situation further downstream (south) in this same drain, cf. Camp 1996, p. 238, and pl. 68:a, b.



Figure 15. Roman levels of north-south street, looking north, showing freshwater pipes of terracotta and lead, and drainage channels

carved from elephant ivory and of a type very popular in antiquity, the Aphrodite Anadyomene, thought to be based on a famous painting by the 4th-century B.C. painter Apelles showing Aphrodite emerging from the sea, wringing water and sea-foam from her hair (Fig. 16). Examples are known in marble, bronze, terracotta, and bone, and the figure is depicted on coins, gemstones, and gold jewelry. Over 75 examples are illustrated in the *Lexicon iconographicum mythologiae classicae*.<sup>12</sup>

11 BI 1222: Ivory figurine of Aphrodite

Fig. 16

Found June 23, 2005, in the late drain, at J/9-2/5, at ca. 52.73 masl.  
P.H. 0.085 m.

Broken off just above ankles; right hand and arm missing, along with a short section of hair on her left. Small statuette in elephant ivory, showing the goddess holding out the tresses of her hair at either side of her head. She wears a diadem of some sort, the ends concealed in her hair, which is rendered as a series of parallel grooves. Drapery originally attached to her missing right upper arm falls down to cover most of her back; it then passes around her left thigh and between her legs, leaving the right leg and all of the torso bare. Eyeballs drilled with well-defined eyelids.

Similar Aphrodite figurines of this type in clay from the same area: T 4367 (Camp 1996, p. 240, no. 18, pl. 70), T 4407 (unpublished), T 4426 (Camp 1999, p. 281, no. 61, fig. 33), and T 4690 (unpublished).

As the figures of Aphrodite from the Agora now span four centuries, the 1st to the 5th century A.D., and two materials (ivory and terracotta), it seems unlikely that they are all the product of a single workshop in the area, but rather of a single sanctuary; they may therefore perhaps be used as

12. See, e.g., *LIMC* II.1, 1984, pp. 76-77, nos. 667-687, s.v. Aphrodite (A. Delivorrias, G. Berger-Doer, and A. Kossatz-Deissmann). For a detailed study of the type, see Neumer-Pfau 1982, pp. 157-163, 191-195, 201-212, 225-226.



Figure 16. Ivory figurine (11) of Aphrodite. P.H. 0.085 m.

further evidence that the altar and later remains found just to the south are indeed dedicated to Aphrodite Ourania. The new ivory example dating to the late 4th or 5th century A.D. is a further indication of the enthusiasm for paganism this late in Athens, and it demonstrates the need for the various Imperial edicts against it at this time: 16 decrees between A.D. 345 and 435.<sup>13</sup> The Sanctuary of Aphrodite presumably went out of use about the time our figurine was discarded, in the first half of the 5th century A.D., when the foundations of a stoa were built over the altar and the facade of the temple.<sup>14</sup>

### MIDDLE ROMAN LEVELS

In excavating the fills along the eastern side of the road, well under the Late Roman floors, we continued to find much earlier material. For the most part we encountered layers that dated to the late 1st century A.D., the date of abandonment of the Classical commercial building immediately to the south. It now seems likely that the Classical building continued this far north and we are digging the abandonment/destruction fill of its northern part, in which case parts of at least six rooms of the building have now been exposed.

13. See Pharr 1952; Frantz 1965; *Agora XXIV*, pp. 68–72.

14. Shear 1984, pp. 15–16, fig. 10.



As elsewhere, this fill was full of assorted terracotta figurines, masks, and relief plaques. Some pieces were in good condition and of high quality; many more were fragmentary and in poor condition, or made from very worn molds. Mold fragments and molds for lamps were also found, but thus far no kilns or other signs of industrial activity that would lead us to suppose that the material was being manufactured in the immediate vicinity, even though many pieces look like wasters. Enough material was recovered to merit a separate publication, now being prepared by the principal excavator, Marcie Handler. A small selection is presented below to give some idea of the range of material, though some of it may be disassociated in the final analysis, while much more material will be included.

12 T 4610: Terracotta plaque

Fig. 17

Found July 7, 2003, at J/10–1/15, at ca. 52.80 masl.

P.H. 0.18, p.W. 0.117, Th. 0.016 m.

Mended from numerous fragments, and incomplete; raised border along preserved parts of top and right side.

Relief preserving the upper part of an armed goddess with numerous attributes. She stands facing left, wearing a crested helmet. The right arm is outstretched, missing the hand, while the left holds a cornucopia (Horn of Amaltheia). The tops of wings are visible over her shoulders, and the end of a quiver over her right shoulder. Attic clay.



Figure 17. Terracotta plaque (12) of an armed goddess



**Figure 18. Bone stamp (13) of a palmette.** Scale 2:1

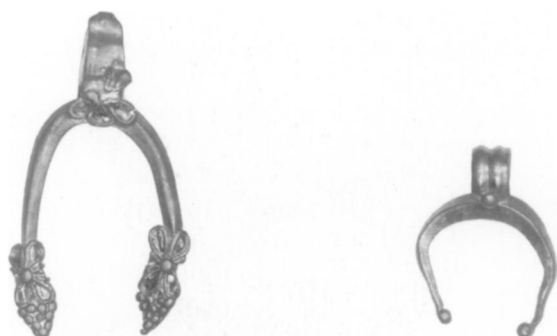
**13 BI 1223: Bone stamp of a palmette**

Fig. 18

Found June 24, 2005, at J/17–1/18, at 52.71 masl.

P.L. 0.024, H. 0.008, W. 0.005 m. Broken at back end.

Length of worked bone, rectangular in section, with a palmette stamp carved into one end, evidently for decorative stamping of pottery. Seven petals (three on each side) springing from two volutes. Discolored from burning.



**Figure 19. Gold pendants 14 (left) and 15 (right).** Scale 2:1

**14 J 250: Gold pendant**

Fig. 19, left

Found June 10, 2004, at J/15–1/12, at 52.78 masl.

L. 0.022, W. 0.012 m.

Small pendant in the shape of an elongated wishbone, the ends decorated with three six-petaled rosettes above two grape clusters. Technique, style, and wear (petals broken and possibly with missing enamel) suggest that the piece may be earlier than its archaeological context (cf. Williams and Ogden 1994, pp. 152–154, nos. 1046, 1054).

**15 J 252: Gold pendant**

Fig. 19, right

Found July 2, 2004, at J/5–2/12, at ca. 52.66 masl.

L. 0.014, W. 0.01 m.

Small pendant in the shape of a horseshoe, tapering to small spheres at the ends. Intact.

**16 P 35181: Transport amphora**

Fig. 20

Found July 22, 2005, at J/17,18–1/6,7 (= deposit J 1:3), at 52.64–52.86 masl.

H. 0.64, Diam. 0.38 m.

Broad, flat rim, strap handles attached at middle of neck and shoulder, ovoid body, ring foot (Diam. 0.11 m). Mended from numerous fragments and largely complete. Creamy yellow white clay. Similar in shape to Gauloise type 5 from southern France, dated to the late 1st–2nd century A.D. Cf. Laubenheimer 1985, pp. 257–299, figs. 154–157; Sciallono and Sibella 1994, pp. 45, 47, types 3 and 5.

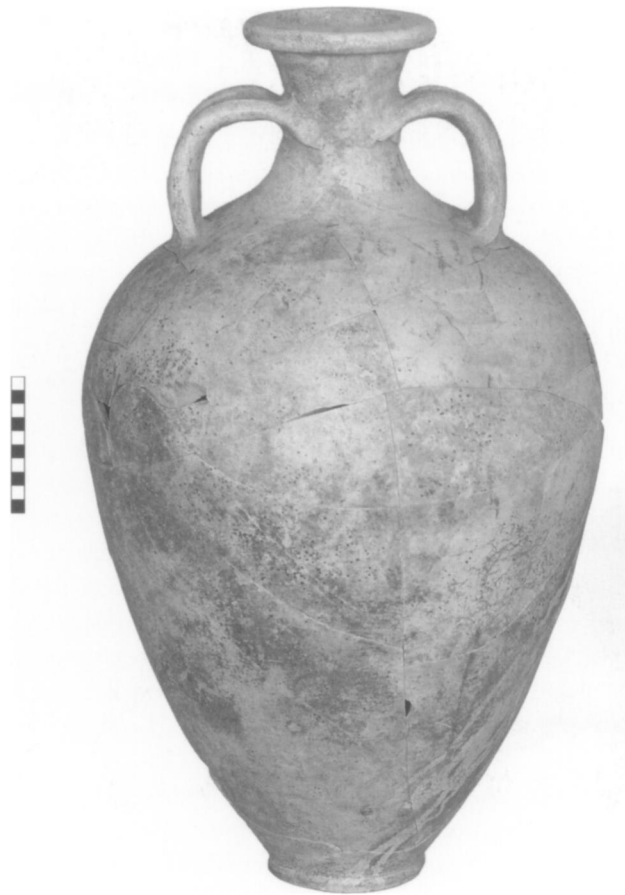


Figure 20. Transport amphora 16



Figure 21. Mold (17) for an alpha-globule lamp

17 L 6092: Mold for an alpha-globule lamp

Fig. 21

Found July 18, 2002, at J/18, 19–1/13, 14, at 53.41 masl.

P.L. 0.08, p.W. 0.065, Th. 0.01 m.

About half of the lower mold for an alpha-globule lamp preserving part of the alpha, some of the globules, and the base of the nozzle. Graffiti on base: OYO and 2 gammas. Late 1st–early 2nd century A.D. Cf. *Agora* VII, pp. 107–108, nos. 439–441.

## SECTION BH

### BYZANTINE LEVELS

Section BH, lying to the east of the areas described above, was excavated under the supervision of Anne McCabe (Fig. 22). Here, we finished clearing the Byzantine levels, down to the bottoms of the walls, that is, well below floor level. For the most part we seem to be largely in the 10th century A.D., with brown-glazed and white-ware pottery, and with no sgraffito or green and brown painted wares of the 11th and 12th centuries. The walls were of rubble: fieldstones and reused ancient blocks set in clay. The area is so small that no plan of any building could be recovered, and even what seem to be individual rooms rarely have four respectable walls.

The fill alongside these walls has proved remarkably deep and undifferentiated, and there is little stratigraphic evidence of extended use of the area, though two or more periods could be identified in the junctures and relative depths of some of the walls. Though one drain, one pithos, and some areas of deep ash or carbon were encountered, there seem to be far fewer installations and evidence for storage (especially pithoi) that were outstanding and common features of the contemporary buildings to the west. Also unusual, in contrast to sections BE and BZ to the west, is the fact that none of the walls in section BH rest on Late Roman predecessors.

This area was expanded to the east in 2006 (Fig. 23), following the demolition of another modern building on the corner of Astingos (Hastings) and St. Phillip's Streets. The contrast with the western half in terms of features is remarkable. In a relatively small area we encountered an abundance of installations: walls, pithoi, pits, a burial, and two wells. Presumably the houses that used these installations faced onto the north-south road that ran immediately to the east, under modern St. Phillip's Street, and the western part of section BH is part of a less intensively used area behind the houses.<sup>15</sup>

Generally the finds seemed to date to the same period as the adjacent sections: the coarse-ware pottery and brown-glazed pieces are hard to date precisely, but most of the material should date to the years around A.D. 1000. For the most part we excavated beneath the floor levels of the buildings, presumably houses.

In the corner of one room, a coarse-ware cooking pot containing the skeletal remains of a late-term fetus of about 32 weeks was buried upside down beneath the floor (deposit L 2:3; Fig. 24). This is the second such interment of a newborn or fetus found in the Byzantine settlement north of the river (see above, p. 629, J 1:4), and may be the accepted manner of disposing of such remains in this period. McCabe notes that even though Novel 53 of the emperor Leo VI (A.D. 886–912) repealed the old prohibition against *intra muros* burials, such interments within a house are noteworthy, and a desire to conceal the death of an infant may be related to the severe penalties imposed on parents who allowed their offspring to die before baptism.<sup>16</sup> Both burials were found at virtually the same level (53.70 masl), in rooms some 40 m apart.

15. For the north-south street under modern St. Phillip's Street, see Alexandri 1968, pp. 43–44; Costaki 2006, pp. 473–475, nos. V 31, V 32.

16. See Noailles and Dain 1944; Baun 1994. I am indebted to Anne McCabe for her observations and to Maria Liston for her preliminary analysis of the bones.

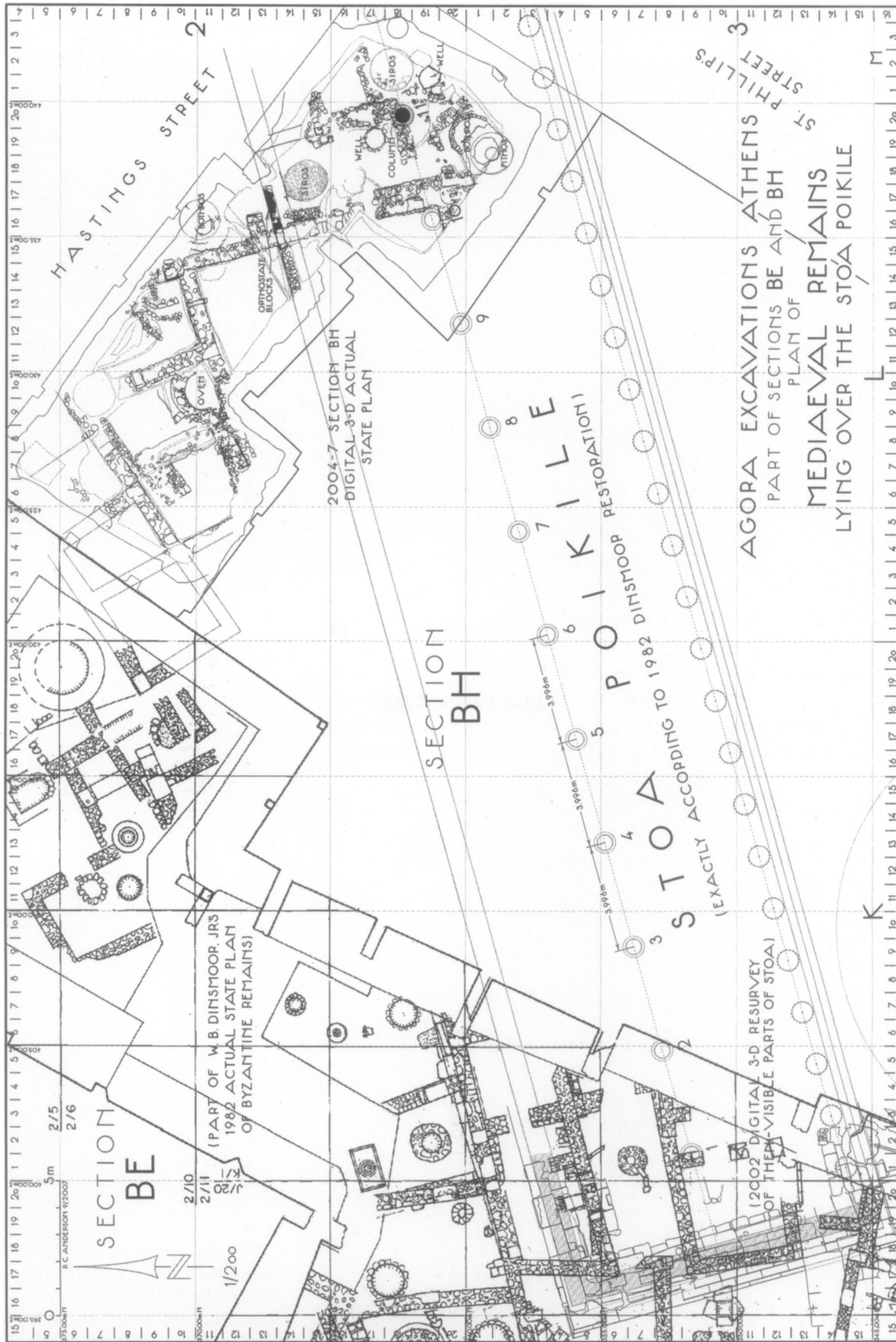


Figure 22. Plan of section BH showing Byzantine levels and the underlying Classical stoa. R. C. Anderson



Figure 23. Byzantine remains in the northeast part of section BH (2007), from the southwest: (A) back wall of the Stoa Poikile; (B) interior column of the Stoa Poikile



Figure 24. Byzantine pot burial (L 2:3) of a late-term fetus

Two wells were excavated to a depth of 2.00–3.00 m and then left for future seasons. Both are lined in the upper part with stones, with proper well-tiles lower down, and seem to have been used in the Byzantine period; it is not yet clear if either was in use at an earlier time. A large stone-lined pit was excavated down to a very hard-packed surface that seems to have served as its floor.

## STOA POIKILE

Beneath the Byzantine levels, traces of an earlier structure appeared in 2006 and 2007: a stretch of the back wall of the Stoa Poikile, the first new parts to become visible since the west end of the building was discovered over 25 years ago. The new material is not fully excavated and, as of 2007, still lies partially embedded in Byzantine walls and Late Roman fill. Nonetheless, the following description is possible. The part found in the 2007 season consists of two adjacent blocks from the outer face of the back (north) wall of the building, made of limestone and originally joined at the ends with a double T-clamp (Figs. 22, 23:A). They are orthostate blocks from the first standing course of the wall. The one block largely exposed measures 1.207 m long, ca. 0.94 m high, and 0.33 m thick. The double T-clamp is ca. 0.24 m long, and the one visible end of the block is treated with anathyrosis, with a smoothed margin some 0.08 m wide. There is no sign of clamping between the inner and outer faces of the wall. The back (outer) face is finished with a drove (flat-faced chisel), while the top surfaces have been finished with a claw chisel; the inner face is rough-picked. Each block has a projecting boss left on its outer face.

The difference in the tooling and the presence of bosses so low down may indicate that the blocks were reused. Blocks in secondary use, presumably made available after the Persian destruction of Athens, were found in the western foundations.<sup>17</sup> The tops of the new blocks lie at ca. 53.54 masl, which means they rise ca. 1.30 m higher than any part of the building seen to the west. They are of a yellow buff poros limestone, and rest on a foundation course some 0.26 m high. This arrangement of an orthostate course made up of inner and outer blocks is paralleled in the Lesche of the Knidians at Delphi, also dated to the second quarter of the 5th century B.C.<sup>18</sup>

To the southeast, the top of an unfluted column shaft of buff limestone, ca. 0.595 m in diameter, appeared below the Byzantine walls, lying very close to the projected placement of an interior Ionic column of the Stoa and also apparently in situ (Figs. 22, 23:B). It stands 3 cm from its position as calculated by W. B. Dinsmoor Jr. on the basis of the western foundations. It rises, as preserved, to a level of ca. 53.20 masl. As this column falls 44 m from the west end, and the interior columns are 4 m apart, it must be the 11th interior column counting from the west. The minimum length of the stoa must be 48 m. If so, the east wall lies at the very extremity of our present trench and may be at least partially exposed in future seasons. In any case, at present the exposed eastern part of the building is appreciably better preserved than the western end.

## ON THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE STOA

The identification of the remains described above is by no means secure, though the weight of evidence seems to favor the Poikile, famous for its paintings and as the birthplace of Stoic philosophy.<sup>19</sup> A wide range of scholarly opinion exists as to whether or not that identification is correct. Mark Stansbury-O'Donnell, for example, was confident enough in the identification to write an article describing where the paintings would have been positioned in the mostly unexcavated building and how large they

17. Shear 1984, pp. 14–15.

18. *FdD* II.6, pp. 120–139.

19. The initial identification was made and argued by T. L. Shear Jr. (Shear 1984, pp. 5–19).

would have been; his article led in turn to a second, in which the authors discuss how much room was then left over for the shields, captured from the Spartans at Pylos in 425/4 B.C., that were displayed in the building for centuries.<sup>20</sup> At the other end of the spectrum are several scholars who reject the identification entirely, preferring to see the remains as those of another missing stoa, the Stoa of the Herms.<sup>21</sup>

The identification as the Poikile rests first on Pausanias (1.14–15), who described it during his visit to Athens in ca. A.D. 150. After referring to the Hephaisteion as being on the hill above the Royal Stoa, he describes, in order, a sanctuary of Aphrodite Ourania, a gate carrying a trophy of the Athenian cavalry over the Macedonians, and the Stoa Poikile. He then moves on to describe a series of monuments that lie to the east, under the modern Plaka. This same sequence of monuments noted by Pausanias has been uncovered north of the Panathenaic Way and the Royal Stoa: sanctuary, gate, and stoa, in the order in which he saw them, moving toward the east.

The archaeological evidence corresponds to what we know from other ancient sources concerning the history of the Stoa Poikile.<sup>22</sup> It was built at the time of Kimon's ascendancy, that is, in the 470s or 460s B.C., and it survived until late antiquity, at least as late as the time of the Bishop Synesius, who saw the building (though not the paintings) in the years around A.D. 400. Pottery found against the foundations and under the floor at the west indicates a construction date around 470 B.C., and the building certainly stood until the 6th century A.D.

Finally, the numerous ancient references (50) indicate that the Poikile was a well-known and prominent building, used for a variety of public functions. The present remains of a large stoa (more than 44 m in length), facing south, overlooking the Agora square and the Acropolis, correspond to such prominence.

As noted above, those who reject the Poikile identification identify it as the Stoa of the Herms. It, too, seems to have been standing in the 5th century B.C., at the time of Kimon (Aeschin. *In Ctes.* 3.183–185), and it is referred to in several Hellenistic inscriptions.<sup>23</sup> Pausanias does not describe this stoa, however, nor does it appear in any source of the Roman period, leaving open the possibility that it did not survive the siege of Sulla in 86 B.C., in which case the archaeological evidence for our stoa would not match the history of the Stoa of the Herms.

In short, at the moment the problem is one building, two missing stoas: the Poikile and the Herms. On balance, if we have to choose a single stoa, the identification of the Poikile seems preferable on the basis of location, size, and history of the building; there is certainly no stronger evidence in favor of the Stoa of the Herms. Continuing excavations will perhaps shed more conclusive light on the issue.

There is a compromise position, and that is to assign both names to a single building. Several such examples are known in Athens: (1) the Poikile itself was originally known as the Peisianakteios, after the man who had it built; (2) the Tholos is referred to in inscriptions as both the Tholos and the Skias, and the area around it was known as the Prytanikon; and (3) the Polemarcheion was also known as the Epilykeion. In theory, our building could easily have been referred to as both the Poikile and the Herms.

20. Stansbury-O'Donnell 2005; Lippman, Scahill, and Schultz 2006, pp. 552–553.

21. See, e.g., Di Cesare 2001, 2002; others have expressed doubts about the Stoa Poikile identification in lectures.

22. *Agora* III, pp. 31–45, nos. 47–98.

23. Threpsiades and Vanderpool 1964; Camp 1996, pp. 252–257.



Those who have worked at the Agora for a while are reluctant to take this path because it was tried once before, with dismal results. As early as the 1930s a similar problem existed: one stoa, two names (Zeus Eleutherios and Basileios). The route of the Panathenaic Way was clear, and as there were only 18 meters between the north end of the Stoa of Zeus and the road, it was thought that no stoa could fit in that tiny space (unexcavated, north of the railroad tracks). So the two names were assigned to the single stoa, although many people were not happy with that solution. That they were correct was shown in 1970 when, north of the Athens–Piraeus railroad, an 18 m long stoa was excavated between the Stoa of Zeus and the Panathenaic Way.<sup>24</sup> So for some there is a residual psychological reluctance to applying two names to a single stoa.

## SOUTH OF THE ELEUSINION

In preparation for work associated with the Unification Project and the Olympic Games, supplementary work was carried out in 2001–2003 in the area of the Eleusinion, on the northwest slopes of the Acropolis, under the supervision of Laura Gawlinski. Work was concentrated on the area south of the main sanctuary, behind (south of) the long east–west stoa that makes up its southern limit. Here, for the most part, scraping removed the lowest fills over bedrock in an area excavated in the 1950s. Not surprisingly, therefore, the two most prominent features recovered were wells sunk into that bedrock. The earliest, U 21:1, was an unlined shaft sunk to a preserved depth of 11.77 m. There was no well-defined period-of-use fill at the bottom, except possibly the staves of a wooden bucket. The dumped material used to fill the shaft dated to the end of the 6th century B.C.

The abandonment of wells of this period is often associated with the Persian destruction of 480/479 B.C. In this instance, however, it seems possible the shaft was abandoned because it failed to produce sufficient water. Little collected in it at the time of excavation, though well U 21:1 is almost 3 m deeper than the average depth of the Late Archaic wells in and around the Agora. Material discarded in the dumped fill included limestone fragments of acroteria from one or more limestone altars (18–22), fragments of late black-figure pottery (23), and a bronze measure (25), in addition to about a dozen assorted loomweights and spindle whorls.

### 18 A 4995: Fragment of pediment and acroterion

Fig. 25

Found July 19, 2002, in well U 21:1.

P.H. 0.12, p.L. 0.19, p.Th. 0.07 m.

From a small altar. Upper part of pedimental end, with the base of the crowning palmette central acroterion. Soft, tan poros limestone. Four holes at top, containing some lead, apparently used for attaching the upper, missing part of the palmette, possibly a repair.

### 19 A 4996: Upper part of a palmette acroterion

Found July 19, 2002, in well U 21:1.

P.H. 0.11, W. 0.11, Th. 0.06 m.

From a small altar. Broken at bottom. Poros limestone.

24. Thompson 1937, pp. 64–76; Travlos, *Athens*, pp. 527, 577–578.

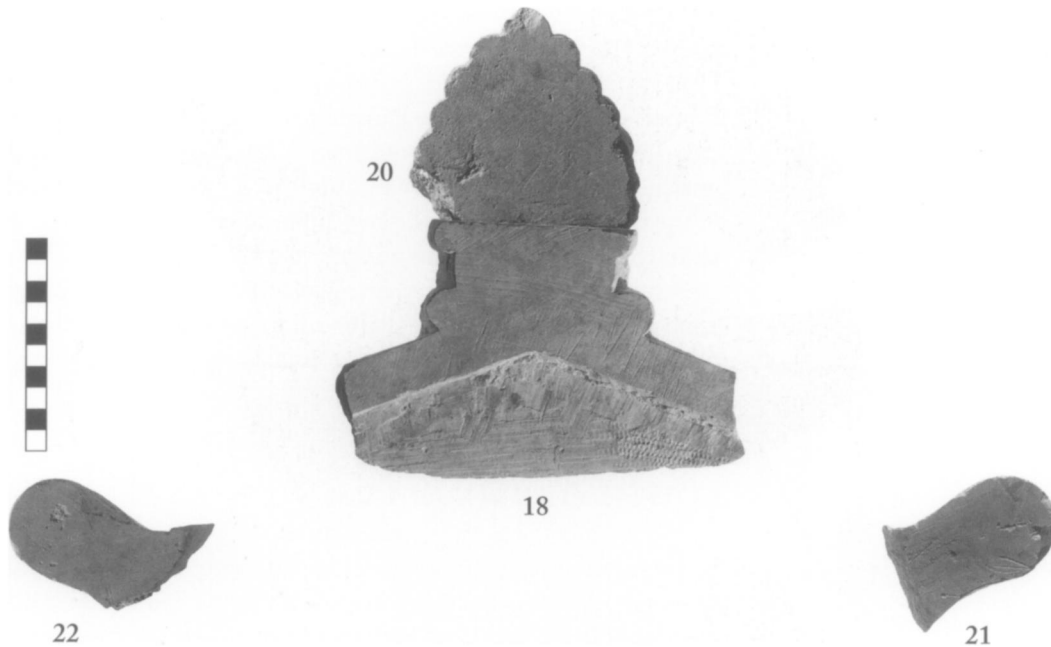


Figure 25. Fragments of acroteria and pediment from Archaic altar(s) from well U 21:1, above the Eleusinion (18, 20–22)

- 20 A 4997: Upper part of a palmette acroterion Fig. 25  
 Found July 19, 2002, in well U 21:1.  
 P.H. 0.105, p.W. 0.105, Th. 0.052 m.  
 From a small altar. Attachment holes, apparently to join A 4995 (18).
- 21 A 4998: Limestone corner acroterion Fig. 25  
 Found July 23, 2002, in well U 21:1.  
 P.L. 0.077, p.W. 0.05, p.Th. 0.06 m.  
 From a small altar. Traces of red pigment, perhaps for painted volute and central rosette.
- 22 A 4999: Limestone corner acroterion Fig. 25  
 Found July 24, 2002, in well U 21:1.  
 P.L. 0.08, p.W. 0.055, Th. 0.06 m.  
 From a small altar. No paint on front surface. Back roughly worked.

The Eleusinion also produced several fragments of small altars, several of them inscribed,<sup>25</sup> and the fragments described above may well have come from there, if not from the Acropolis or its north slope. Despite the early date at the end of the 6th century B.C. proposed above for the filling of the well, it should be noted that such finials might have been lopped off during the Persian destruction or later, in order to make the blocks more amenable to reuse in the aftermath of the destruction.

- 23 P 34436: Black-figure skyphos Fig. 26  
 Mended from numerous fragments found in several lots.  
 P.H. 0.16, est. Diam. at rim 0.24 m.  
 Scene of Dionysiac revelry, with Dionysos, dancers, musicians, and drinkers; ivy tendrils in background. Heron Class skyphos, Theseus Painter, ca. 500 B.C.: cf. Borgers 1999; Fritzilas 2006.

25. *Agora* XXXI, pp. 200–201, nos. 39, 40, and p. 214, nos. 9–13.



Figure 26. Fragments of  
black-figure skyphos 23



Figure 27. Black-glazed stemmed dish 24 from well U 21:1

24 P 34437: Black-glazed stemmed dish

Fig. 27

Found July 16–19, 2002, in well U 21:1.

H. 0.05, Diam. 0.087 m, over half preserved.

Similar to *Agora* XII, p. 305, no. 979, dated ca. 525–460 B.C.

25 B 2094: Bronze measure

Found June 27, 2002, in well U 21:1.

H. 0.08, Diam. at top 0.06, at bottom 0.065 m.

Intact, but corroded. Bronze cylinder with slightly raised collar at rim and base. Similar in appearance, though slightly taller than, DM 43 (= B 1083*bis*) in *Agora* X, p. 52, pl. 14.

Much of the fill over bedrock in the area just inside the Late Roman fortification wall proved to have been deposited in the Hellenistic period (deposits T 21:1 and T–U 21:1), probably around 220–150 B.C. The deposits included over 40 stamped amphora handles, loomweights, pottery (lots 149–154, with no long-petaled “Megarian” bowls), and terracotta figurines.

A stray find from just below the surface left after the earlier excavations was a rare portrait of an individual wearing an elaborate crown decorated with small sculpted busts (Fig. 28, S 3500, found June 19, 2002, in surface fill at U 22). Such portraits wearing bust-crowns are often identified as priests of the Imperial cult, and they are far more common in Asia Minor than on the Greek mainland. The style of this head suggests a date late in the 2nd century A.D. The piece has been the subject of a separate study published earlier this year by Lee Ann Riccardi.<sup>26</sup>

A second well (T 22:3) was encountered just inside the Late Roman fortification wall, unlined and preserved to a depth of 6.00 m. Pottery from the period-of-use fill consisted of about a dozen pitchers and mugs with ridged and gouged decoration (Fig. 29), along with several micaceous water jars, all dating to the second half of the 4th century A.D.<sup>27</sup> As the well lies just within the fortified limits of the Late Roman city, it is not clear if the well was abandoned as a result of the arrival of Alaric and the Visigoths in A.D. 395. In addition to the pottery, the lower levels of the well also produced the battered head of a sleeping child, perhaps Eros (Fig. 30).

26. Riccardi 2007; for bust-crowns generally, see also Rumschied 2000, esp. pp. 113–147.

27. See *Agora* V, pp. 78, 111, groups L and M.

Figure 28 (*right*). Marble portrait  
with bust-crown (S 3500)

Figure 29 (*below*). Pottery from well  
T 22:3





Figure 30. Head of a sleeping Eros(?)  
(26) from well T 22:3

26 S 3527: Head of a sleeping child (Eros?)

Fig. 30

Found July 3, 2003, in well T 22:3.

P.H. 0.125, W. 0.12 m.

Marble head of a male child. Eyes closed, he lies with his head tilted to his left. His left cheek bulges and the entire right side is far more carefully finished than the (largely concealed) left. The basic scene and pose are very familiar as a figure of a sleeping Eros, almost 400 examples of which are known, both in stone and terracotta. Unusual is the fact that this head is carved separately from the rest of the figure; normally the head rests on the child's hand, a pillow, or some drapery, carved from the same piece of marble. Here, the head is finished in the round and there is a small round dowel-hole under the left side of the chin. Also surprising is the large hole (Diam. 0.03 m) in the top of the head, filled with lead and traces of some iron attachment. A possible original location for this piece is the Sanctuary of Eros and Aphrodite, excavated by Oscar Broneer in the 1930s on the north slope of the Acropolis, some 250 m to the southeast.<sup>28</sup>

27 I 7624: Inscribed fragment

Fig. 31

Found June 27, 2003, in lining around mouth of well T 22:3.

P.H. 0.28, p.W. 0.16, Th. 0.125 m.

Fragmentary inscription of the 4th century B.C. Parts of 10 lines of text are preserved, with no more than eight letters surviving on any one line. Because the text is stichedon, however, and much of the language is formulaic, it is possible to restore a line length of 21 letters per line. Preserved is the upper part of a stele containing the preamble of a decree of the year when Nikophemos was eponymous archon, that is, 361/0 B.C. The formulae are identical to *IG II<sup>2</sup> 116*, passed in the same year, and the decree may concern a treaty between Athens and the Thessalians. Publication of this text has been entrusted to Stephen Tracy.

28. For the sleeping Eros type, cf. Söldner 1986. I am indebted to Nancy Winter for pointing out that a standing sleeping Eros might also be possible, which might fit the piece

better: cf., e.g., *LIMC* III, 1986, p. 917, no. 791, s.v. Eros (A. Hermay), and p. 972, no. 118, s.v. Eros/Amor, Cupido (N. Blanc and F. Gury). For the north slope sanctuary, see Broneer 1932;

1933, pp. 329–349; 1935, pp. 123–132. Glowacki 1991 (*non vidi*) presumably includes a recent discussion of the sanctuary.

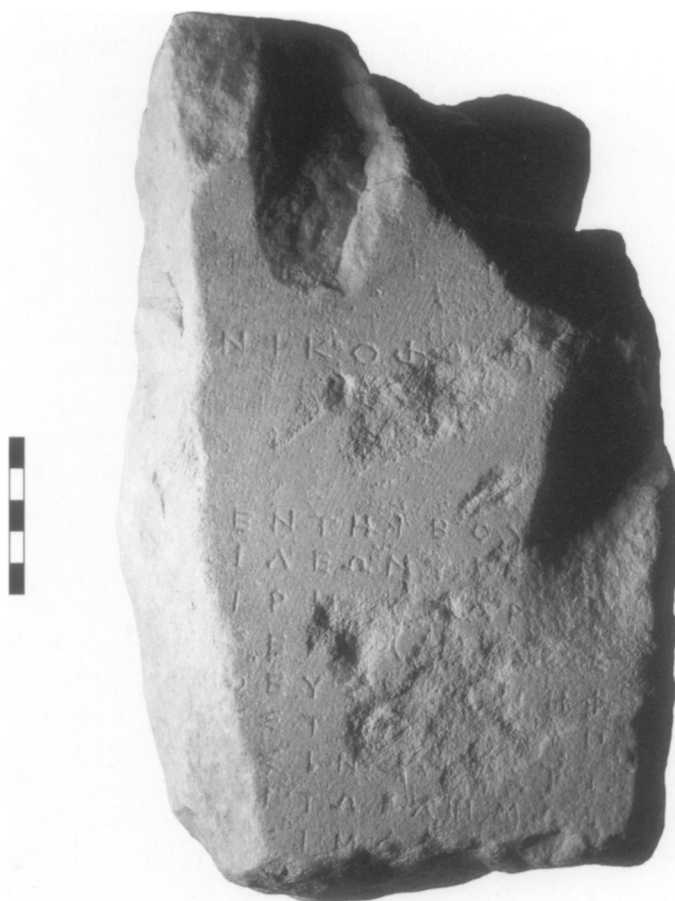


Figure 31. Inscribed fragment (27),  
Agora I 7624

### SOUTHWEST CORNER: STRATEGEION?

Supplementary excavations were also carried out at the southwest corner of the Agora square, in the building traditionally (and tentatively) identified as the *Strategeion*, the headquarters of the 10 annually elected generals (*strategoï*). The board had considerable business with the Boule, and, according to several literary sources, held office somewhere in the Agora.<sup>29</sup> The building traditionally assigned to the *strategoï* dates to the 5th century B.C. It is trapezoidal in shape, measuring ca. 27 × 20 m, divided into several rooms. The state of preservation is poor, particularly at the west, where it was set into an area created by quarrying away part of the southeast slopes of Kolonos Agoraios.

While date, location, and size are all appropriate to a public building, other evidence suggests a different function. In the course of excavation in the 1930s, a shallow pyre was found in the building (deposit F 13:1).<sup>30</sup> Such deposits are well known in the Agora excavations, usually taking the form of a shallow pit cut beneath the floor, in which were deposited small vessels for cooking and serving food, a lamp, and a drinking cup. The number of vessels may vary from three to three dozen. Traces of burning and a few animal bones are often encountered.<sup>31</sup> In all, some 51 such deposits have been excavated over the years and are now the subject

29. The fullest exposition of the evidence in favor of the *Strategeion* is Dinsmoor 1954, pp. 293–296. For the testimonia on the *Strategeion*, see *Agora* III, pp. 174–177.

30. *Agora* XXIX, p. 450.

31. Young 1951; Camp 1999, pp. 275, 278–280.

of a separate study being prepared by Susan Rotroff. In those cases where the architectural contexts can be established, all these deposits are found in commercial establishments or private houses, never in sanctuaries or public buildings. The presence of a pyre in the "Strategieion," therefore, casts some doubt on its traditional identification as a public building, and was the basis for our decision to renew work in the area in the hopes of clarifying the situation.

The excavation, supervised by Laura Gawlinski, was begun in 2004 and is ongoing. Excavations in the western half of the building produced little new evidence as the floors are essentially of dressed bedrock. The eastern half of the building proved more promising, however, as it overlies a deep natural gully running from the southwest toward the northeast, a line followed by the western branch of the Great Drain, and there is a considerable depth of fill under the latest floors. The recent excavations have added several new crosswalls to the plan and have confirmed a construction date for the building in the second half of the 5th century B.C. Several rooms along the east side each have a drain emptying eastward, directly into the Great Drain.

One welcome find came just under a floor of one of the rooms, left by our predecessors in the excavations of the 1930s. A large hoard of Athenian silver tetradrachms was buried in a shallow pit beneath the floor and never recovered (Fig. 32). Most of the coins had adhered into a solid mass, which is still being disassembled by head conservator Amandina Anastasiades and her assistant, Karen Loven. By weight (ca. 7.1 kg, about 15.6 pounds), there should be a total of some 400–420 coins. All those that can be seen have the profile head of Athena on the obverse, with the owl, olive sprig, and legend ΑΘΕ on the reverse. They are of the so-called pi-style, referring to the decoration on Athena's helmet, struck in great numbers in the 4th century B.C.<sup>32</sup> Further analysis needs to be done with die-links and patterns of wear, but the coins at present seem to have been assembled near the end of the 4th century B.C. Numismatic analysis of the hoard has been assigned to Irini Marathaki; when completed, this should shed light on both the date and circumstances of deposition. The significance of the discovery may be appreciated when considering these coins against the background of 75 years of excavation at the Agora. The new find increases spectacularly the number of Athenian silver coins recovered in the excavations, representing more than three times the number recovered up until now.<sup>33</sup>

The presence of such a hoard may well prove useful in establishing the identity of the building. The hoard, with a value of about 1,600 ancient drachmas, represents a considerable amount of money, following the usual formula of one drachma as a day's wage,<sup>34</sup> some three to five years' income, depending upon holidays and festivals. Whether a public official would conceal such an amount within a public building may be questioned, along with the possible identity of that official as a general.

If the building is indeed a public one, then equally plausible is its identification as the Poleterion, the office of the *poletai*, who both had regular business with the Boule and dealt with the leases of the silver mines from Laureion (Arist. [*Ath. Pol.*] 47.2–3; Harp., s.v. πωληται καὶ πωλητήριον). They were responsible also for selling confiscated property, for assorted

32. For a similar hoard from Thorikos, see Bingen 1973.

33. Kroll (*Agora XXVI*, pp. 4–5) lists 129 silver Athenian coins known from the Agora as of 1993 and the number had not changed appreciably until the present discovery. For the ratios of silver to bronze coins found at excavated sites, see de Callatay 2006, where the Athenian figures will now need revision and discussion. For a preliminary discussion of the new coin hoard, see Kroll 2006. For Athenian silver coinage generally, see now Flament 2007 (*non vidi*); I am indebted to J. Kroll for this reference.

34. For all the testimonia, see Loomis 1998. Lifting it, one is struck by how heavy this mass of silver is, representing just over a quarter of a talent. A full talent, just under 60 pounds, weighs about as much as a full military pack or the maximum weight an airline will allow an individual suitcase; a talent of silver is about as much as an average man can carry.



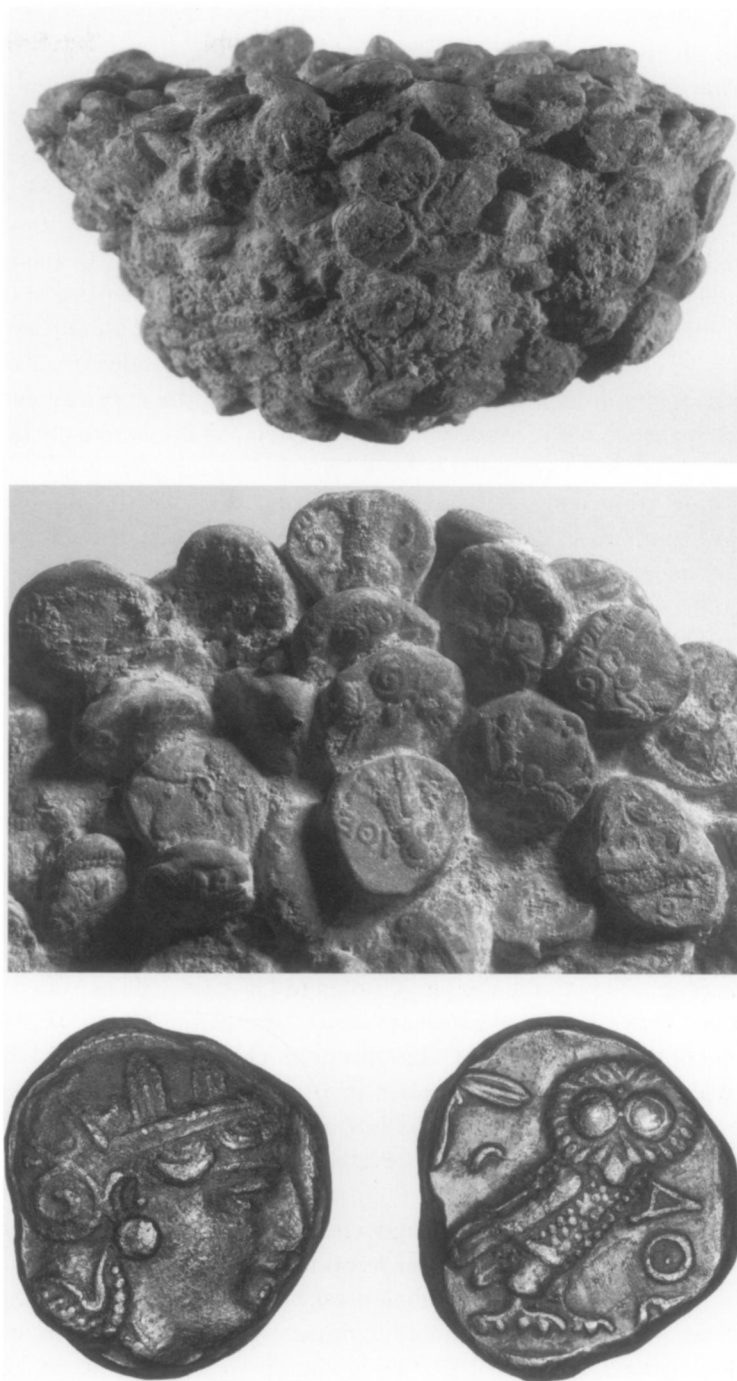


Figure 32. Hoard of more than 400 Athenian silver tetradrachms from the "Strategeion": view of excavated hoard; detail; cleaned coin, obverse (left), reverse (right). Scale (of cleaned coin) 2:1

35. *Agora* XIX, pp. 57–69, esp. pp. 65–67 and n. 53.

36. *Agora* III, pp. 174–177, nos. 572–581.

state contracts, and taxes; all these duties involved large sums of money. Numerous fragments of the inscribed mining leases set up by the *poletai* have come to light, and their findspots cluster in the southwest corner of the Agora, between the Bouleuterion and our building (70 of 93 fragments, just over 75%).<sup>35</sup> The statistics are far more compelling than the somewhat paltry epigraphical evidence adduced for the Strategeion.<sup>36</sup> Only 10 inscriptions concerning the Strategeion or military officials are possibly relevant, and of these only three were found near our building.

A compromise solution would be to house both boards, generals and *poletai*, in the same building, which seems to have several rooms. The problem then becomes one of nomenclature, since both “Poleterion” and “Strategeion” are attested in the ancient sources.

As noted, however, it may well be the building should be thought of as a privately owned building, perhaps commercial in function. The pyre would be the first bit of evidence suggesting this identification, and the drains leading out of individual rooms directly into the Great Drain perhaps indicate they functioned independently. Large Classical buildings that seem to serve a primarily commercial function have been found just outside the northwest corner of the Agora square in the recent excavations (see above), and are known from earlier excavations just outside the northeast corner and along the east side of the square.<sup>37</sup> In the southwest corner, the house and shop ascribed to Simon the cobbler makes use of every available bit of land up to the boundary stone of the Agora.<sup>38</sup>

While the plans of the individual buildings vary somewhat, it is clear that permanent installations built as close as possible to the public square served the commercial needs of the city. It may well be that the “Strategeion/Poleterion” should be identified in this way as well. Final analysis of the hoard should clarify the circumstances of its composition and assembly. This in turn may help determine whether the hoard was buried by an official or a successful businessman. In the meantime, ongoing excavations may also shed further light on the identification of the building and its role in Athenian life.

## WORK IN THE STOA OF ATTALOS

In collaboration with the Packard Humanities Institute, the past five years have also seen a flourishing of our system of record-keeping by electronic means. Both the catalogue of the collection, which is now on a database, and the way records are taken in the field are largely unrecognizable from five years ago. Those interested in the results of the excavations are invited to consult, in addition to future fascicles of *Hesperia*, the Agora website at [www.agathe.gr](http://www.agathe.gr).

The 75th anniversary of the Agora Excavations, begun in May of 1931, was celebrated in 2006. The occasion was marked by two symposia, one in Montreal in January at the 107th Annual Meeting of the Archaeological Institute of America, and a second in Athens in June. A commemorative volume, *Agora Excavations, 1931–2006: A Pictorial History* (Athens 2006), was edited and produced by Craig Mauzy.

In addition to 75 years in the field, 2006 also saw the 50th anniversary of the reconstruction of the Stoa of Attalos. The building has served remarkably well as the site museum, and also for storerooms, offices, and workrooms. It is used every year by dozens of scholars working on Agora publication assignments, and by hundreds of visitors coming to consult the collections and archives. Any building begins to show its age, however, and in the years covered by this report, Mauzy has undertaken the renovation of the workspace, room by room. With the advent of new technology and digital photography, the requirements of the stoa have shifted. This has led to the

37. Northeast corner: Shear 1971, pp. 265–266; 1973, pp. 138–144; Milbank 2002. East side: Shear 1975, pp. 346–361.

38. For “Simon the Shoemaker,” see Diog. Laert. 2.13.122; for the house, see Thompson 1960.

creation of a climate-controlled storeroom for metals, a rebuilt conservation laboratory, a new computer room, and a reconfigured records room. The building has now been rearranged for the next half-century, and is ready to accommodate the immediate needs of the ongoing excavations.

In conclusion, both in the new properties and in reexamining old areas, the Agora excavations continue to produce a wide range of material spanning many centuries and shedding light on multiple aspects of the archaeology of Athens. The long history of these discoveries and the associated research can be found in virtually every issue of *Hesperia*.

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## John McKesson Camp II

### AGORA EXCAVATIONS

AMERICAN SCHOOL OF CLASSICAL STUDIES AT ATHENS

54 SOUIDIAS STREET

106 76 ATHENS

GREECE

jcamp@agathe.gr